

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March, 2018

- PRESENT:** Councillor Ieuan Williams (Vice-Chair) (In the Chair)
- Councillors Richard Dew, John Griffith, Carwyn Jones, R. Meirion Jones, Alun Mummery, R.G. Parry, OBE, FRAGS , Dafydd Rhys Thomas
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Assistant Chief Executive (Governance & Business Process Transformation)
Assistant Chief Executive (Partnership, Community & Service Improvement)
Head of Function (Resources) & Section 151 Officer
Head of Learning
Head of Democratic Services (for item 4)
Regeneration Manager (for item 14)
Housing Service Manager (Strategy, Commissioning & Policy)
Principal Development Officer (Supporting People) (for item 9)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Leader)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Lewis Davies, Glyn Haynes, Kenneth Hughes, Aled M. Jones, Eric Jones, Bryan Owen, Alun Roberts, Dylan Rees, Peter Rogers, Shaun Redmond

Councillor Ieuan Williams, Vice-Chair welcomed all those present to this meeting of the Executive which he explained he would be chairing on account of the absence through indisposition of the Leader and Chair, Councillor Llinos Medi Huws.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Carwyn Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest with regard to item 12. He clarified that in order to be able to fully represent the Seirrol ward in the discussions on this matter as one of the Local Members he had sought and had been granted, a dispensation by the Standards Committee on 18 July, 2017 to participate throughout the debate.

Councillor Alun Roberts (not a member of the Executive) declared a personal interest with regard to item 12.

2. URGENT MATTERS CERTIFIED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR HIS APPOINTED OFFICER

None to report.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on the morning of 19 February, 2018 (Budget meeting) and the afternoon of 19 February, 2018 (Ordinary meeting) were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meetings of the Executive held on the following date and times be approved as a correct record:

19 February, 2018 (A.M.) (Budget Meeting)

19 February, 2018 (P.M.) (Ordinary Meeting)

4. THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democratic Services incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from April to November, 2018 was presented for the Executive's approval.

The Head of Democratic Services reported on items that were new to the Work Programme as follows –

Item 10 – Craig y Don, Amlwch provisionally scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 21 May, 2018 meeting

Item 11 – Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2017/18 – a delegated decision scheduled to be made in June, 2018

Item 13 – Welsh Housing Quality Standards (Acceptable Fails) scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 18 June, 2018 meeting

Item 14 - Housing Maintenance Work and Standards Policy scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 18 June, 2018 meeting

Item 16 - Draft Final Accounts 2017/18 scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 16 July, 2018 meeting

Item 21 - Review of the Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18 scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 17 September, 2018 meeting

Item 22 - Medium Term Financial Strategy scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 17 September, 2018 meeting

Item 25 – Capital Budget Strategic Plan 2019/20 scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its meeting held on 29 October, 2018

Item 26 – 2019/20 Budget (initial draft proposals) scheduled to be considered by the Executive at its 12 November, 2018 meeting.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period from April, 2018 to November, 2018 as presented.

5. CORPORATE SCORECARD QUARTER 3 2017/18

The report of the Programme, Business Planning and Performance Manager incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 3 2017/18 was presented for the Executive's approval.

The Portfolio Member for Corporate Services reported that overall, performance has been encouraging in Quarter 3 with the majority of indicators on target and presenting as either Green or Yellow. Five indicators were underperforming as Red against their annual target at this stage, one in relation to Adults' Services and four in relation to Children's Services; details of these along with the mitigating actions are provided in sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4 of the report. Additionally, two performance indicators within the Learning Service have

underperformed for the year, the one in relation to the percentage of 15 years olds achieving L2+ in Key Stage 4 and the other in relation to the percentage of pupils achieving the CSI/FPI in the Foundation Phase. On the other hand, the performance against some indicators is very good as with the percentage of food establishments that meet food hygiene standards which stands at 98% against a target of 80% and the percentage of municipal waste collected and prepared for reuse and/or recycled which has shown a steady improvement and currently stands at 73.24% against a target of 67%.

