

LEADER'S ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2015

FOREWORD

Last year, I was criticised for painting too positive a picture of the Council's progress. I do not apologise for that since the Council has made substantial progress compared to 2009. In this report, I shall refer to the Council's weaknesses along with the continuing good progress.

This report will refer in the first place to the self-assessment prepared for the Welsh Audit Office's Corporate Assessment in February since this work identified our weaknesses.

The second part will report on progress against the Independent Manifesto I prepared for the 2013 Election.

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT

At the end of February, the Welsh Audit Office conducted a Corporate Assessment of the Council. A team of Auditors interviewed Officers and Members for a week. I quote from the remit 'The purpose of the corporate assessment is to provide a position statement on the Authority's resources and ability to ensure continuous improvement. Naturally, it will consider the Authority's previous performance and outcomes along with the key arrangements which are required to improve services and functions.

A self-assessment was prepared for WAO's visit. A copy of the summary and the full version is attached. It can be seen from this work that the self-assessment was based on the 6 key themes developed as a foundation for our transformation programme i.e.:

- Theme 1 – Professional and well run
- Theme 2 – Innovative, Ambitious and outward looking
- Theme 3 – Become Customer, Citizen and Community focused
- Theme 4 – Valuing and Developing our People
- Theme 5 – Committed to Partnership
- Theme 6 – Achieving.

The self-assessment concluded that we were partly achieving the first two themes and achieving most of the last four themes.

The self-assessment highlights steps which need to be taken to achieve the themes in full.

We shall use this information to create a work programme which will enable us to fully meet the priorities over the next 3 years.

We have not yet received the final report from WAO on their analysis of the assessment but we have received informal feedback (which could change after going through the internal procedures of the organisation) stating that our self-assessment was correct. This is an initial quote from an outline report '*The Council is self-aware and members and officers work together productively and with partners to tackle the priorities which have been agreed. The priorities reflect local needs and the governance framework is quite robust.*'

WAO's initial self-assessment and analysis shows that we are a Council which has matured and which is tackling the task of changing the Council and establishing a robust foundation for the future.

PROGRESS AGAINST THE INDEPENDENT MANIFESTO

The headings in my manifesto, a summary of the intentions and a summary of the current position are outlined below.

COUNCIL TAX

Aim – To try and keep Anglesey in the lowest quartile with regard to Council tax in Wales by reviewing its budgets regularly.

Current Position – At the moment, we have risen from 6th to 8th position. Nevertheless, there is only £10 difference between us on £1296 (Band D) and Conwy which is now in 6th position. Band D Council Tax in Anglesey is £32 lower than the Welsh average, £134 lower than Gwynedd Council and £339 lower than the highest in Wales.

The budget setting process has improved gradually but we have not yet got to grips with setting a zero based budget. In order to set the 2016-2017 budget, our intention is to analyse our budget task by task and to differentiate between tasks which are statutory and non-statutory. This work has already started and a briefing session has been arranged for all members on the 12th May.

EDUCATION

Aim – This was my highest priority. Modernising education on the Island to the highest standards. Coming out of intervention. Creating a modernisation strategy.

Current Position – Work on this priority has begun promisingly. A modernisation strategy was produced which was supported by the whole Council. Subsequently, the required procedures have been followed in the Llannau and Holyhead areas and

there are plans to begin building two new schools next year. Consultation is taking place in the Rhosyr area.

On 20 June last year, Estyn resolved that the Education Authority had made good progress in responding to the recommendations of the Inspection Report published in May 2012.

The Inspectors stated that significant change and improvement had taken place within the school service and corporately over a comparatively short period of time. Consequently, Estyn declared that the authority's education services were no longer in special measures.

This priority has been achieved.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Aim – To work with the Social Services in order to ensure that the proposed transformational changes do not reduce the level of care provided currently and to ensure the people of Anglesey have an input to the changes and that the Council takes their comments seriously.

Current Position – with regard to older people, strategies are progressing to put services in place which will enable people to be independent and, where possible to stay in their homes all their lives.

The service has developed a re-ablement model and intends to concentrate on this area while commissioning the majority of its home care. This work is ongoing.

