Ceredigion County Council

Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2016/17

Introduction

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 provided executive arrangements which replaced the old committee system of local government with a system in which a small, clearly identified executive (the Cabinet) is responsible for providing leadership and taking decisions within a framework agreed by the full council; and where new overview and scrutiny committees review the performance of the executive and seek continuous improvement and development.

Prior to the Local Elections in May 2012, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee reviewed the Overview and Scrutiny structure of the Council in the context of a number of factors which impact on the way in which the Council operates and provides services, including the recommendations contained in the Wales Audit Office Corporate Assessment Letter of August 2011. The old structure comprised one Co-ordinating and six subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees which mirrored the six Cabinet portfolios. The new structure comprises 5 thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees, namely:

- Thriving Communities
- Healthier Communities
- Learning Communities
- Corporate Resources
- Co-ordinating.

The *Statutory Guidance for County and County Borough Councils in Wales on Executive and Alternative Arrangements* (2006) sets out that Overview and Scrutiny committees are an essential and integral part of executive arrangements. Under section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, they are given wide-ranging powers of review and scrutiny, and the ability to make reports and recommendations on any matters relevant to the area and its inhabitants. The guidance sets out the role of Councillors exercising overview and scrutiny as being:

- to hold the executive to account for the efficient exercise of executive functions – especially the performance of the executive as measured against the standards, objectives and targets set out in the policies and plans which it is implementing;
- to assist in the improvement and development of the Council's policies by evaluating whether they are achieving their stated objectives, whether those policies and the way they are being implemented reflect the needs and priorities of local communities and by reporting and making recommendations to the executive or the full council;
- to review and make reports on issues which affect the authority's area or its residents; and
- to examine whether the systems the executive has in place to deliver its functions are robust and are being properly observed.

In addition, they are able to review the discharge of non-executive functions and to report on matters of more general local concern. This could link with the authority's power under Part 1 of the Act to promote economic, social and environmental well being, by identifying areas which the executive could address using this power.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 sets out a clear role for an authority's scrutiny function in its improvement processes: as part of its role in holding local decision makers and policy makers to account, and in its policy development role. This should extend to:

- scrutiny of the processes that an authority has gone through in the discharge of the general duty to improve;
- scrutiny of the fitness of the organisation to discharge the general duty to improve;
- scrutiny of the processes that the authority has gone through in the selection of its improvement objectives, including a review of the level of engagement with stakeholders;

- scrutiny of the monitoring of the progress of the delivery of the authority's improvement objectives;
- promoting innovation by challenging the status quo and encourage different ways of thinking and options for delivery.

Under Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Local Authorities are required to ensure their Overview and Scrutiny Committees have the power to scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Public Services Board (PSB) for the Local Authority's area in the exercise of its functions.

At the 7th November 2016 Committee meeting, members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny considered and discussed matters pertaining to the Scrutiny of the Ceredigion PSB. Further information is provided in this report under the heading 'Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee' shown on page 4.

Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee met on seven occasions during the municipal year 2016/2017.

Standard items that were considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee included an update on developments in the Scrutiny field, and an update by the Chairmen on the work of their Committees.

Key Issues considered.

The Committee considered the development of the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes for 2016/17. The role of the Co-ordinating Committee is to oversee all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees Forward Work Programmes to ensure that they are relevant to corporate priorities and focus on key areas. The Committee also ensures that the Forward Work Programmes are coordinated to avoid duplication ensuring they are realistic and manageable within the resources available, and that they will add value. Each Committee agree to consider their individual Forward Work Programmes in accordance with the guidance in the report.

At its 7th November 2016 Committee meeting, members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny considered and discussed the following matters pertaining to the Scrutiny of the Ceredigion Public Service Board (PSB):

1. The Ceredigion PSB Terms of Reference;
2. Arrangements for taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Ceredigion PSB, and the requirement to report that approach to the Board; and to Cabinet; and;
3. To consider possible amendments to the Council's Constitution to reflect those arrangements.

In order to comply with legislation and to ensure that effective Overview and Scrutiny arrangements are put in place for the Ceredigion PSB, it was agreed that Ceredigion County Council's Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Board.

Each of the Boards sub-groups will continue to report annually on progress to the Council's Scrutiny Committees, and included on the forward work programme, as follows:

PSB Executive Group (EG)	**CCC Scrutiny Committee (SC)**
Bilingual Future EG	Coordinating SC
Children and Young People EG	Learning Communities SC
Community Safety EG	Coordinating SC
Health, Social Care and Wellbeing EG	Healthier Communities SC
Sustainable Futures EG	Thriving Communities SC

The following points from the Ceredigion PSB Terms of Reference were also noted by the Committee:

- Welsh Ministers have power to refer a plan to the local scrutiny committee if it is not considered sufficient; for example, due to an adverse report by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales or a concern statutory duties are not being met;
- The scrutiny committee can require any member of the Board to give evidence, but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a member of the Board;
- Scrutiny must send a copy of any report or recommendation it makes to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales.

The Ceredigion County Council Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the following approach for taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the PSB:

- Review or scrutinise the **decisions made or actions taken** by the Board by:
  - Acting as a formal consultee for the Assessment of Local Well-being
  - Acting as a formal consultee for the Local Well-being Plan
  - Receiving the Annual Progress Report
  - Receiving PSB minutes
  - Receiving performance monitoring reports.
- Review or scrutinise the Board's **governance arrangements** by:
  - Receiving the PSB Terms of Reference following each Mandatory Meeting of the Board (A 'mandatory meeting' of the Board must be held no later than 60 days after each subsequent ordinary election of councillors).
  - Inviting members of the Board to give evidence in respect of the exercise of joint functions, (but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a statutory member of the Board under the Well-being of Future Generations Act).
- Make reports or recommendations to the Board regarding its functions or governance arrangements.
- Refer matters to the relevant Thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider further, as appropriate.
- Present the recommendations from scrutiny to Cabinet, the PSB and the relevant sub-group.

The Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2016-2017 was presented at the June meeting by Alun Williams, Head of Policy Support, and Michael Smith, Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator for Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys County Councils. Committee Members received an update on the tasks undertaken in Ceredigion during 2015-2016 and were asked to consider supporting the proposed priorities and tasks of the National Delivery Plan

outlined in the report for 2016-2017 relevant to Ceredigion County Council. Following discussion, Committee Members requested that an achievement report against priorities was presented in 12 months' time. Committee Members were happy with the seven priorities listed for Ceredigion and supported its presentation to Cabinet. It was also suggested that a message was returned to the Welsh Government via the Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator, that Welsh Government should take responsibility for translation of the documentation.

A Special meeting was held on the 12th September 2016 in relation to Safety on the A487 and A44 with Officers from North and Mid Wales North Trunk Agent (NMWTRA), Welsh Government, and Police in attendance. The Chairman welcomed Mr Richard Morgan, Head of Planning, Network Management Division, Transport at Welsh Government and Inspector Gary Jones, Roads Policing Unit and Ms Susan Storch, Road Safety Officer from Dyfed Powys Police. Members agreed that the discussion had been of benefit and would await the announcement by the Minister of Economy and Infrastructure, in relation to a new programme and its implications to the County. Officers confirmed they would continue to advocate major improvements to safety on all Ceredigion trunk roads.

At its meeting on the 29th September 2016, Members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft Improvement Plan Performance Report 2015-16. The Authority must each year prepare an Improvement Plan, which outlines high level objectives that the Authority seeks to make towards progressing the Council's Corporate Strategy and other improvement priorities. It is through having plans that the Council can demonstrate it has appropriate arrangements in place to secure improvement across the range of its functions.

In addition to preparing an Improvement Plan, the Council must also publish a performance report that looks back at the Council's performance during the previous year on its improvement commitments. Members of the Co-ordinating Committee received information on how well the Council managed to meet those objectives, targets and actions listed in its Improvement Plan for 2015-16.

Following detailed consideration of the papers provided to the Committee, it was agreed to support the recommendation to Cabinet, that Cabinet endorsed the Draft Improvement Plan Performance Report for 2015-16. Committee Members suggested that an explanation be included at the beginning of Improvement Objective 2, to explain to citizens why the main focus of the objective was on developing Aberystwyth as a recognised regional and national centre.

At the 29th September 2016 meeting, Members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee also considered the Ceredigion Local Service Board (LSB) 'Ceredigion for All' Annual Report 2015-16.

The Welsh Government's guidance 'Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery' sets out the role of local government and their partners, through Local Service Boards (LSB),

now Public Service Boards (PSB), in helping to achieve better outcomes by bringing together public service leaders to plan, work, deliver and improve service delivery. The focus on LSB's should be on a shared agenda of better outcomes, placing the emphasis on priorities, pace and performance. Co-ordinating Committee Members were asked to consider the annual report, and to note the work of the LSB through its Executive Groups. Following detailed consideration of the papers provided to the Committee it was agreed to support the recommendation to Cabinet, that Cabinet endorsed the Ceredigion Local Service Board 'Ceredigion for All' Annual Report 2015-16.

The Office of Surveillance Commissioners inspection report on the Authority's use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) was also considered and Members agreed to note the information contained within.

Committee Members received regular update reports in relation to developments on the Ysgol Bro Teifi 3-19 School Project and Dyffryn Cledlyn Voluntary Controlled Primary School throughout the reporting period. The final report on Ysgol Bro Teifi was received in November 2016. Members agreed it had certainly proved an extremely successful project and that Ceredigion County Council should be proud of their achievements in the delivery of Wales's first purpose built 3-19 year School. Further updates on Dyffryn Cledlyn Voluntary Controlled Primary School will be received during the next reporting period. Committee Members welcomed the opportunity to visit the School site in Drefach on the afternoon of Monday, 17th October 2016 and were pleased with its progress to date.

At its 7th November 2016 Committee meeting, the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an update on the developments and arrangements with regards to the Whistleblowing Policy. The Corporate Whistleblowing Policy had been updated and circulated; and was available to Staff on the Council's Cardinet and Ceri-net internal sites. Members were advised that the Council had strengthened whistleblowing arrangements by revising the policy, and that training for Managers, staff and Members would be arranged as necessary, and that an e-learning module for officers was in the process of being developed.

Following discussion, Members recommended that Cabinet considered:

- that the training is made mandatory for all Staff Members and elected Members alike;
- that this training is included as part of the Members induction process following the May 2017 elections;
- the frequency of refresher training is thereafter considered.

This recommendation was agreed by Cabinet.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Policy was also considered at the 7th November 2016 meeting. Following Members suggestions and comments a further report was received in February 2017.

As previously mentioned on page 3 and 4 of this report, under Section 35 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Local Authorities are required to ensure their Overview and Scrutiny Committees have the power to scrutinise

decisions made, or other action taken, by the Public Services Board (PSB) for the Local Authority's area in the exercise of its functions. At the meeting on the 7th November 2016, members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny considered and discussed matters pertaining to the Scrutiny of the Ceredigion PSB:

- The Ceredigion PSB Terms of Reference;
- Arrangements for taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Ceredigion PSB, and the requirement to report that approach to the Board; and to Cabinet;
- To consider possible amendments to the Council's Constitution to reflect those arrangements; and;
- These arrangements will continue into the foreseeable future.

In order to comply with legislation and to ensure that effective Overview and Scrutiny arrangements are put in place for the Ceredigion PSB, it was agreed that Ceredigion County Council's Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for taking an overview of the overall effectiveness of the Board.

At the same meeting, the Committee received an update report from the Public Services Board's Bilingual Futures Executive Group.

At its 1st December 2016 meeting, members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider the Policy and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk. A Corporate Policy and Guidelines for Children and Vulnerable Adults was previously considered by the Committee and approved by Cabinet in 2014. The Strategic Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults identified that the Policy required a significant review in order to reflect current legislative requirements and to strengthen accountabilities for safeguarding across the Council. There were many questions from Members and each was answered by Mr Hopkins. Concern was raised with regards to point 7.3 of the Policy and Guidelines which relates to Members of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committees role in Safeguarding. The relevant paragraph is copied below for ease of reference.

7.3 Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee has within its remit the scrutiny and challenge of the work of the Ceredigion Strategic Safeguarding Children and Adults Board and other safeguarding activities across the Local Authority. Specifically, the Committee will receive the Corporate Strategic Board's annual report prior to its submission to Cabinet and Full Council. It is crucial that Committee Members gain ***experience*** *and understanding in the field and become completely aware of the breadth and depth of the Strategic Board's work and the corporate arrangements.*

Concern was raised regarding the reference to members gaining experience in the field. Members felt that it would be difficult to achieve this without them first receiving appropriate training.

Following due consideration, the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that appropriate arrangements are in place for Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk within the Council. It should be noted that the Committee's agreement

is subject to receiving clarification on what level of training is required for Committee Members to fulfil their Safeguarding role.

Members were also asked to consider the Integrated Impact Assessment Tool and its Guidance. A new Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Tool had been developed in order to inform effective decision making across the Council by providing a systematic, integrated approach of ensuring that legal obligations are met; taking into account the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011.