With regard to Customer Service, Social Services' performance as regards responding to Stage 1 complaints up to the end of Quarter 3 has slipped from that in Quarter 2. However, performance was better for Stage 1 discussions with a discussion being offered to the complainant within timescale for 24 of the 28 complaints to Children's Services and for 6 of the 10 complaints to Adults' Services up to the end of Quarter 3.

In terms of Financial Management, a total overspend of £1.624m is projected for the year ending 31 March, 2018. This is being monitored and the Heads of Service of the areas experiencing the most budgetary pressures are aware of the issues and are working to reduce the level of overspending within their control by year-end.

The trend in relation to People Management remains positive with a further improvement showing for sickness rates when compared with the same period for 2016/17 (6.88 as opposed to 7.21 in Q3 2016/17). If the trend continues and barring any negative impact from winter related illnesses, the projected end of year sickness level would equate to 9.81 days per FTE. However, further work needs to be done especially in relation to improving performance in conducting Return to Work interviews where performance remains below target.

Councillor Dylan Rees reported from the Finance Scrutiny Panel. He confirmed that the Panel has been scrutinising overspending on the revenue budget specifically in relation to Children's Services and the Learning Service where the level of over-expenditure is greatest. The Panel has requested the respective Heads of Service to report back on their strategy for reducing the overspend and managing their budgets and it expects to be updated on progress at its meeting in April, 2018.

The Executive noted the information and noted also that certain PIs are consistently underperforming e.g. in Children's Services. The Executive is fully aware of the position and expects the mitigating work being undertaken in those services to yield results in the next quarter. The Executive further noted the performance for PI 25 on the scorecard in relation to the average number of calendar days to let lettable units of accommodation (excluding DTLs) as an example of continuous and sustained improvement over a period of time with the number of days taken to let lettable units having reduced from 33.7 days in 2015/16 to 17.7 days at present.

The Chair informed the Executive that it was announced at a meeting of the Welsh Local Government Association the previous week at which performance indicators was one of the topics under discussion, that local authorities will be expected to report on 14 new PIs as from April, 2018 onwards.

It was resolved –

- **To accept and to note the Corporate Scorecard Monitoring Report for Quarter 3 2017/18 and to note also the areas which the Senior Leadership Team are managing to secure improvements into the future as summarised in section 1.3.1 of the report.**
- **To accept and to note the mitigation measures as outlined in the report.**

6. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT POLICY 2018/19

The report of the Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer seeking the Executive's approval for a revised Local Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Scheme for 2018/19 was presented for consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Scheme is intended to provide customers in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit with further financial assistance with their housing costs where the Local Authority considers that such help is necessary. All DHP payments must be made within the overall cash limits as determined by the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). The DWP awards the Authority an annual sum as the Government contribution towards the administration of the scheme. The Authority can top up the Government Contribution by an additional 150% (the permitted total) if it so wishes. The implementation of Universal Credit will progress in Anglesey from November, 2018 (having been put back from June, 2018); currently there are delays in the award of Universal Credit; it must be noted therefore that an award of DHP can only be made once entitlement to the Housing costs element of Universal Credit (or Housing Benefit) has been established.

The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that the intention is that in future years the DHP Policy which has been reported on annually will only to be brought back to the Executive if amendments are required. However, the costs of the scheme will continue to be reported on via the quarterly budget monitoring report. The Officer said that as at 28 February, 2018 overall expenditure on DHP (spent and committed) amounted to £133,586 against the DWP grant of £162,656 leaving £29,070 to be spent over the remainder of the current financial year. It is projected that the expenditure will be slightly below the DWPs grant allocation for the year meaning that any residual unspent grant will be lost.

The Executive noted the information; the Executive also noted with regard to DHP applications that there has been a notable decrease in approvals in 2017/18 compared with 2016/17 and accordingly, a corresponding increase in refusals. The Executive sought an explanation for the difference. The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that many of the applications are repeat applications; however, as the policy is not meant to provide a permanent additional benefit the assessing process can result in a reduced payment or a refusal in cases where the applicant is not prepared to make reasonable compromises with regard to their expenditure and lifestyle. The grant has to be distributed to those in need and is designed to act as a temporary safety net for those experiencing difficulty in meeting their housing costs.