Much engagement and collaboration has taken place with our older people in collaboration by working with the third sector and Medrwn Môn via the innovative Local Voices project where we have developed community hubs in the Seiriol and Holyhead areas. The Minister, Mark Drakeford, visited the Holyhead hub recently and Lesley Griffiths will visit the Seiriol area at the beginning of next month.

Another successful project for adults which was promoted by the department is the Age Well project which has also been praised for its innovation.

I quote from a letter I received from the Older People's Commissioner on 20 April. *'Secondly, over the last month I have asked every Local Authority in Wales to send examples of good practice to me with regard to innovative community and public services for the benefit of older people. Very few examples have come to hand which provide definite cost savings for the Local Authority, only six examples have the required information and three of these are on Anglesey.'*

In addition, the department is working on plans to develop extra care facilities.

There is strong evidence that substantial progress has been made in our plans to transform care for older people and that we are also engaging with our residents and listening to their aspirations.

HIGHWAYS

Aim – It is essential that we work with the Highways Department on a repair and maintenance programme which can be achieved in the long term. We will ensure that adequate revenue and capital budgets are in place in the future to maintain our roads to an acceptable standard.

Current position – Since the Welsh Government borrowing scheme came to an end, capital funding of £2,000,000 has been earmarked for the Highways department to maintain our roads for the 2015 – 2016 financial year.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

Aim – Until the national political parties can overturn the weak economic situation and provide jobs in the private sector, we shall object to any plans to reform local government.

We will be working to create jobs by re-establishing the professional traineeship scheme in the Council for those leaving schools and colleges.

We shall continue to fight to ensure that the investment in Wylfa Newydd comes to Anglesey and creates 1,000 permanent jobs once it is operational.

Current Position – The independent group and the opposition party voted against the reform of local government by voluntary merger in the meeting of the County Council on 30 September 2014.

The Finance Department has re-established the professional traineeship scheme.

The independent group and the majority of the elected members continue to strongly support Wylfa Newydd. However, this support is not to be taken for granted and we will be working with the developer to ensure that the majority of the jobs throughout the construction and operational phases go to local people who have been trained and who possess the required skills. The support is conditional on the developer's support to safeguard our language and culture. Our response to their first consultation document was comprehensive showing that our support was not unconditional.

PLANNING

Aim – We shall work to ensure that the local development policy which is currently being developed will be published on time in April 2016. The intention with this priority was to ensure a robust planning development policy which would ensure consistency in the decision making progress.

Current position – Good progress has been made with the development of the local development plan and it looks as if it will be presented on time. The Board is chaired by the Planning Portfolio Holder.

CAPITAL BUDGET AND THE CORPORATE PLAN

Intention – As there was no long term strategic capital plan in place during my first term in 2008 – 2013, I was determined that this needed to be rectified in order to deliver the corporate plan.

In the meeting of the Executive Committee on 14 July 2014, the Finance Department submitted a Capital Strategy. This is a quote from the report -

‘The Council has not had a formal Capital Strategy for some time and the adoption of one now would enhance the Council’s financial management process.

The Capital Strategy is attached as Appendix A. In summary, it sets a process for identifying and putting forward for Member consideration a schedule of possible capital schemes for the coming year but set in the context of how the proposed schemes help to deliver the corporate priorities (or other statutory requirements) that Members’ have set for the Council.

The Strategy also requires that regular reporting be brought before Members so that there is full transparency and appropriate governance agreements around the delivery of agreed Capital schemes.’

USE OF AGENCY STAFF AND PROCUREMENT

Aim – To continue to challenge and ultimately eliminate, as misuse of public funds, the practice of employing agency staff for protracted periods.

Work with the Council in order to increase the number of contracts that can be awarded to local companies by adopting a flexible procurement strategy.

Current position – The number of agency staff is recorded and challenged quarterly through the corporate scorecard. The number of agency staff used by the Finance Department has reduced.

In the last meeting of the Executive Committee on 20 April, a new Procurement Strategy and Policy were approved. Section 7 of the Strategy relates to the needs of

the Welsh Language in the context of procurement and Section 8 deals with supporting the local economy.

JOB EVALUATION

Aim – The latest date for completing the job evaluation exercise is 2014. We shall be monitoring progress closely until the exercise has been completed.

