

# Complete Agenda

# CABINET

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD

<b>DATE</b>	Tuesday, 11th March, 2025
<b>TIME</b>	1.00 pm
<b>LOCATION</b>	Hybrid Meeting - Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon LL55 1SH and on Zoom  This Meeting will be webcast <a href="https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core/portal/home">https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core/portal/home</a>
<b>CONTACT POINT</b>	Sioned Mai Jones  01286 679665 / cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

### GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Nia Wyn Jeffreys	Council Leader
Menna Trenholme	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Paul John Rowlinson	Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
June Jones	Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy
R Medwyn Hughes	Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Dewi Jones	Cabinet Member for Education
Huw Wyn Jones	Cabinet Member for Finance
Llio Elenid Owen	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Legal
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Environment

## AGENDA

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## THE CABINET, TUESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2025

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### **Present-**

Councillors: Nia Jeffreys, Menna Trenholme, Craig ab Iago, R. Medwyn Hughes, Dewi Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, June Jones, Llio Elenid Owen and Paul Rowlinson.

### **Also present-**

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Geraint Owen (Corporate Director), Dylan Owen, (Statutory Director of Social Services), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance) and Sioned Mai Jones (Democracy Team Leader).

- Item 6: Bethan Richardson (Climate Change Programme Manager).
- Item 7-8: Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education Department).
- Item 11: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department).
- Item 12: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Department) and Heledd Fflur Jones (Planning Policy Team Leader)
- Item 14: Ian Jones (Head of Corporate Services Department) and Catrin Love (Assistant Head of Corporate Services).

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting by the Leader.

A tribute was paid to Dafydd Elis-Thomas and condolences were extended to his family in their grief. It was expressed that Dafydd's contribution to the nation and language had been invaluable, as well as his contribution to Wales. The Leader added that she had known Dafydd since the 90's and that it was a privilege to have known him.

Apologies were received from Councillor Dilwyn Morgan.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

Item 7: Councillors Llio Elenid Owen and Menna Trenholme declared they were authority-appointed Governors of Ysgol Llandwrog and Ysgol Bontnewydd. In addition, it was noted that Councillor Menna Trenholme had children at Ysgol Bontnewydd. This was not a prejudicial interest and therefore they did not withdraw from the meeting.

## **3. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

## **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

## **5. MINUTES**

The minutes of meetings held on 21 January 2025 were accepted as a true record.



## **6. 2023/24 CLIMATE AND NATURE EMERGENCY PLAN ANNUAL REPORT**

The report was submitted by Councillor Nia Jeffreys.

### **DECISION**

To approve the 2023/24 Cyngor Gwynedd Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Climate Change Programme Manager was welcomed to the meeting and she was thanked for her management of the programme and for a comprehensive report. The background to the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan was provided, stating that responding to the climate change crisis was one of 8 improvement priorities within the Council Plan (2023-28). It was noted that this report was the second annual report to be submitted since the Plan's inception at the start of the 2023/23 year and that the report had already been submitted before the Communities Scrutiny Committee in January.

Cabinet Members were guided through the report noting that carbon emission reductions were achieved during the year. It was noted that Cyngor Gwynedd's carbon emissions had fallen by 37% if procurement was ruled out. It was added that there had been a reduction of 16% since 2019/20 if procurement was included in the figures. It was noted that this difference was true of all organisations across the country.

It was noted that a number of exciting projects were underway such as investing in an electric minibus to provide transport to schools. Reference was made to the important task of changing behaviour, which was not always easy. It was noted that despite the progress, much work remained to ensure a greener future for Gwynedd.

Reference was made to the financial risk, and it was explained that a £3m Climate Plan fund had been set up through the one-off revenue bid process. It was elaborated that there was £792,015 left in the fund with £2,207,984 spent or set aside to be spent. It was explained that the Council had added money from several different funds towards the £3m over the years as well as having been very successful with grants which resulted in an additional £6m for the Plan.

It was explained that the report referred to headlines about other specific plans such as the Green Fleet plan to convert Council vehicles from diesel to electric vehicles to save carbon and money for the Council. Reference was also made to a successful grant application where confirmation had been received yesterday about the success of the application to undertake work on Plas Ogwen residential care home. It was noted that the Council had attracted £1.7 million grant monies towards converting the building and improving its energy performance. The Council would also contribute towards this plan and the energy conservation unit was congratulated.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Congratulations were extended on the work undertaken so far.

- The view was expressed that the Council had tackled the easiest changes first and this had led to significant reductions at the start of the process. It was pointed out that the reduction in emissions had slowed down since 2022/23 with only a 1% increase being made in the reductions. It was thought that progress would slow down when moving forward to more difficult schemes and this may lead to the risk of not reaching the 0% target by 2030.
- It was thought that it was difficult for Local Authorities to prioritise this work because no funding was received from the Welsh Government in terms of revenue towards the work area. It was hoped that the Council's success in being able to attract grants would continue.
- It was thought that difficult decisions would have to be made in the long run by Cabinet Members when the time comes to complete a review of the upcoming scheme which will recognise the cost and recognise how little money is being received for this area. There was concern that a decision will need to be made between this area or other Council responsibilities.
- It was asked what other projects were in the pipeline and if comparisons could be made with what other Councils are doing.
  - In response it was noted that a review was underway to look at all projects on Gwynedd's register and new ideas that had been submitted by Departments as well as new ideas received by looking at the activity of other external bodies. It was noted that these schemes needed to be assessed to establish their practicality, cost and how much carbon they would save. This information will need to be shared with Cabinet Members shortly to prioritise and see how many of the schemes can be funded. Any new ideas were welcomed.

## 7. REVIEW OF THE YSGOL FELINWENDA CATCHMENT AREA

The report was submitted by Councillor Dewi Jones

### DECISION

The responses received to the consultation on reviewing the Ysgol Felinwenda catchment area were considered, as well as the evaluation of the options presented in the report. It was resolved to approve the preferred option, namely: *'Option 2: Transfer the entire Felinwenda catchment area to the catchment area of Ysgol Bontnewydd'*

### DISCUSSION

The report was submitted highlighting Appendix 5, namely the Local Member's comments. It was noted that the Local Member had apologised that he could not attend but was very keen to convey his comments. Cabinet Members were reminded that these comments would need to be taken into account when making today's decision.

It was noted that this report was part of the forward planning and noted that a consultation and evaluation of all options had taken place. Following this Option 2 was suggested as the preferred option, noting that Officers from the Education Department and the Cabinet Member for Education were of the opinion that this was the most suitable option.

It was noted that this option would enable all Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area learners to stay together and the option aligned with the current choice of the majority of catchment learners with 57% already choosing to attend Ysgol Bontnewydd. It was anticipated that this option would offer lower transportation costs than all other options except for option 3. It was expressed that due consideration had been given to the financial element although the financial element was not the main consideration in making the decision.

It was confirmed that, in accordance with Council Policy, parents had the right to enrol their children in any school with empty places. It was noted that establishing a catchment area did not mean that the Council required any child to go to a particular school. It was commented that the promise that the Council would provide transport for former Ysgol Felinwnda pupils to the school of their choice for the duration of their primary school remained.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was recognised that this decision was difficult, and it was hard to please everyone.
- Assurances were sought that parents would be given the choice of which school to send their children to if the school of their choice was in another catchment area.
  - It was confirmed that this was correct and that parents were entitled to enrol their children in any school provided there were empty places in the school in question.
- Disappointment was expressed that transferring the Felinwnda catchment area to Ysgol Llandwrog was not the recommendation and strong disagreement was expressed with the option before the Cabinet. Reference was made to the link that had existed between Ysgol Felinwnda and Ysgol Llandwrog for years and the points of the Local Member were echoed who also disagreed with the recommendation. There was concern that this recommendation would result in a negative impact on Cylch Meithrin Dinas and Llanwnda. It was confirmed that the Cabinet Member would vote against the decision today based on these reasons.
- The Council's vow on page 59 of the report to continue to offer transport to children in the area was welcomed.
  - It was stressed that any former pupil would continue to receive transport while they remained in primary school.
- It was expressed that the Education Department continued to support Ysgol Llandwrog.
- It was noted that education and children must be put ahead of the future of any school.
- It was believed that there would be no negative impact on the Cylch Meithrin adding that the Education Department was very supportive of the Cylch Meithrin and wished to see it continue to succeed and for the close relationship between Cylch Meithrin Llanwnda and Ysgol Llandwrog to continue.

## **8. YSGOL GYNRADD NEBO AND YSGOL BALADEULYN**

The report was submitted by Councillor Dewi Jones

### **DECISION**

It was agreed to commence formal discussions with the Governing Body and relevant stakeholders of Ysgol Gynradd Nebo, discussing the potential options relating to the school's future as a result of a low number of learners and the concerns about the school's sustainability.

It was agreed to commence formal discussions with the Governing Body and relevant stakeholders of Ysgol Baladeulyn, discussing the potential options relating to the school's future because of a low number of learners and the concerns about the school's sustainability.

## **DISCUSSION**

Reference was made to the severity of the County's demographic shifts with the ageing population and the number of children in the County decreasing annually. It was acknowledged that there had been successful efforts by the Council to attract young people back to Gwynedd to live but the problem of the reduction in the number of children in the County remained.

The report was submitted asking the Cabinet to initiate formal discussions relating to the future of Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Baladeulyn due to low numbers of learners and concerns about the sustainability of both schools. It was confirmed that the Education Department would look at the two schools separately.

Reference was made to the background and what had led to the initiation of these discussions as noted in the report. It was stated that 10 full-time learners currently attended Ysgol Gynradd Nebo with one child in the nursery class. This meant that there was 80% empty places at the school. A similar situation was reported at Ysgol Baladeulyn with 13 full-time learners currently attending school and only one child in the nursery class. It was noted that this corresponded to 76% of empty places at the school when looking at the school's capacity.

Reference was made to the per capita cost per learner for both schools, which was significantly higher than the County average; almost three times the cost.

The Head of Education added that if the Cabinet approved the decision sought today, then discussions would take place with the schools over the coming months. He noted that an impact assessment would be conducted following those discussions on each of the possible options. It was explained that the items would come back before the Cabinet in June with the local feedback and the outcome of the discussions in order to discuss next steps.

There were no observations or questions.

## **9. SAVINGS AND CUTS PLAN 2025/26**

The report was submitted by Councillor Nia Jeffreys.

## **DECISION**

To approve the savings and cuts listed in Appendix A (£519k) to be used as a contribution towards our 2025/26 fiscal gap, and commission the Departments to move forward with implementing the plans while pointing out the issues highlighted in the report.

It was approved to delegate the right to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader and the Finance Cabinet Member, to make adjustments to this Savings and Cuts Plan within the Departmental totals as the maturity of the schemes listed in Appendix A develop, within the fiscal totals.

## **DISCUSSION**

The report was submitted stating that the Council now knew what the Revenue Support Grant level from the Welsh Government would be for 2025/26 and that it would be significantly lower than what was needed to maintain our current level of services. As a result of this and other factors e.g. Departmental overspending and increased staffing costs, it was reported that detailed work has been carried out to identify opportunities for savings or cuts.

Reference was made to the financial briefing sessions held for all elected members in January 2025 to prioritise savings cuts for 2025/26. It was added that this report was submitted to the Governance and Audit Committee last week and that the Committee had noted the contents of the report.

It was elaborated that the settlement was better than what had been predicted last year but that the Council's financial position remained very poor with a significant gap to fill. It was noted that the £3.5 million of cuts determined last year were already in the system. It was added that there were no further efficiency savings that could be made and therefore cuts of £519,000 had been identified as listed in Appendix A.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Concern was expressed about the negative comments received by the Council, staff and Members in public e.g. on social media, and there was concern about the impact these comments were having on officers. It was added that Cyngor Gwynedd was lucky and better placed than many other Councils and were doing their best to protect services for the people of the County.
- The opportunity was taken to thank Council staff who were working hard and trying to achieve more but with fewer resources.

## **10. 2025/26 BUDGET**

The report was submitted by Councillor Huw Wyn Jones.

## **DECISION**

To recommend to the Council (at its meeting on 6 March 2025) that a budget of £355,243,800 should be established for 2025/26 to be funded by a £246,818,190 Government Grant and £108,425,610 of Council Tax income (which is an increase of 8.66%).

To recommend to the Council (at its meeting on 6 March 2025) that a capital programme of £53,736,190 should be established for 2025/26 to be funded from the sources noted in Appendix 4 of the report.

## DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that the budget was an attempt to invest in services that catered for the most vulnerable, such as adult social services and care services for children. This will be done by investing to reduce waiting lists and trying to rectify budgets that could not be invested in previously. The Finance Department were thanked for their hard work in preparing the budget.

A presentation summarising the main points of the report was shared. Reference was made to the overspend totalling £8.3 million with almost £7 million coming from the care services namely Adult, Health and Well-being and Children and Families. It was thought that this was partly due to people living longer with more intensive conditions, and it was noted that addressing these requirements were costly.

Reference was made to the revenue bids noting that £6.8 million has already been approved and many had also received support or were new issues in 2025/26. It was noted that this meant that a total of £7.7 million of additional resources needed to be found. Taking into account the increase in levies, salary inflation and an increase in the employer's national insurance, it was noted that the Council's total additional expenditure was £24 million.

It was confirmed by considering the basic budget and the additional expenditure and income from the Welsh Government Grant, that there was a financial gap of £109 million to be funded from savings and Council Tax. It was noted that after including the savings there was a residual gap to be addressed through Council Tax of £108,45,610. It was elaborated that Council Tax would have to be increased by 8.66% to meet this figure. It was acknowledged that this was not good news but that there were few other options.

The Head of Finance referred to Appendix 10, namely a statutory finance officer's statement on the resilience of the estimates and he elaborated that he was confident that the budgets submitted were sound and adequate.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Gratitude was expressed for the presentation, and it was noted that the slides presented were of assistance to understand the figures.
- Reference was made to the costly services such as adults and school costs and it was noted that they are not obvious services but very costly ones to maintain.
  - The Cabinet Member reiterated that the Department had not disrupted the Education budget too much this year. It caused concern that County residents do not see the care work unless they are a care recipient and therefore do not understand how expensive it is.
- It was expressed that there was no pleasure in suggesting increases in Council Tax. It was added that Council Tax reduction schemes were available.

- The Head of Finance elaborated that there were limits to qualifying for this scheme but took the opportunity to note that it was important for those eligible to make a claim for any benefits or discounts.

## **11. MODIFICATION TO THE COUNCIL PLAN**

The report was submitted by Councillor Nia Jeffreys.

### **DECISION**

It was approved to add the Domiciliary Care project to the list of projects under the Gwynedd caring priority area in the Council's Plan 2023 – 2028.

### **DISCUSSION**

The report was submitted stating that the application stemmed from the finding and recommendation of the Adult Services Inspections that have been undertaken over the past few months. It was elaborated that Care Inspectorate Wales and the Welsh Audit Office carried out the inspections of care services provided by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department during the months of October and November 2024. In addition to this it was mentioned that the audit by the Welsh Local Government Association had taken place during the same period.

The findings of the inspections were detailed, and it was noted that the 3 organisations highlighted that domiciliary care issues should receive greater attention in the Council's strategic programmes. It was also noted that this topic should be given priority by being included in the Council's Plan. It was thought that this would help to deliver and provide a foundation for the issues, and it was important to include it as one of the Department's priorities. It was noted that the Caring Gwynedd priority field within the Council's Plan was an important one and this is where the home care field would be included. The next steps of introducing this modification were highlighted to a meeting of the Full Council on 6 March.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Gratitude was expressed for the report and it was welcomed that such an important area should be given more priority in the Council's Plan.

## **12. DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: MANAGING THE USE OF DWELLINGS AS HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION**

The report was submitted by the Assistant Head of Department.

### **DECISION**

The Draft SPG: Managing the Use of Dwellings as Holiday Accommodation (Second Homes and Short-Term Holiday Accommodation), was considered and comments were provided as well as any necessary amendments as appropriate.

Approval was given to release the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: Managing the Use of Dwellings as Holiday Accommodation (subject to any necessary amendments) for a public consultation period.

It was approved to delegate the right to the Head of the Environment Department to make any non-material amendments that may be required to the draft SPG.

## **DISCUSSION**

The report was submitted stating that the Article 4 Direction came into effect on 1 September 2024 following its confirmation at the Cabinet meeting of 16 July, 2024. Reference was made to the implications of the Article 4 Direction stating that planning permission is now required to be obtained for certain change of use developments. It was explained that the decisions on those applications were made in accordance with the Joint Local Development Plan namely the adopted plan for the area. It was explained that this was the statutory requirement as a result of recent legislative changes.

It was noted that the Department was in the process of preparing a new plan and that the work of creating new policies was currently underway. It was explained that the intention of the Draft Supplementary Planning Guide included in Appendix 1 was to provide detailed guidance as to the application of the Department's current planning policies that emanate from the Article 4 direction. It was deemed that this Guidance will aid the Authority in making decisions on planning applications.

It was added that the Guidance needed to be consistent with the Council's current planning policies and provide clear guidance. It was noted that the draft Guidance had already been reported to the Planning Policy Working Group twice with reference to the Working Group's comments included in part 3.7 of the report.

It was noted that the Guidance was effectively a temporary measure until the Department had completed the process of developing and adopting the new Local Development Plan. Reference was made on part 3.8 of the report which outlined the next steps in the process and undertaking a public consultation period of 6 weeks.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- The Assistant Head of Department was asked to elaborate on the role of the Working Group and their input.
  - In response it was explained that a draft version of the Supplementary Planning Guidance had been submitted to the Working Group in November 2024. It was noted that the Working Group had concerns about the guidance included for applications to change the use of a house to a second home; as a result of these concerns amendments were made to the Guidance. It was reported that the Working Group was pleased with the changes reported to them in December 2024 and supported releasing the Guidance for public consultation.