The Authority has a statutory duty to complete an impact assessment when developing proposals, making policy decisions or reviewing existing policies, or when making a reduction or closure of service. The impact assessment should be conducted before the proposal is approved, as it should formulate part of the decision making process.

Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendations:

1. To receive and approve the new Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Tool and Guidance;
2. To recommend that the IIA Tool is presented to Cabinet for approval, and;
3. To recommend to Cabinet that a comprehensive IIA training programme should be offered to staff and elected Members to coincide with the introduction of the new tool.

Following consideration, Committee Members agreed with the recommendations as outlined above, subject to a minor amendment regarding recommendation number 2, which Members suggest should read as follows:

2. To present the IIA tool to Cabinet for approval.

Members also suggested that a comprehensive training programme was introduced as soon as possible to Staff and then to elected Members.

During the same meeting, Members received another update on Whistleblowing for monitoring purposes.

The Coordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the annual Overview and Scrutiny report, relating to the 2015/2016 reporting period; prior to the Coordinating Committee Chairman during the 2015/2016 period, Councillor Mark Cole, presenting to Full Council on the 8th December 2016. Members were pleased with the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the year, and thanked the Scrutiny Support Officers for collating this information and also for theirs, and the Democratic Services Officers support throughout the year.

The draft budget report for 2017/2018 was presented on the 19th January 2017. Committee Members agreed with the information provided and noted that the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees would consider the budget details furthermore on the 26th January and 27th January 2017.

The Corporate Policy and procedure in relation to Monitoring of the Authority's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) was presented at the 16th February 2017 Committee meeting. Following detailed consideration of the papers provided to the Committee, it was agreed to support the recommendation to Cabinet, that the Corporate Policy and procedure be adopted.

At the same meeting, results of the Consultation and Final Wellbeing Objectives were presented along with copies of the Ceredigion Public Services Board minutes of the meeting held on the 9th January 2017.

Following discussion, Committee Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:
• Receive and approve the Ceredigion PSB Assessment of Local Well-being.

Members praised Officers for the hard work involved in collating this information and for producing such a comprehensive assessment.

Members wished to note the importance of Officers re-iterating the rurality and agricultural obligations in Ceredigion to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. Members were reassured to hear that the Commissioner had included rurality and agriculture in her first year work plan.

A copy of the Ceredigion Public Services Board minutes of the 9th January 2017; was also noted for information.

During the same meeting, the Strategic Equality Plan was also presented with a recommendation to Cabinet as follows:
• In relation to action 3.2 in the plan, it was recommended that Cabinet requests officers to investigate the possibility of the Nominated Child Protection and Child Protection Training Officer (Learning Services), who currently visits the County's Schools to develop better understanding of links between bullying and equalities, and to improve recording and monitoring of incidents at Schools; should also visit community groups so that the message about bullying concerns is relayed appropriately. In relation to incidents in the community, it was also highlighted that the Community Safety Partnership promotes the Hate Crime Campaign, which provides information and guidance on how to report incidents of hate crime or bullying in relation to equality issues within our communities; and;
• that Cabinet approve the Equality Monitoring Report 2015-2016.

The following was also noted:
In order to record progress regarding the action plan, a traffic light system had been used within the report. It was noted that 7 actions had been completed; 28 actions were progressing to plan; 4 actions were slightly behind target and no actions not started or that there is concern that the action would not be completed. It was reported that work was in progress regarding the 4 actions that were slightly behind targets, with a view that a report on progress would be presented in the next financial year. The delay was in regard to the introduction of a new Human Resources Ceri System, and the ability of the system to retrieve data in time for reporting.

Crime and Disorder matters

Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, together with the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, came into force on the 1st October 2009.

They require the Council to have in place:

- A 'crime and disorder scrutiny committee' with the role of scrutinising the work of the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership and its constituent bodies (the Council, Dyfed Powys Police, the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Panel, the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, and the Hywel Dda Health Board which are the responsible authorities) in respect of their community safety functions,

- A procedure for the overview and scrutiny committee and the partnership and its constituent bodies to deal with councillor calls for action (dealing with community safety matters) from Councillors.

The Council's existing Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee undertook the responsibilities for crime and disorder matters.

Crime and Disorder Matters and the work of the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Partnerships were originally created by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder. The aim of the Ceredigion Partnership is to 'work with individuals, organisations and communities to build a safe, just and tolerant society for those who live and work in and who visit Ceredigion'. In addition to representatives of the responsible authorities, the Partnership also includes representatives of the Ceredigion Youth Offending Service, the Dyfed-Powys Probation Trust, the Local Public Health Team, Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations, Aberystwyth University, the Substance Misuse Commissioning Coordinator and the Community Safety Manager.

Key Issues considered

Consideration was given to the report of the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment 2016/2017. The purpose of the Assessment was to provide knowledge and understanding of community safety problems to inform and enable the Community Safety Partnership to:

1. understand the patterns, trends and shifts relating to Crime and Disorder and Substance Misuse;
2. set clear and robust priorities;
3. develop activity that is driven by reliable intelligence and meets the needs of the local community;
4. deploy resources effectively and present value for money;

5. undertake annual review and plan activity based on the clear understanding of the issues and priorities.

It was reported that the assessment is also utilised to provide the Partnership with a strong ‘Evidence based’ intelligence led foundation to inform the Ceredigion Single Integrated Plan, the Regional Police and Crime Plan and other related Plans and initiatives. The Community Safety Full Partnership and Strategy Group have statutory responsibility for the approval of the annual Strategic Assessment relating to Crime and Disorder issues within the County, and Single Integrated Plan. In addition, the group maintains a strategic overview on matters affecting community safety within Ceredigion, monitors performance and delivery, and gives guidance and direction on behalf of the Public Service Board when responding to issues that are giving, or have given concern. Members continued to receive regular updates in relation to Community Safety during the reporting year. Following the discussion, Members felt it was beneficial to invite Dafydd Llewellyn, Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner to a future meeting.

To this end, Mr Llewellyn attended and presented at the 1st December 2016 Committee meeting. Mr Llywellyn provided some background and context to his role and Members agreed that they following the meeting had a better understanding of what the Commissioner’s role involved.

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on six separate occasions during the municipal year 2016/2017.

Key Issues considered.

Consideration was given at the beginning of the municipal year to the development of the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2016/2017. The Forward Work Programme was monitored and updated at each Committee meeting as a standing agenda item.

A report to consider the future of Llandysul Library was presented at the 7th July 2016 Committee meeting prior to presenting to Cabinet. At the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held during the previous reporting period on the 8th February 2016, following consideration of the papers, the Committee made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- To allow Llandysul Community three months to agree on running the library service as a community trust.
- If no business cases are forthcoming, then Cabinet should consider the original proposal to close the library at Llandysul.

Cabinet agreed to accept the recommendations from the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At the 7th July 2016 Committee meeting, a representative from Llandysul Library Supporters Group, Mr Greg Parker, was given an opportunity to speak and to present an alternative proposal to Committee Members.

Arwyn Morris, Head of ICT and Customer Service then presented information on the future delivery of the library service in Llandysul. To date, no response has been received from the community of Llandysul outlining a plan to run a voluntary library service.

Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendation:

- To proceed to close Llandysul Library and provide an alternative Library Service through a mobile Library Service.

Following a lengthy discussion, Members recommend that Cabinet:

- defer the decision to close Llandysul Library until such time as information is known on the cost involved with terminating the 125 year building lease with the Church in Wales;
- that Officers investigate the terms of the lease in detail and explore whether areas of the building could be sub-let with the view of generating income in the future?
- that Officers investigate the possibility of retaining the library in Llandysul on reduced opening hours?
- that Officers liaise with the Llandysul Library Supporters Group to enquire how many volunteers have come forward and how many of those are able to converse in the Welsh language.
- contact Llandysul Community Council to obtain their views on the future delivery of the library;
- Committee Members wish to receive a future report prior to any final decision being taken by Cabinet.

Members do not support the proposal from the Llandysul Library Support Group in its entirety as it would affect the Ceredigion Library Service. The Committee, however, thanked Mr Parker for taking the time to present the information to them. This matter is still ongoing and will be considered during the next reporting period.

During the same meeting, the Committee received a presentation from Mr Gerwyn Jones, Group Manager – Local Environment Service, and Ms Siwan Davies, Senior Communications Officer in relation to the Caru Ceredigion Initiative. Caru Ceredigion has been developed by Ceredigion County Council to further inspire the public, businesses, organisations and staff to change their behaviour and encourage them to take action that is beneficial for them and to Ceredigion.

Caru Ceredigion supports the delivery of Ceredigion County Council's Improvement Plan, primarily by contributing to achieving its outcomes. Caru Ceredigion is also aligned with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act and also the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendations:

1. To use the Caru Ceredigion initiative at a corporate level across the Council in a consistent manner with a view to embedding its ethos and principles internally and externally;
2. Develop the Project Managements Framework to roll out the Caru Ceredigion initiative effectively; and;

3. Pursue opportunities to promote and use the brand as part of ongoing activities or as stand-alone which will include identifying sources of funding to deliver these.

Following detailed consideration of the papers provided to the Committee, it was agreed to support the recommendations to Cabinet, that Cabinet endorses the Caru Ceredigion Initiative. Committee Members noted that there is no call on core funding to promote Caru Ceredigion initiatives.

A review of the management arrangements for Harbours in Ceredigion, including a review of the lease arrangements relating to the Marina at Aberystwyth was included in the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Forward Work Programme for 2016/2017.

The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report at its meeting dated 28th September 2016 from Mr Gerwyn Jones, Group Manager, Local Environment Service, Mr Neil Hinchliffe, Chief Estates Officer, Mr Paul Arnold, Head of Technical Services, and Mr Russell Hughes Pickering, Head of Performance and Improvement.

The Ceredigion Harbours Section forms part of the Street scene Service within the Technical Services Environment Services Group. The main base for the Section is at the Harbourmaster Office, Town Quay, South Marine Terrace, Aberystwyth. The Section is responsible for the operational management of the harbours at Aberystwyth, Aberaeron and New Quay and there are public interfaces via Harbour Offices at these locations. The operation of the Marina in Aberystwyth is undertaken by a private company through a lease arrangement and does not, therefore, fall under the remit of the Harbours Section.

The Harbours Section comprises a small team of one full-time Harbourmaster, two Assistant Harbourmasters and one seasonal Harbourmaster. This provides for seven day coverage at the Harbour offices between 1st May and 31st September, with reduced coverage over the winter months. The harbours provide operating bases for commercial fishing and pleasure boat businesses as well as leisure craft and associated activities. Members received with the agenda papers a copy of Ceredigion's Harbour Management Policy, detailed description of operational port tasks, job descriptions for the posts within the Harbours team, details of moorings and other facilities provided at the respective harbours and details of the waiting list for moorings. Information was also made available on the Harbours Maintenance Budget during 2015/2016 and the Fees and Charges for 2016/2017 were provided.

Members asked pertinent questions in relation to the Harbours. Responses to some questions require Officers to investigate further and contact the relevant Councillor directly regarding specific matters.

Following detailed consideration of the papers provided to the Committee, Members agreed to make the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- that the Ceredigion Harbours Management Policy is reviewed with appropriate consultation taking place with relevant Stakeholders;
- to investigate the possibility of increasing commercial opportunities at Ceredigion County Council's Harbours in the future;
- Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee to receive an update report following Ceredigion County Council's scheduled meeting with Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Members felt that it would be useful to receive information in relation to dredging, whether it is advantageous or not, its effect on the environment, on flooding, on river flow, and what is the economic result of not dredging;
- Officers to investigate if there are any grants available from NRW or elsewhere to dispose PCB's;
- a verbal report was received at Committee in relation to the lease arrangements at Aberystwyth Marina, Members would welcome receiving a further report with detailed lease information prior to further discussion;
- Members feel strongly that all Ceredigion County Council's Harbours pay an important role supporting Ceredigion's economic and tourism industry. Members wished it noted that the Harbourmasters are very much valued for their work associated with the operational delivery of the Harbours Service.

Cabinet accepted the recommendations outlined above. An update report following Ceredigion County Council's scheduled meeting with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and a written report regarding lease arrangements at Aberystwyth Marina will both be considered during the next reporting period.

At the same meeting, a presentation was also received from the Human Resources Team regarding the Pension Auto Enrolment. Members agreed to note the information provided. An update was also provided on Sickness Absence. It was agreed that the Committee would monitor and receive another report once the Policy has been reviewed.

At its October meeting, Mr Ynyr Roberts from Openreach, and Mr Peter Williams from Welsh Government, attend to provide an update on telephone masts and superfast Broadband in Ceredigion. Members were pleased to receive this information.

At the same meeting, Mr Arwyn Morris gave an update on the Customer Services Transformation as requested following the 12th May, 2016, when Committee Members considered the Customer Care vision. The focus of which is to streamline and centralise the existing Customer Services provision by reducing the number of Call and Customer Service Centres throughout the county in order to ensure that the Council provides an efficient, effective and economical service. It was agreed that

further reports would be presented to the Committee to update on any developments.