Current position – The work has not been finalized but great progress has been made and a report was presented to the last Council meeting and another will be presented to today's meeting recommending the terms for the completion of the work.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Aim – The Council's work involves huge responsibilities and as a result, independent Councillors will ensure that the accountability framework is reviewed regularly so that risks and weaknesses are tackled appropriately.

Current position – One of the main aims under this priority was to develop and to improve our risk management system. Work on this system has been completed and reports on the current register are presented to the Members more often. A report was presented to the last Audit Committee very recently and will be reported to the next Executive Committee.

In addition to the risk register, a number of other procedures have been established to monitor performance and accountability, i.e. the corporate scorecard, transformation boards, project boards, service challenge and review meetings and the remit of the Audit Committee has also been extended. Although the number of Scrutiny Committees has been reduced to 2, the Scrutiny Committees play an important role in corporate governance.

In addition to the above procedures, lack of communication can lead to political misunderstanding, therefore the communication system has been strengthened by means of monthly sessions for all members on current issues.

LEISURE AND LIBRARIES

Aim – We shall safeguard and improve these services where possible.

Current position – The financial cuts have been huge over the last 2 years and these services have borne large cuts over the last 5 years although we have not closed or externalised our leisure centres. A decision was made early in the year to close the Golf Course in Llangefni and at the moment discussions are ongoing with external organisations to take over the responsibility for running the facility.

A 3 year leisure strategy has been established with the aim of generating more income so that the service can be more or less self-sufficient.

With regards to libraries, a report on options for the future will be presented to the Executive Committee in July. A cross-party member and officer project board are overseeing this work. The aim of the project will be to work in accordance with the library standards published by Welsh Government.

REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT

Intention – In June 2012, the Commissioners recommended that the policy for Energy and Water consumption in Council Buildings should include a clear statement outlining the Authority's commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 3% and energy and water consumption by 5% per annum. It was also stated that the Council would publish progress on the achievement of these aims. We will ensure that these targets are reviewed annually and the results published.

Current position – Little work has been done on this priority. The Executive Committee has driven the priority this year and received a report on 16 March and resolved to adopt the Energy Policy and the Action Plan and also to implement energy efficiency schemes in order to demonstrate the Authority's commitment to saving energy and reducing carbon emissions.

MODERNISATION

Intention – Many of the business processes used by the Council are out of date and require modernisation. A common complaint is the lack of consistency in the time taken to respond to letters and request for service. Most Councils now have customer management information systems to monitor their performance in responding to requests from the public. Improving the way the Council deals with public requests will be an important priority.

Current position – This priority has been addressed under two work streams, the Customer Care project where a Charter of our aims has been published and the second is the Smarter Working Project. There are a number of aims to the Smarter Working Project – rationalisation and disposal of assets which are expensive to run and leading to capital receipts, a one shop stop style reception area which will provide a better customer experience, introducing agile working in the Council which enables field staff to work from anywhere, the modernisation of administration methods and strengthening the Council's IT infrastructure.

The above demonstrates that the Council is committed to modernisation.

CURRENT ISSUES

Intention – At the time of the Election, current planning issues such as wind turbines and pylons were the subject of debate. My intention was to listen to our communities to develop and introduce strong policies which will safeguard the landscape from industrial structures and any other structure which could adversely impact the quality of the Island's landscape.

Current position – A planning policy was developed to deal with applications for wind turbines. Our opinion regarding pylons has not changed.

I believe the above gives a meaningful and fair picture of the year which has flown by.

To close, I wish to express my appreciation to the Chief Executive for his leadership and to all the Council staff for their hard work in responding to all the challenges.

I would like to wish Mr. Jones a happy retirement and thank him for his willing support on every occasion I needed assistance.

Ynys Môn

THE ISLE OF
Anglesey

Self-Assessment Report
January 2015

Executive Summary



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The Isle of Anglesey Self-Assessment Report January 2015

Executive Summary

Welcome to the Isle of Anglesey County Council's *Self-Assessment Report*, the first of its kind since the election of the new, 30-member Council in May 2013.

The purpose of this self-assessment is to provide a position statement on the progress we have made in developing as an organisation over the last 20 months.