## **13. TRANSFER OF THE NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL TO THE NORTH WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE**



The report was submitted by the Monitoring Officer.

## DECISION

- (1) It was agreed to draw up a Partnering and Funding Agreement (Appendix 1) whereby the role of the Accountable Body, the responsibility for achieving the North Wales Growth Deal and the funding arrangements for the Growth Deal are transferred to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee on or before 31 March 2025.
- (2) It was agreed to novate and assign as required the delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal and rights and obligations in all incoming funding agreements held by Cyngor Gwynedd as an Accountable Body on behalf of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board ("NWEAB") transfer to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee ("NWCJC").
- (3) It was agreed to transfer and novate and/or assign all interests in the portfolio of projects funded by the North Wales Growth Deal, together with any ancillary agreements, charges and leases from Cyngor Gwynedd as an Accountable Body on behalf of the NWEAB to the NWCJC.
- (4) It was agreed to transfer and / or assignment of all financial balances, monies due and assets as held on behalf of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board by Cyngor Gwynedd to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.
- (5) It was agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer, to agree and execute the final form agreements, deeds and all other legal documents necessary to implement the transfers referred to in paragraphs (1), (2) and (3) above.
- (6) On completion of the Partnership and Funding Agreement, it was agreed to terminate the GA2 agreement and to the winding up of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board Joint Committee.
- (7) It was agreed to transfer accountability to the CJC and that the CJC accepts responsibility for decision making for the implementation of the North Wales Growth Deal subject to novation of the Growth Deal and approval of the additional Standing Orders Page 251 incorporating the key terms of the Joint Working Agreement ("GA2") between the six Constituent Councils and the four Education parties. An additional 251 incorporating the key terms of the Co-working Agreement ("GA2") between the 6 Constituent Councils and the 4 Education parties.

## DISCUSSION

The report was submitted highlighting that it was a very technical report. The background was provided with reference to the decision to invest public funds in the region back in 2020 and the establishment of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee in 2021. It was explained that the CJC currently has three distinct functions namely the development of regional transport policies, the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan and the Economic Well-being work. It was noted that there was a

decision in principle across the six authorities in North Wales to transfer the Growth Plan to the CJC.

Reference was made to the delay in moving the project forward and in setting up the CJC and the reasons for the delay such as the regulations and the system for the Corporate Joint Committee which were continuing to develop. It was highlighted that a project team was working on transferring the Growth Deal to the CJC; this will ultimately mean Gwynedd would be able to step back from the host authority role. It was explained that the grants would transfer to the responsibility of the CJC but Scrutiny would remain with the Councils.

It was explained that a similar report would be submitted before the Cabinet of other Councils soon and before the two universities to agree to transfer on 31 March 2025. It was noted that Cyngor Gwynedd was the first Council to make the decision.

There were no observations or questions.

#### **14. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE AND LEGAL SERVICES**

The report was submitted by Councillor Llio Elenid Owen.

##### **DECISION**

To accept and note the information in the report.

##### **DISCUSSION**

The report providing an update on what had happened recently presented in the Corporate and Legal Services Department. It was expressed that the Corporate Services Department was leading on six projects within the different priority areas of the Council's Plan 2023-28 namely Keeping the Benefit Local, Women In Leadership, Ensuring Fairness for All, Workforce Planning, Promoting the Use of the Welsh Language by Gwynedd Residents and a Strategic Review of Health and Safety Management. A summary was provided on what had been achieved to date within these projects.

It was highlighted that the Corporate Services Department was performing well and reference was made to some of the highlights as set out in part 5 of the report. In conclusion, reference was made to the Department's financial position.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Reference was made to the Legal Service Performance Report and it was noted that it was encouraging to see the benefits of Cynllun Yfory.
- Concern was expressed about the reference to the appointment of a locum and the externalisation of work, further details were requested about the number of locums used by the Service and if they are able to undertake work in Welsh. It was also asked about the recruitment challenges and any resulting financial risks.

- In response it was confirmed that the staffing position had transformed for the better in the last two years. It was noted that a position was currently being advertised and the hope was that they could appoint.
- It was confirmed that the recruitment situation had improved and that this had led to a reduction in the Service's use of locums.
- It was noted that the Service was now able to recruit by offering a short-term contract rather than employing a locum.
- It was expressed that efforts were being made to use Welsh-speaking locums although it was recognised that these were scarce.
- It was explained that many issues and cases were open by the Legal team and that the use of locums allowed them to bridge gaps to cope with the work. It was added that the nature of the work was specialised with certain technical areas and that there was not enough of the work to appoint but that specific expertise was required for a period of time so that an element of locums use was inevitable.
- An update was requested on the effort to try to get more staff on board with the Equality Forum.
  - It was expressed that the initial work of finding out what the interest was had been carried out and an invitation had been sent to staff. It was noted that there was strong interest among staff and that the Department was waiting to see what the response would be following sending out a second invitation last week.
- Congratulations were expressed on the success of the Women in Leadership programme, and it was noted that it was pleasing to see the progress. The differences were highlighted in the division of men and women between Departments and between job tiers. It was questioned if it was timely to evaluate the programme and compare the differences between Departments to see what works well to continue to learn and look at new ways to push this long-term agenda forward.
  - In response it was noted that the data was constantly being updated. Reference was made to a new year-long regime of requests for Service Manager level positions or above to be submitted anonymously in an attempt to remove any unconscious bias. It was reported that 50% of appointments over the past year to Service Manager positions or above had been filled by women and this was very encouraging. It was further added that more women than men submitted an application form for the posts and that this was a vital part of the work of the Women in Leadership programme which was to encourage women to apply.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 3.00 pm.

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**CHAIR**

## REPORT TO THE CABINET

11 MARCH 2025

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Nia Jeffreys, Council Leader

**Subject:** One-off Bids 2025/26

**Contact officer:** Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive

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### 1. Decision sought

- 1.1 Subject to a decision on the Budget, the Cabinet is requested to approve the one-off bids of £2,057,260 for 2025/26 to be funded from:
- £1,557,260 of additional funding in the final settlement announced by the Welsh Government on 20 February 2025.
  - £500,000 from the Council Tax Premium for the purpose of temporary accommodation for homeless people.
- 1.2 Following the Welsh Government's recent announcement that there will be additional funding for the care area, subject to the details and conditions of this grant, the source will be used to fund the bids in the care area.

### 2. The reason why a decision is needed

The bids for one-off resources are presented in a separate report to the Budget report, as the allocation of one-off resources does not have an impact on setting our annual revenue budget and is not a consideration when setting the Council Tax rate. This report is submitted prior to the start of the 2025/26 financial year so that it can be implemented from 1 April 2025.

### 3. Introduction / Background

- 3.1 Council departments are invited annually to submit bids for one-off resources for matters such as addressing temporary pressures, delivering projects within the Council Plan, transforming services or investigations to examine whether it makes sense to provide a permanent budget.
- 3.2 Although the departments have submitted several bids, it has been necessary to prioritise and limit the bids to be approved in order to ensure that they can be accommodated within the available funding.
- 3.3 The one-off bids are normally funded from the Transformation / Council Plan Fund. This fund was used in its entirety last year and therefore this source is not available to fund any bids this year. If one-off bids are to be funded in future, consideration will need to be given to how this transformation budget can be replenished as opportunities arise.

- 3.4 In addition, the Financial Strategy Reserve, which is the only other source of funds not committed for specific matters, has already reduced from £26M to £13.5M this year due to the demands on the fund to address departmental overspends.
- 3.5 As we were preparing to set our budget for 2025/26, we were aware at the time that we were likely to receive additional funding to what was announced in the Local Government draft settlement before Christmas. Therefore, rather than including one-off revenue expenditure in the draft revenue budget which was submitted to the Governance and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny and then to the Cabinet for a decision, and therefore increasing our financial gap (and as a result pushing the Council tax higher than would be necessary) we left the task of considering how to fund these one-off spending requirements until we received the final settlement.
- 3.6 We have now received confirmation that additional funding has now been allocated by the Welsh Government and therefore this funding is available as a contribution towards the cost of funding the one-off bids contained in this report.
- 3.7 The Welsh Government has also announced that there will likely be an additional grant to assist with additional pressure in the care area in 25 / 26. Details of the amount of additional funds or grant conditions have not been shared so far but if the opportunity arises, it is suggested that it be used to replace the bids in the care area. Funds can then be released for the following year's revenue needs.
- 3.8 This means that our decision not to include these requirements within the draft budget, and as a result to increase the Council Tax requirement higher than necessary, has been responsible and sensible. The additional money has been incorporated into the Budget which will be presented to the Council on March 6th for the specific purpose of funding one-off bids (with a residual sum of around £14,000 placed in a risk fund).

#### 4. One-off Bids 2025/26

- 4.1 The bids received have been assessed by both directors, the Head of Finance and myself. Paragraph 4.2 provides details of the one-off bids recommended to receive financial support for 2025/26.
- 4.2 It is recommended that seven bids are approved, with a value of £2,057,260 as listed in **Table 1** below. The additional funding in the settlement is to be used as a source to fund the value of £1,557,260 of these bids.

**Table 1 One-off Revenue Bids 2025/26**

	Bid Title	Amount recommended (£)
<b>Education Department</b>		
One-off 1	Education Transport – school buses, taxi transport and trains	939,160
<b>Corporate Services Department</b>		
One-off 2	Alcohol and drugs random testing	6,500

One-off 3	Establish a staff safety system for lone workers attending high-risk locations	57,600
One-off 4	Reconcile equated pay rates	339,000
<b>Housing and Property Department</b>		
One-off 5	Homelessness emergency accommodation costs	500,000
<b>Children Department</b>		
One-off 6	Additional workers as a result of receiving Asylum Seekers Without Parents as part of the National Transfer Scheme	115,000
<b>Adults Department</b>		
One-off 7	Supported Accommodation – Adults with Disabilities	100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,057,260</b>

4.3 As has already been explained in this report, our reserves have decreased significantly and it is necessary to try to stabilise them. There were several references to this by the Members of the Governance and Scrutiny Committee as they discussed cuts and the 26/27 budget at their meeting on February 6th, with several suggestions that we should consider using any additional money on top of the draft settlement in order to protect our funds when setting a budget for the coming year. What is recommended in this report is therefore in line with that aspiration.

4.4 That leaves a residual sum of £500,000 for which a funding source will need to be identified. There is a bid for this sum in the homelessness field, specifically to finance overspend on temporary accommodation costs. £3M a year from the Council tax Premium is already being used to fund these costs and therefore it is appropriate to fund the £500K one-off sum from the same source.

## 5. Conclusion

5.1 Following approval of the bids set out in Part 1 of the report, the funding will be earmarked for the purpose so that Departments can implement their expenditure on services during the 2025/26 financial year.

5.2 When preparing the following year's budget (2026/27) it will be necessary to revisit these areas in order to establish whether permanent provisions need to be made or whether it is possible to release the amount that has been designated this year for other priorities when starting to set the 2026/27 budget.

### Local member's views

Not relevant

## **Views of the statutory officers**

### **Monitoring Officer:**

It is noted in the report that the decision sought reflects the final settlement announced by the Government on the 20th of February. The ability to support these bids is therefore subject to the Council's decision to adopt the recommended Budget.

### **Head of Finance Department:**

Officers from the Finance Department have collaborated closely with the author of the report, and I can confirm the accuracy of the figures contained therein. Subject to the decision of the Council on 6 March to allocate the additional settlement funding towards the one-off bids, I am satisfied that adequate resources have been identified, as shown in part 3.5, to finance the one-off bids shown in Table 1.

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## CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

<b>Title of Item:</b>	Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – Panel Performance Assessment
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Nia Jeffreys
<b>Relevant officer:</b>	Dewi Wyn Jones, the Council's Business Support Service Manager
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	11 March 2025

### 1. Decision sought:

To agree on a timetable to carry out a Panel Performance Assessment during the week of 9 March 2026.

### 2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision:

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act places a responsibility on Councils to carry out a Performance Assessment by a Panel once within an election cycle. The duty came into force in May 2022.

### 3. Introduction and Rationale

#### 3.1 Background / Introduction

As noted above, the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act places a responsibility on Councils to carry out a Performance Assessment by a Panel once within an election cycle.

It is noted that the Council has the freedom to determine who should carry out and coordinate the panel assessment and to determine its timing, therefore guidance is required on this. It is necessary to follow three statutory duties when carrying out a panel assessment:

- Prepare (specify the scope, terms of reference, membership etc.)
- Assess (carry out the assessment, present findings)
- Follow-up step (draw up the final report, the council's response)

After the Full Council adopted changes to the Constitution in relation to the Panel Performance Assessment on 28 September 2023, the function was set to arrange and appoint a panel with the Cabinet but that the response to the report and the recommendations would be retained for the Full Council.

This duty is linked to the duty of holding annual performance self-assessments. Similarly, the panel assessment will look specifically at the extent to which the Council:

- exercises its functions effectively:



- uses its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively: and
- has robust governance arrangements in place for securing the above.

You are reminded that the Cabinet has already discussed the Panel Performance Assessment at its meetings on 7 November 2023 and 17 September 2024 and that many of the decisions have already been made. Here is a list of these decisions:

- Carry out a Panel Performance Assessment during the Autumn 2024 term, commissioning the Welsh Local Government Association to support the work.
- Approve the content of the draft Panel Performance Assessment Scoping Document and the fields that have been identified for the Panel to look at them.
- Delegate the right to determine the Panel membership, paying due regard to the Welsh Local Government Association's advice to the Leader in consultation with the Chief Executive.

As there wasn't a Leader in place and the fact that there were many vacant seats on the Cabinet in November 2024, it was decided to postpone the Performance Assessment by a Panel with the intention of carrying it out at a convenient time during 2025/26.

Consequently, the Cabinet needs to agree on a new timetable to carry out the assessment. In doing so, there will be a need to consider the commitments that the Welsh Local Government Association already have to support councils across Wales and the need for the final report to be approved by the Full Council at least 6 months before the next local government elections in Wales in May 2027.

### 3.2 What will the Panel Assessment be looking at?

It is a matter for the Council to determine the scope of the work, considering any challenges that have been highlighted in self-assessments, audits by external auditors and matters on our risk register.

The assessment will look at evidence to allow the panel members to come to a conclusion regarding the extent to which the Council addresses the 3 performance requirements below. The table below notes the performance requirements, as well as the lead principles for the requirements noted in the Draft Methodology that has been published by the Welsh Local Government Association. The Panel will then need to consider a series of questions under different themes.

<b>Performance Requirement One: The extent to which the Council exercises its functions effectively.</b>
<b>Lead Principle: The council is self-aware and is able to show that it exercises its functions in accordance with the local, regional and national context. Where improvements are required, suitable interventions have been designated without delay, and they should fulfil the desired results.</b>
<b>Considerations for the Panel</b> Questions on the themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Corporate Planning and Service Planning</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> </ul>

<b>Performance Requirement Two: The extent to which the council uses its resources prudently, effectively and efficiently.</b>
<b>Lead Principle: Resources are aligned effectively to facilitate the council to fulfil its objectives and statutory functions and the council is able to show that it ensures value for money.</b>
<b>Considerations for the Panel</b> Questions on the themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Planning and Service Planning</li> <li>• Digital and data</li> <li>• Financial Planning</li> <li>• The Workforce</li> <li>• Procurement</li> <li>• Risk and Assurance</li> <li>• Assets</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Requirement Three: The extent to which the council has robust governance arrangements in place to ensure performance requirements one and two.</b>
<b>Lead Principle: There are robust and clear governance arrangements, that encourage an open and transparent culture which welcomes scrutiny processes and constructive challenging.</b>
<b>Considerations for the Panel</b> Questions on the themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Organisational culture</li> <li>• Financial Governance</li> <li>• The Ability to Improve</li> </ul>

In addition, there is an opportunity for the Council to identify fields where consideration from the Panel would be welcomed. There is a list below of the fields that the Cabinet has already determined would be beneficial for the Panel to look at as part of the assessment (note that the Governance Group and the Audit and Governance Committee has been part of the process of identifying these fields). In order to ensure that we get the most benefit from the Panel's visit and they add value to our work, it is suggested that they focus mainly on the matters that have been coloured in yellow on the list:

- Capacity/ability to fulfil our priorities for the future – are the resources aligned with our priorities?
- Leadership and organisational governance – how effective is this politically and managerially and is it supported by governance arrangements and make robust decisions? Do they allow the Council to respond to challenges by changing and transforming in order to respond to the challenges?
- Do we have suitable arrangements in place to measure how we provide services to customers/residents?
- Prove the efficiency of our plans or projects within the current Council Plan
- Carry out an assessment of the core matters within the requirements of the Act:
  - Exercises its functions effectively
  - Uses its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively; and
  - Has robust governance arrangements in place to ensure the above

- Look at the extent to which the Council's culture and our way of working (Ffordd Gwynedd) has permeated within the organisation and the difference it has made.
- To what extent have we incorporated the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act in our work?
- The Council's self-assessments and arrangements to respond to matters that need to be improved
- Look at our work and plans in the fields of workforce planning, succession planning and managerial progression, suggesting any improvements.