At the November meeting, a report was received from Mr Llyr Hughes, Welfare Reform Housing Officer, and Mrs Sue Thomas, Housing Strategy Manager, in relation to Housing/Homelessness work undertaken to mitigate the effects of Welfare Reform. This was identified as a future agenda item for the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a Coordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting from priority number eight of the Poverty Strategy, which is 'Maximise benefit entitlements for older people and other vulnerable groups', in assisting and directing people to realise their entitlements. Representatives from Age Cymru Ceredigion and Ceredigion Cares Society were invited. Mr Simon Wright, Joint Chief Officer, Age Cymru Ceredigion, attended and presented and Members fully support and acknowledge the excellent work that Age Cymru Ceredigion undertake.

Following discussion, Committee Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

- Write to the appropriate Minister requesting they re-consider cutting funding by 59%. This service evidently has been, and continues to prove, invaluable to the citizens of Ceredigion. Members feel this service should be an essential service;
- Include with the letter a report from Officers which includes evidence showing the impact the service has had on Ceredigion Citizens; and;
- Widely publicise the service in future.

Officers from the Health and Safety Unit also attended to provide an overview of Ceredigion County Council's Health and Safety procedures. Following discussion, it was suggested that Healthier Communities investigate Care Providers Contracts at a future meeting.

An annual report of Complaints, Compliments and Freedom of Information activity during 2015/2016 was received and a report on Stage 2 complaints. Recommend to Cabinet that Leadership Group and HOS receive Stage 2 report for discussion 20th December 2016.

A task and finish group was previously established to review the Council's response to the Ceredigion flooding emergency events. Its purpose being to visit those communities/towns affected by past flooding and to hold informal discussions on the flooding after-effects, providing local residents with an opportunity to talk about the events surrounding, during and post flooding, and to highlight any concerns/worries that may still be relevant. During the previous reporting period, the Group held a public meeting at Borth. During this reporting period, the Group held a public meeting at the Bandstand in Aberystwyth. A report finalising recommendations will be presented to Cabinet during the next reporting period.

A report on the Service Savings Options for 2017/2018 was considered by the Committee with a report to Cabinet outlining its recommendations.

Members continued to monitor the yearly collection of Council Tax and Business Rates performance.

The Annual Report of Complaints, Compliments and Freedom of Information activity during 2015-2016 was considered at its November meeting. A Stage 2 complaint report was also considered as previously suggested in a Cabinet report during the previous reporting period. The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously agreed to receive regular reports in relation to Complaints as an item recorded on the risk register. Following discussion of the reports presented, it was agreed to recommend to Cabinet that:

• A report on Stage 2 Complaints is presented at future Leadership Group and Heads of Service meetings, as it provides an excellent opportunity to identify any Services or themes which may require additional attention to ensure improved performance in forthcoming years.

On the 27th January 2017, a half day meeting was arranged to consider the draft budget for 2017/2018. A report was presented to Cabinet as follows:

The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report that was presented to Cabinet on 17 January 2017, which provided background information on the proposed savings options for 2017/18.

Committee Members were asked to consider the budgets, cost pressures and savings (including the assessed risk) proposals required for 2017/18 for those service areas that were within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the event of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee not agreeing with the savings proposals (within its remit) for 2017/18, alternative savings proposals should be proposed for consideration by Cabinet.

Following a lengthy debate, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

1. **<u>Legal & Democratic Services – Target Saving 24k</u>**
    1. *Savings to be found within various Supplies & Services budgets*
        a) *Legal & Land Charges - £5k*
        b) *Democratic Services - £8k*
        c) *Electoral Registration - £1k*
    2. *Registrars – Increased Income target - £5k*
    3. *Members Allowances & Associated Costs – Reduced contingency for Members' Pensions take-up - £5k*

    The Committee agreed to the proposed savings.

2. **<u>Performance & Economy - Target Savings £32k</u>**
   1. *Deletion of additional 2016/17 RSG benefit - £10k*
   2. *Income& Cost Recovery Opportunities: Increased income target for Estates rental income - £22k*

   The Committee agreed to the proposed savings.

3. **<u>ICT and Customer Services – Target Savings - £25k</u>**
   a) *Vacant post removed from structure*
   The Service has transferred £102k during 2016/17 towards Corporate Savings target through changes made to the library and archive services

   The Committee agreed to the proposed savings.

4. **<u>HR & Corporate Health & Safety – target Savings - £51k</u>**
   1. Deletion of additional 2016/17 RSG benefit - £4k
   2. Increased Corporate HR income target (inflationary increase on Schools SLA - £3k
   3. Savings from planned Corporate Health & Safety restructuring already agreed by Leadership Group - £3k
   4. Savings to be found from review of Corporate HR structure - £41k

   The Committee agreed to the proposed savings points 1, 3 and 4 above. The majority of Committee Members agreed with point 2 above. Three Committee Members abstained from the vote due to not agreeing with the proposed increase due to school budgets already being under pressure.

5. **<u>Finance – Target Savings - £60k</u>**
   1. Vacant post 28k
   2. Reduce spend on Supplies and Services £16k
   3. Income increases of £16k

   The Committee agreed to the proposed savings.

At its meeting on 23rd February 2017, Members considered proposals for a Customer Services Contact Centre. The focus of which is to streamline and centralise the existing Customer Services provision by reducing the number of Call and Customer Service Centres throughout the county in order to ensure that the Council provides an efficient, effective and economical service. Members received information on the first outcome for the Contact Centre work stream in providing a new Contact Centre structure.

Cabinet, on the 17th May 2016, approved the vision for Customer Care in Ceredigion, and subsequently on the 27th September 2016 approved the work stream terms of reference against the vision.

Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendations:

1. To agree the draft new structure for central customer contact centre and post room;

2. To fund the balance for the customer contact centre and post room staffing corporately to enable the recruitment and training of the staff to meet the target of April 2018, for all Customer enquiries and post to be managed centrally;
3. To start the consultation process through Human Resources and the Unions for the recruitment of staff to the new customer contact centre structure;
4. To recover the customer staffing balance from each service areas based on the current staffing that are engaging with customers;
5. Services to be responsible to target and achieve further savings as defined in the potential savings available through Customer project; and
6. To monitor all customer savings achieved through the quarterly financial service meetings.

Following a lengthy discussion, Committee members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

1. Approve the draft new structure, (recommendation 1 above); subject to reconsideration of whether there is a need for a Contact Centre Deputy Manager and a Customer Services Manager. Committee Members suggest that a Customer Service Manager should be sufficient;
2. Approve recommendation 2;
3. Approve recommendation 3, subject to adherence to the change management policy;
4. Approve recommendation 4;
5. Approve recommendation 5;
6. Approve recommendation 6.

Cabinet agreed with the recommendation in that the Customer Services Manager post would be sufficient.

Committee Members also recommend that the transformation of Customer Services is regularly monitored by the Corporate Resources O&S Committee. It was suggested that an initial report be presented to the Committee in April 2018. It was agreed to include this matter as an item on the future Forward Work Plan.

Concern was raised regarding the possibility of some staff being made redundant. It was confirmed by the Head of Service that some staff have already expressed interest in exploring early retirement.

Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on eight separate occasions during 2016/2017.

Key Issues considered

Consideration was given at the beginning of the municipal year to the development of the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2016/2017. The Forward Work Programme was monitored and updated at each Committee meeting as a standing agenda item.

At its 9th June 2016 meeting, Ceredigion County Council's Domestic Abuse Coordinator, Ms Helen Twiddle, attended to present information regarding Domestic Abuse referrals in Ceredigion. Members were pleased to receive the information and agreed that a future update would be beneficial to monitor the percentage of referrals.

Mrs Carys James, Head of Adult Services and Commissioning, attended and gave an explanation on the process used relating to the Eligibility Threshold and a presentation on information relating to the Social Services Wellbeing Bill. It was agreed to receive a future update on its progress.

At its meeting on the 7th July 2016 the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report from the Ceredigion Public Service Board's Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Executive Group'. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 came into force on the 1st April 2016. This legislates for the formation of statutory Public Service Boards (PSB) which will replace the voluntary Local Service Boards in each local authority area. Each board will assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in this area and set objectives that are designed to maximise the PSB's contribution to the wellbeing goals. The Health Social Care and Wellbeing Executive Group will continue to meet, as there are key elements of the legislation which the Executive Group will be able to contribute to, including a wellbeing assessment which will inform a Local Well-being Plan set to be published in 2017.

Mrs Naomi McDonagh, Environmental Health Officer, Health Improvement provided a detailed explanation of the report content.

Mr Peter Skitt, Director, and Ms Jina Hawkes, Community Health Lead, Hywel Dda University Health Board, Ms Hazel Lloyd Lubran, CAVO, Ms Catherine Moyle, Carers Unit, Ms Melanie Evans, Service Manager, Partnership, Strategy and Commissioning, Mrs Gaynor Toft, Community Wellbeing Manager, Ms Anna Henchie-Jones, Housing Strategy & Policy Officer, and Mr Huw Williams, Head of Lifestyle Services, were also present to answer Members questions. The Chairman

thanked Officers and the Hywel Dda representatives for their contribution to the meeting.

Following consideration of the report, the following was noted:

- That in some instances there appears to be issues regarding arrangements for patient discharge service, especially when a Ceredigion resident has been an inpatient in an out of County Hospital. Mr Peter Skitt asked for further information in relation to individual cases in order to investigate this further. It was however noted that once the discharge plan is in place, service provided is then excellent;
- Concern was raised regarding the high number of recorded empty properties (815) in the County. It was suggested that it might be helpful to include the reasons why they are empty in future reports;
- That Aberystwyth University have undertaken some research into Dementia, and that they should be invited to a future Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to provide information on the research findings;
- Members were pleased that all relevant representatives were present and that good work is being achieved through working collaboratively.

Following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to support the recommendation stated within the report as below:

- That Members of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the ongoing work involved in achieving an improvement in health, social care and wellbeing services and are included within the Single Integrated Plan, and acknowledge the risks presented in the continued availability of those services outlined that rely on short-term grant or project funding.

At its meeting on the 7th September 2016, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Overarching Policy Review.

The Cabinet adopted the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Overarching Policy in Match 2015 and subsequently, certain provisions of the Deregulation Act have come in to force, which have resulted in changes to the manner by which the trade is regulated. The main changes were:

- Three year licences becoming the default position for Hackney Carriage drivers, with one year licences only being granted on a case by case basis e.g. where a driver has a medical condition that requires an annual medical check;
- The default position for Private Hire Operators is that of a 5 year licence; a licence may be granted for a period of less than five years but based on the circumstances of an individual case (not a blanket policy).

The Committee thanked the Licensing Team for their hard work and were pleased

to note the positive feedback received from Barristers regarding the Policy in that it was current and fair.

Following consideration of the report and the proposed changes to the Policy, the following were noted:

- Concerns were raised regarding the regulations in relation to seatbelts and use of child seats. The regulations permit children to sit in the front seat; and that children under 3 were permitted to travel without a car seat or seatbelt in the rear of the vehicle. The Committee agreed to write to Mark Williams AM, copied to Elin Jones AM to raise concerns regarding these regulations;
- Assurance was provided in relation to ensuring that all taxi drivers have received Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and that they have received safeguarding training;
- Assurance was provided to the Committee that if a driver receives points on their licence that they must notify the Local Authority within 14 days;
- The Committee suggested that information be published on the Council website illustrating where the taxi ranks are in our towns.

Following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend the adoption of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Overarching Policy by Council.

A report was received during the same meeting regarding Community Chest. The Community Chest Grant is administered by the Local authority in partnership with Sport Wales. The Community Chest offers grant awards up to £1,500 in any 12 months towards:

- Increasing participation
- Improving standards

Last year, £75,610 was awarded to grass roots sport and activity in Ceredigion. A list of all grants awarded by Ceredigion Community Chest Panel since 1999 was provided and Committee Members were advised that by the end of the 2016/2017 financial year, in total over £800,000 had been distributed to clubs and groups in Ceredigion over the past 16 years.

Members were pleased with the information received and thanked Mr Darryl Evans, Head of Educational Wellbeing, and Mr Huw Williams, Head of Lifestyle Services, for attending and presenting this information to the Committee.

Mrs Sue Darnbrook, Strategic Director – Care, Protection and Lifestyle, attended the September meeting to present the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services 2015-2016. Members were pleased to receive the information and agreed to note the report contents.

At the same 16th September 2016 Committee meeting, the Care, Protection and Lifestyle Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management Reports for quarters 3 and 4, 2015/2016, were considered and Committee Members agreed to note the content of the report and the levels of activity within the Local Authority and congratulated Officers on the hard work undertaken by the service. The Head of

Service was requested to relay this message to all staff involved. Committee Members also considered the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Quarter 1 2014/15 report and the CYSUR Local Operational Group Safeguarding Report Quarters 2, 3 & 4, 2014/15.
The following items were noted:

- The number of Child Protection referrals increased significantly during October to December and have continued to do so during January and March. This is in comparison with the summer months. It was suggested that this could perhaps be due to a history of clinical depression in the children's families;
- Concern was raised in relation to the number of children receiving home education in the County. Several letters regarding this matter have previously been sent to the Minister of Education from Councillor Alun Lloyd Jones and Councillor Paul Hinge voicing Councillors concern. It is suggested that this Committee hold a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting with the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise this in the near future.

The Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and the levels of activity within the Local Authority.

The Families First Annual Report for 2015/2016 was presented also at the September meeting by Ms Catherine Morgan, Families First Coordinator. Committee Members agreed to accept the contents of the report and of the progress made on the delivery of the Families First programme in Ceredigion. Families First is a Welsh Government programme that funds the development of effective early intervention and preventative support for families, particularly those living in poverty. Approximately £3.5 million (£700,000 p.a.) has been allocated to Ceredigion to support the delivery of the programme from 2012 to 2017. The Families First programme is due to end in March 2017. There is an expectation that it will continue and at the time of reporting it was hoped that Carl Sargeant AM, Cabinet Secretary, for Communities and Children will make a statement in the autumn.
(On the 7th December 2016, Carl Sargeant AM confirmed continued support for Families First).

At its 2nd November 2016 meeting, Committee Members received a report from Mr Huw Williams, Head of Lifestyle Services and Mrs Carwen Evans, Commercial Services Manager in relation to the report on the Food Standards Agency Wales audit on Ceredigion County Council's Food Law Enforcement Services which took place between the 19th and 23rd October 2015.

The audit covered Ceredigion County Council's arrangements for the delivery of food hygiene and food standards enforcement services. The on-site element of the audit took place at Neuadd Cyngor, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, and included verification visits at food businesses to assess the effectiveness of official controls implemented by the authority, and more specifically, the checks carried out by the authority's officers, to verify food business operator (FBO) compliance with legislative requirements.
Members were pleased to note that the report was generally positive in terms of management arrangements in place for the service, the manner in which risks were

being assessed and managed and the selection and use of enforcement interventions, especially in respect of high profile and complex investigations. Areas where the service was able to demonstrate that it was performing well included the following:

- Food Hygiene Interventions/Inspections Reports
- Advice to businesses
- Food Establishment Database
- Enforcement
- Liaison

The areas for improvement were:

- Officer authorisations
- Food Hygiene and Food Standards Intervention Frequencies (The issue being that the unit is under resourced).
- Food Standards Interventions/Intervention Reports
- Food Hygiene Sampling
- Control and Investigation of Food Related Infectious Disease.

It was confirmed that Officers had since developed an Action Plan so as to address the recommendations. Members were pleased to note that many of the planned improvements had already been achieved. Concerns were raised that the authority needed to address the issue that food hygiene interventions/inspections were carried out by the minimum frequency specified by the Food Law Code of Practice (The Standard – 7.1). The Chairman thanked Officers for the good work that is being achieved within the County.

Following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend that:

- Cabinet consider the statutory responsibilities and essential service requirements under the Food Safety Act 1990 when discussing the allocation budget for 2017/2018, as the Service is at present under- resourced;
- A high level of priority is given to the areas for improvement identified through the audit process as the authority is failing to meet the requirements of the Food Law Enforcement Framework Agreement to such an extent that this presents a Corporate Risk;
- The Service should explore collaborative working with neighbouring authorities in the future although it was noted that this may not be logistically viable given the geography of the County, in addition to probable lack of capacity and service pressures facing neighbouring Authorities;
- the high level of risk to the Authority is recognised, in particular in relation to the infrequency of high risk Premises Inspection and the timeliness of new premises inspection, the potential impact on local businesses and the Ceredigion economy as well as the potential reputational risk to the Authority;
- Cabinet bring to the Minister's attention the budgetary issues, that statutory requirements are not being met due to the financial pressures enforced on the Authority in recent years;
- Members agree that the Audit Committee should consider including this on the Corporate Risk Register.

Also, at its 2nd November 2016 meeting, Committee Members received a presentation from the Mental Capacity Team, Mrs Carys James, Head of Adult Services and Commissioning, Ms Lynne Regan and Ms Kate Lewis, Senior Practitioners.

Officers explained the significant implications for Local Authorities in Wales arising from the following:

1. Supreme Court Judgement on 19th March 2014 in the case of "P v Cheshire West and Chester Council and another" and "P and Q v Surrey County Council"; and
2. House of Lords report (March 2014) in respect of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and the HM Government's response to this (June 2014).

Ceredigion County Council put forward a Business Case in 2015 to establish a Mental Capacity Act Team so as to ensure the organisation could meet its statutory duties. Committee Members were advised that funding was agreed until November 2016 and Carys James also confirmed that this funding had, since writing the report, been extended for a further 6 months.

The development of such a team has provided a mechanism for ensuring that there is a framework in place to meet the statutory duty. Failure to meet Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards DoLS legislation poses a significant risk to the Authority.

The Chairman thanked Officers for their contribution to the meeting.

Following consideration of the report, the following was raised:

- Concerns with regards to the increasing number of requests being made and the timescale the assessments need to be completed within. The 7 and 14 day timescales for Urgent Authorisations were discussed and the Mental Capacity Act team acknowledged that the timescales for all types of requests are rarely met due to current team resources. See footnote on page 2 for the detail on timescales;
- Concerns in relation to the funding currently available and Members suggest that long term funding needs to be secured;
- Members suggested that a letter should be sent to the Minister to convey Ceredigion County Council's concerns.

Following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend that:

- Cabinet consider securing future long term funding for the Mental Capacity Act Team which is set-aside solely for this team so that they are able to meet the Council's Statutory duties;
- A letter is sent to the relevant Minister suggesting that the government ring-fence future funding so that Local Authorities are able to meet their statutory obligations.

At its 16th November 2016 meeting, Members of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to consider a feasibility report prepared by Social Firms Wales for the creation of an integrated mental health facility at Awel Deg in Llandysul. Representatives from Social Firms Wales, Ms Vina Patel and Mr David Williams, representatives from Hywel Dda, Ms Mel Evans, Ms Julie Denley, Ms Sarah Rees and Mr Bleddyn Lewis, together with Mrs Sue Darnbrook and Mr Matthew Richards from Ceredigion County Council's Social Services. The Committee received a power point presentation.

In 2015, a feasibility study was commissioned by Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) and Ceredigion County Council (CCC) to consider the redevelopment of Awel Deg care home into an integrated health and social care service. The two main objectives of the study were to consider:

- the development of a 24 hour Mental Health Centre at Awel Deg, where health and social services staffs' teams work under HDUHB/CCC could be co-located; and
- the development of a Dementia Assessment Unit at Awel Deg. The focus to be on assessment, early intervention, support for carers and return to home packages of care.

Following consideration of the report, Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendation:

- that Members consider the report and support the proposed development of Awel Deg into an integrated mental health centre and dementia assessment unit.

The proposed governance arrangement selected through the options appraisal process will be in 2 phases:

- **Stage one** Form a partnership between HDUHB and Ceredigion CC
- **Stage Two** Develop a social enterprise and transition responsibility for the building from the partnership to a new legal entity

The intention being that a project group consisting of HDUHB/Ceredigion CC officers is convened to develop a detailed business case and progress the project. The project group will report to the Residential Care Modernisation Programme Board and it is recommended that this group holds a mandate to carry the Project over into an independent Social Enterprise. To enable this service development a robust Partnership Agreement will need to be developed between CCC and HDUHB which will require professional legal advice for both parties. Progress updates and further reports will be provided to scrutiny for update as and when required.

Following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to support the recommendation as outlined above subject to the following consideration:

- that Scrutiny are actively involved in the process and receive regular progress updates in a timely manner.

Committee Members were asked on the 17th January 2017, to consider the budgets, cost pressures and savings (including the assessed risk) proposals required for 2017/18 for those service areas that were within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the event of the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee not agreeing with the savings proposals (within its remit) for 2017/18, alternative savings proposals should be proposed for consideration by Cabinet. Following a lengthy debate, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

Families & Children – Target Saving 190k

1. *LAC Young People in Transition £120k saving*
2. *Review of Respite Care £15k saving*
3. *Review Taxi Contracts £50k saving*
4. *Review Family Centre Service £5k saving*

The Committee agreed to the proposed savings. Committee Members wished to emphasise with regard to item 2 above that Respite Care is an essential service. This service should not be compromised in any way in order to achieve this saving.

Adult Social Care and Commissioning – Target Savings £1,081k

1 *The intention to develop the assessment reablement beds and step-up/step-down beds in partnership with health within existing local authority homes will ultimately prevent people from being admitted into long term residential care. It will also address the existing issue of voids within our LA homes by utilising current staff and space, supported by the reablement team to promote a speedy and safe return home – Target Savings 960k Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) income*

2 *There are a significant number of service users in receipt of adult services direct payment packages who haven't reviewed with a focus on service user progression towards increased independence. Anticipated reduction in care packages – Target Saving £50k*

3 *Review of current nursing and community based packages applying Continuing Health Care (CHC) criteria. This will require robust reviews and assessments of people with complex needs – Target Saving £71k - saving target based on transferring the equivalent of 3 full year effect nursing beds to CHC funding.*

The Committee agreed to the proposed savings. Two Committee Members abstained from the vote due to concerns as to whether the proposed savings were achievable.

Lifestyle Services – Target Savings - £487k

1. *Reduction in Business Rates on Plascrug Leisure Centre and Lampeter Pool – Target Savings £11k*
2. *Targeted increase in Leisure Membership packages – Target Savings £15k*
3. *Deletion of x1.5 posts in Business Support and Housing Strategy and other Employee related savings – Target Savings £43k*
4. *Savings from Remodelling within Homelessness Service – Target Savings £6k*
5. *Other Miscellaneous Savings – Target Savings £2k*
6. *Inflationary linked increase in Fees and Charges*
   b) *Licensing - £2k*

c) HMO Licensing - £5k
d) Leisure Pay as you play - £4k
e) Building Control - £5k

7. Review of options for the future of the Community Warden Service – Target Savings £2k

8. Savings targets to be considered alongside Service redesign work
a) Planning Fee income shortfall - £200k
b) Balance not available to find within Service (Commercial Services re Food law Enforcement) - £170k

The majority of Committee Members agreed to the proposed savings. A Committee Member did not agree with point number 8 a), shown above, in that the information did not give clarity as to what impact the Service redesign work would have on Staff.

At its 23rd February 2017 meeting, Committee Members received a presentation from Mr Martyn Palfreman, Head of Regional Collaboration, which provided an overview of the partnership arrangements established within the West Wales footprint, to meet the requirements within Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014.

It was noted that:

- Collaborative arrangements have been in place across health and social care in West Wales (and the former Mid and West Wales region, which included Powys), for a number of years;
- The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBWA) came into force on 6 April 2016, and provides a coherent legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales;
- The Act also confers duties on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to prepare annual reports, from April 2017, for submission to Welsh Ministers, and establish appropriate information sharing arrangements;
- An ongoing programme of activity will support delivery of these priorities, funded largely through the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) and Delivering Transformation Grant (DTG). The ICF and DTG also fund a small Regional Collaboration Unit, hosted by Carmarthenshire County Council, which provides support to the RPB and coordination of its programme.

Members made many suggestions for Mr Martyn Palfreman to report back to the Board with particular reference to the following:

1. To consider including, on page 78 of the Population Assessment, heading, further health related objectives are: a reference to Strokes, as there is an increase in stroke victims;
2. Page 44, Figure 6.2, Population pyramid percentage by age and sex in Hywel Dda UHB and Wales, 2014; refers to statistical information produced by Public Health Wales Observatory. It would be useful if Local Authority statistics were also included;

3. Autism is recognised in 18+ year olds, Members felt that the situation could be improved in identifying and assisting Children with Autism and their Parent/s or Guardian/s at an earlier age;
4. Hospital Discharge packages appear to be failing and more work needs to be done in this area of work;
5. Welsh Language is vitally important and Members agreed that there is a need to improve the level of service available through the medium of Welsh. Alzheimer's and Dementia were mentioned;
6. 3rd Sector has a significant role and Members are fully supportive of this.

The Chairman thanked Officers for their contribution to the meeting and for a comprehensive report.

Following many pertinent questions from Committee Members, which were answered in turn by the relevant Officer, and, following due consideration, the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend that:

- Cabinet notes the Statutory Requirements under Part 9 of the SSWBWA and the partnership arrangements in place within West Wales to meet these requirements;
- Cabinet agrees to adopt this as Ceredigion County Council's population assessment;
- Cabinet notes Members preference with regards to Scrutiny arrangements is to receive regular future update reports to the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Care, Protection and Lifestyle, Independent Reviewing Service Performance Management Report, Quarter 1, 2016 – 2017, report was presented to the Committee by Elfed Hopkins, Head of Families and Children Service.

It was noted that the independent reviewing service report is brought before the Committee on a quarterly basis. This report effectively monitors the progress of looked after children via independent officers. The report also highlights a number of local and national targets, which are mostly achieved or exceeded.

The Committee noted:

- That looked after children have personalised plans in place for their support. Additionally, there are officers in place to support them after they've left care.
- Page 15, point 22: To ensure that Looked after Children benefit from education opportunities – Members noted that there is little narrative in the report to provide further information regarding the benefits looked after children receive from education. Mr Elfed Hopkins, Head of Families and Children Service, informed Members that Learning services present a separate report to the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with more in depth information regarding this, and noted that it may be beneficial to link the reports in future.