It was resolved to approve the revised Local Discretionary Housing Payment Policy (DHP) Scheme for 2018/19 and for the subsequent years as at Appendix A to the report. To note that the approved scheme will apply for subsequent years and will only be brought back to the Executive if future amendments are required.

7. ANGLESEY FURTHER EDUCATION TRUST – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17

The report of the Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer incorporating the Annual Report and Accounts for the Anglesey Further Education Trust for 2016/17 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Finance reported that the Anglesey Further Education Trust is comprised of three funds – the David Hughes Endowment and the Anglesey Further Education Fund 1/3 and the Anglesey Education Trust Fund 2/3 which provide specific

educational benefit. The accounts and Annual Reports for the Trust for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years were approved by the Executive at its January, 2018 meeting. The Balance Sheet shows that the total net assets i.e. the value of the Trust as at 31 March, 2017 was £2,835,879 compared to £3,179,220 on 31 March, 2016. The reduction is due to capital expenditure in the year on refurbishing the smallholdings and the purchase of Hendre Farm which in the long term will increase the income earning capability of the Trust.

The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that the accounts show that the total income for 2016/17 was £138,632 and that total expenditure was £65,905. The accounts also include an exceptional item of £446,203 for Impairment which is the main reason for the decrease in the value of the Fund. Expenditure of £710,545 which was incurred during the year on the smallholdings will increase their market value; however, for the purpose of the accounts the smallholdings are valued on an existing use value basis i.e. on the basis of the income which the assets will generate over time when the properties are tenanted. This valuation is for the purpose of the accounts and is less than the properties' market value hence the impairment loss provision.

It was resolved to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for the Anglesey Further Education Trust for the year 2016/17 and to note the update on the David Hughes Estate Smallholdings.

8. LOCAL TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2018-23

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating a Local Tenant Participation Strategy for 2018-23 for the purpose of consultation was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities reported that the purpose of the Local Tenant Participation Strategy is to ensure tenants understand what tenant participation means and how they can take part. A series of 5 workshops have jointly been held which has resulted in positive feedback. It is also important that support continues to be provided for tenants who may be affected by welfare reform.

The Housing Service Manager said that as tenant participation means tenants and landlords working together, it is important that the strategy was written in partnership with tenants; tenants have been actively involved in the development of the strategy including its aims and objectives. Further work needs to be done jointly with tenants on developing monitoring arrangements and more clearly evidencing successes and improvements.

The Executive noted that it would be appropriate for progress against the Tenant Participation Action Plan to be reported periodically to the Housing Board.

It was resolved to approve the Local Tenant Participation Strategy 2018-23 for consultation.

9. SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME COMMISSIONING PLAN

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Isle of Anglesey County Council Supporting People Commissioning and Spend Plan 2018/19 was presented for the Executive's consideration and approval.

The Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities commended the Plan to the Executive.

The Housing Services' Principal Development Officer reported that it is one of the requirements of the Supporting People Programme funding that the Authority prepares a Commissioning Plan to inform Welsh Government and all partners and stakeholders of its commissioning intentions and priorities. In a letter received from Welsh Government in December, 2017 the allocation for Anglesey for 2018/19 was confirmed as £2,643,866 i.e. the same level of funding approximately as in the previous four years. 2018/19 will be a transitional year for the Supporting People Programme in Wales with 7 local authorities operating under a different arrangement and taking part in a pilot scheme which will see 10 grants which are part of the Tackling Poverty Agenda being combined within one fund which will be known as the Early Intervention, Prevention and Support Grant – 100% of this funding can be transferred from one programme to another. During the same period, Anglesey along with the other 14 authorities will have the option to transfer up to 15% of any underspend from one programme to another. The new arrangement across the 7 local authorities will be evaluated during the year. The Officer said that whilst close collaboration across the sources of funding should be welcomed the arrangement poses a risk to the Programme in its current form as described in paragraph 1.8 of the report, and it creates some uncertainty for the future of the Programme which has been in existence since 2003 and which has during that time proved its worth to the Housing Service, to Social Services and to other services such as Probation and Health.