There is a draft copy of the Scoping Document for the Statutory Panel Performance Assessment in **Appendix 1**. *(Note that this is the document prepared for the assessment in November 2024, so it will need to be updated at the end of 2025.)*

Should the Cabinet agree with the timetable suggested in terms of carrying out the assessment, it is suggested that we revisit the fields above at the end of 2025 to ensure that we continue to be up to date.

The assessment will be a combination of desk top work, as well as interviews and work on site. As part of the assessment, it is likely that the Panel will be eager to meet a wide range of members, officers and stakeholders, namely the Leader, every Cabinet Member, Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Department, various Focus Groups and officers and partner organisations.

It is noted that there is no expectation for the Council to prepare any additional material for the assessment, but the panel will need access to a number of information sources and documents that already exist, such as the Performance Reports, Self-assessments and the annual Governance Statement.

During the period of the assessment, daily feedback will be given by the Chief Executive and the Leader on the progress of the work.

At the end of the assessment, there will be a presentation on the main findings and the recommendations will be presented. In addition, a written report will be presented (where the Council will have an opportunity to check its factual accuracy) and the Council is responsible for publishing the final report.

The Council will also need to prepare a response to the report and the recommendations as noted in the statutory guidelines.

### **3.3 The Panel and timing of the review**

As already mentioned, the assessment had to be postponed in November 2024. The availability of the team within the Welsh Local Government Association (who will be supporting the work) is quite limited over the next few months as a result of commitments that they already have to support other councils across Wales. Consequently, it is

suggested to carry out the assessment during the second week of March 2026 (week commencing 9 March).

We will have prepared 4 self-assessments by then and we should be in a position to be able to present the final report, as well as the Council's response to the Full Council in July 2026.

The panel is likely to include 4 people, including an independent Chair; counterparts from the broader voluntary, private or public sector; senior local government officer who is currently in post (Chief Executive or Director level) and a senior elected member (from outside the Council).

Discussions have already been held with the Welsh Local Government Association regarding proposed members for the Panel, with some potential members having been identified with necessary expertise and skills. There will be a need to ensure that the individuals are available on the dates in question and that their expertise continues to be relevant to the fields that the assessment will look at. It is therefore suggested that we wait until we have confirmed the final scope for the assessment before confirming the Panel members.

We have received assurance that the Panel members for us will be able to speak Welsh (although it is likely that there would be fewer potential members). The Improvement/Contact Officer will also be able to speak Welsh.

The preparation work will take place before the Panel's 'on site' period with the Council to gather all the required documents and make the necessary arrangements. It is likely that the Panel members will be eager to conduct interviews/discussion sessions with elected members and key officers.

### **3.4 Next steps**

After receiving the Cabinet's approval for the amended timetable, we will inform the Welsh Local Government Association to be able to move forward with the work. Over the next few months, we will confirm the final scope for the assessment and the Panel members.

## **4. Statutory Officers Observations**

### **4.1 Chief Finance Officer**

Conducting a panel assessment as described in the report is a statutory requirement. I have no comments to add from the perspective of financial propriety.

### **4.2 Monitoring Officer**

The first Panel assessment for Gwynedd Council represents one main element of the new performance regime created in Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. I can confirm that the modifications to the Constitution set out in the report are operative. With delay and re-organisation of a timetable it is appropriate that Cabinet has an opportunity to review the arrangements and in particular the date of the assessment. It is noted in the report that decisions for organising the Panel have already been made.

**List of Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** – Scope Document for the Statutory Panel Performance Assessment



Statutory Panel Performance Assessment Scoping  
Document  
Cyngor Gwynedd 2024/25

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  - Population and Demography
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  - Public Services Board
  - Governance Statement
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  - Organisation and Workforce Design
7. Improvement Priorities and Planned Actions

## 1. Introduction

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on Councils to conduct a Panel Performance Assessment **once** within an electoral cycle. The duty came into force in May 2022.

Three statutory duties must be followed when carrying out a panel assessment:

- Preparation (determine the scope, terms of reference, membership, etc.)
- Assessment (carry out the assessment, present findings)
- Follow-up (draw up the final report, the Council's response)

This duty is linked to the duty of holding annual performance self-assessments. Similarly, the panel assessment will look specifically at the extent to which the Council:

- exercises its functions effectively;
- is using its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively; and
- has robust governance arrangements in place for securing the above.

The assessment will consider evidence to enable panel members to reach conclusions on the degree to which the Council meets the three performance requirements noted above.

After consulting the Council's Management Team and Cabinet Members the Cabinet decided that Cyngor Gwynedd's Statutory Panel Performance Assessment should be carried out during October 2024. We will have prepared three self-assessment cycles by that point and the timescale should give us time to conduct the assessment and put steps in place to respond and implement any recommendations made, by the next local government elections in 2027.

The Panel review will look at the self-assessments already prepared by the Council over recent years. As part of preparing for the assessment, consideration has been given to the areas for which we as a Council are keen to obtain impartial views or feedback from an independent panel. A list of these matters can be found in **part 7 of this document**.

It is hoped that the assessment will result in a number of recommendations that will add value and lead to improvements in the Council's work and the services provided to the county's residents. We welcome the external and independent challenge as one of the ways in which we can ensure that we make a lasting improvement.

Given the current challenges we face, we are keen for the assessment to focus on the core questions outlined above. The [Council Plan](#) has been adopted for the period 2023-28 (reviewed in 2024) and a [Financial Strategy](#) is in place (with a Medium-term Financial Strategy being developed) but we are keen to strike the right balance between our ambition and the constraints that exist and we would appreciate feedback on how that can be done in a sustainable way into the future.

In recent years we have faced a number of unprecedented major challenges such as the pandemic, Brexit, the cost-of-living crisis and the financial pressures on us as local authorities and it is anticipated that this situation is likely to continue into the future.



## 2. Overview of Place

Gwynedd is one of the most diverse and beautiful areas of Wales, and is a stronghold of the Welsh language.

It covers an area of 2,535km<sup>2</sup> making it the second largest county in Wales by land area. It shares borders with the counties of Conwy, Denbighshire, Powys, Ceredigion and Anglesey. 80% of Wales's largest National Park, Eryri National Park, is in the Gwynedd area.

### Population and Demography

In 2021, there were 117,393 people living in Gwynedd – a 3.7% reduction on the population in 2011 (121,874). Over the whole of Wales there has been a 1.4% increase in population for the same period.

Ardal	Poblogaeth 2021	Poblogaeth 2011	+/- %
Ardal Pen Llŷn	7,796	8,524	-8.5%
Ardal Porthmadog / Penrhyndeudraeth	9,759	10,323	-5.5%
Bro Ardudwy	6,331	7,157	-11.5%
Bro Dysynni	6,946	7,514	-7.6%
Bro Ffestiniog	6,077	6,479	-6.2%
Bro Lleu / Nantlle	9,659	9,665	-0.1%
Bro Ogwen	8,213	8,351	-1.7%
Bro Peris	11,374	11,685	-2.7%
Dalgylch Bala / Penllyn	4,422	4,362	1.4%
Dalgylch Bangor	20,486	21,092	-2.9%
Dalgylch Caernarfon	11,082	10,777	2.8%
Dalgylch Dolgellau	5,234	5,477	-4.4%
Dalgylch Pwllheli	9,994	10,468	-4.5%
<b>Gwynedd</b>	<b>117,393*</b>	<b>121,874</b>	<b>-3.7%</b>

\* Ffigyrau'r ardaloedd unigol ddim yn adio i union gyfanswm Gwynedd oherwydd dull y Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol o addasu rhywfaint ar ffigyrau ardaloedd bychan i warchod cyfrinachedd

The figures of individual areas do not add up to the exact Gwynedd total due to the Office for National Statistics' method of adjusting the figures for small areas to some extent, to protect confidentiality

15.3% of people in Gwynedd are under the age of 15, compared to 16.5% throughout Wales. 23.3% of people in Gwynedd are aged 65 or over, compared to 21.3% throughout Wales. It is anticipated that there will be a significant increase (42%) in the number of 75+ year olds across the County by the year 2043 which means that we need to support an ageing population and ensure that individuals stay healthy for longer for the benefit of the economy and health and care services. The largest percentage increase is likely to be in the Bala and Penllyn areas of (57.5%) and the Tywyn area with the smallest percentage increase of 17%.

### The Welsh Language

On the day of the 2021 Census there were 73,560 people (aged 3+) able to speak Welsh in Gwynedd which equates to 64.4%. In 2011, the equivalent percentage was 65.4%.

## **Housing**

Housing prices and affordability are a major concern amongst local communities across the county and is likely to have a negative impact on the social, cultural, linguistic and economic well-being of areas. Another concern highlighted by communities is the second / holiday home situation.

This was highlighted by county residents during the Ardal Ni 2035 public engagement exercise with these issues identified as one of the top five priorities in each of the 13 local regeneration areas used during the exercise.

## **Tourism**

Based on the STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Assessment Model) figures, prior to the Covid-19 period, the tourism sector had grown to contribute over £1.35bn to the Gwynedd economy and employed over 18,200 people with 7.81m visitors visiting annually. The tourism sector is undoubtedly important to Gwynedd's economy, however, tourism can also create additional pressures on public services and the natural world

Covid-19 has had a negative impact on the country's accommodation and food sector as a result of the restrictions, and this has been more pronounced in tourism-dependent areas.

## **Local Climate Challenges**

In March 2019, Cyngor Gwynedd announced that we were facing a climate change emergency and committed to taking decisive action to reduce carbon emissions and strive for a zero-carbon future.

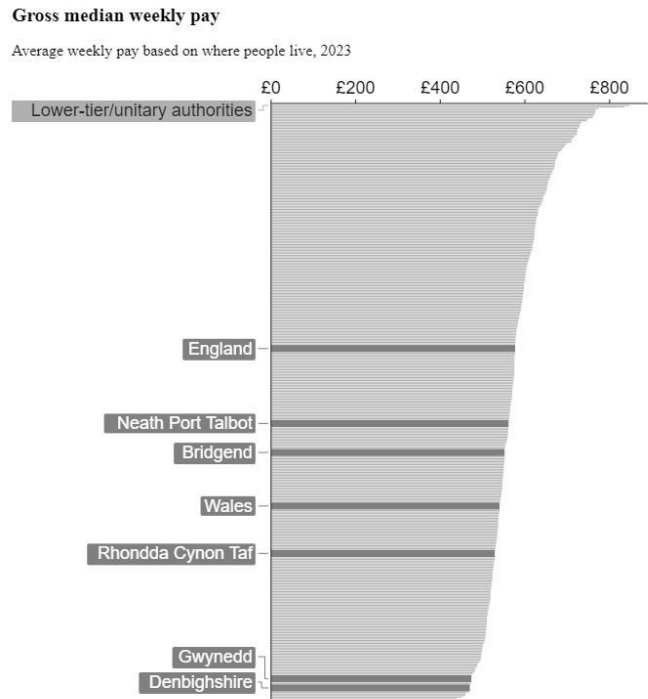
The intention of the [Climate and Nature Emergency Plan](#) is to outline the actions that we will take between 2022 and 2030 to reach the aim of being a net-zero carbon council.

Parts of Gwynedd face a very uncertain future as sea levels increase, and it is anticipated that some communities will have to relocate over the next few years due to climate changes, while others will face constant threats.

With a much higher proportion of coastline compared to other counties in Wales, one of the most noticeable side effects of climate change is flooding. In Gwynedd, 11,285 properties are currently at risk of flooding / are protected from flooding.

Economy

The latest ONS statistics (2023) show that Gwynedd's wages are among the lowest in Britain:

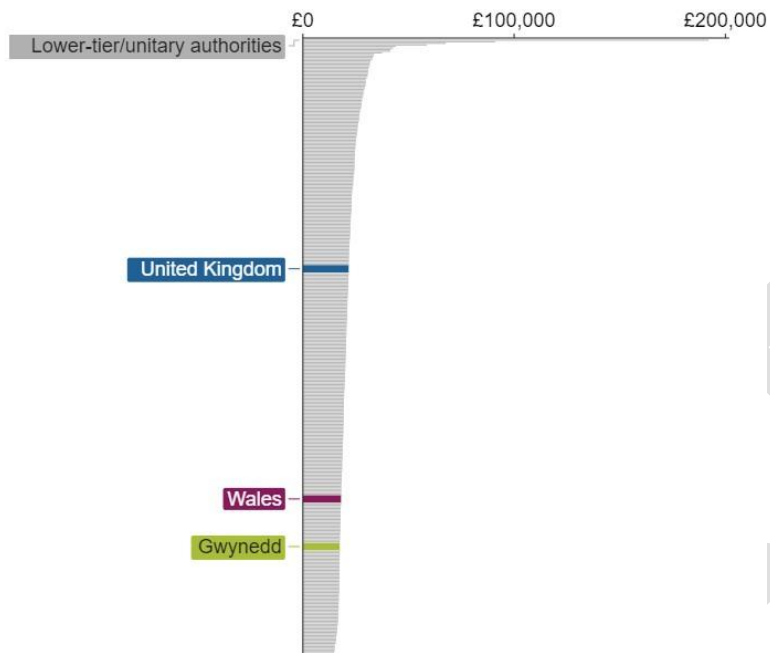


Source: [Office for National Statistics](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)

In addition, annual household income in Gwynedd is among the lowest in Britain (£17,430) according to the latest ONS data 2021:

**Gross disposable household income**

Average income per person after taxes and direct benefits, 2021



Source: [Office for National Statistics](#)

### 3. Vision for the Area and Local Priorities

#### Council Plan

The [Council Plan 2023-28](#) was originally adopted by the Full Council at its meeting on 2 March 2023. The Plan is our public statement as a Council of what we intend to achieve for the people of Gwynedd. It states our vision and ambition for the five years together with the projects we will deliver. The Plan was reviewed for 2024/2025. The purpose of reviewing the Plan is to look at where we have reached after a year of implementation, as well as to make sure we continue to do the right things. The Full Council agreed on the review of the Plan at its meeting on 7 March 2024. Full details of the review can be found on our [website](#).

Following extensive consultation with the people of Gwynedd as part of the [Ardal Ni 2035](#) plan, together with a number of discussions and feedback from the county's residents and beyond, a series of priorities and projects were formed that will allow us to further develop and improve the services provided to the people of Gwynedd. Naturally, only a proportion of the Council's activities is seen in the Council Plan, and the day-to-day work of providing services continues throughout the county.

We are aiming high over the next five years and working hard to reach every ambition set out for the priorities in the plan. To do this, we will review the plan regularly and determine milestones for each project to allow us to measure our progress on an annual basis.

The Plan comprises a series of projects for the five years 2023-2028 under seven priority areas:

- **Tomorrow's Gwynedd**  
*Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life*
- **A Prosperous Gwynedd**  
*Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary*
- **A Homely Gwynedd**  
*Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities*
- **A Caring Gwynedd**  
*Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities*
- **A Welsh Gwynedd**  
*Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community.*
- **A Green Gwynedd**  
*Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis*
- **An Efficient Gwynedd**  
*Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently*

The priority areas are our Well-being Objectives under the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The objectives will directly contribute to achieving the seven national well-being goals. These are difficult times financially and there is no doubt that it will be a challenge for the Council to deliver all of the projects on time. We will, however, be aiming high over the

next five years and working hard to reach every ambition set out for the priorities in the plan. To do this, we will review the plan regularly and determine milestones for each project to allow us to measure our progress on an annual basis.

Performance challenge and support arrangements are in place to report on the progress of the projects every two months to the relevant Cabinet Member and the Chief Executive/Corporate Director. Furthermore, a performance report is published by individual Cabinet Members twice a year which includes the progress of Council Plan projects [*enclose a document containing information about our performance challenge and support arrangements*].

It is noted that it is early days in terms of implementing the Council Plan but an overview report of the progress of all projects submitted to the Leadership Team on 23 April 2024 shows that 24 projects out of 36 (67%) achieved what was stated for the year with the remaining 12 partially achieved [*link to the overview report*]. Steps are already in place to agree milestones for year 2 and the remainder of the Plan period to try to ensure that we are able to achieve what has been set out by the end of the Plan period.

Following the [Ardal Ni](#) engagement process 13 individual regeneration plans have been developed which reflect the aspirations of local communities in Gwynedd. The Plans can be found on the [Ardal Ni 2035 website](#). The vision for the Local Regeneration Plans is based on the following:

*“Develop and support healthy, thriving and vibrant sustainable communities that have the confidence to venture and the desire and ability to contribute their own solutions to local needs and to take advantage of new opportunities.”*

### **Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board**

The Board has a vision that public services work together to ensure that our communities thrive and flourish in the long term. The [Well-being Plan 2023-2028](#) outlines how this will be achieved and will make a real difference to the lives of Gwynedd and Anglesey residents.

Using the evidence in the local [Well-being Assessments](#) in 2022 (research undertaken to understand and learn more about the well-being of areas within Gwynedd and Anglesey), as well as running workshops and consulting locally, here are the Board's three Well-being Objectives for 2023-2028:

- We will work together to mitigate the effect of poverty on the well-being of our communities.
- We will work together to improve the well-being and achievement of our children and young people to realise their full potential.
- We will work together to support our services and communities to move towards Zero Net Carbon.

### **The Welsh Language**

The Welsh language is a permanent priority for the Board and we promote it in all aspects of our work. The Public Services Board is an opportunity to share good practice, promote the language and ensure that residents of both counties have access to all public services through the medium of Welsh.

A copy of the Well-being Plan for 2023-2028 can be found on the [Public Services Board's website](#).