It was agreed to note the information in the report. The Committee wished to congratulate the service on exceeding a number of the set targets, and thanked them for their hard work.

The Carers Unit Annual Report 2015-2016 report was presented to the Committee meeting on the 23rd February 2017, by Mrs Heather West, Carers Development Officer.

The presentation explained that Ceredigion has a long history of being particularly focussed on supporting Carers, and that all efforts are, and will continue to be made to ensure this continues.

The committee noted that:

- The service has experienced increased pressures following the introduction of the new Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014).
- Carers known to the service are offered support continual support, until such time as the carer decides they no longer wish to receive this support.
- The good communication between Social services and the Carers Unit means that carers are provided with the most appropriate form of support at any given time, in addition to carers being linked to third sector organisations subject to their personal preference.
- Ceredigion was chosen to pilot a new scheme, through partnership with Hywel Dda University Health Board and third sector organisations, whereby carers are put in contact with one another. Results have shown that carers subsequently offer support to one another, and an increased resilience through building of community connections is experienced.
- That work needs to continue to reach carers as many carers remain unknown to the Local Authority and therefore are not aware of the support that is available to them.

It was agreed to note the information in the report and the Chairman on behalf of its Committee Members thanked Officers for the report and for their continued hard work.

The 2015-2016 Annual Report - Hywel Dda Information & Consultation Strategy for Carers 2012-2015 and extension for 2015-2016 report was also presented to the Committee by Mrs Heather West, Carers Development Officer, and Pennie Muir, Hywel Dda Regional Carers Project Manager for Investors in Carers.

The presentation explained that regional partnership between Ceredigion County Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Hywel Dda University Health Board in response to the Carers Strategies (Wales) Measure (2010).

The Committee noted:

- That work continues to be done in order to ensure that GP surgeries, pharmacies, primary and secondary health care services are fully equipped with information in the form of notice boards etc, in addition to skilled staff as a point of contact to assist carers.
- That the Welsh Government has praised the report presented to Committee, and recognised the work as a piece of good practice for carer services.
- The Hywel Dda Information and consultation strategy was due to end in 2015, however was extended in May 2013 until 2106. Further to this, funding has recently been gained for the second year transitional period. This will maintain the 5 posts reliant upon the funding and allow considerable work to continue.
- Hospitals and surgeries are required to have a noticeboard dedicated to information for carers only, so as to ensure that information is appropriately displayed. Work continues to be done to ensure that the information displayed on these boards remains up to date. In addition to this, GP practices are recommended to follow Carer led roles, i.e. assisting carers to complete forms; ensuring noticeboards remain current etc., in order to become recognised as Carer friendly spaces.

It was agreed to note the information in the report and the Chairman on behalf of its Committee Members thanked officers for their hard work and continuous dedication.

Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on five occasions during the municipal year 2015/2016.

Key issues considered

Consideration was given at the beginning of the municipal year to the report on the Development of Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Forward Work Programme was monitored and updated at each Committee meeting as a standing item on each agenda.

At its meeting on June 26th 2016, the Committee considered the Flying Start Annual Report 2015-16. The report had been presented to enable the Committee to monitor whether Flying Start was fit purpose and effective in delivering the 4 core entitlements to families in the 5 Flying Start areas and having a positive impact on their outcomes including their educational attainment. The 4 core entitlements were as follows:-

• Enhanced Health Visiting Team support – this now includes some ante natal support
• Quality childcare for children aged 2-3 to dovetail with their Early Years entitlement aged 3-4 years
• Parenting support in the form of both 1:1 and group programs e.g. Incredible Years courses – these now span Baby, Toddler and School Readiness courses.
• Early language Development (used to be Language and Play. Following a review of entitlements carried out in 2012-13, Welsh Government decided to take a more strategic approach to this entitlement re-naming it Early Language Development. The program has involved 88m in investment over the past 8 years. Alongside this revenue, there has also been a program of capital investment with a total of over 28m invested across Wales.

It was reported that Flying Start had a stand still budget in 2016-17 and there was no assurance as yet for funding in 2017-18. Members' support for the programme would assist in proceeding to address pressures of further cuts to services.

Following questions from the floor; it was AGREED to note the achievements and the challenges the programme was encountering.

At the same meeting, consideration was given to the Annual Report on the Ceredigion Integrated Children's Centres. The report had been presented in order to enable the Committee to monitor whether the Integrated Children's centres in Ceredigion were fit for purpose and effective in providing early intervention and preventative services to families and children in the neediest areas.

The Development Officer for the Ceredigion Integrated Children's Centre provided a background to the centres and their purpose. It was reported that there were four aspects to an integrated children's centre/campus:-

• Integrated Family support and health services
• Early years' education and Quality Childcare
• Open access play
• Community training and learning

It was reported that to ensure that the provision of early intervention and preventative services were efficient and effective, and that they were was appropriately promoted and sustained in our most deprived communities it was AGREED:-

(i) to note the work of the Integrated Children's Centres across the county and the contribution they were making to the outcomes of a significant number of families; and
(ii) to support the continued work of the Integrated Children's Centres.

There followed a presentation on an update on the progress of the Family Information Service. The report had been presented in order to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the Ceredigion County Council Family Information Services and to ensure that the Local Authority meets existing and new statutory duties. The following information was outlined:-

• Background – Childcare Act 2006, Social Services & Wellbeing Act
• Current Situation – Number of enquires, Number of page views to FIS website, Number of page views to Childcare search, Number of page views to FIS website, Number of page views to Childcare search, Number of page views to the Directory of Services, Number of page views to the Directory of Services
• Future Developments- DEWIS Cymru – network of social care, health and third sector organisations across Wales through a single point of contact.

Following questions from the floor, the Committee AGREED:

(i) to note the performance made by the Family Information Services following the re-branding of the service four years ago; and
(ii) that the service remains as a standalone service for the time being but ensuring that strong link were made with DEWIS Cymru and vice versa

Mr Barry Rees, Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships was welcomed to the meeting on 21st September 2016 to present a report on Engagement – Area School in the Aeron Valley. Following the Cabinet decision C331, on 17 May 2016, 'To approve the further development of option 3 in the report, Establish a new area school in the Aeron Valley located on the Professional Education Centre campus, Felinfach (for the pupils of Ciliau Parc, Cilcennin, Dihewyd and Felinfach, prior to

engagement with the 4 communities', an engagement exercise was undertaken with the staff, Governors and parents/carers of pupils currently attending Cilcennin, Ciliau Parc, Dihewyd and Felinfach Schools. The method of engagement had been discussed with the local Members. The meetings were held at each of the 4 villages between 27 June and 30 June 2016. A meeting was also held with the staff currently working at the Professional Education Centre, Felinfach.

Following considerable discussion the Committee agreed to continue with the development to establish a new area school in the Aeron Valley located on the Professional Education Campus, Felinfach whilst, in the meantime, heeding any new directive and guidelines which may emanate from the Welsh Government office of the Cabinet Secretary for Education, who is currently undertaking a review of current policy on surplus school places. It was agreed that a recommendation in relation to the above would be presented to Cabinet in due course.

Subsequently, an overview of the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key stage 4 results and early information about the GCSE and A level results for 2016 was presented by Mr Barry Rees, Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships. Members agreed that the results were positive and, in particular, commended the excellent results at GCSE level noting that Cardigan Secondary School and Ysgol Dyffryn Teifi's results were greatly improved. It was noted that the County had achieved 70.3% on level 2+ at GCSE level and that it was the first time that any Education Authority had exceeded 70%.

The Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships stated that, although the A level and GCSE results were provisional, significant changes to the results were not envisaged.

It was noted that a report on the final A level and GCSE results would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee. Members agreed to note the information provided.

Mr Barry Rees, Strategic Director for Education presented a verbal report on the Estyn Inspection of ERW which is available on the Estyn website. https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/ERW%20Eng.pdf

The four recommendations within the report on the quality of the school improvement services provided by the ERW Consortium are:

R1 Ensure that school improvement services address the performance of schools causing concern, particularly in the secondary sector
R2 Ensure that planning for education improvement clearly integrates local and regional priorities, so that ERW and local authority plans are complementary and contain actions that are specific and measurable, with appropriate milestones for delivery

R3 Ensure that the work of the main boards and working groups is recorded carefully and consistently, so that concerns, decisions and actions are clear, auditable and fully costed, and that they enable leaders to monitor progress
R4 Refine the framework for assessing value for money so that all relevant costs across the six authorities are taken into account fully when set against outcomes
It was noted that a regional target for improvement in results would have been useful as this information was not included in the report. However, it was noted that ERW's data is better than other regions.

The report stated that Local Authority portfolio holders do not have a clear enough input to the management or oversight of ERW's work. Members noted that these concerns were previously raised when ERW was established. They noted the need to revise governance arrangements as soon as possible. The Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships noted that he would convey this message at the next ERW Joint Committee and Executive Committee.

There followed a presentation on an annual update on the LSB Executive Group for Children and Young People which focussed on the Supporting Families priority outcome in the Single Integrated Plan, 'Ceredigion for All'.

The LSB has adopted a performance monitoring framework to manage performance and delivery of the Single Integrated Plan. Actions were agreed in order to achieve the three priority outcomes, Supporting Families, Economy and Place and Independent Living. Five LSB Executive Groups are responsible operationally while the LSB monitors performance of the Executive Groups against the Single Integrated Plan.

The LSB Executive Group for Children and Young's four Workstream Groups that correspond directly with the priorities set out under Supporting Families outcome within the Single Integrated Plan are: 1) Safeguard and support vulnerable children and families; 2) Reduce the effects of poverty and combat inequalities; 3) Enable all children and young people to reach their full potential; and 4) Promote physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

It was stated that outcomes were good or improving and that work is undertaken with LSB partners to identify appropriate performance measures within workstream groups to improve the lives of children and young people in Ceredigion.

During discussion Members raised concerns in relation to dental and obesity issues and the poverty indicator. It was noted that obesity rates within children and young people are rising and is an issue of national concern. It was also noted that the rise in the number of statements issued is due to a change in the profile therefore is not a fair comparison to previous years. Members noted the importance of early intervention work undertaken by ICCs etc.

The Committee agreed to note the annual report in relation to the Supporting Families priority outcome.

At the Committee's meeting held on 10th November, the Chairman welcomed back Mrs Meinir Ebbsworth, Head of School Improvement to present a report on the final GCSE and A Level results, having presented the interim results at the Committee's previous meeting.

The Head of School Improvement stated that progress of pupils who received free school meals (FSM) was very good and that persistent absenteeism has decreased. The excellent results at GCSE level were noted and, in particular, the improvement in level 2+. It was noted that Ceredigion is the first county in Wales to cross the threshold of 70% in key stage 4 level 2+. The seven schools performed well, in line with ERW's expectations and two schools in particular, namely, Cardigan and Dyffryn Teifi achieved great improvement. The Head of School Improvement stated that work continues for improvement in areas of need.

Members AGREED to note the information provided and stated that were very proud of Ceredigion Schools' results. It was also agreed that the Chairman is to write, on behalf of the Committee, to every secondary school to congratulate them on their achievements.

Subsequently, Mrs Meinir Ebbsworth, Head of School Improvement also presented the draft Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which is to be presented to the Welsh Government by 20 December 2016. The Plan states the Local Authority's vision, aim and objectives over the next three years and illustrates how it will deliver the following seven outcomes set by the Welsh Government:

1. More seven year olds being educated through the medium of Welsh.
2. More pupils continuing to improve their Welsh skills on transfer from primary to secondary school.
3. More learners aged 14-16 studying towards qualifications through the medium of Welsh.
4. More learners aged 14-16 studying towards qualifications through the medium of Welsh in schools, colleges and work-based learning.
5. More learners with higher skills in Welsh.
6. Welsh medium provision for learners with additional needs (ALN)
7. Workforce planning and continuous professional development (CPD)

Mr Matthew Brown, Head of Learning Services reported that consultation on the Welsh in Education Strategy would take place with a large number of partners and neighbouring counties and would welcome the opportunity to discuss with governing boards during the consultation period.

Members of the Committee agreed to note the consultation period date of 17 October to 13 December and the information presented and this was reported to the Cabinet meeting on 17th January 2017.

Mr Mathew Brown, Head of Learning Services presented the 'Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation' Policy which sets out clear guidance for Schools in developing a consistent approach across the Authority for the Prevent Strategy in order to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Policy sets out beliefs, strategies and procedures to protect vulnerable individuals from being radicalised or exposed to extremist views by identifying who they are and promptly providing them with support.

The main aims of the policy are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant about radicalisation, that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen here and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our pupils are safe from harm.

The Committee AGREED to note the information provided.

Mr Matthew Brown, Head of Learning Services presented a report on the Cashless Catering System. The Systems are being rolled out to 6 of the 7 secondary schools with the aim of removing cash from the school and reducing the stigma of free school meals for pupils. Penweddig School does not take part as the canteen is run under a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract.

Parents subscribe to the cashless system via a ParentMail system. A smartphone app or website enables parents to keep a track of balances and monitor their children's food choices. Parents without access to the internet can pay via a PayPoint at local shops and post offices etc.