Our progress is assessed against the **6 Key Themes** outlined in the Corporate Plan which underpin the work of the Council, and communicate our values in achieving our vision that by 2017:

"We will be a professional and well-run Council, innovative and outward looking in our approach, committed to developing our people and partnerships in order to deliver efficient and effective services of good quality, that are highly valued by our citizens"

The report draws on a wide range of evidence including; the *Annual Governance Statement*, *Annual Performance Report*, service challenges, Member and Officer workshops, an initial baseline assessment of the *6 Key Themes*, and importantly takes account of the views of staff gathered through our *6 Key Theme Working Groups* chaired by Middle Managers.

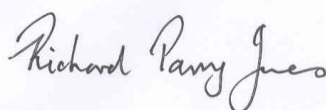
The Council's plan for improvement is referred to as the [Corporate Plan](#). This outlines the Council's intentions and priorities regarding continuous improvement and sustainable modernisation over the term of the current Council until 2017.

In addition, the Council plans to undertake a full Self-Assessment such as this one twice during the term of the Council. One at its midway point - which is this report, and the second towards the end of its term of office.

The authority has come a long way, but the momentum needs to be maintained, and our journey continues.



Ieuan Williams
Leader



Richard Parry Jones
Chief Executive

THEME 1 – Professional and Well-Run

We are committed to developing a democratic and professional partnership that will deliver effective, strong leadership and establish the necessary professional and organisational behaviours required to secure improvement

**Partially
Achieving**

1.1 Overview

This section explores how professional and well run we are and provides evidence of our conclusion that we are *'partly achieving'* this theme.

Our conclusion is evidenced through:

- Our improved, stable and inclusive political leadership
- Increased Member involvement and challenge
- The corporate approach of the *Senior Leadership Team*
- The establishment of a trusting and transparent working environment

Underpinned by:

- Our strong political governance arrangements
- Our transformation agenda and the increased clarity of direction for most services
- Improving financial management arrangements
- Significant progress on information governance
- Our emerging asset management strategy

To fully meet this theme, we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Introduce a more corporate approach by SLT and increase delegation to HoS
- ✓ Improve and refine internal financial management arrangements
- ✓ Embed our internal communications framework, including monthly Member briefing sessions, and an entitlement for staff to be communicated with
- ✓ Further strengthen team approaches between Senior Officers working with Academi Wales
- ✓ Implement the new Corporate Risk Management arrangements
- ✓ Revise and update the Audit Committee 'Terms of Reference'
- ✓ Clarify the role of the Shadow Portfolio Holders and further develop the Scrutiny work plan and stakeholder engagement
- ✓ Deliver on the Corporate Procurement Project
- ✓ Develop Business Continuity arrangements, both corporately and at service level

THEME 2 – Innovative, Ambitious and Outward Looking

Establishment of an environment and culture that encourages and nurtures innovation, and creative ideas and solutions. The Council will look beyond the organisation to seek ambitious solutions that will benefit customers, citizens and communities.

**Partially
Achieving**

2.1 Overview

This section explores if our Corporate vision is innovative, ambitious and outward looking, and if we support an innovative, ambitious and outward looking culture, and provides evidence of our conclusion that we are '*Partially Achieving*' this theme.

This is evidenced through:

- Strong vision and direction through the Corporate Plan
- An improving reputation
- An ambitious programme for service transformation and modernisation
- Strong outward looking arrangements through the Energy Island and other Programmes

Underpinned by:

- Opportunities for staff and Members to learn from others
- Opportunities for staff to contribute and influence the direction of change

To fully meet this theme, we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Sustain the progress on the Transformation Programme
- ✓ Reflect the impact of Wylfa Newydd and other major initiatives in our future service planning
- ✓ Implement Smarter Working
- ✓ Implement a programme of cultural change
- ✓ Implement an ICT Strategy that supports innovation
- ✓ Further develop and implement a staff suggestion scheme

THEME 3 – Customer, Citizen and Community Focused

The Council will actively engage with communities, citizens and customers, seek their views understand their needs and respond accordingly, fully explaining and communicating its actions.

**Mostly
Achieving**

3.1 Overview

This section explores how customer focused we are and provides evidence of our conclusion that we are '*mostly achieving*' this theme.