Since the launch of the Well-being Plan for 2023-2028, the Board has embarked on the work of preparing annual delivery plans that follow Whole System and Healthy Weight/Healthy Wales methodology. Furthermore, IAITH: the Welsh language planning centre was appointed by the Board's Welsh language sub-group to investigate the challenges and successes of bilingual workforce planning among organisations that make up the three North Wales Public Service Boards. IAITH was asked to examine why public organisations across north Wales are struggling to recruit staff to Welsh-speaking posts, and whether the answer lay within the recruitment processes themselves.

Work has also commenced to collaborate on the Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales Strategy, working on a Whole System Approach and promoting and implementing the North Wales Healthy Travel Charter (including collaborating on energy use in public sector settings infrastructure).

The Council is part of the North Wales Ambition Board, which works to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the region. The Board has developed a Growth Deal, with the intention of generating an investment of more than £1 billion for north Wales.

Cyngor Gwynedd is also part of the North Wales Regional Partnership Board. This was established as part of the Social Services and Well-being Act to improve the well-being of the population and improve the delivery of health and care services. It brings together health services, social services, the third sector and other partners to coordinate the ongoing process of transforming and integrating health, social care and well-being services across the region.

## 4. Political and Organisational Leadership

Cyngor Gwynedd consists of 69 Councillors who are elected every five years. 69 Councillors serve on the Full Council and the Council operates through a Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees system. The Council is led by Plaid Cymru. Here is the Council's current political composition:

Plaid Cymru: 46  
Independent: 21  
Labour/Liberal Group: 2  
Total: 69

Changes to several of the electoral wards took place in advance of the Election in 2022, reducing the number of wards from 75 to 69. This has meant changing the boundaries of wards as well as increasing the number of multi-member wards.

**The Full Council:** The Full Council is a formal meeting of all Councillors. It is at the meetings that they set the budget each year and approve a number of key plans and strategies that form the Council's overall Policy Framework. The Council meets five times a year and the meetings are open to the public and are webcast live to ensure access for all.

**The Cabinet:** The Cabinet includes ten Councillors and is chaired by the Leader of the Council. Each of the Members has a specific portfolio of responsibility for fields within the Council's services (Corporate Support; Education; Finance; Environment; Adults, Health and Well-being; Children and Supporting Families; Housing; Highways, Engineering and YGC). The Leader of the Council is [Councillor Nia Jeffreys](#) (Porthmadog: East). [Councillor Menna Trenholme](#) (Bontnewydd) is the Deputy Leader.

**The Chair of the Council:** Cyngor Gwynedd elects a Chair and Vice-chair every 12 months at its annual meeting. The Chair presides over Council meetings and represents Cyngor Gwynedd at civic and ceremonial events. At Cyngor Gwynedd's annual meeting on 9 May 2024, [Councillor Beca Roberts](#) (Tregarth and Mynydd Llandygái) was elected Chair of Cyngor Gwynedd and [Councillor Ioan Thomas](#) (Menai (Caernarfon)) was elected Vice-chair.

**Scrutiny Committees:** There are three Scrutiny Committees in Gwynedd, all of them meeting at least five times a year:

- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- Communities Scrutiny Committee
- Care Scrutiny Committee

### Corporate Leadership Team

The Corporate Leadership Team is the Council's most senior management tier. It includes the Chief Executive, the two Corporate Directors, the Departmental Heads and the Monitoring Officer, and is responsible for realising the Council's strategic priorities as well as ensuring effective governance.



Dafydd Gibbard is the Chief Executive, the most senior officer, and is responsible for all the staff employed directly by the Council. He was appointed to his post in May 2021. The role of the Chief Executive includes:

- **Leadership:** Working with the Council's Elected Members to ensure strong and visible leadership and direction. Encouraging and enabling managers to motivate and inspire their staff to achieve objectives agreed by the Council.
- **Strategic direction:** Realising the strategic priorities set by the Council's Elected Members and stakeholders, by ensuring that staff understand these and follow them.
- **Policy advice:** Acting as the principal policy adviser to Elected Members of the Council.
- **Partnerships:** Leading and developing strong partnerships with other public services, businesses and voluntary groups across Gwynedd and beyond to improve the quality of life in the county.
- **Governance:** Overseeing and coordinating financial and performance management, risk management, and managing change within the Council.

There are four departments in the Chief Executive's portfolio. In these areas, the Chief Executive leads on strategic work as well as on performance challenge arrangements.

- Economy and Community
- Environment
- Housing and Property
- Education

The Corporate Directors delegate for and support the Chief Executive. They are responsible for the departments noted below. Here, the Corporate Directors lead on strategic work as well as on performance challenge arrangements.

Huw Dylan Owen is the Corporate Director (Social Services). He was appointed to his post in October 2022.

The following departments are in this Director's portfolio:

- Children and Supporting Families
- Adults, Health and Well-being

Geraint Owen is the second Corporate Director; he was appointed to his post in August 2022.

The following departments are in this Director's portfolio:

- Corporate Support
- Finance and IT
- Legal Services
- Highways, Engineering and YGC

## 5. Governance

The Council generally has a suitable governance system in place. The Council's Constitution is a public document which sets out the governance arrangements, and guidance is provided to reinforce this. The Governance Arrangements Assessment Group retains an overview of governance issues within the Council. The Group comprises the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Head of Corporate Support, Assistant Head of Corporate Support, the Risk and Insurance Manager and the Council's Business Support Service Manager.

The Governance and Audit Committee has a continuous role in the process of providing good governance. The core purpose of the committee is to provide independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework and associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects its exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.

In carrying out its work, the Committee has regard to the guidelines of various external bodies and organisations including CIPFA. The Governance and Audit Committee consists of 12 Councillors based on political balance, along with six 'lay members', namely a person who is not a local authority member.

In addition, the Council publishes an annual Governance Statement outlining our governance arrangements and their effectiveness following the principles of the CIPFA/Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework. A copy of the latest version of the Council's Governance Statement can be found here – Governance Statement [\[Need to include a link to the document\]](#)

The Corporate Risk Register [\[link to the register or a copy of it\]](#) contains 25 Governance risks. These risk scores indicate that two governance fields present a very high risk, four are high risks and 11 are medium risks. A summary of the very high-level and high-level risks can be seen below:

### Very high Risk

- Finance - Weaknesses in managing public money
- Safeguarding – Failure to protect children from misuse of reasonable force in schools

### High Risk

- Culture - That an inappropriate culture within the Council hinders our ability to do the right things in the correct manner.
- Information - Failure to maximise the potential of information when supporting the business of the Council and failure to meet statutory requirements.
- Health, Safety and Well-being - Unsafe arrangements and action by Council Services to manage health and safety risks effectively.
- Customer Contact - A lack of timely response to enquiries.

Actions are in place to respond to these risks.

Past self-assessments and recent reports from Audit Wales identified engagement and improved participation as an area to receive attention and actions have been put in place to respond. This includes trying to improve how we share information and raise awareness of the work of the Council together with having more and better diversity of representation (including individuals and groups with protected characteristics) when we engage and consult.

As part of our response, a [Participation Strategy](#) was published in 2023, explaining how we encourage local people to become involved in the Council's decision-making processes.

The Council's public participation strategy describes how the Council will:

- promote an awareness of the Council's functions;
- promote an awareness of how people can become Councillors and what the role entails;
- facilitate access to information about decisions made, or to be made, by the Council;
- promote the arrangements whereby people can make representations to the Council about the decisions it has made or will make in the future;
- ensure that public opinion is brought to the attention of its Oversight and Scrutiny Committees;
- promote awareness among Councillors of the advantages of using social media to communicate with local people.

We also welcome formal questions from the public at meetings of the full Council. There are specific arrangements for that, including giving adequate written notice in advance.

## 6. Resource Management and Culture

### Finance

At the meeting of the [Full Council on 7 March 2024](#) Cyngor Gwynedd's budget for 2024/25 was set. The revenue budget of £331,814,710 is to be funded by £233,316,780 of Government Grant and £98,497,930 Council Tax income (which is an increase of 9.54% on the income of individual households). At the same time, a capital programme of £85,224,800 in 2024/25 was established and the Council's decision included approving the methods of funding the programme.

This budget has been set at a time when Welsh local authorities are facing financial challenges, particularly in the context of overall inflation having reached levels in 2022/23 and 2023/24 unprecedented for decades, the impact of which has worked its way through to the 2024/25 budget.

The report submitted to the Council highlighted that our spending would need to be increased by £22.7m by 2024/25 just to "stand still". However, an increase of £5.1m was received in external funding (with an additional £639k to reflect the transfer of responsibilities to the settlement previously funded through specific grants).

The report found that pressures of demand on services as well as inflation pressures indicated that a combination of Council Tax increases and the introduction of a new programme of savings and cuts must be considered if a balanced budget is to be set for 2024/25. The budget for 2024/25 attempts to protect the services that the Council provides to the people of Gwynedd, and the Council's decision was a 9.54% increase in Council Tax to achieve that objective this year. Even then, we will need to look for additional savings and use funds to set a balanced budget, and projections suggest there will be further pressures in aiming to set a balanced budget for 2025/26.

Savings that have been identified have been subject to consultation with Council members in a series of workshops in October 2023. The draft budget was considered by a majority of Council members at a financial situation briefing session held on 16 January 2024, and was scrutinised by the Governance and Audit Committee on 8 February 2024 before the Cabinet considered its recommendation to the Council on 20 February, 2024.

The 2024/25 budget includes a significant proportion of savings that have slipped from previous years, some that were identified when setting the 2023/24 budget as well as new savings.

### Procurement Priorities

The Procurement Team provides advice and support to services, and ensures that the organisation adheres to its Procurement Regulations. The team aims to strengthen and develop the procurement expertise within the Council, adopt best practice in the field and support the local market. There are also Category Management arrangements (Environment, Corporate and People) in place in order to look at procurement strategically and put more emphasis on conducting a thorough analysis of the market, encouraging more collaboration.

The Council has already adopted a [Sustainable Procurement Policy](#) that is in line with the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. By adopting the Policy, it is intended to consider the potential social, economic and environmental impact that our procurement decisions can have and what steps can be taken to maximise the use of Council expenditure, for the benefit of the county.

### **Organisation and Workforce Design**

In order to ensure that the residents of Gwynedd receive the best possible services, we have a responsibility to ensure that our internal operational arrangements are always of the highest standard. Our ambition in the Council Plan 2023-28 for an Efficient Gwynedd is:

- To promote a culture of open and inclusive working which always puts the needs of the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do.
- To provide adequate and suitable staffing resources for delivering services.
- To be an organisation that looks after our workforce's well-being and embeds the principles of equality naturally in all parts of the organisation.
- To make the best use of all financial resources.

The main aim of the Workforce Planning project within the Council Plan is to ensure that the Council has an adequate supply of qualified staff to enable it to provide services to the county's residents, and that we can ensure that that supply is in place for the long term. We will address specific staff recruitment issues in key fields such as in the social care and education field.

The Council's vision for the 2023-28 period identifies the need to establish and implement a [Digital Plan \(need English link\)](#) as one of its main improvement objectives in the "Efficient Gwynedd" priority area. This priority area forms one of our seven well-being objectives for the period in question, and the Digital Plan has a key role to play in laying the foundations to realise each of the other six objectives as well. At a time that is financially challenging, our use of digital technology and our ability to deliver the projects within this Plan will play a key role in the provision of public services for the people of Gwynedd in the future.

There are further details on other Efficient Gwynedd projects addressing organisation and workforce design within the Council Plan 2023-28 available [here](#).

**Ffordd Gwynedd** is the name given to the “way of working” that we in Cyngor Gwynedd have adopted in order to place the people of the county at the heart of everything we do. It is neither a process nor a theory, rather a collection of working arrangements, behaviours and culture which, together, allow us to be confident that we always consider the service from the perspective of the user.

Developing this culture means that we need to remove the obstacles that prevent our employees from delivering and that this leads to a continuous challenge in terms of the way that we work. It means working across the Council's internal structural boundaries in order to deliver what is needed, creating and maintaining a work environment that includes everyone. It also promotes and supports the mental and physical well-being of our workers as well as respecting the key operational principles in the context of equality and language.

Further information can be found in this booklet: [Ffordd Gwynedd 2023-2028](#) ([need to update to English link](#))

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## 7. Improvement Priorities and Planned Actions

Each year we as a Council publish an Annual Performance Report to explain, in a clear and balanced way, what we have achieved over the previous year.

The Cyngor Gwynedd Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2022/23 evaluates how we have responded to the priorities that were published in the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2018-23: 2022/23 Review (Council Plan). Copies of previous annual performance reports are available [\[here\]](#).

As previously stated, we measure our performance continuously throughout the year and Cabinet Members present reports to Cabinet meetings twice a year (in addition to the Annual Report) describing progress. Members of the Council's Scrutiny Committees are also involved in this ongoing process of performance challenge. The Annual Performance Report brings these progress reports together and evaluates success over the year.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the Council to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the performance requirements, and our Self-assessment for 2022/23 can be found in Part 3 of the Report.

By the time the Performance Assessment by a Panel takes place we will have completed three self-assessments and identified improvements as part of that process while also putting actions in place to respond to the issues highlighted.

An Assurance and Risk Assessment session is held annually between the Council and the main regulatory bodies (Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn). The session is an opportunity to discuss assurance, risks and any topics for consideration when regulators formulate their programmes for the coming year. A list of the main issues (assurance and risk) highlighted at the session held on 4 February 2025 can be found here – [\[link to the assurance and risk document\]](#).

In recent years a number of major changes were seen such as Brexit, the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the financial crisis which have resulted in very challenging years for the Council, a situation that is likely to continue into the future. It is felt that it is timely for us to take stock of where we are at and to receive independent feedback on the progress of our work against our priorities and recommendations together with what we can do to improve.

The Council has considered what the Panel Assessment should focus on and considers that the following issues should be looked at whilst prioritising the ones highlighted:

- Capacity/ability to be delivering our priorities to the future – are resources aligned with our priorities?
- Organisational leadership and governance – how effective is this politically and managerially and is it supported by strong governance and decision-making processes? Do they allow the Council to respond to challenges by changing and transforming in order to meet the challenges?

- Do we have suitable arrangements in place to measure how we deliver services to customers/residents?
- Testing the effectiveness of our plans or projects within the current Council Plan.
- Carry out an assessment of the core issues within the requirements of the Act:
  - Exercises its functions effectively
  - Uses its resources prudently, efficiently and effectively; and
  - Has robust governance arrangements in place for securing the above.
- Look at the extent to which the culture of the Council and our way of working (Ffordd Gwynedd) has permeated the organisation and the difference it has made.
- To what extent have we incorporated the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act into our work?
- Council self-assessments and arrangements to respond to the issues that need improvement.
- Look at our work and plans in the areas of workforce planning, succession planning and managerial progression and suggest any improvements. (Governance and Scrutiny Committee Suggestion)



## GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



### Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 11/03/2025  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Paul Rowlinson  
**Contact Officer:** Carys Fôn Williams, Head of Housing and Property Department  
**Contact Telephone Number:** 3436  
**Title of Item:** Leasing of the former Abersoch School site to Menter Rabar

#### 1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

To use powers under General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 to lease Ysgol Abersoch site directly to Menter Rabar for less than market rent, to realise social, economic and environmental benefits.

#### 2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the powers of General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003.

#### 3 INTRODUCTION

Following reports submitted to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on 28 September 2021 and 9 November 2021, Ysgol Abersoch was closed on 31 December 2021. Consequently, and in line with the School Buildings Post-use Policy, Menter Rabar was established as a community (not-for-profit) group to create a facility for the benefit of the local community, with the aspiration of securing community use for the site.

Menter Rabar has submitted an application to undertake a long-term lease of Ysgol Abersoch for a nominal sum to establish a multi-purpose Community Hub. The enterprise has been successful in securing grant funding to carry out the first phase of the refurbishment work and is keen to move forward with making the scheme a reality.

#### 4 THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

At its meeting on 15 September 2009 the Council Board adopted the School Buildings Post-use Policy. The Policy recognised that reorganisation schemes are likely to lead to situations where school premises will be disposed of in accordance with the usual principles, disposal policies and statutory requirements.

However, the Post-use Policy also gives the communities affected when a school closes, a fair opportunity to consider drawing up a business plan to support taking over the premises.

A consultation was undertaken by Menter Rabar to gather the views of the community on what they would like to see at the School. The results of that survey, along with those of respondents from Abersoch to the Cyngor Gwynedd 'Ardal Ni 2035' survey (2022), Cyngor Gwynedd's Childcare Needs survey (July 2023) and discussions with stakeholders, have been considered as Menter Rabar sets about developing a business plan for the site.

A business plan was received from Menter Rabar during 2024, together with a request to take on the lease of the school site for a period of 99 years for a nominal amount in order to develop a Multi-Purpose Community Hub which would incorporate the following:

- Community café.
- Heritage exhibition.
- A multi-use room to host activities and courses.
- Business units to be let.
- Community garden.

The application was subject to Menter Rabar's ability to secure funding sources and planning permission to enable it to realise the scheme.

Planning permission was secured in December 2024, and the total cost of realising the development as a whole is projected to be in the region of £595,000. Menter Rabar has been successful in its bid for £300,000 from the Welsh Government's Community Facilities Programme fund and an additional £100,000 has been raised through various sources. This sum of £400,000 will be sufficient to cover the costs of renovating the building, and to fund the initial running costs of the enterprise. The enterprise is now in the process of bidding for further funding to realise the second phase of the development work, which is the installation of the heritage space and business units.