Following consideration, Members agreed to note the report for information.

A special meeting of the Committee was convened on January 26th 2017 to consider the Budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2017/18

Consideration was given to the report that was presented to Cabinet on 17 January 2017, which provided background information on the proposed savings options for 2017/18.

Committee Members were requested to consider the service budgets, its cost pressures and savings (including the assessed risk) and the proposals required for 2017/18 for those service areas that were within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the event of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee not

agreeing with the savings proposals (within its remit) for 2017/18, alternative savings proposals should be proposed for consideration by Cabinet.

Following a lengthy discussion where Members raised many concerns in relation to diminishing budgets to maintain / improve standards in schools and maintain the number of subjects on offer at schools with, the Committee reached the following conclusions:

1. Learning Service – Target Savings - Delegated to Schools – £0.770M
    1. By individual school governing bodies - £725k
    2. By reducing NNDR costs following re-assessment of rateable values from April 2017 - £45k

The Committee AGREED to the proposed savings.

2. Learning Services – Target Savings - Non-Delegated to Schools - £0.430M
    1. Within individual grant funded programmes - £165k
    2. Changes to transport provision - £105k
    3. School meal price increase - £20k
    4. Staff vacancy factor – some identified currently vacant posts + an achievable target for non-specific posts likely to become vacant in the next few months - £140k

The Committee AGREED to the proposed savings.

3. Policy – Target Savings - £35k
    1. Proportionate savings to cover growth to be found from within grant funded programmes £21k.
    2. Review and reduction in Arts Grants £7K.
    3. Vacancy factor - £4k

The Committee AGREED to the proposed savings.

At the Committee's final meeting of the municipal year, 17th March 2017, a report was presented by Carys Davies, Childcare & Family Information Service Manager in relation to the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017-22. She also presented the Committee with the draft Ceredigion Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2017-2022 during the consultation period prior to its submission to Welsh Government for Ministerial recommendations.

The Childcare & Family Information Service Manager provided Members with a detailed background to the assessment, the current situation and the gaps identified, and the actions to address the gaps. The recommendations identified in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017-2022 would be used to develop a five year action plan which would endeavour to address the issues highlighted. The Local Authority aim would be to work in partnership with the private, voluntary,

independent and maintained sector to ensure sufficient, sustainable and flexible childcare which would be reported to Welsh Government on an annual basis. Members stated that it was imperative that the new childcare scheme from the Welsh Government to roll out the extended 30 hours childcare offer was marketed. In response, the Manager stated that information would be circulated via schools, Councillors; social networks and leaflets.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED:-

(i) to note the current situation regarding childcare sufficiency in Ceredigion;
(ii) that the draft Ceredigion Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2017- 2022 would be presented for approval to enable consultation prior to its submission to Welsh Government for Ministerial recommendations; and
(iii) that an update would be provided on childcare in Ceredigion at a future meeting

At the same meeting, consideration was given to the report of the Chairman of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny committee on the Committee's visit to Cardigan Secondary School on 3rd February and their feedback from the visit.

The Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships stated that Cardigan Secondary School had not previously been part of the 21st Century programme to bring schools and colleges into 21st Century standard via both revenue and capital funding, however, the school had now been nominated for the second phase programme. The second phase (Band B) was a combination of capital and revenue funded projects and was operational from 2019-2024. The Strategic Director stated that, in all likelihood, that Ceredigion's Band B proposals would avoid entering into revenue funding arrangements with Welsh Government and would be exclusively capital based.

Concerns were raised on the reduction in the number of pupils attending secondary schools and the impact on each school within the Counties' towns.

In response, the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships reported that a 14-19 and post 16 forum had been established to consider the education provision in the County. Various options could be considered such as employing a teacher to teach a specific subject in a number of schools. He reported that there were several good school partnerships in teaching various subjects; however, further work on this was required.

Following questions from the floor, it was AGREED:

(i) to note the content of the draft report as presented;

(ii) that the relevant officers of the Council work closely with Cardigan Secondary School Governors and Senior Management in the drawing up and creation of a 'priority list' from the work outlined in the back page of the School's presentation with the view of attracting the best possible funding outcomes as a 'priority school' and drawing these together into a realistic medium to long term funding application plan for the school and the County;

(iii) an update on (ii) would be presented to the committee at the earliest opportunity following the Local Elections;

(iv) that the School Finance Forum consider a short to medium term suggestion that a re-work of the funding formula for schools that takes into account the varying building infrastructure challenges that some schools, like Cardigan, were experiencing; and

(v) the need to establish a protocol that schools do not over market their school at the expense of others as it was reported that pupils from other catchments were invited to a recent transition day at Bro Teifi School.

The Feedback Report from the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Workstreams held on 4 November 2016 and 2 March 2017 was considered and it was AGREED to note the report as presented.

Consideration was also given to the report on the Standards and Schools Workstream meetings on 25 May and 10 November 2016 where it was AGREED:

(i) to note the report presented;

(ii) that a letter of thanks be sent to all the schools who had attended the workstreams to discuss their performance and standards of their schools; and

(iii) that the workstream would do additional work on monitoring school standards following the election.

Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Streams

The Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee established four workstreams, namely, ALN, Inclusion and Wellbeing; Youth Engagement and Continuing Education, Standards and Schools; and Modernising the Infrastructure. The workstreams are in place to raise awareness, training purposes and to identify aspects which require further scrutiny as part of the forward work programme planning process.

ALN, Inclusion & Wellbeing

The ALN, Inclusion & Wellbeing workstream met on three occasions during 2016-17. The workstream visited Canolfan y Mor at Aberaeron Comprehensive School where they spoke to the teachers and pupils that attend the Centre. Following the visit the workstream met in the Council Chamber to discuss the SEN/ALN 2008-15 figures. Emphasis was placed on the importance of the pupils having the opportunity to remain within the County for their education, and that children are identified at an early stage in order that the correct resources are provided in a timely manner. The number of children that receive their education outside the County has reduced which is a positive improvement.

The assessment process is undertaken through a multi-agency approach, however whilst other organisations will state what provision is required for the pupils, it is the local authority that will fund the pupil. This is a challenge for the Local Authority. The workstream was of the opinion that there should also be a multi-agency approach to funding.

The Head of the Pupil Referral Unit also attended the workstream and delivered a presentation on the work of the PRU. A challenge that was identified during the discussion was that pupils often require emotional support and there is no access to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) due to the individual pupil not meeting their criteria for support. This was of concern to the Members of the Committee as the pupils are being denied a provision in which they require to develop.

The workstream agreed to recommend that the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee write to Bernadine Rees, Chair of Hywel Dda Health Board highlighting their concerns. This was agreed by the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

On the 5th January, 2017, Ceredigion the ALN, Inclusion and Wellbeing workstream met to consider the implications of the ALN Transformation Programme.

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill was presented before the Welsh Assembly Government during December 2016. It’s aim is to transform the separate systems for special educational needs (SEN) in schools and learning difficulties (LDD) in further education to create unified system for supporting learners from 0 to 25 with ALN.

The Welsh Government’s overarching policy objectives in relation to the Bill are to create:

a) a unified legislative framework to support children and young people aged 0 to 25 years with ALN in schools and further education;

b) an integrated, collaborative process of assessment, planning and monitoring which facilitates early, timely and effective interventions; and

c) a fair and transparent system for providing information and advice, and for resolving concerns and appeals.

In order to achieve these three overarching objectives, the Welsh Government has established ten core aims within which the draft Bill's provisions have been developed. These aims are as follows:

1. The introduction of the term Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
2. A 0-25 age range
3. A unified plan
4. Increased participation of children and young people
5. High aspirations and improved outcomes
6. A simpler and less adversarial system.
7. Increased collaboration
8. Avoiding disagreements and earlier disagreement resolution
9. Clear and consistent rights of appeal
10. A mandatory Code

Information in relation to PLASC data showed good performance in the County with continued improvement in areas such as the Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and 3. Special Education Centres are almost at full capacity with, currently, more than 40 pupils proceeding through the system.

During discussion, the following concerns were raised:

- Funding and methods of funding.
- Availability of sufficient provision.
- Extra pressures on staff and budgets, paticularly due to the increased age range to 25 years.
- The implementation and monitoring of planning and sharing of resources with the Health Board.
- The good performance across the County being compromised due to the above concerns.

The work stream proposed that correspondence highlighting these concerns is to be sent to the Chairs of Hywel Dda University Health Board and Ceredigion PSB. This was subsequently agreed by the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The ALN, Inclusion & Wellbeing work stream met again on 17th March 2017. Work stream Members received presentations from Gillian Evans, Head of ALN, Inclusion and Wellbeing; Catrin Petche, Education Inclusion Officer; Lorraine Young, Advisory

Teacher Specific Learning Difficulties and Angharad Behnan, Principal Psychologist. The agenda for the meeting included Child Centred Planning; ALN Innovation Fund; Safeguarding; Analysis of the autumn term's directions; allegations against staff members; Behaviour service update.

The Head of ALN, Inclusion and Wellbeing presented an update on the Behaviour Service which included UCD Ceredigion, Alternative Curriculum, Complex and profound needs, key stages 3 and 4.

It was noted that all efforts are made to keep the children in the county as it is important that they can remain in their communities. Also, there are significant cost implications for those out of county.

Pathological demand avoidance (PDA) is becoming more apparent and increasing. Many children have moved into the county e.g. through private fostering. This influx cannot be planned for. Staff training is needed to deal with the situation.

The Education Inclusion Officer provided a presentation on Safeguarding. Physical and sexual safeguarding matters are the main reason for schools reporting. Data is used to provide targeted training for schools. Strategy meetings are held following the incident being reported to Social Services. The meetings establish whether there are concerns. Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation meetings are held bi-monthly – Ceredigion is one of the first counties to ensure that this is in place. Training is to be provided for taxi drivers on CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation).

The Education Inclusion Officer informed Members of the process in relation to the allegations against staff members. A step by step checklist is in place but it is thought that the process is not as sound as it should be. It is thought that the procedure for the aftermath following a strategy meeting is currently not strong enough. The importance of adhering to policy procedures was emphasised.

The Principal Psychologist delivered a presentation on Person Centred Approaches. The Draft Code of Practice of new legislation is out currently and is focussed on Person Centred Approaches.

£26k is to be received from the WG for training over two years and further discussion are in place in relation to funding.

The Advisory Teacher Specific Learning Difficulties informed the work stream of the ALN Innovation Fund where the WG invite bids for innovative projects. This has been undertaken through ERW but Ceredigion have its own bid and priorities.

Youth Engagement & Continuing Education

The Youth Engagement & Continuing Education workstream met on three occasions during 2016-17. The workstream meeting on 27th of June 2016 was held at

Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training, Llanbadarn Learning Centre, Llanbadarn Fawr. The Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education delivered a presentation to the Committee on 'Cymraeg i Oedolion' / Welsh for Adults'.

It was noted that changes in provision have occurred since the Minister for Education and Skills in 2012 conducted a review throughout Wales. Most of the 24 recommendations from the review were accepted by the Welsh Government. The main recommendation entailed setting up one National Entity to lead on Welsh for Adults and to streamline the number of providers from 24 to 10-14. In 2015 the University of Wales Trinity St David was appointed to lead on Welsh for Adults throughout Wales.

In February 2016, Aberystwyth University were successful in their bid to provide Welsh for Adults in Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Powys. At the time it was understood that Ceredigion staff (19 full / part time) from the Welsh for Adults service would be transferred to Aberystwyth via TUPE arrangements.

A meeting was held by the National Centre for Learning Welsh for current providers, to discuss and share information in relation to TUPE.

Following the receipt of a letter from the Human Resources department in Aberystwyth University stating that they had decided that TUPE was not relevant in this case, the Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education and the Human Resources Officer met with staff and Union representatives to explain the situation.

Concerns were raised as the third party contract between Ceredigion County Council and Aberystwyth University was to terminate on the 31st of July, 2016.

The Council has sought independent legal advice which states that TUPE is indeed relevant. Aberystwyth were duly informed of this.

At the time of the workstream meeting the outcome was not known. The workstream were sympathetic of the Service's current situation and acknowledged the Managers and staff's concerns during this very difficult time.

On 4th of November 2016, the Youth Engagement & Continuing Education workstream met at the Council Chamber, Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron. The Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education' Elen James and the NEETs (Not in Education Employment or Training) Strategic Manager, Michael Pritchard delivered a presentation to the Committee on the work of the NEET team. The team is responsible for the implementation of:

•Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF),
•Local NEET Strategy and Action Plan,
•Secondary School Alternative Curriculum provision,
•ESF Cynnydd and Cam Nesa Projects and

•Community Benefits (targeted recruitment and training).

The NEETs Strategic Manager explained the team's responsibilities. Early intervention was noted as being a key factor as, the sooner a young person is identified as being at risk, the earlier support can be put in place for that young person. The alternative curriculum is the main area of support for pre 16 at risk of becoming NEET young people, this area is a key prevention remit that delivers vocational qualifications, 1-1 intensive support and tailored transition programmes at post 16. Information sharing with Job Centre partners is progressing slowly and 2 members of the Youth Service staff attend the centre weekly to meet with the young people (16+). Although representatives from the Job Centre are invited to attend NEET meetings, they have not attended thus far. The Chair noted that discussions are currently taking place on a higher level in relation to partnership working therefore it is hoped the situation will improve in the near future.