The Supporting People Plan includes a programme of service area reviews that are conducted every three years. During 2018/19, detailed reviews in relation to domestic abuse, single vulnerable parents, older people, prison leavers, mental health and older people (floating support) will be carried out. The service also intends to undertake a full tendering exercise for continuous floating support in May, 2018.

Members of the North Wales Regional Collaboration Committee are keen to develop regionally commissioned services within specific areas; to achieve this goal, it has been proposed on a regional level and approved in local Planning Group Boards across North Wales that each local authority should make a contribution of 0.5% directly to the annual Supporting People allocation. For Anglesey, this would result in a reduction of £13,219 in its grant for local provision. The North Wales Regional Collaboration Committee has identified the service areas listed in paragraph 4.3 as regional priorities.

The Officer highlighted changes in the way services are funded as referred to in section 5 of the report. The provision for Prison leavers will increase by 72.5% as a result of the £35,243 investment in the Resettlement Officers post. Previously, the post was funded from the Homelessness Section 180 grant – the funding will now be available for other uses in relation to preventing homelessness.

The Executive noted the information and sought assurance with regard to the following points –

- The Executive sought clarification of whether any impacts resulting from the Wylfa Newydd development have been factored into Supporting People Plans. The Housing Services' Principal Development Officer said that the service is mindful of the possible effects of the Wylfa Newydd development which could lead to an increased level of homelessness if the private rental sector seeks to maximise rental income at the expense of existing tenancies. This has been a feature in certain areas of England where rents have increased by three times the market rent. Therefore, while there are considerable financial advantages to the Wylfa Newydd development, there is also another side to the picture, and the Authority needs to be aware of the homelessness factor and the consequent risk.
- The Executive sought assurance that the removal of the Resettlement Officer from Homelessness Prevention to the Supporting People Programme will not entail the

loss of a post within the Homelessness prevention provision. The Housing Services' Principal Development Officer confirmed that it is matter of moving funds from one programme to another; the Resettlement Officer post will sit better in the Supporting People Programme and will mean that the funds can be used for other homelessness prevention purposes.

- The Executive noted that homelessness levels are on the increase nationally. The Executive sought clarification of the position locally. The Housing Services' Principal Development Officer said that anecdotal evidence suggests that homelessness levels are rising on Anglesey too with increased numbers in bed and breakfast placements; there are also a number of poverty related issues and social issues which can be linked to homelessness. The service expects these issues to become more acute for a time with the advent of the Government welfare reforms which does not bode well for the future.

It was resolved to approve –

- **The Supporting People Commissioning Plan 2018-21 and the recommendations therein.**
- **The allocation of funding for each service area as outlined in the Spend Plan on page 45 of the Supporting People Commissioning Plan.**

10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2018-2048

The report of the Head of Housing Services incorporating the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2018-48 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Housing Service Manager said that the Business Plan forms the primary tool for financial planning of the delivery and management of the Council's housing and demonstrates how the Council brings all its stock to Welsh Housing Quality Standards; how the Council intends to maintain and exceed these Standards and the investment needed to increase the housing stock. The Business Plan assumes a development programme of 45 units in 2018-19, 60 units in 2019/20 and 100 units during 2021-22 which includes 40 new extra care housing units in the Seiriol area.

The Executive noted the information. The Executive queried whether it was feasible given that the Authority's housing stock has achieved the Welsh Quality Housing Standards (WQHS) since 2012, to reduce the funding provision in the capital programme for repairs and maintenance works and to increase the provision for the development of new Council housing. The Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer said that having met the WHQS the Authority has to ensure it maintains the standards and continues to upgrade the stock. The Business Plan is based on projections in relation to the resources available and required to maintain the standards, as well as capacity for new build. A balance has to be struck between maintaining the current stock to Welsh Quality Housing Standards and making funds available to develop new council housing to meet housing needs. The Officer said that it is important to note also that the Business Plan has been stress tested to take account of the risks e.g. increased inflation, increased interest rates, increased repairs and maintenance cost etc. to ensure the viability of the Plan and the long-term sustainability of the HRA.