The Welsh Government's willingness to release the £300,000 grant money is conditional on Menter Rabar receiving a long-term Lease from Cyngor Gwynedd, and the enterprise's Business Plan shows that the project would not be viable if a commercial rent was charged for the building.

The Council is legally entitled in accordance with the powers of General Disposal Consent (April) 2003 to dispose for less than market rent in cases where economic, social or environmental benefits are provided.

It is considered that disposal directly to Menter Rabar for the development of the HUB would facilitate the following benefits:-

Economic Benefits:

- Promote and advance the local economy creating space for businesses that will support entrepreneurs.

- Create new permanent and seasonal jobs in the area.
- Potential to attract visitors and income from outside the area.
- Any remaining profits will be invested in further projects creating a positive economic cycle.

#### Social Benefits:

- Provide a destination for the community providing opportunities to network and develop new skills through the activities offered.
- Potential to support diverse generations of the community by offering services that will support families, promote inclusion, and support health and well-being.
- Raise awareness of the culture and heritage of the area and promote the Welsh language.

#### Environmental Benefits:

- Contribute towards a healthier local environment, conserve biodiversity and encourage sustainable food practices by providing a community garden in the centre of the village.
- Reduce Carbon footprint by improving the building's energy efficiency, providing charging points for electric cars, and creating a central location for the community for various activities and services.

Accepting the recommendation and using the powers of General Disposal Consent (April) 2003 to vary from the General Disposal Policy and Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, would mean waiving the opportunity to sell the property and generate a capital receipt.

If the property was sold on the open market, we consider the open market value to be around £150,000.

Cabinet members therefore need to carefully weigh up the social, environmental and economic benefits against the potential financial loss.

It should be noted that the intention is to lease the property. Menter Rabar intends to invest significantly in the property, and should the scheme fail for any reason, the property will remain in the Council's ownership. At that time the Council could take a decision to dispose of it on the open market should that be its wish.

## **5 NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

The Housing and Property Department will direct the Legal Service to issue a lease without delay. This will enable the Government to release the grant funding to Menter Rabar to enable it to adapt the school and realise the scheme with a view to opening the provision during 2026.

## **6 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION**

## The Statutory Officers' observations

### **Chief Finance Officer:**

"Realising that there will be fewer capital receipts, but when weighing against the benefit to the community through the social enterprise, no objection to what is being proposed".

### **Monitoring Officer:**

"I am satisfied that the decision sought is an appropriate use of the power available under the General Disposal Consent (April) 2003 to dispose of property at less than the market value. The report provides sufficient evidence to support this position".

### **Observations of the Local Member – John Brynmor Hughes:**

"In my opinion, the Enterprise is great in terms of what we want to do in Abersoch. I think that it will be successful for local people, similar to what Nefyn has done with 'Yr Heliwr'. A strong team has come together to establish it, and they have already done very well up to now to bring the village together through fund-raising activities and by drawing attention to the Enterprise.

I think there is an even wider possibility to what is being discussed here, and the relevant funding and grants are now in place, but not much else can be done without certainty that the building will be transferred".

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet



<b>Title of item:</b>	<b>Regional Transport Plan: Update</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Craig ab Iago, Cabinet Member for the Environment Department</b>
<b>Relevant officer:</b>	<b>Gerwyn Jones, Assistant Head of Environment Department</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2025</b>

### **1. Decision Sought:**

- 1.1 Recognition of the development of the draft Regional Transport Plan (RTP) and the processes associated with this.
- 1.2 Approval of the response **[Appendix 5]** to the consultation.

### **2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision:**

- 2.1 There is a statutory duty for the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) to produce an RTP. Cyngor Gwynedd is a member of the CJC. Further detail is provided in the following report.

### **3. Introduction - Regional Transport Plan (RTP)**

#### **The RTP and ancillary outputs**

- 3.1. The RTP is a strategic document outlining the long-term vision for the region's transport system, including the aims, objectives and policies and priorities for improving the transport network and services.
- 3.2 This RTP will help us address current and future local and regional transport issues now and over the next 5 years (2025-2030) by providing a framework for future investment decisions. It sets out how transport can support the delivery of Llwybr Newydd, the Welsh Government's transport strategy, and contribute to the success, regeneration and development of our region.

#### **The need for an RTP**

- 3.3 The requirement for local authorities to produce a Transport Plan is set out in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006. This duty was transferred to CJs on 30 June 2022, by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. Therefore, North Wales CJC has a duty to produce an RTP for north Wales. The CJC must develop local authority policies to implement Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy 2021. These policies must include transport facilities and services where:

- There is a need to satisfy the needs of people who live or work in, visit or travel through the region;
  - The need to carry loads; and
  - Pedestrian facilities and services.
- 3.4 RTP must consider the transport needs of disabled persons (within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010) and persons who are older or have mobility issues and consider overcoming barriers more widely.

#### **Ownership of the RTP and ancillary outputs**

- 3.5 The RTP is owned by the CJC, which is responsible for bringing it in line with Llwybr Newydd: Transport Strategy for Wales, and for its development and adoption.

#### **Implementation support of the RTP**

- 3.6 Local authorities have a key role to play in implementing the RTP. Local authorities are responsible for carrying out the schemes identified in the Regional Transport Delivery Plan.
- 3.7 The implementation of the RTP is supported by Transport for Wales, who will work with local authorities to develop schemes that local authorities intend to deliver. In addition, Transport for Wales will support the achievement of our rail aspirations, and work with local authorities to identify improvements to the bus network as we move towards franchising.
- 3.8 The Welsh Government and the North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Agent (NMWTRA) will support the presentation of our strategic road network aspirations, as the bodies responsible for managing, maintaining and improving the strategic road network.

#### **Approval of the RTP and subsequent actions**

- 3.9 The Strategic Transport sub-committee is responsible for the preparation and development of the RTP, with responsibility for its approval reserved to the CJC following a period of public consultation and submission to the Welsh Government. The timetable for approval is July 2025.
- 3.10 Once the RTP is approved, it will shape the transport improvements being introduced in North Wales over the next five years. Welsh Government funding grants for transport schemes will only be available for schemes that support the aims of the RTP. It is expected that any transport improvements undertaken in North Wales will be included in the Regional Transport Delivery Plan.

#### **How the Regional Transport funding operates**

- 3.11 Currently, bids are submitted by each local authority every year. Bids are assessed and awarded by the Welsh Government. Grants are accepted. Introducing the plan and quarterly claims are made that are monitored and evaluated. Currently, there are seven funds with processes requiring separate bids.
- 3.12 By now, a grant modernisation programme is underway to review this process.

### **What is the Regional Transport Delivery Plan**

- 3.13 A draft Regional Transport Delivery Plan (RTDP) outlines the specific steps needed to implement the wider objectives and policies set out in our RTP.
- 3.14 Our RTDP sets out the interventions that our local authorities will take forward over the next 5 years. It includes our priorities over time, considers the likely costs and impacts, and our contributions to our regional objectives.
- 3.15 The RTDP takes the form of a list of schemes that are ranked in priority order in terms of the impact of delivering against our priorities. These are the schemes that local transport authorities intend to invest in to achieve the RTP. It does not include strategic 'trunk road' schemes, or rail projects, which would be provided by other bodies such as the Welsh Government and Network Rail.
- 3.16 The schemes in the RTDP have been ranked on the following basis:
- Higher Priority
  - Medium Priority
  - Lower Priority

This is based on output from a system that considered and weighed-up the schemes from the perspective of:

- Environmental Impact
  - Land Considerations
  - Planning and Legal Considerations
  - Stakeholder Acceptance
  - Consultation
  - Disruption
  - Buildability
- 3.17 The schemes are a mix of schemes that reflect local and/or historical aspirations, schemes proposed by Transport for Wales and specific schemes that have reached a level of maturity. They include a range of different schemes in size, nature, scope and cost with some being specific/local as well as some that are more general. See **Appendix 1**.

### **Integrated Wellbeing Appraisal**

- 3.18 An Integrated Well-being Assessment (IWBA) is required as part of the Transport for Wales Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG). Our IWBA shows how our policies will contribute to well-being, supported by impact assessments that have been undertaken to consider issues such as the environment, health, equality and biodiversity.
- 3.19 IWBA is not just a 'tick box' exercise. The information in the IWBA must be used to include benefits of the design except for any potential adverse effects from the design. The IWBA must demonstrate how well-being has been dealt with and should identify the positive and negative effects and show how any negative impacts have been avoided or mitigated.

3.20 The IWBA should address four key questions, based on the four ambitions in the Welsh Transport Strategy:

- How will the programme or project benefit people and communities? (equality, health, safety and confidence)
- How will this benefit the environment? (reducing carbon emissions, beneficial to biodiversity and ecosystem resilience and reducing waste)
- How will this benefit places and the economy? (place-making, innovation, transportation)
- How will this benefit Welsh culture and the language? (arts and sport and historic environment)

3.21 In helping to answer these questions, the IWBA is supported by a range of impact assessments, including some that are statutory, such as a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

### **Monitoring and Appraisal Scheme**

3.22 The RTP must include a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that shows how regional progress in achieving the national priorities and ambitions of the Transport Strategy for Wales (TSW) will be monitored, measured and evaluated. This must include the region's contribution to decarbonisation targets and national modal change.

3.23 Our Monitoring and Evaluation Plan includes a series of measures with baseline information for each. The measures are based on the framework of measures used in the Integrated Well-being Appraisal (IWBA) and draw on the Transport Strategy for Wales Monitoring Framework adapted for regional needs. Transport for Wales has published baseline data for the TSW Monitoring Framework and this is continuously updated by Transport for Wales.

3.24 The CJC must submit annual performance reports on RTP to the Welsh Government each year. A comprehensive evaluation will be prepared after three years to assess whether the RTP is achieving its outcomes, providing value for money and whether there are any outcomes that were not intended. The results of this comprehensive evaluation will feed into the subsequent RTP for the National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP).

### **What has the RTP programme achieved thus far**

3.25 During 2024, the programme has delivered:

- The CJC Action Plan which defines the tasks, resources and budget required to develop and deliver the RTP for North Wales.
- The Case for Change and the supporting Stakeholder Engagement Plan provide the evidence base and approach for engagement.
- The IWBA scoping report was submitted to statutory consultees (including Natural Resources Wales and Cadw) for a period of 5 weeks.
- Draft products for consultation including: RTP; Monitoring and Evaluation Plan; RTDP; IWBA; consultation materials.

**Appendix 2** provides a summary of the main milestones and time-scale associated with the RTP.



### **Consultation on the RTP - Reaching Out and Engagement**

- 3.26 Feedback on the Draft Regional Transport Plan, along with the supporting documents, can be found on the North Wales Ambition website:

[Ambition North Wales | North Wales Regional Transport Plan \(draft\) - Public Consultation](#)

- 3.27 A consultation period on the draft Regional Transport Plan opened on the 20 January 2025 and will be open until the 14 April 2025. A copy of the consultation document has been included as **Appendix 3**.
- 3.28 The CJC's central team has coordinated and collaborated with the consultants commissioned to develop the RTP on outreach and engagement work to raise awareness and encourage participation as part of the consultation process on the RTP.
- 3.29 This has included co-working with officers in communications, as well as transport, within the North's six local authorities. Examples of what has been done to this effect are included as **Appendix 4** which includes:
- Press Release
  - Direct communication with Politicians
  - Sharing information on social networks
  - General communication with Elected Members

### **4. Considerations**

- 4.1 There are several considerations involved in the development of the RTP. In the short term the following can be considered as a summary of the main ones.
- 4.2 Constitutionally local authorities will need to consider:
- How they engage with work such as the RTP from a consultation perspective and provide input into something they have already contributed to its development.
  - How the CJC's operation interacts with the Local Authorities, and this includes consideration and approval of work such as the RTP.
  - How the CJC will operate and make decisions that will often relate to local issues on a regional basis.
- 4.3 It is a transformational time in transport which includes the following:
- Changes are taking place structurally in the transport context with, for example, the establishment of the CJC and Transport for Wales.
  - Changes taking place in terms of Welsh Government means, programmes and funding sources.
  - Potential changes in Welsh Government's priorities and focus on transport.
  - Changes in legislation and models related to provision in specific areas that include buses.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 The structural situation is likely to take some time to establish and it is true to say that not all things involved in implementing these changes are completely clear and have not been confirmed. This is likely to lead to a situation where there will be uncertainty in terms of role, responsibilities and accountability in relevance and transport matters in Wales. An example of this would be the implications and effects of moving to a model of franchise to maintain and provide local bus services in Wales. The likelihood is that Transport for Wales will lead with local authorities as partners. This has already happened in terms of the perspective of the TrawsCymru network.
- 5.2 In the context of the RTP the CJC is responsible for its development as a product in its own right but the expectation to realise the aspirations, expectations, objectives and goals will likely fail, on the whole, on local authorities. What the local authorities are able to achieve, to a large extent, will depend on the funding provided by the Welsh Government.
- 5.3 It will therefore be necessary to be careful that there is a credible link between the strategic ambition and what can be achieved as well as between those who will be responsible for setting the framework and those who will be seen as being responsible for realisation.
- 5.4 It is necessary to be aware and to be alive to the considerations referred to. While the ability to influence directly may be limited it will be necessary to look to optimise opportunities for the benefit of Gwynedd's communities.
- 5.5 This is likely to involve close collaboration with other key stakeholders including Transport for Wales. Recent successful examples of this are already happening which include the cross-county review of the local bus network along with the Porth Caernarfon and Llanbedr projects.
- 5.6 The draft RTP meets the requirements set out in the guidance. It is in line, supported and aligned with Llwybr Newydd which is essential to unlock and win grants to implement schemes.
- 5.7 The wider concerns remain that the Welsh Government's strategy and allocation of resources does not recognise the dynamic, not to mention meet the needs and aspirations of rural areas such as Gwynedd.
- 5.8 At a time when the CJC continues to become established there will be a significant responsibility on that body to agree, plan priorities and spending at a regional level that will continue to engage and realise plans, for the most part, locally.

## **6. Rationale and justification for recommending the decision**

- 6.1 There is a statutory duty for the CJC to produce an RTP. Cyngor Gwynedd is a member of the CJC.

## **7. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

- 7.1 The process and work of developing the RTP is subject to an Integrated Wellbeing Assessment (IWBA) as part of the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG).

## **8. Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duty**

- 8.1 The process and work of developing the RTP is subject to an Integrated Wellbeing Assessment (IWBA) as part of the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG).

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 That Cabinet Members note the arrival of the Corporate Joint Committee for North Wales and its role in the development and delivery of the RTP.

- 9.2 That Cabinet Members authorise the Cabinet Member for Environment to write to the Chair of the CJC to:

- acknowledge and congratulate the work that has gone into preparing the draft RTP.
- recognise that the draft RTP meets the guidelines set by Welsh Government for the development of RTP.
- refers to wider concerns regarding issues influencing and affecting transport provision in rural areas.

Draft response has been included as **Appendix 5**.

## **10. Views of the Statutory Officers**

### **a. Chief Finance Officer**

There is no financial commitment arising from the decision sought, but the Regional Transport Plan is a key document and will affect transport projects in the Gwynedd area when it becomes operational.

### **b. Monitoring Officer**

The report represents Gwynedd Council's response to the consultation on the Regional Transport Plan. Although there is representation from Gwynedd on the Corporate Joint Committee and the Transport Sub-Committee this consultation is an opportunity for Gwynedd to give a corporate response on the proposed Scheme. It will be for the Corporate Joint Committee to exercise its statutory powers under the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (Wales) Regulations 2021 to evaluate the responses and adopt the Plan in a final form.