It was noted that the Outreach Workers in Ceredigion are currently working with approximately 80 young people (16+). The Outreach Workers are eager for these young people to attend training in order to gain additional skills, which will be of benefit to them, when they apply for vacancies, however, if young people attend training more than three days a week their DWP benefits would be taken away from them. Some young people suffer from such debilitating circumstances and they do not have the confidence to travel to attend training. In such cases, the Outreach Workers collect these young people up from their homes in order for them to attend. It was noted that travelling costs in the County are far greater than course costs.

NEET school leavers' performance in Ceredigion is among the best in Wales. However, due to this success, which is due to the good work carried out by the Service, it appears that further funding for future projects such as Cam Nesa are disadvantageously affected as funding is calculated according to the amount of NEET young people in the Local Authority, with more funding attributed those counties where there are more NEET young people. Representations in relation to this unfairness have often been made but to no avail. However, the Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education stated that internal resources are being built and as much as possible is being done in order to ensure sustainability while ESF funding is available. Further information will be brought to a future meeting.

Members were pleased to hear of the success of the work of the NEET team, in particular the implementation of the qualifications framework, which has been built into various activities which young people who are at risk of becoming NEET undertake, e.g. the Alternative Curriculum, and look forward to receiving the report on future sustainability for continued success.

On Thursday, 2nd March, the Youth Engagement & Continuing Education work stream met with Elen James, Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education,

who provided an update on the work undertaken by the Service since last September and the plans for the Service for the forthcoming months.

The services highlighted included 14 -19 / Welsh Baccalaureate, Youth Service, Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET's), Welsh for Adults, Dysgu Bro and Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training (HCT).

The work stream noted the following:

•The new Welsh Baccalaureate is significantly different to the old Welsh Baccalaureate. The new L2 National Baccalaureate is equivalent to one GCSE, and the Advanced Baccalaureate L3, is equivalent to one A Level. The Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate is graded i.e. Level 2 – A* - C, Level 3 / Advanced – A* - E.

•Interviews are due to take place for a Welsh Baccalaureate Advisor post. This personwill have responsibility for supporting the secondary schools in developing and delivering the Welsh Baccalaureate across KS4 and Post 16.

•Concerns were raised in relation to some Higher Education Institutions in England failing to recognise the Welsh Baccalaureate as a valid qualification for entry on to some courses. The Head of Youth Engagement and Continuing Education informed Members that she had been in contact with the WJEC in relation to such circumstances. The WJEC are aware of this and are in discussions in these HEIs. One of the University's in question, when challenged, had replied that the Welsh Baccalaureate 'would only enhance an application'. Members were concerned to hear this and agreed to bring this issue to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommend that a letter is written to the Cabinet Secretary for Education

•Excellent work is being undertaken by the Youth Service. The Youth Service in Ceredigion is the least funded from all the other Local Authorities in Wales, but in 2015-2016, the service engaged with more young people (aged 11-19), as a proportion of the population, than any other Local Authority in Wales. (Data from the Welsh Government Annual Audit Report).

•Members were pleased to hear that Ceredigion, once again this year, evidenced the lowest percentage of year 11 schools leavers becoming NEET (1% - 7 individuals) (according to the pre-release data). It was noted that this is the lowest achieved to date. Work has been undertaken in conjunction with other services e.g. the YS, YJS, Careers Service etc. to track and monitor young people to ensure that they all remain in education or training, or enter employment at the end of Year 11.

•Qualifications are now linked to the provision provided via the Alternative Curriculum. All pupils who attended the Alternative Curriculum last year, left with at least one/two or in some cases up to four L1 BTEC qualifications.(Equivalent to 1/2/4

GCSE's grade D-G). Four pupils also gained two GCSE's at C grades in Blacksmithing and Metalwork.

•Difficulties have arisen in appointing tutors for Welsh for Adults as the future of the service remains to be uncertain.

•Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training currently have 224 learners enrolled. The Childcare and Health and Beauty courses are currently being run at Cwmpadarn as the asbestos in the roof at HCT is due to be removed.

The Head of Engagement and Continuing Education noted that all services work well together to improve outcomes for Ceredigion's pupils. However, she noted that there are issues/growing concerns with regards to the 'Engaged' and 'Less Engaged' learners being tutored together.

Members noted that the uncertainty of the various grants were of concern, as it made it very difficult to plan ahead and to ensure the continued success of the Youth Engagement and Continuing Education Service.

Standards and Schools

The Standards and Schools workstream was assigned as the workstream responsible for monitoring school standards in 2016 with the aim to enhance the monitoring and challenge of standards of individual schools by elected Members. The workstream is responsible for conducting detailed monitoring of school standards with the outcomes reported back to the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enhance the effectiveness of the scrutiny function in its role of monitoring school standards.

The first meeting of monitoring school standards took place on 25th May 2016. The three schools that were considered at the first meeting were:

• Cardigan Secondary School
• Penweddig Comprehensive School
• Ysgol Bro Pedr

The second meeting of monitoring school standards took place on 10th November 2016. The four schools considered at this meeting were:

• Aberaeron Comprehensive School
• Ysgol Henry Richard
• Ysgol Bro Teifi
• Penglais Comprehensive School

The head-teachers and Chairs of Governors were invited to the workstream meetings to discuss the performance and standards of their schools. A presentation was delivered by each school on the following areas:

a. Attendance

b. Challenges
c. Exclusion rate
d. Key Stage results
e. Leadership
f. Regional School Improvement Data
g. Safeguarding

Areas of identified good practice included:
• Incentives for good attendance including free cinema tickets and early lunch breaks.
• Extra tutoring by existing teachers to assist those children that need it.
• Management courses ran by the Council.
• Accountability structures in place – fortnightly meetings so that all aware of what is happening across the school
• Training for staff on their strategic roles
• Support for individual staff to raise standards
• Departmental improvement plans
• Co-working with other schools
• Effective safeguarding systems

Areas of challenge that were identified included:
• The budget was the main area of challenge identified by all 3 schools. Maintaining standards with reduced budgets is also a challenge for all schools. Some schools required investment in substantial refurbishment. Schools would benefit from knowing the budget for the next 2/3 years.
• Developing leaders of the future within schools was discussed as an area of challenge. It was agreed that this should be included on the forward work programme of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
• Staff recruitment (teaching and leadership) and especially recruiting teachers in subjects such as Chemistry through the medium of Welsh.
• The curriculum requirement to offer a large number of subjects to pupils.
• Concerns over maintaining high standards with decreased budgets.
• Staff workloads.
• Management of large site areas
• Buildings accessibility
The Members of the workstream agreed that they would visit the schools during the year as part of their work programme**.**

The Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee School Standards Workstream had invited all Secondary Schools in Ceredigion to individual meetings to discuss their Improvement Plans and to air their individual concerns as to their medium to long term plans. Cardigan Secondary School invited the Scrutiny Committee to visit them to gain a greater appreciation of the physical challenges they are experiencing (the building infrastructure) as well as to see what they have

already achieved with limited resources. The Committee accepted the kind invitation from the Chairman of Governors, Mr Chris Evans and the Head teacher, Mrs Nicola James.

The Committee visited the School on 3rd February 2017 to receive a presentation and a comprehensive tour of the school led by the Head teacher and Chairman assisted by the Vice Chair of Governors the Deputy Head teacher and the Business Manager. The tour, following the presentation, gave Members the opportunity to see for themselves the challenges and the innovative work that needs/ has already been carrying /carried out. A list was presented on the desired work required to
bring this school into a position where it can operate on a level playing field with the more modern schools in the county given that there are elements of the buildings in Cardigan School that have been there since the 19th Century:-

• A new build two-storey extension block between the N Block and T Block, with increased teaching facilities situated at the rear of the site of the existing school.
• New breakout spaces to the side and rear of the school.
• An extension to the canteen and school hall.
• The removal of three porta-cabins and an extension to the building adjacent to the sixth form study area and the resource centre.
• An extension of the classrooms to the side of the old building and new windows throughout the old building.
• Flexible ground floor spaces for use as dining and teaching, for socialising and for a variety of events.
• Improving the landscaping and shelter of existing outdoor spaces and areas for use by students.
• New changing and toilet facilities for the girls.
• Reconfiguring the existing classroom usage and developing a dedicated science and technology block.
• Landscaping improvements and alterations to the front and rear of the school, including a new surfaced car parking area to the side of the school.
• New anti-slip flooring at all entrances.
• An upgrade of the boiler / heating system to ensure adequate temperature levels, including thermostatic radiator valves.
• New staff toilets.
• A new sound and lighting system for the school hall.
• A new automatic seating system for the school hall.
• New flooring throughout the school corridors, laboratories, workshops and classrooms.
• An upgrade to our ICT facilities and equipment to enable the delivery of the Digital Competence Framework. Currently do not have the Windows 10 OS and none of the technology resources are Windows 10 compatible.
• The installation of security fencing at the front and side of the school

Following discussion, it was recommended that the paper, in relation to the desired work required, is circulated to all members of the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 'draft format'; that relevant officers of the Council work closely with Cardigan Secondary School Governors and Senior Management in the drawing up of and creation of a 'priority list' from the works outlined on the back page

of the School's presentation with the view of attracting the best possible funding outcomes as a 'priority school' and drawing these together into a realistic medium to long term funding application plan for the school and the County. This is to be brought back to the Learning Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the earliest opportunity following the Local Elections and that the School Finance Forum considers a short to medium term suggestion that a re-work of the funding formula for schools that takes into account the varying building infrastructure challenges that some schools, like Cardigan, are experiencing.

Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on seven occasions during the municipal year 2016/2017.

Consideration was given at the beginning of the municipal year to the report on the Development of Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Forward Work Programme was monitored and updated at each Committee meeting as a standing item on each agenda.

Key issues considered

At its meeting on June 23rd 2016, Members of the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee were presented with information on the work of the Local Access Forum (LAF) by Mr John Morgan, Chair of LAF and Mr Eifion Jones, Public Rights of Way Officer. They gave a review of progress made and drew attention to any issues of significance. It was noted that LAF's sub committees meet regularly to consider issues such as funding, volunteer works, path issues and Rights of Way Improvement Plan etc. Members agreed to note the information provided.

At the same meeting, Caroline Jones, Performance and Improvement Officer presented a report on the Sustainable Futures Executive group. The Group's priority areas include Poverty and Economic Regeneration and covers a wide range of areas including transport, climate change, economy and regeneration. She informed the meeting that, following the Group's self-assessment last year, a workshop was held where revised work-streams and measures were proposed and presented to the Public Service Board earlier this year. Further work is required within the partnership to embed partnership working and take forward actions to address issues. Members agreed to note the information provided.

On the14th July, the Chairman welcomed Mr Matthew Willis, Manager Bronglais Hospital Site to the meeting. The Committee considered a report on the Aberystwyth Park and Ride Service, presented by Mr Huw Morgan, Strategic Director for Sustainable Communities, prior to it being presented to Cabinet. It was noted that, not continuing with a new contract to service the Park and Ride Service would avoid duplication of transport provision, realise financial savings (considering that the Caradog Road hospital entrance is to close in September 2016) and that parking patterns are to change dramatically at that time due to the provision of the new expanded car park at Mill Street.
Following discussion, the Committee agreed not to accept the recommendation in the report: that a new contract servicing the current Park and Ride site is not put in place following the scheduled ending of the current contract at the end of August this year. Journey opportunities will be retained over sections of the current route by

services forming part of the wider local bus network which includes those servicing Bronglais Hospital via Penglais Road.

The Committee agreed to make the following recommendations to Cabinet:
• Further discussions take place with Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDUHB) in order to ascertain whether it's possible to continue with the Park and Ride in its current form. Currently, HDUHB have a Park and Ride service specifically for Health Board Staff located at the top of Penglais Hill.
• If the above is not possible, that the whole multi-storey car park at Bronglais Hospital is allocated to patients for appointments and that the Local Bus Network is reviewed to establish whether a service can be provided that will eliminate the need to change buses at Aberystwyth Bus Station. A robust monitoring system to be in place to ensure that patients are only allowed to park for a limited period of time and that other motorists do not use the multi-storey car park at Bronglais Hospital.

On 19th July 2016, the Cabinet met to consider the Aberystwyth Park and Ride Service. However, Cabinet did not accept the Committee's recommendation and agreed to the following decision: C56 "That a new contract servicing the current Park and Ride site is not put in place following the scheduled ending of the current contract at the end of August 2016. *Reason for decision:* To avoid duplication of transport provision and to realise financial savings."

The Cabinet decision, C56, was subsequently called-in by Councillors Dai Mason, Gareth Davies and Paul James on 28 July 2016.