The Executive noted further that the numbers on the waiting list for 1 and 2 bedroom housing far exceeds that for 3 and 4 bedroom housing; it sought an explanation for the difference. The Housing Service Manager confirmed that there has been a change in demand; the service undertakes an affordability test before families move into social housing given that families may not always be able to afford 3 bedroom homes. Also, there has been

a demographic change with an increase in the number of single and older people seeking one bedroom homes.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2018-48 and specifically the HRA budget for 2018/19 as set out within the Plan, for submission to the Welsh Government.**
- **To approve the proposed Housing Capital Programme for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix 3.**
- **To delegate authority to the Head of Service (Housing) and the Head of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer to make any amendments to the Business Plan, prior to submission to Welsh Government.**

11. SCHOOLS' MODERNISATION LLANGEFNI AREA (YSGOL Y GRAIG AND YSGOL TALWRN): REPORT FOLLOWING THE RE-CONSULTATION

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating the report on the statutory consultation on the proposal to expand Ysgol y Graig to accommodate pupils from Ysgol Talwrn and to close Ysgol Talwrn, was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth reported that a non-statutory consultation on options for modernising the primary education provision in the Llangefni area with reference to Ysgol y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn was held between January and March, 2017. Following the Executive's approval in July, 2016, a statutory consultation process took place between 26 September and 13 November, 2017. A pause and review period then ensued from 18 December, 2017 to 9 February, 2018.

The Portfolio Member referred to section 3, paragraph E of the Officer's written report wherein the Council's Monitoring Officer notes that as the report on the consultation report was not published within the statutory consultation period (up to 13 weeks from the end of the consultation period), the legal advice is to restart the statutory consultation period (which must be at least 42 days long) for this proposal.

The Portfolio Member said that he was therefore proposing that in line with the legal advice, the decision on modernising schools in the Llangefni area in relation to Ysgol y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn be deferred to allow a new statutory consultation process to take place. The Executive was in agreement with the proposal.

Councillor Dylan Rees, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee spoke as the Chair of the Committee's meeting held on 12 March, 2018 at which this matter was considered (the Chair - Councillor Aled Morris Jones - having been absent due to illness). He reported that representatives of Ysgol Talwrn Governing Body and parents and residents of Talwrn were given the opportunity to address the meeting. Two Canolbarth Ward Councillors also spoke as Local Members. Councillor Dylan Rees said that having considered all the information presented both in writing and orally at the meeting, the Committee had resolved to support the recommendations in the Head of Learning's report with regard to expanding Ysgol y Graig but had recommended that Ysgol Talwrn should not be closed.

It was resolved that a decision with regard to the modernisation of schools in the Llangefni area in relation to Ysgol y Graig and Ysgol Talwrn be deferred until a new statutory consultation process is completed.

12. SCHOOLS' MODERNISATION – SEIRIOL AREA

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating the report on the statutory consultation process in relation to schools in the Seiriol area was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth reported that a non-statutory consultation on options for modernising the primary education provision in the Seiriol area was held for a period between June and July 2017. Following the Executive's approval in October, 2017, a statutory consultation process took place from 20 November, 2017 to 6 February, 2018. The report on the outcome of the statutory consultation was considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 12 March, 2018.

The Portfolio Member said that one of the criticisms levelled at the Authority with regard to its decision-making especially in relation to education is that it does not listen to the views of stakeholders, and that matters are pre-determined making consultation a tick-box exercise. The Portfolio Member emphasised that the Authority does listen and in this case it has noted the strong representations made at the meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 12 March with regard to the proposals put forward – specifically that Ysgol Beaumaris be closed - as well as the comments made during the consultation process particularly by the community of Beaumaris. Mindful of the views expressed, the Portfolio Member said that he was therefore proposing that a new statutory consultation process be held for the Seiriol area; the consultation report will reflect the views of Estyn and other stakeholders and will be based on proposals to close either Ysgol Beaumaris or Ysgol Llangoed on the grounds that the Authority has to move forward with the schools' modernisation programme on the Island. The Executive was supportive of the proposal.