## **List of Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Gwynedd Projects  
Appendix 2: Milestones and Timeline RTP 2025  
Appendix 3: Consultation Document  
Appendix 4: Consultation on the RTP - Reaching Out and Engaging  
Appendix 5: Draft Response – Environment Cabinet Member

Appendix 1 - Schedule of schemes

A.1 Higher priority schemes

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
74	Safe Routes in communities/ home to school transport, Gwynedd	Safe routes in communities/ home to school transport across the county	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	<1m	<0.1m	Safer Routes in Communities	Higher
100	Implement the bus transformation network Gwynedd	Bus Transformation Network supported by multi-year funding would have higher frequencies and longer hours of operation, which will allow for a higher number of journeys that better fit with people’s travel needs and that will be more attractive for everyday travel use. Enhancements to Traws Cymru routes, service frequencies and hours of operation are carried out in the short term	Bus and Coach	Gwynedd	Short-term	<1m	5m-10m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Higher
105	Regional rural bus and coach network Gwynedd	Introduce a network of regional rural Fflecsi services with an hourly service frequency extending into the evenings that link rural settlements and are operated by a fleet of Fflecsi bus and coaches that are comfortable for longer journeys.	Bus and Coach	Gwynedd	Short-term	1-5m	1m - 5m	Unknown	Higher
147	Llanbedr Transport Improvements	Cyngor Gwynedd is collaborating with partners to identify transport solutions to improve access and alleviate transport problems in Llanbedr. This is being progressed through the WelTAG process.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Short-term	15m - 50m	0.1m - 0.25m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Higher
154	Porth Caernarfon (Gateway) Project	As part of a wider regeneration programme a review of infrastructure in the Pen Llyn area of Caernarfon to include a flyover, multi storey car park and bus interchange. The intention being to implement a project which re-defines the area as a key, attractive, contemporary gateway to access the town.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	5m-15m	0.5m-1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Higher
162	Highway maintenance and improvements, Gwynedd	Highway maintenance and improvements: A range of schemes involving capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements and Transport Network resilience improvements, with specific measures including, but not limited to street lighting renewal and flood risk alleviation.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Short-term	5m-15m	1m - 5m	Roads Resilience	Higher

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
165	Enhance Public EV charging and information coordination, Gwynedd	Produce a strategy for public electric vehicle charging, which will look at providing schemes of charging points. Coordinate between Local Authorities to share information about where charge points are, whether they are operational and how much they cost to charge. This could be through regular updates in collaboration with third party providers, such as Zap Maps.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Short-term	<1m	0.1m - 0.25m	Ultra-low Emission Fund	Higher
207	Local Active Travel improvement in main settlements (Bangor, Porthmaodog, Caernarfon, Pwllheli, Tywyn, Bala, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Dolgellau, Felinheli, Bethesda, Abermaw)	Improve Walking and cycling provision within the designated settlement.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	15m - 50m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Higher
218	Lon Las Improvement. Improving and enhancing existing off road cycle routes, Lon las Ogwen, Lon Las Menai and Lon Eifion	Continue the planned programme of works to improve and enhance the existing off road walking and cycling network, Lon las Menai, Lon Las Eifion and Lon las Ogwen	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	<0.1m	UK Government Funding	Higher
220	Llanberis to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	Create a 6.4km multiuser path alongside an existing highway between Caenrafon and Llanrug. The scheme will complete the active travel route between Llanberis and the designated settlement.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Higher
239	Chwilog to Afonwen Active Travel Route	Create a 1KM Multiuser path which connect Chwilog with the wider active travel network	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Short-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Higher
250	Tywyn to Aberdyfi Active Travel Route	Create a new 3Km Multiuser path to complete the walking and cycling route between Tywyn and Aberdyfi.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Short-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Higher

A.2 Medium priority schemes

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
5	Eryri Access Improvement	Access improvements to Eryri through a range of measures including: Arosfan overnight motorhome and campervan pilot scheme; delivering of active travel routes including Glan Conwy to Llandudno Junction, Betws y Coed to Llanrwst and Bethesda to Zip World, and improvements to Pen y Pass, Oqwen, Nangwynant and Geirionydd.	Integration	Gwynedd/Conwy	Medium-term	5m-15m	<0.1m	UK Government Funding	Medium
113	Subsidised taxi rides in rural areas to fill "gaps" in public transport in Gwynedd	Subsidised taxi services to fill gaps in service, as a back-up system that allows users to access taxis at a very low cost to cater for space and time “gaps”. The gaps can be times of day when public transport is unavailable or remote rural areas not yet served by public transport.	Community, on demand transport and taxis	Gwynedd	Aspirational	<1m	1m - 5m	Unknown	Medium
119	Transport Network Resilience Improvements: Bridge strengthening at Gwynedd pinch points	The proposed scheme is to re-deck, refurbish or strengthen the bridges that have substandard load capacity and are subject to monitoring regimes in order to minimise disruption to the local communities. This will be implemented in a phased programme according to priority	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	1m - 5m	Roads Resilience	Medium
122	Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: Collision Cluster sites Gwynedd	The proposed scheme involves an annual analysis of collision data to identify cluster sites and corridors in order to identify any need for future individual schemes to reduce the number of accidents at these sites and overall, within the region. Specific focus should be on locations with disproportionate numbers of casualties, specifically schemes that target vulnerable groups as identified in the Welsh Government’s road safety framework. Specific schemes should include interactive signing and the alleviation of flood risk on connections where access to employment and services are impacted.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Roads Safety Capital	Medium

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
129	Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: B4366 Pengelli to Bethel Road improvements	Road widening scheme, between Caernarfon and Tyddyn Hen roundabout. The scheme would provide improvement to a short section of the B4366 in line with the design standards of the remaining road section. This may include multiuser path provision as part of the scheme	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Medium
151	Transport Network Resilience Improvements: A499 Penrhos Road flood alleviation improvements	A499 Penrhos Road flood alleviation improvements	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	0.1m - 0.25m	Roads Resilience	Medium
152	Improved links to employment: Congestion and parking review in Gwynedd	Review of paid for and free on and off street parking arrangements to optimise the available resources, support and facilitate access and modal shift.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	<1m	0.5m-1m	Unknown	Medium
170	North Wales Bus Infrastructure Enhancements - bus priority measures in North Wales	Delivery of bus priority infrastructure across six local authorities to support the planned routes as part of the bus transformation network. Identification of delay hotspots and proposals for bus priority infrastructure in these locations to reduce journey times, improve reliability, and minimise delays. A study is currently being undertaken which will identify potential congestion locations that will impact on planned future bus network, determining the likely causes of these delays and developing options to address them, and evaluating these options and providing recommendations for which should be taken forward. Potential intervention types include but are not limited to improvements to stop and shelter provision, bus lane, segregated routes, supporting traffic regulation orders, and technological enhancements (e.g. signal technology).	Bus and Coach	All - TfW support	Medium-term	1-5m	0.25m-0.5m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Medium

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
171	North Wales Express Coach - provision of an express coach service along the A55 corridor between Port of Holyhead and Liverpool	Delivery of an express coach service between Port of Holyhead and Liverpool identified within the Union Connectivity Review and North Wales Transport Commission. A study is currently being undertaken to identify a preferred service pattern/ design, vehicle propulsion and specifications, bus priority measures required to address delays, and enhancements to interchanges at 19no. potential stopping locations to serve the proposed service, enhance customer experience, and improve multi-modal interchange capabilities. Potential supporting infrastructure includes bus priority measures, infrastructure to support vehicle propulsion/ depots, and new or enhanced interchanges at stopping locations.	Bus and Coach	All - TfW support	Medium-term	1-5m	0.5m-1m	Other	Medium
184	Llandudno Junction Railway station Active Travel links	Active travel routes to Llandudno Junction Railway station via the B5115, A547 and A546. Forms part of the TfW active travel links to Railway Stations strategy.	Active Travel		Short-term	1-5m		Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
219	Bethel to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	Create a 2.1km multiuser path alongside an existing highway between Caernarfon bypass and Arfon Leisure Centre, Caernarfon. The scheme will complete the active travel route between Bethel and the designated settlement.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
224	Llanrug to Bethel Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Bethel and Llanrug.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
225	Nantlle to Penygroes Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects communities along the Nantlle corridor with Caernarfon	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
226	Caeathro to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Caeathro and Caernarfon.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
228	Llanberis to Bangor Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route to completes the active travel offer between Llanberis and Bangor.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
229	Mynydd Llandygai Active Travel enhancement	Local Active Travel improvements in Mynydd Llandygai area	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
231	Edern to Nefyn Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route between Edern and Nefyn	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium



Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
235	Pwllheli to Mynytho Active Travel Route	Create a walking a cycling route which connect Mynytho to the proposed Active Travel route between Llanbedrog and Pwllheli	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
236	Efailnewydd Pwhelli Route	Create a multiuser path between Efailnewyd and Pwllheli	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
238	A499 Pwllheli to Porthmadog Active Travel route enhancement and Improvement	Improve the existing walking and cycling route between Pwllheli and Porthmadog	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
240	Cricieth Active Travel Improvement	Improve and enhance active travel provision in Cricieth	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Short-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
242	Porthmadog to Llanfrothen Active Travel Route	Create a new 2K Muti user path which connects Y Garreg Llanfrothen with Penrhyndeudraeth along the A4085 and enhance the existing walking and cycling provision between Boston lodge and Minffordd.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
248	Corris Uchaf to Corris Active Travel route	Improve and enhance existing active travel provision between Corris Uchaf and Corris	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
249	Tywyn Machynlleth Active Travel Route	Create a new 1. 3Km Multiuser path between Cwrt andPennal and a 3Km Multiuser path between Esgairgoch and Machynlleth along the A493 to complete the walking and cycling route between Tywyn Machynlleth.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Medium
281	Dolgellau Interchange	Bus Introduce a bus interchange facility at Dolgellau to improve safety, integration and co-ordination of bus services	Bus and Coach	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Medium

### A.3 Lower priority schemes

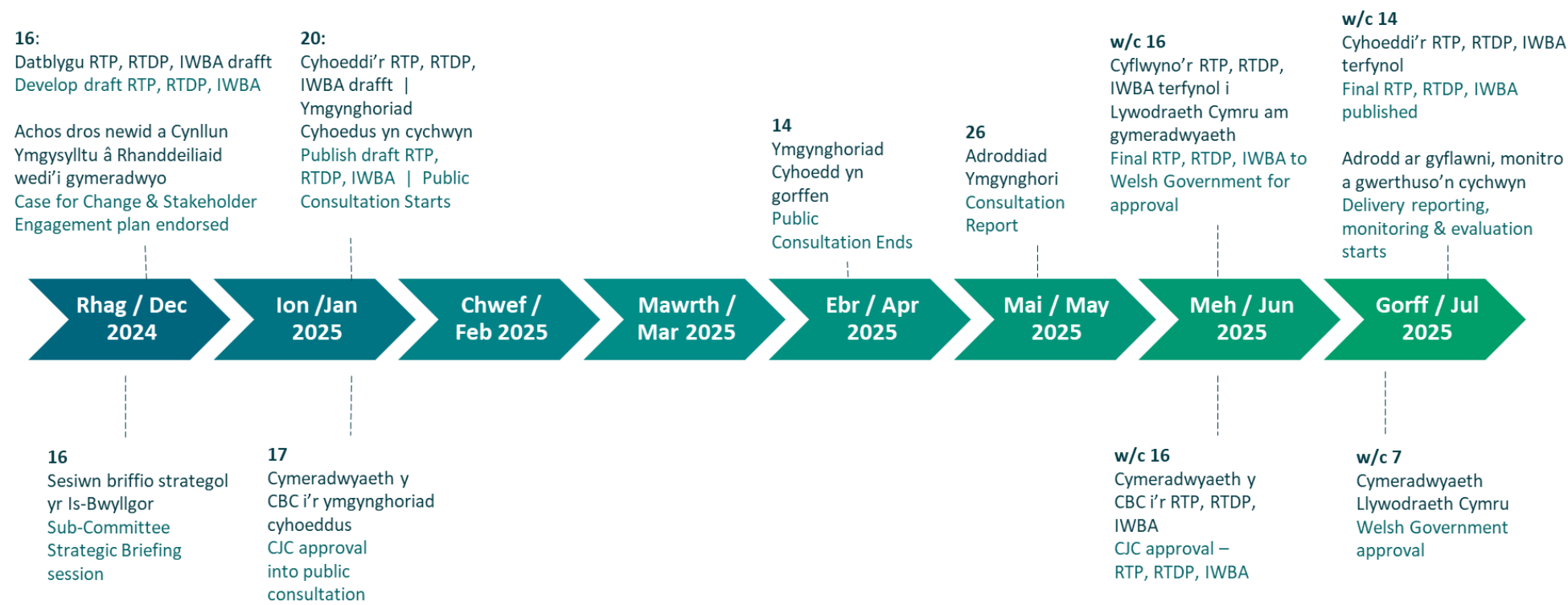
Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
4	Bangor Station transport integration	Gateway Area TfW have identified an opportunity at Bangor station to improve the welcome into the city of Bangor and improve interchange with onward modes of transport. Station Quarter study is being undertaken to understand current problems and barriers faced when travelling to, from and using Bangor Station	Integration	Gwynedd	Medium-term	5m-15m	0.1m - 0.25m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
12	Integration with strategic public transport services: Public transport infrastructure improvements in Gwynedd	Ongoing bus infrastructure improvements, including bus priority measures, bus boarding improvements, signage, bus stops and shelter provision.	Integration	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
20	Introduce a free tourist/visitors public transport	The Konus card giving free public transport to tourists/visitors and paid for (partly) by a tourist tax	Integration	Gwynedd/Conwy	Aspirational	<1m	1m - 5m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
29	Mobility Hub in Bangor	A mobility hub that brings together on one central site a multi-modal interchange, which over time will be staffed and would have real time information, café, and toilets	Integration	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	0.25m-0.5m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
116	Car Clubs	Local Authorities will collaborate to regionally coordinate and promote car sharing clubs across North Wales. This may involve a joined up approach working with the Welsh Government and external providers for example utilising platforms like Lift share and TrydaN	Community, on demand transport and taxis	All - TfW support	Medium-term	1-5m	1m - 5m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
126	Capacity and safety enhancements/ pinch point improvements: street lighting renewal	The renewal of street lighting columns across the region, making them suitable to be fitted with new low energy LED lanterns	Roads, Streets and Parking	All	Medium-term	15m - 50m	5m-10m	Other	Lower


Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
140	Access to Services: A499 to Nefyn Link (B4417)	Road improvements to the B4417 between the town of Nefyn and the A499 at Llanaelhaearn. Scheme to include road widening and realignment which would provide improved safer links, vehicular and active travel, for Nefyn and also the community of Llithfaen to the A499.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	15m - 50m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
141	Access to Services: A4086 Cibyn to Pontrug Road Improvements	Improvements to the A4086 between Llanrug and Caernarfon. The scheme would comprise of road widening, alignment and junction improvement. This would provide improved connectivity to the proposed Caernarfon by-pass scheme for the outlying villages.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
142	Access to Services: Dinas Dinlle Link to A499	Upgrade of the existing Class III road which forms a link between Caernarfon airport and the A499 which in conjunction with the Allt Goch proposal would create an improved transport link from the A487(T) nr Penygroes. The scheme would consist of road widening and re-alignment with junction improvement on the A499.	Roads, Streets and Parking	Gwynedd	Medium-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Lower
206	Upper Bangor Access Improvements	Review opportunities to re-establish a multi modal link between the A487 and Belmont Avenue to improve access for local and longer distance travel options and mitigate congestion.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	15m - 50m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
221	Rhosgadfan to Caernarfon Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Rhosgadfan with the wider active travel network	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
222	Caernarfon to Rhyddu Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Rhyddu to Caernarfon, part of Eryri Access Improvement	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
223	Llanberis to Nant Peris Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Nant Peris to Llanberis, part of Eryri Access Improvement	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
227	Rhiwlas to Bangor Active Travel Route	Create an active travel route which connects Rhiwlas and Bangor.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
230	Pistyll to Nefyn Active travel route	Create an active travel route between Pistyll and Nefyn	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower

Scheme No.	Scheme Name	Scheme Description	Policy theme	Lead Local Authority(ies)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Estimated CAPEX Cost Level	Estimated OPEX Cost Level	Potential Funding Source	Priority
232	Aberdaron Active travel Route	Create a local active travel route in Aberdaron	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
233	Sarn Mellteryn Active Travel Route	Create a multiuser path, which connects a rural housing estate with the centre of the Sarn Mellteryn Village	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
234	Pwllheli to Abersoch Active Travel Route	Create a multiuser path along the A499 between Abersoch and Llanbedrog and an off-road walking and cycling provision between Llanbedrog and Pwllheli	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Long-term	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
237	A499 Caernarfon to Pwllheli active Travel Route	Create a 11Km Multiuser path along the A499 to complete the 32Km Walking and cycling route between Caernarfon and Pwllheli.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
241	Bethgelert Active Travel improvement	Improve and enhance active travel provision in Bethgelert	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
243	Ardudwy Corridor Green Active Travel Routes	Create a walking and cycling route which connects the communities along the A496 corridor between Penrhyndeudraeth and Barmouth	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	15m - 50m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
244	Trawsfynydd Active Travel Route	Improve walking and cycling provision in Trawsfynydd	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Medium-term	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
245	Frongoch to Bala Active Travel Route	Create a new walking and cycling route which connects the White-water centre at Frongoch with Bala along the old railway line	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
246	Rhos y Gwaliau to Bala Active Travel Route	Enhance the existing active travel provision between Rhos y Gwaliau and Bala	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	<1m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
247	Llandderfel to Bala Active Travel Route	Create a new Active Travel route which connects Llandderfel with Bala	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	5m-15m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower
251	Tywyn to Llanegryn Active Travel Route	Create a 3Km multiuser path between Llanegryn and Brynchrug to enhance the existing active travel provision in the area.	Active Travel	Gwynedd	Aspirational	1-5m	<0.1m	Active Travel Fund (ATF)	Lower



**Atodiad / Appendix 2**  
**Cerrig Milltir a Llinyn Amser yr CTRh 2025 / RTP Milestones and Timeline 2025**





PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSES TO OUR ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE FOUND AT THE 'HAVE YOUR SAY' DISPLAY BOARD IN OUR VIRTUAL EXHIBITION ROOM. ALTERNATIVELY YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THIS COPY TO COMPLETE AND RETURN BY EMAIL OR POST.

# Consultation on the draft North Wales Regional Transport Plan Questionnaire



The consultation runs from 20th January 2025 for 12 weeks. Please submit your response to us by 23:59pm on 14th April 2025.

## Have your say

Ambition North Wales are seeking your views on the proposed Regional Transport Plan for North Wales and its supporting documents, which include a monitoring and evaluation plan, delivery plan for local authority schemes, and an integrated well-being appraisal.

You can view our plans and respond to our consultation by completing a questionnaire online, available in our virtual exhibition room here: <https://northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com/>

Alternatively, you can email responses to [northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com](mailto:northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com)

Or, write to us and post printed copies of the questionnaire to: **FREEPOST UGC / ANW**

If you'd like to speak to us about our plans, you can also call us on: **01172 405 350**

Paper or alternative copies can be provided to you on request by emailing us or leaving us a message on our telephone service (details above).

We will carefully consider all the feedback we receive, which will be used to update and finalise our plans. We are aiming to publish and adopt our Regional Transport Plan in the Summer 2025.