Following the call in of decision C56, a Special Meeting of the Committee was convened on 9 August 2016 to re-consider Aberystwyth Park and Ride Service. Councillors Mason, Davies and James outlined their reasons for calling in the Cabinet decision:
i. That Cabinet did not have all the necessary information and that new information had come to light since.
ii. That some of the information/figures in the report to Cabinet (19 July 2016) were misleading, specifically point 2 on page 1 (Welsh version).
In response to the issue relating to the translation, it was stated that although the translation may not have fully reflected the context in the English version, that they were correct.
Following consideration, the Committee AGREED to recommend to Cabinet:
Noting that the period of current subsidy for the Park and Ride service ends in August 2016, that the Council monitors the activity of the operator; and should the operator serve notice to the Transport Commissioner to terminate the route,
then the Council seeks tenders to provide a new service for a period of 12 months.
That Committee will ensure that the (Park and Ride) service ensure that the service is continually monitored and that updates are received regularly.

Committee Members RESOLVED to refer decision C56 back to Cabinet for reconsideration, in order for the above proposal to be considered, prior to making a final decision and that Decision C56 does not become effective in the meantime.

Subsequently at a Special Meeting of the Cabinet on 23 August 2016, Cabinet accepted the Committee's recommendation and agreed to the following decision:

(i) That a new Transport contract servicing the current P&R site is not put in place following the scheduled ending of the current contract at the end of August this year.

(ii) As the period of current subsidy for the Park & Ride Service ends in August 2016, that the Council monitors the activity of the operator; and should the operator serve notice to the Transport Commissioner to terminate the route, then the Council seeks tenders to provide a new service for a period of 12 months.

At the meeting on 6th October 2016, the Ceredigion Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2015-16 was introduced to the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Anjuli Davies, Planning Policy and Research Services Manager. Rebecca Young, Planning Policy Officer delivered a presentation on the key findings and conclusion on the AMR. This was followed by a discussion and questions from the Committee.

Members noted that the local members should be more heavily involved in discussion regarding allocated sites and developments in their wards.

It was AGREED to note the contents of the report, as is required for it to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 31 October 2016, subject to the recommendation to Cabinet that the following be included within the AMR to the considerations of the Review:

• Infrastructure (particularly Transport & Sewerage) capacity to enable sites to come forward.

At its meeting on 18th October 2016, the recommendation was noted by Cabinet.

Also at the meeting on 6th October, an update report on the recommendations made in relation to Ceredigion County Council managed Car Parks was presented to the Committee by Paul Arnold, Head of Technical Services.

Members thanked staff for the comprehensive report and noted that it was pleasing to see extensive progress in a number of areas, without needing to outsource car park services.

At the same meeting a recommendation from the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group on Bus Contracts and their monitoring following the awarding of contracts was presented to the Committee.

The Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 23rd June 2016, had agreed to establish a Task and Finish group to consider the Council's learner bus contracts. Mr Paul Arnold, Head of Technical Services, Gerwyn Jones, Group Manager Local Environment Services and Shan Witts, Senior

Transport Officer provided information and delivered a presentation to the Group at their meeting on 26th September. It was noted that there are 109 contracts in total to the value of almost £3m to provide 3237 learners with transport. The procurement process and tender evaluation process was explained in detail.

The Task and Finish Group Members' concerns included the need of a streamlined process to award contracts and the lack of resources for robustly monitoring bus companies for issues such as contract compliance post award. During discussions consideration was given to reviewing the parameters for the specification surrounding the age of buses used such as companies should provide buses that are no more than ten years old for every route in the county on every day. Also, a more robust approach to monitoring occurs by either purchasing assistance or employing more in-house staff.

Following due consideration, the Task and Finish Group agreed to recommend to the Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that, as Technical Services and the CPTU in particular is considered to be under-staffed, there is a need for more staff and a more robust monitoring system along with spot checks. Furthermore, an acknowledgement of a beneficial economic activity of the County's bus companies be taken into account. The Thriving Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the content of the report and would present a report to Cabinet in due course.

On the 17th November 2017 a further report on the Former 'Park And Ride' Bus Service – Now 503 Service was presented to the committee by Paul Arnold, Head of Technical Services. It was noted that the report was being presented to the committee following the request that the service be monitored and that updates are reported to the Committee regularly.
It was noted that the report offers an update on the current position in relation to the former Park and Ride Service in Aberystwyth. It was articulated that subsidy for the service ended on 31st August 2016, however it was agreed that financial contribution to the service be provided between 1st September and 31st December, 2016. Furthermore it was noted that the service has revised its operation in the form of reduced hours, changes to charging arrangements and an amended route.
It was noted that the number of passengers using the service has significantly decreased, from 6,200 in September 2015 to just 2,600 in September 2016, and a further reduction to approximately 2,200 in October 2016.
The Committee noted:
- A range of issues are likely to have affected passenger use, in particular the Hywel Dda University Health Board staff park and ride service, allowing more patients to park in the multi-storey hospital carpark. It was noted that the opening of the Mill Street Development car park and stores are likely to have a further impact upon passenger numbers.
- That they were concerned that the service would cease at the most difficult time of year for those reliant upon the service.
- That if the service is no longer commercially viable once the additional funding is stopped on 31 December 2016 then the Operator may decide to amend other services in order to maintain some of the route and service passengers.

- The committee expressed concern that businesses on the main high street may be affected by fewer people being brought into the area by the service.
The Committee thanked Officers for their work in preparing the report.
The report was noted with an addition to the recommendation that the situation be considered again in 12 months.

Also on 17th November 2016, the Committee considered the Bus Shelters report presented by Gerwyn Jones, Group Manager Local Environment Services.
It was noted that the situation is particularly variable across the county as to the ownership of the bus shelters. The report provided Members with an update of the situation across the County.
However it was noted that the work is yet to be completed in compiling the information. Despite this, Members were informed that once the work had been completed and that the Service had as clear a picture as reasonably possible regarding the ownership of all bus shelters in Ceredigion they would then be able to consider an appropriate strategic plan.
It was noted that there is some difficulty in tracing the ownership of some bus shelters for a variety of reasons. These included that a number of shelters had been in situ for such a long time and that a number of grants had been available to place/renew bus shelters across the county. It is proving difficult in some case to source and confirm records relating to the shelters including grants and their associated conditions.
The Committee noted that:
- It was disappointing that not all Town and Community Councils had responded to Officers surveys. It was noted that local Members may be able to assist officers by contacting the Town and Community Councils in their Wards.
- Some bus shelters in the county are somewhat dilapidated and that the County Council does not have regular maintenance and cleaning plans in place.
- Given that the ownership of bus shelters is unknown then it is also unclear who would be liable if someone was to be injured in one of these bus shelters. Additionally, it is possible that neither the relevant Town and Community Council or the County Council would be covered by their insurance in this instance as their ownership over the shelter is not certain. Subsequently, it was noted that it may be necessary to consider placing the issue on the Corporate Risk Register.
- While Ceredigion County Council has a responsibility to ensure that the bus shelters are safe their aesthetic appearance, at present, taking into account the scarcity of resources is not the most important factor.
- Responsibility of the bus shelters across the county must be clarified in order to enable the Council to make a strategic decision upon the most appropriate method to move forward.

The Committee thanked Officers for their efforts in undertaking this work.
It was AGREED to note the report, with an addition to the recommendation that the issue be brought before the Committee again in Quarter 4.

At its meeting on 27th January 2017 the Committee met to consider the Budget being recommended by Cabinet for 2017/18

Consideration was given to the report that was presented to Cabinet on 17 January 2017, which provided background information on the proposed savings options for 2017/18.
Committee Members were requested to consider the service budgets, its cost pressures and savings (including the assessed risk) and the proposals required for 2017/18 for those service areas that were within the remit of this Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the event of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee not agreeing with the savings proposals (within its remit) for 2017/18, alternative savings proposals should be proposed for consideration by Cabinet.

Following discussion, the Committee reached the following conclusions: Technical Service – Target Savings - £468k
1. Full year effect of surrender of Brewery Car Park lease including ancillary costs - £53k
2. Natural termination of Tanygroes lease - £15k
3. Reduction in gratuities (contribution to Pension Fund) for former Highways Operatives - £21k
4. Removal of Portacabin facility at Penmorfa - £7k
5. Increased Fees and Charges for services (as agreed by Cabinet 29/11/16) - £81k
6. Cessation of joint use of software system with Powys County Council - £22k
7. Accommodation review - Minaeron disposal - £117k
8. Achieved saving as result of Learner Travel route optimisation - £64k
9. Potential disposal of surplus assets- Adpar LDO - £15k
10.Benefit of renegotiated waste management opportunity with contractor - £10k
11.Energy efficiency/ reduced usage in various offices - £35k
12.Reduction in funding for Regional Transport Partnerships by utilising other grant opportunities - £10k
13.Reduction in Contribution to Rail Partnership - £4k
14.Re-introduction of vacancy factor for staffing - £14k

The Committee AGREED to the proposed savings.

Following the report presented on the county's Bus Shelters in November, an update report was presented, as agreed, to the committee by Gerwyn Jones, Group Manager – Local Environment Services at the Committee's meeting on 9th March 2017. Since November further efforts had been made to contact Town and Community Councils in Ceredigion in order to uncover ownership of shelters in the county.

The Committee noted that:
- 42 of the 51 Town and Community Councils had responded to Officers requests. Subsequent data analysis shows that 90 (28%) are believed to be owned by Ceredigion County Council; 125 (38%) were stated to be owned by Town/Community Councils; and the ownership of 111 (34%) bus shelters is unknown.
- The innovative vinyl wrapping approach identified by officers has proven successful in areas across the county.
- In respect of shelters who's ownership remained unconfirmed that the Authority, as currently, would respond to issues as and when identified. This could

include the removal of shelters that were deemed to be life expired and / or unsafe. In such circumstances it was unlikely that the shelter would be replaced as there is no budget provision for this.

- The grey vinyl wrapping is translucent providing light in the shelter and allowing users to see approaching buses.
- The green vinyl wrapping offers an opportunity for the advertisement of Council messages/projects and to others.
- Officers noted that at present the vinyl wrapping is applied to Ceredigion County Council owned shelters only; however it may be possible to provide Town/Community Councils with the contact details of the external contractors. Alternatively, if interest proves substantial it may be possible for Ceredigion County Council to arrange with the contractor for multiple shelters to be wrapped at once on behalf of the Town/Community Councils, thus proving more cost effective.

Members requested that the list of the nine Town/Community Councils that have not provided a response to Officers be distributed to the Committee. Officers noted that further correspondence would be sent to those Town/Community Councils and Local Member in a final attempt to uncover the ownership of bus shelters in the county.

The Committee commended officers for their innovative approach to resolving a county wide issue despite constraining finances.

It was AGREED to note the report.

At the same meeting the committee welcomed Mike Shaw, Group Manager – Community Regeneration and Europe to present information on 'The effect of the withdrawal from the European Union on European Grant Aid' which provided an update on the current situation, and the possible impact of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union.

The Committee noted that:

- The situation surrounding the exit from the European Union is ever-changing and the update outlined some of the difficulties in estimating the effect European transition may have upon the United Kingdom; Wales; and, Ceredigion.
- Ceredigion currently receives a high level of European funding (approximately £750 per capita per annum) in comparison with other areas of the U.K., for example England, where approximately £45 per capita per annum is received.
- Documents published by the Welsh Government and U.K Government suggest differences in the initial statements for the outcome of European transition discussions.
- It was noted that there appeared to be little discussion regarding the position of rural areas and the challenges faced by those areas like Ceredigion in the wider statements about European transition.

It was AGREED to note the report.

The Committee also received a report on the Catering Service by Chris Macey, Head of Educational Finance & Resources and Nia James, Resource Manager.

The Committee noted that:

- The cost of food for primary school meals per pupil had decreased by 16% (from 75p to 63p per meal) in April 2015, which resulted in savings of £67,000 following changes to menus and ingredients.
- The price of school meals increased by 5 pence in September 2016, and will increase a further 10 pence (from £2.35 to £2.45) in September 2017.
- A reduction in cook and catering assistant hours has resulted in £70,796 savings being achieved.
- Following the removal of free staff meals in schools and social care premises a severe reduction in meal uptake has been seen.

The Committee raised concerns over increasing the price of school meals a further 10 pence in September 2017, given that the report suggests that there was a significant decrease in pupils having school meals following the increase of 5 pence in September 2016. Members were concerned that those unable to afford the increased price of school means would likely be those most affected by welfare reform and poverty. Subsequently, additional effort should be placed on encouraging the uptake of free school meals by those eligible.

It was AGREED to note the report and recommend to the Cabinet meeting on May 30th 2017 that Cabinet reconsider the increasing school meal prices by 10 pence from September 2017.

Corporate Performance Management Panel

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees attend the Corporate Performance Management Panel.

This provides a forum where members of the CPM panel come together to:

- obtain a holistic view of the Council's performance;
- identify and explore high level cross-cutting issues that affect more than one service area e.g. the welfare reform;
- critically challenge areas of poor performance; and
- identify service improvement opportunities, risks to service delivery, and resource implications.

This allows the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be able to identify topics which require further attention by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and for its inclusion on the Forward Work Programme of the Committee.

Dwynwen Jones, Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer
Kay Davies, Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer (temporary)