This is evidenced through:

- Effective engagement at service level
- Increased use of citizen feedback channels
- Greater clarity on meeting customer expectations

Underpinned by:

- Adoption and implementation of a Town and Community Council engagement charter
- Adoption of a Customer Service Excellence Charter
- Utilisation of webcasting committee meetings

To 'fully' meet this theme we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Establish and embed a corporate and partnership approach to engagement
- ✓ Improve the quality and number of channels for Customers to access our services
- ✓ Fully implement Customer Charter Action Plan
- ✓ Introduce a Values Assessment Tool to assist in staff recruitment and staff development
- ✓ Revise Communications Strategy

THEME 4 – Valuing and Developing People

The Council will value and develop its people so that they are skilled, motivated and always professional in the way that they work. It will recognise success and innovation and a commitment to providing exceptional customer experience.

**Mostly
Achieving**

4.1 Overview

This section explores if we recruit the right people and manage them well and how we value and develop our people, to provide evidence of our conclusion that we are 'mostly achieving' this theme.

This is evidenced through:

- Member and officer development and training
- Established staff recognition ceremony
- Improved attendance levels
- Progress towards concluding Job Evaluation
- Member and officer PDRs

Underpinned by:

- Corporate PDR process
- People Strategy
- Workforce and Talent Management Strategies
- Sickness Absence Policies
- Customer Service Charter
- Training Programmes

To fully meet this theme we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Progress the development of service Workforce Development Plans and Corporate workforce planning in a bilingual environment
- ✓ Develop a tool to use in the recruitment process to ensure candidates have core values that align with ours, and provide targeted support to existing staff to align values and attitudes.
- ✓ To take full advantage of a computerised workforce (HR) system
- ✓ Develop the process for identifying staff with potential through our Talent Management Strategy, and provide opportunities for progression
- ✓ PDRs developed as part of the electronic staff record and with clearer links between corporate, service and individual objectives.
- ✓ Introduce a 360° PDR process for Heads of Service and SLT
- ✓ Implement a policy management system for the Council that will cover key corporate policies, procedures and protocols

THEME 5 – Committed to Partnership

We understand that we cannot deliver the required transformation on our own and are committed to working in partnership with public, voluntary and private sector partners in order to deliver sustainable growth and development.

**Mostly
Achieving**

5.1 Overview

This section explores how committed we are to the partnership agenda and provides evidence of its effectiveness in addressing our conclusion that we are 'mostly achieving' this theme.

Our conclusion is evidenced through:

- Extensive partnership arrangements across Council on both a strategic and operational level
- Successful outcome driven partnership examples
- Further development of our Energy Island provision

Underpinned by:

- Collaborative drive to amend and clarify future direction of LSB
- Adoption of the Town and Community Council charter
- Establishment of an Integrated Delivery Board between the Council and Health
- Leading the Regional Safeguarding Board

To 'fully' meet this theme we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Improve Scrutiny evaluation of regional, sub-regional and local partnership arrangement to secure benefits for the citizens of Anglesey and alignment with the Local Service Board (LSB)
- ✓ Develop communication strategy for LSB
- ✓ Increased pace and intensity of partnership arrangement with Town & Community Councils
- ✓ Strengthen certain governance arrangements
- ✓ Develop a Partnership Policy with clear guidance on criteria for entering into partnership and expected governance models

THEME 6 – Achieving

The Council is results and outcome-orientated and strives to improve performance in important areas of our work.

**Mostly
Achieving**

6.1 Overview

This section explores how well we manage our performance, and provides evidence of our conclusion that we are *'mostly achieving'* this theme.

Our conclusion is evidenced through:

- The focused approach to, and progress made in, delivering the Corporate Plan
- Improved position in relation to NSIs and PAMs
- Achievement of our Outcome Agreement
- Achievement of National Awards
- Improved views of our regulators

Underpinned by:

- Improved business planning processes
- The development of Corporate and Service Scorecards
- Challenging service performance reviews
- Effective programme and project management

To fully meet this theme we need to make improvements in the following areas:

- ✓ Further developing the Corporate Plan Delivery Scheme
- ✓ Achieving consistency in the standard of Service Delivery Plans
- ✓ Continue to refine Corporate and Service Scorecards
- ✓ Ensuring implementation of Service Performance Review actions
- ✓ Build on the success of CTPBs and underpinning processes
- ✓ Procure and implement a corporate electronic performance management system, secure the required analytical skills, and empower staff through training to better manage performance.