## About you

The following information is optional for you to provide, but by providing us with this data it will help us to understand who has participated in this consultation, which will provide insight on whether comments received are representative of the community in North Wales. It will also help us to consider how to undertake similar consultations in the future. We would only use this information to contact you should we have any unforeseen technical issues with your responses.

If you do not want to complete this section of the form, please only provide us with your postcode, which will help us understand from where people are having their say.

### Postcode

### First Name / Last Name

### Age

☐ under 25 ☐ 25-39 ☐ 40-60 ☐ 60+

### Gender

☐ male ☐ female ☐ non-binary  
☐ prefer to self-describe ☐ prefer not to say

### Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### Are you in employment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### Are you in education or training?

☐ Yes ☐ No

### Email address



## Data protection

Arup is undertaking a public consultation on the North Wales Regional Transport Plan on behalf of Ambition North Wales. Ambition North Wales's data policy can be found here: [Data protection \(llyw.cymru\)](#). Arup act as a Data Processor on behalf of Ambition North Wales. At the end of the consultation all personal information is transferred to Ambition North Wales. Personal information is not retained beyond this time. When we do temporarily store your information, it is stored securely in our cloud infrastructure located within the EU.

Your feedback including any comments will be anonymised and used to help us finalise our proposals. A record of comments may be produced that could be published. Comments will not be made attributable to any individual or organisation if this happens.

# Questions

All questions are optional.

## 1. Regional Transport Plan

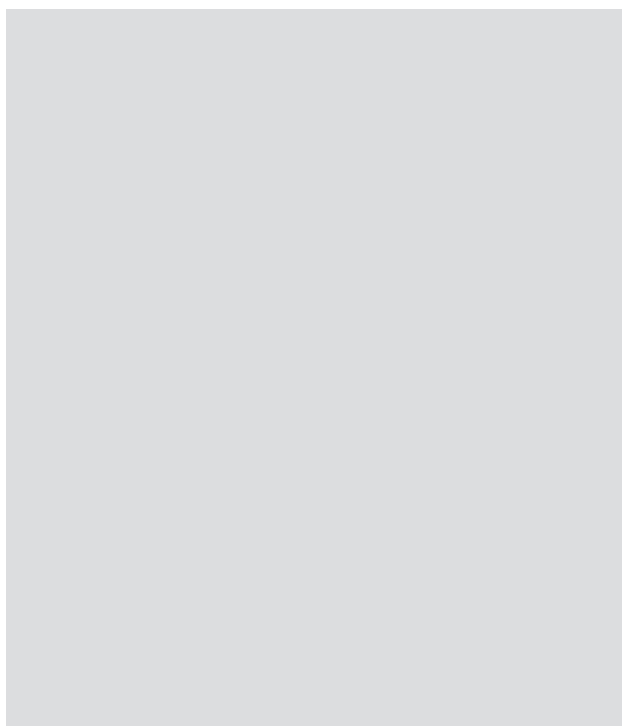
B. To what extent do you support the vision and objectives set out in our draft Regional Transport Plan?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

C. To what extent do you support the policies and interventions set out in our draft Regional Transport Plan?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

D. Please tell us what you think about our draft Regional Transport Plan or make alternative suggestions here . . .

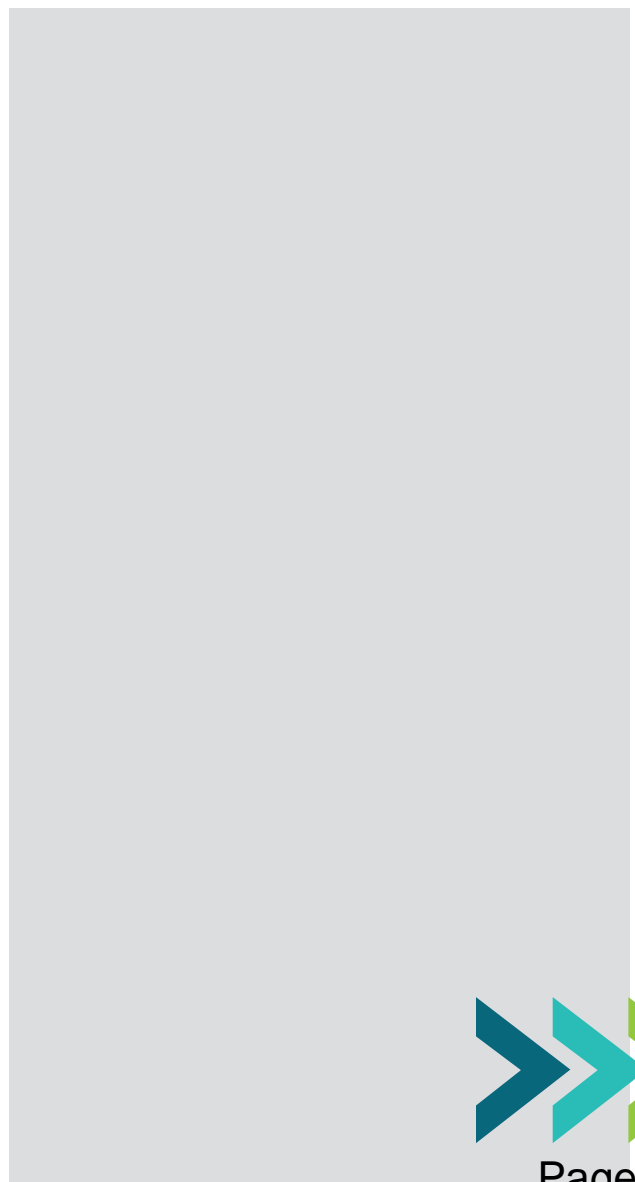


## 2. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

A. To what extent do you support the approach we have taken to our draft Monitoring and Evaluation Plan?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

B. Please tell us what you think about our draft Monitoring and Evaluation Plan or make alternative suggestions here . . .



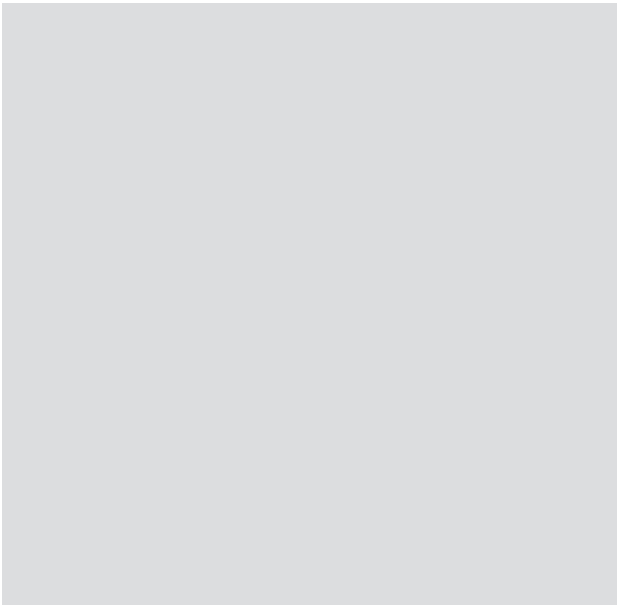


### 3. Regional Transport Delivery Plan

A. To what extent do you support the approach we have taken to our draft Regional Transport Delivery Plan?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

B. Please tell us what you think about our draft Regional Transport Delivery Plan or make alternative suggestions here . . .

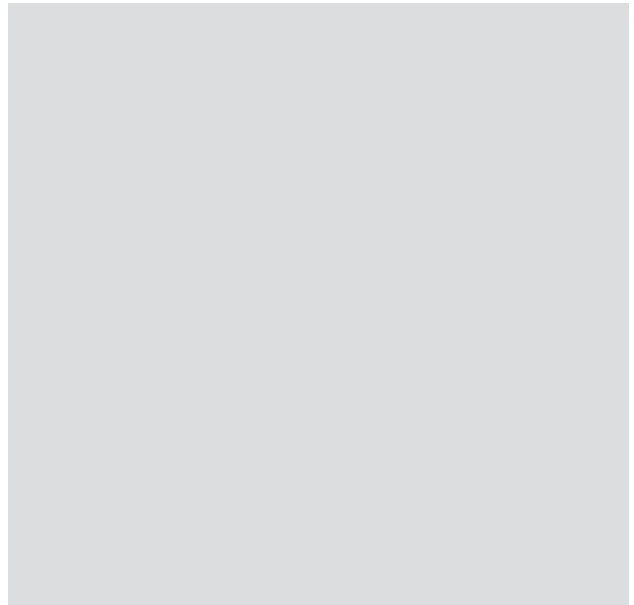


### 4. Integrated Well-being Appraisal

A. To what extent do you support the approach we have taken to our draft Integrated Well-being Appraisal?

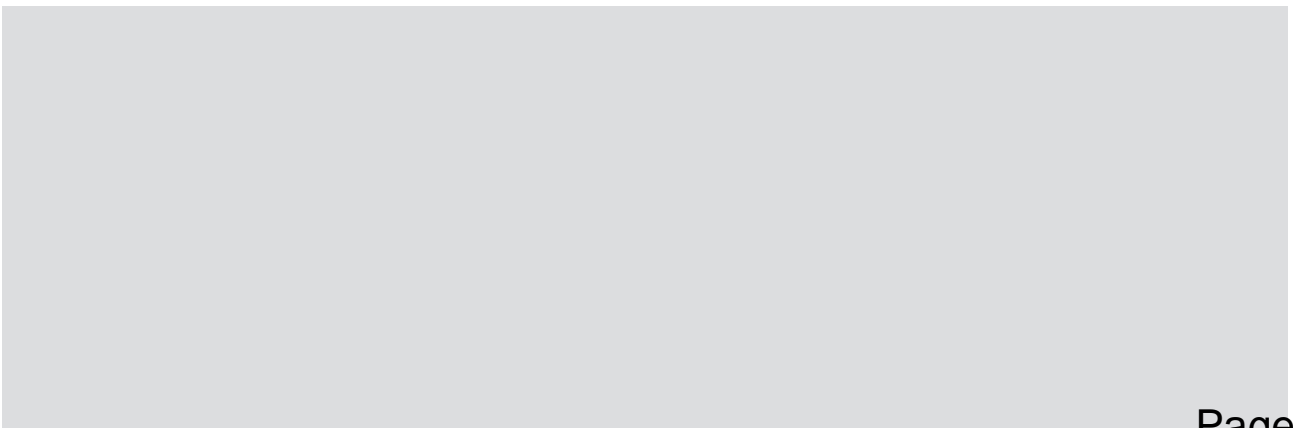
- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

B. Please tell us what you think about our draft Integrated Well-being Appraisal or make alternative suggestions here . . .



### 5. Any other comments

Do you have any other comments about this consultation or our proposals?



# Notes

[illegible]

# Notes

[illegible]

# Notes

[illegible]

# Notes

[illegible]

# Notes

[illegible]



## Appendix 4 – Consulting on the RTP – Reaching Out and Engaging

### Press release

20 January 2025

### Have Your Say on the Future of Transport in North Wales

Getting around much of North Wales can be a challenge. As a largely rural region with rail and road networks often under pressure, there is widespread agreement that local transportation and connectivity need improvement. Today, a 12-week public consultation launches, giving residents, businesses, and visitors the chance to shape the future of travel in the region.

Ambition North Wales, which also serves as the region's Corporate Joint Committee - with responsibility for regional transport planning, strategic land use planning and enhancing economic well-being, is inviting feedback on the draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales. The document sets out strategic policies and interventions for the next five years, covering all modes of transport, including rail, road, bus, walking, and cycling, and aims to provide better travel options, improve digital connectivity, and reduce environmental impacts.

The consultation represents the collective efforts and expertise of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, its Transport Sub-Committee and partners, including local authorities, Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government.

**Councillor Goronwy Edwards, Chair of the Transport Sub-Committee, said:** "This is an opportunity for people to tell us what's important to them and how we can improve transport links across the region. Effective transport systems connect people to essential services, link businesses to employees and customers, and support a thriving economy. I urge residents to get involved and have their say."

**Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas, Committee Vice-chair, added:** "Good transport links are vital for our communities. They reduce isolation in rural areas, improve access to services like healthcare and education, and boost local economies by attracting visitors and supporting small businesses. This is why we are keen to get as much input as possible so we can work together to create a transport network that works for everyone across the region."

The plan aims to shape transport policy and investment up to 2030, replacing local transport plans and aligning with national priorities. It is seen as essential to ensure that North Wales meets future economic challenges, supports sustainable travel, and contributes to climate goals.

The [consultation](https://northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com) runs until 14th April 2025 – North Wales residents are urged not to miss the opportunity to influence the future of transport in the region by visiting: [northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com](https://northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com)

Ends



For media enquiries please contact: Bethan Angharad Airey

[BethanAngharadAirey@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru](mailto:BethanAngharadAirey@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru) / [media@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru](mailto:media@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru) / 07385 223271

## Notes to editors

1. The consultation runs from 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 for 12 weeks. Responses should be submitted by 23:59pm on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
2. Ambition North Wales is responsible for supporting the delivery of the region's Growth Deal and is also the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) – with responsibilities for regional transport planning, strategic land use planning, and enhancing economic well-being.
3. The CJC includes representative members from the six councils of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, and Wrexham, as well as Eryri National Park Authority for planning matters. As the CJC, Ambition North Wales is seeking views on the draft North Wales Regional Transport Plan, which outlines our strategic policies and interventions for the next five years across various modes of transport. The aim is to publish and adopt our Regional Transport Plan in the Summer 2025.
4. The draft plan and consultation questionnaire are available online in a [virtual exhibition room](#). Responses can also be emailed to [northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com](mailto:northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com) or sent by post to: FREEPOST UGC / ANW.

Paper copies of the consultation document are available at public libraries in every county. Accessible formats can be requested by emailing [northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com](mailto:northwalesregionaltransportplan@arup.com) or calling 01172 405 350.



## Engaging with Politicians

**Oddi wrth:** Uchelgais Gogledd Cymru | Ambition North Wales

<info@uchelgaisgogledd.cymru>

**Anfonwyd:** Dydd Llun, 20 Ionawr 2025 14:26

**Pwnc:** Gwybodaeth am lansiad yr ymgynghoriad trafndiaeth | Information regarding the public consultation on the future of transport

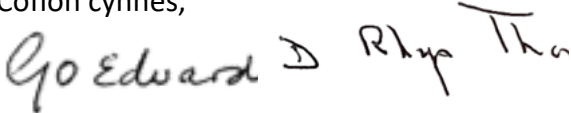
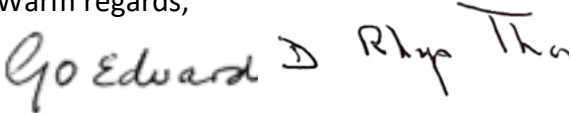
Er gwybodaeth – **for your information.**

Mae'r gwybodaeth canlynol a'r dogfennau atodedig wedi'u rhannu ag ASau ac ASau San Steffan perthnasol yn ogystal â phartneriaid a rhanddeiliaid, gan gynnwys arweinwyr cyfathrebu o fewn awdurdodau lleol.

**The following information and attached documents have been shared with relevant MSs and MPs as well as partners and stakeholders, including local authority communications leads.**

<p>Annwyl [Enw],</p> <p>Rydym yn lansio ymgynghoriad cyhoeddus ar Gynllun Trafnidiaeth Rhanbarthol drafft ar gyfer Gogledd Cymru ar yr 20fed o Ionawr. Mae'r ymgynghoriad 12 wythnos yn gyfle i drigolion, busnesau ac ymwelwyr gael mewnbwn i ddyfodol trafndiaeth yng ngogledd Cymru.</p> <p>O ystyried eich rôl yn cynrychioli ein cymunedau, byddwn yn ddiolchgar pe gallech chi a'ch tîm rannu gwybodaeth am yr ymgynghoriad gyda'ch etholwyr er mwyn sicrhau bod cymaint â phosibl yn cael cyfle i gyfrannu.</p> <p>Er mwyn hwyluso hyn, rwy'n atodi graffeg a chynnwys posib ar gyfer eich rhwydweithiau cymdeithasol, ynghyd â datganiad i'r wasg.</p> <p>Mae'r ymgynghoriad yn rhedeg tan 14 Ebrill 2025, ac mae modd darparu adborth ar-lein, ar e-bost, neu drwy'r post. Mae copïau papur hefyd ar gael mewn llyfrgelloedd cyhoeddus ym mhob sir.</p> <p>I gael rhagor o fanylion, mae croeso i chi gysylltu neu, gallwch fynd i wefan yr ymgynghoriad: <a href="https://bit.ly/CTRhGCymgysylltu-rhithwir">https://bit.ly/CTRhGCymgysylltu-rhithwir</a></p>	<p>Dear [Name],</p> <p>We are launching an important public consultation on the draft Regional Transport Plan for North Wales on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January. This 12-week consultation offers residents, businesses, and visitors the opportunity to shape the future of transport in north Wales.</p> <p>Given your role in representing our communities, I would be grateful if you and your team could share information about this consultation with your constituents to ensure as many people as possible have the chance to contribute.</p> <p>To help you do this, I attach graphics and suggested wording for your social media channels and a press release.</p> <p>The consultation runs until 14th April 2025, and feedback can be provided through an online virtual exhibition, via email, or by post. Paper copies are also available at public libraries in each county.</p> <p>For more details, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us or visit the consultation website: <a href="http://northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com">northwalesregionaltransportplan.virtual-engage.com</a>.</p>
--	--



Diolch ymlaen llaw. Cofion cynnes, 		Thank you for considering this request. Warm regards, 	
<b>Cyng. Goronwy Edwards</b> <b>Cadeirydd Is-Bwyllgor Trafnidiaeth Strategol</b>	<b>Cyng. Dafydd Rhys Thomas</b> <b>Is-Gadeirydd Is-Bwyllgor Trafnidiaeth Strategol</b>	<b>Cllr. Goronwy Edwards</b> <b>Chair Strategic Transport Sub-Committee</b>	<b>Cllr. Dafydd Rhys Thomas</b> <b>Vice-Chair Strategic Transport Sub-Committee</b>

## Members Bulletin 31/01/2025

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### Transport Consultation

Ambition North Wales has launched a public consultation on a proposed Regional Transport Plan for North Wales.