The Head of Learning said that prior to and following the meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee but after the consultation period had closed, a number of issues and questions were raised; also alternative options were submitted. Consequently, the service has put the four alternative options that were presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Beaumaris as well as a further option that was put forward by the Chair of the Ysgol Beaumaris Consultation Response Committee through the scoring process; the outcome of this process is set out in Appendix 10 to the report. In Appendix 11, the Service has sought to address the additional issues and questions that have been raised. The Officer said that some of the scores for the alternative options are comparable with the score for the option favoured by the Service; hence the proposal to carry out the consultation anew.

Councillor Dylan Rees, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee spoke as the Chair of the Committee's meeting held on 12 March, 2018 at which this matter was discussed. He reported that representatives of Ysgol Beaumaris and Beaumaris Town Council were given the opportunity to address the meeting. Two Seiriol ward councillors spoke as Local Members and a statement was read out on behalf of one Ward Member. Councillor Dylan Rees said that having considered all the information presented and the representations made, and in light of the level of concern expressed and the number of issues which the Committee deemed remain unanswered, the Committee had resolved to recommend to the Executive that a decision on the modernisation of schools in the Seiriol area be deferred in order give more time to review and to assess the impact on the community, and also that a stakeholder group be formed to look in detail at other ways of mitigating the risks in the area.

Councillor Lewis Davies, a Local Member spoke to acknowledge the intention to consult again on the primary education provision in the Seiriol area in recognition of the strong views expressed by the community of Beaumaris and the alternative options put forward. He emphasised his role as a local Member for the whole of the Seiriol Ward and said that he had been consistent throughout in his support for each area within the ward. He had been a

member and Chair of the Governing Body of Ysgol Llangoed for 10 years and had fought hard to keep the school open. He had also been elected by the residents of Beaumaris and as such he had been asked to fight for the community and its school. He had given assurance that he would do his best for them hence the representations he had made on behalf of the school and for social housing for the town of Beaumaris. Regrettably, and inaccurately, this has been interpreted by some as his favouring the closure of Ysgol Llangoed.

It was resolved that a decision on the modernisation of schools in the Seiriol area be deferred in order to undertake a new statutory consultation on proposals for primary education provision in the area.

13. PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating a review of the Play Sufficiency Action Plan 2017/18 was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth commended the report and Action Plan to the Executive.

The Head of Learning confirmed that there are no concerns that the Authority is not meeting the statutory requirements with regard to play opportunities and play sufficiency. However, the way the Play Officer post is funded has changed. The post was funded previously through the Families First grant; as the terms of the grant will change from April, 2018 and as this is a statutory requirement, the grant cannot be utilised for this purpose. Consequently, and as the post holder has left, the Learning Service has incorporated the duties of the post within its Supporting Families Unit and will combine the statutory responsibilities with those of the childcare sufficiency assessment. This will allow for cohesive delivery, targeting of resources and development across both sectors. The Officer said that the review of the action plan addresses nine areas of work which the Authority is required by statute to report on including work undertaken with schools and communities to ensure free/low cost play activities, play opportunities in rural areas and play opportunities to meet the specific needs of children and young people. The action plan further reports on how the Authority ensures that play activities take place within a safe environment.

The Executive noted that invitations to apply for grant funding for play areas have sometimes been issued with very tight deadlines (in some instances as little as 24 hours) making it difficult for groups/organisations to apply unless they have ready-made, off the shelf plans which they can submit at very short notice. The Executive noted that whilst it is advisable that groups do have plans at the ready, it should also be impressed upon Welsh Government that the timescale for presenting such plans/applications needs to be realistic.

The Head of Learning said that although the funding which the Welsh Government makes available annually in addition to the play opportunities grant tends to be late, the majority of the Authority's partners with regard to play related work now have plans in place meaning that it is then a matter of ensuring the application is made.

It was resolved to approve the draft Play Sufficiency Action Plan for 2017-18 and to forward the Plan to Welsh Government in accordance with statutory requirement.

14. NORTH WALES REGENERATION PLAN AND TRIP FUNDING

The joint report of the Head of Regulation and Economic Development and the Head of Housing Services in relation to the Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRIP) was presented for the Executive's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Major Projects and Economic Development reported that the TRIP has been launched to provide capital regeneration funding in Wales from April, 2018 and replaces the VVP Programme 2014-17. Welsh Government has invited each of the four regional economic development partnerships to develop long-term regeneration strategies to steer the TRIP investment in their region. Officers from the North Wales Regeneration Officers Group and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) Programme Management Group have led the response to this opportunity from North Wales. It has been agreed that there should be a North Wales Regeneration Strategy with the priorities as set out in the report. Plans must have the support of all 6 North Wales authorities in order for North Wales to access TRIP funding.

Based on advice from Welsh Government, 12 towns are proposed as priority areas for urban regeneration interventions in North Wales; these have been identified using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) rankings for overall levels of deprivation based on the presence of Lower Output Areas (LSOs) which are among the 10% most deprived in Wales. Anglesey has only one LSOA in the top 10% most deprived in Wales (Morawelon) and because of this, Holyhead appears on the list of 12 regeneration areas but other towns in Anglesey do not, and the relatively lower population numbers in Holyhead means that it is not among the four areas for priority investment (Rhyl, Wrexham, Bangor and Colwyn Bay). It has been pointed out that this methodology identifies concentrations of poverty linked to towns and urban settlements at the expense of smaller towns and rural areas. Although the need to address poverty and regeneration issues in smaller towns and rural areas has been recognised, there are no measures to address those needs.

The Portfolio Member said that the funding available is relatively small there being a notional allocation of £22m over three years for North Wales. TRIP can only fund capital investments and will provide up to 70% of project costs (or 50% for project development). It has been agreed in principle by Welsh Government that some of the North Wales funding can be made available for thematic programmes covering more than one county – one such programme under consideration is empty buildings in Anglesey/Gwynedd.

Anglesey's provisional TRIP Project proposals are listed in the report; further work will take place over the coming weeks to finalise the proposals in readiness for submission early in the new financial year.

It is important to highlight that poverty and deprivation also exist in smaller towns/ villages/ rural areas and that use of WIMD/LSOA level data means that it is often hidden. The emerging North Wales Regeneration Strategy recognises that rural needs have to be addressed, but the current TRIP programme is not geared to do so; work therefore has to be done to address this gap.

The Regeneration Manager confirmed that Anglesey will be working jointly with Gwynedd Council on the Empty Properties Theme with Anglesey acting as lead body. Additionally, the statistical indices are to be reviewed in 2019 meaning there will be an opportunity to ensure they better reflect rural poverty and deprivation in future.

It was resolved to authorise the Head of Service (Regulation and Economic Development) and the Head of Service (Housing) to –

- **Participate in the preparation of a regional Regeneration Strategy by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board (NWEAB) for submission to the Welsh Government.**
- **Negotiate funding allocations and make TRIP funding applications to the Welsh Government, subject to agreement by the Section 151 Officer.**
- **Accept and undertake expenditure of approved TRIP funding, including the award of grant to others for eligible projects, subject to agreement by the Section 151 Officer.**
- **Seek to maximise the level of TRIP funding to Anglesey, and prepare projects in readiness for potential opportunities to secure additional funds.**
- **Lobby for the provision of a regeneration funding scheme designed to assist regeneration projects in smaller towns and rural areas.**
- **Negotiate and enter into agreements with other North Wales county councils where this is necessary to bid for or receive TRIP funds, subject to agreement by the Section 151 Officer and Council Monitoring Officer.**

Councillor Ieuan Williams
Chair

DRAFT