You can view the proposals and submit your feedback through a virtual engagement room by following this link: [North Wales Regional Transport Plan](#)

The deadline for responses is 23:59pm on 14 April 2025.

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## Social Media





## Appendix 5

### **Cyngor Gwynedd's Draft Response to the Consultation on the North Wales Transport Plan**

Dear Cllr. Chairman of the Corporate Joint Committee or Chairman of the Transport Sub-Committee.

#### **Regional Transport Plan (RTP): Feedback from Cyngor Gwynedd**

Cyngor Gwynedd greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the production of the 2025-2030 RTP and in this context the consultation process.

In the first instance, I would like to take the opportunity to sincerely congratulate the North Wales Coporate Joint Committee (CJC), for leading on and coordinating the production of the draft RTP and the supporting documents. In addition to the CJC staff I would also like to thank the elected members and the staff of the six local authorities in North Wales for working together to develop this regional plan together with the consultants ARUP who have supported and facilitated this work. It's also important to recognise the role and contribution of Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government with this work.

The draft RTP matches and aligns with the Welsh Government's guidelines for creating regional transport plans. With this it is difficult to argue with the vision and objectives included nor the policies and interventions that are detailed with the intention of realising and achieving them.

Cyngor Gwynedd is fully supportive of, and wants to see, a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being in North Wales. As part of this we want to see attractive opportunities and options that offer real choice and alternative methods of travel rather than the car. We are keen to see a network that is accessible and address wider aspirations to support specific groups within society which include vulnerable, disabled, young, old people and who also address the effects of rural poverty.

The wide range of plans included in the Delivery Plan reflects how challenging it is to assess and prioritise schemes when these are so varied in terms of their reach, if they address very regional or local demand, cost and what they will try, or achieve. The truth is that it is not the plan itself that is important but how many of these plans will be carried out during the RTP period. While fully understanding the need to prioritise and rank the plans, it is also necessary to recognise that the plans identified in the Delivery Plan will all have a high priority for the communities associated with them.

We are of the opinion that the Monitoring and Evaluation Plans are purposeful and relevant. Although, as with the RTP and supporting documents in general, we are concerned, in order to meet the Welsh Government's expectations and guidelines, if these documents are too technical and too detailed for the overwhelming majority of the region's population to be able to understand and follow and thereby participate in a meaningful way in processes such as this public consultation.


The Integrated Well-being Appraisal considers the correct questions from the point of view of how the programme or projects will benefit communities, environment, places and economy, culture and the Welsh language and the positive and negative effects in this context.

**Cyswllt:**

01286 679868

01286 679490

cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru



The Council here recognises that it is a transitional period in the field of transport which includes from a point of view, among other factors, the following:

- Changes occurring structurally in the context of transport with, for example, the arrival of the CJC and Transport Wales.
- Changes taking place in terms of Welsh Government means, programmes and funding sources.
- Possible changes in the priorities and focus of the Welsh Government in the field of transport.
- Changes in legislation and models linked to provision in specific areas that include buses.

In addition to the above, a key factor in the relevance and reality of objectives and aspirations in the plan will be the provision of sufficient funding by the Welsh Government. This includes from a capital and revenue perspective. The current arrangements create obvious challenges for local authorities and in many cases the administration of grants on a year-on-year basis places a significant risk on Local Authorities, in the field of public bus provision for example where agreements are often set for a period of between 5-7 years.

We remain concerned that the Welsh Government's strategy and vision do not sufficiently recognise the unique dynamics of transport in rural areas. This includes from the point of view of our desires, wishes and the opportunities and challenges in the context of transport. With this, the mechanism for distributing funding is not sufficient or fair meaning there is a significant difference between the provision and ability to travel between urban and rural areas. We are also of the opinion that the input and influence of local authorities in the field of transport is now eroding which deprives our communities of decent and fair engagement in matters that affect them.

This Council will continue with the open and positive approach towards working together as a member of the CJC but also with the other key stakeholders namely Transport for Wales and the Welsh Government with the intention of providing and maintaining the best possible services and facilities for the communities of Gwynedd along with those of the rest of North Wales.

Yours sincerely,

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet



<b>Title of Item:</b>	<b>Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for the Environment</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Craig ab Iago</b>
<b>Relevant officer:</b>	<b>Dafydd Wyn Williams, Head of Environment Department</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 March 2025</b>

### 1. THE DECISION SOUGHT:

To accept and note the information in the report.

### 2. THE REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To ensure effective performance management.

### 3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on developments in the fields within my remit as Cabinet Member for the Environment. It outlines the latest developments against the commitments within the 2023-2028 Cyngor Gwynedd Plan; and where we are with the performance measures.

3.2 I would like to remind you that all matters have already been discussed between me, the Chief Executive and a representation of senior officers of the Environment Department in January.

3.3 Overall, I am very satisfied with the progress to date on the Council Plan projects led by the Department and the work of the officers in the day-to-day work of the Environment Department's Services.

### 4. PRIORITIES OF THE CYNGOR GWYNEDD PLAN 2023-2028

4.1 The Department is leading on five priorities in the 2023-2028 Council Plan, namely:

- Management of second homes and short-term holiday accommodation;
- New Local Development Plan;
- Waste and Recycling;
- Active Travel;
- Public Transport.

- 4.2 I am very satisfied with the progress that has been achieved this year, and the progress against the milestones set for the five priorities is outlined in Appendix A.

## 5. PERFORMANCE

I outline below the main issues arising from the Department's performance in the latest period. The information does not refer to all services, rather, it focuses on the issues I feel that need to be brought to your attention.

### 5.1 Waste and Recycling

- 5.1.1 Together, we have successfully met the Welsh Government's target of recycling 64% of the waste we collect. However, recycling performance has levelled off for a few years now, and with the expectations to increase to 70% by the end of the year, reaching this level is unlikely this year. But as outlined above, the Waste Strategy for 2025-2030 will set a clear direction for Gwynedd as a county to deliver improvements in recycling levels and meet the 70% target.
- 5.1.2 We monitor the number of queries relating to missed waste collections and it is good to be able to report there have been clear improvements over the current year (See Figure 1). This coincides with the introduction of a new computer system to facilitate back office arrangements, which also facilitates the work of the workforce on the routes. This system is currently being rolled out across the county, and such arrangements are planned to be used for the Commercial Waste Service soon, to improve communication with customers.

Figure 1



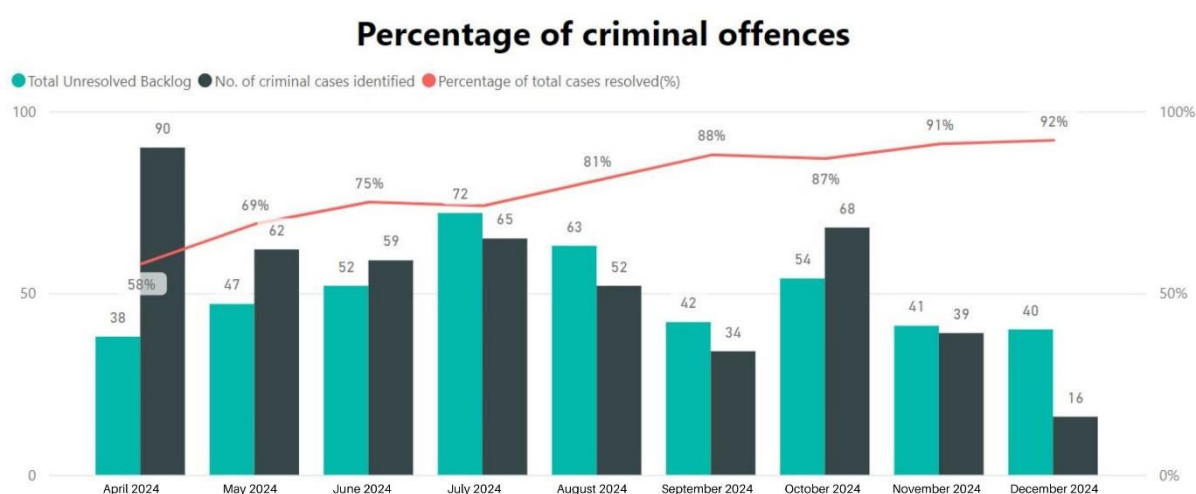
### 5.2 Public Protection

- 5.2.1 The **Trading Standards Service** safeguards the public's health and well-being from business practices (including farms) that have the potential to be harmful, by ensuring that businesses adopt and maintain systems and comply with the legal requirements that apply to them. The Service achieves this by monitoring, influencing and ensuring animal health and welfare standards, preventing dangerous infections and ensuring the tracing of farm animals.



- 5.2.2 This year, a new measure has been introduced that monitors the percentage of criminal offences identified by the Service that have been resolved.
- 5.2.3 Cases are identified through a combination of reports or complaints brought to the service's attention by members of the public and businesses, as well as the proactive work of officers as part of premises inspections.
- 5.2.4 As the graph demonstrates (Figure 2), the performance of the Service is very positive, and includes a range of work to ensure the welfare of farm animals, together with consumer protection work. This includes energy performance certificates/standards for private rental properties, carrying out inspections of premises that are licensed to store and sell fireworks to ensure compliance with the requirements.

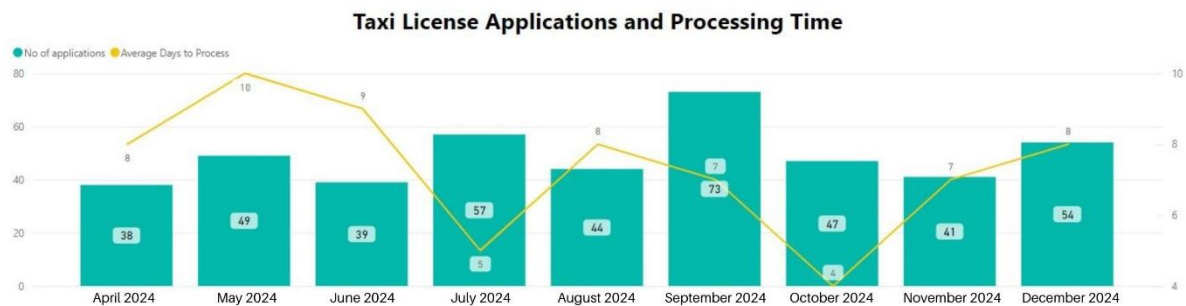
**Figure 2**



- 5.2.5 The team also carried out 'test purchase' exercises in a sample of the county's shops and on age-restricted goods - with particular attention on trying to purchase 'fireworks'. The results of the campaign were positive, with no sales reported.
- 5.2.6 The **Pollution and Licensing Service** ensures that licensed activities relating to taxis, alcohol, gambling and entertaining are provided in a way that protects the public and supports businesses.
- 5.2.3 During the last year, more taxi vehicle licensing applications are now being submitted through the on-line system on the Council website. The current level of performance is good, and it can be seen from the graph (Figure 3) that the time taken to process applications is very fast, with applications that are submitted in full being processed the same day.

**Figure 3**





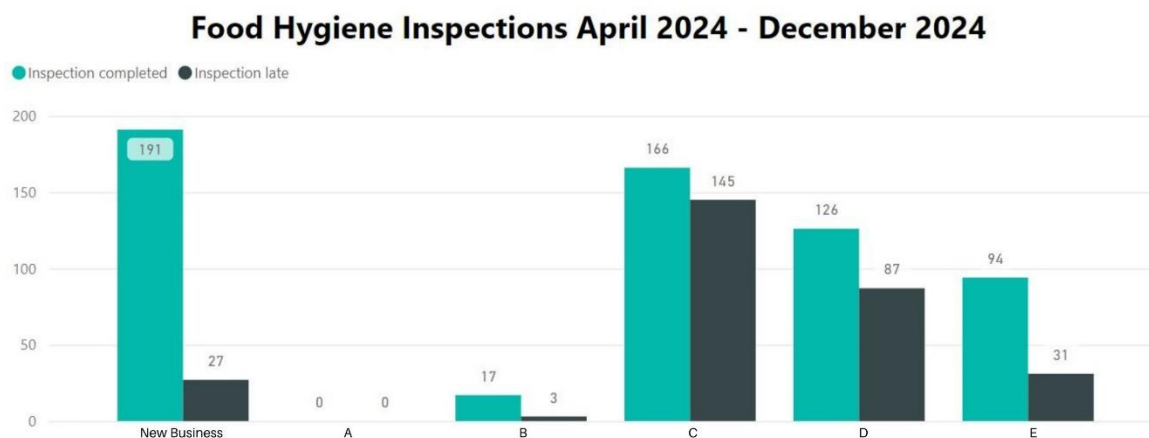
5.2.4 Modifications have also been agreed to the delegated rights process in relation to determinations of the Council's licensing applications. This could result in fewer applications having to be referred to Committee for a decision, thus accelerating the process for applicants. There are delays with some applications as the information submitted may be incomplete or more information is required in addition to the fact that some applications still need to be reported to the Licensing Committee for a decision.

5.2.5 The **Food and Safety Service** ensures that food and drink that is sold for consumption is produced, stored, distributed and handled in a safe manner and complies with statutory requirements.

5.2.6 While 99% of the county's food businesses meet food hygiene standards of a score of 3 or higher, there is currently a backlog in food hygiene standards inspections. This follows significant changes in the Service's organisation over the past 18 months, with a number of experienced officers retiring or moving into other roles and challenges with recruiting qualified officers.

5.2.7 The Service prioritises inspections of high/higher risk food businesses (A/B in the graph in Figure 4 below), and new businesses and there are also efforts to try to secure resources to recruit a trainee who would assist with capacity and planning the future workforce.

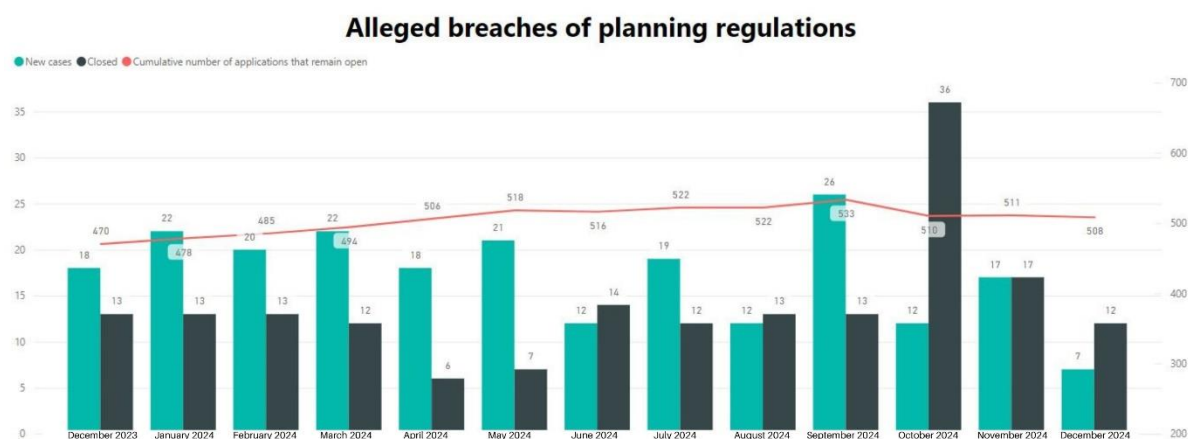
**Figure 4**



### 5.3 Planning and Building Control

- 5.3.1 The performance of the **Planning Service** in terms of the average time taken to determine a planning application remains relatively stable, although there is an increase this year in specific applications relating to air source heat pumps and for agricultural developments. The increase in agricultural applications is due to the need for farms to store and treat waste in a way that protects the environment and to comply with relevant legislation.
- 5.3.2 The average application determination time is 105 days, with the latest figures showing that 85% of determinations are made within the statutory time (either under 56 days or with an agreed extension). This highlights that, generally, officers communicate effectively with applicants and understand why it is not always possible to issue a determination within the statutory period.
- 5.3.3 As part of workforce planning efforts, it is gratifying to report there are 4 trainees in the Planning Service, developing their skills and experience.
- 5.3.4 In relation to the number of alleged breaches of planning regulations, it appears that arrangements to strengthen the resource in the field are now having a positive impact on performance. As can be seen from the graph (Figure 5), a good number of cases are now being closed in a timely manner.

**Figure 5**



- 5.3.5 The **Building Control Service** ensures that building work meets the expected health and safety standards. The Service has been given additional responsibilities in light of the Buildings Safety Act 2022 including the need for officers to register with the Building Safety Regulator as 'Registered Building Inspectors'.
- 5.3.6 However, the latest performance data shows that the Service has shown good progress in the decisions made on applications within statutory deadlines (See Figure 6 below). This has been achieved following an increase in capacity with the recruitment of 2 Assistant Building Control officers, and a LABC Trainee Building Inspector. This has proven to be a great boost to the service, and we will ensure that new team members are fully supported.

Figure 6

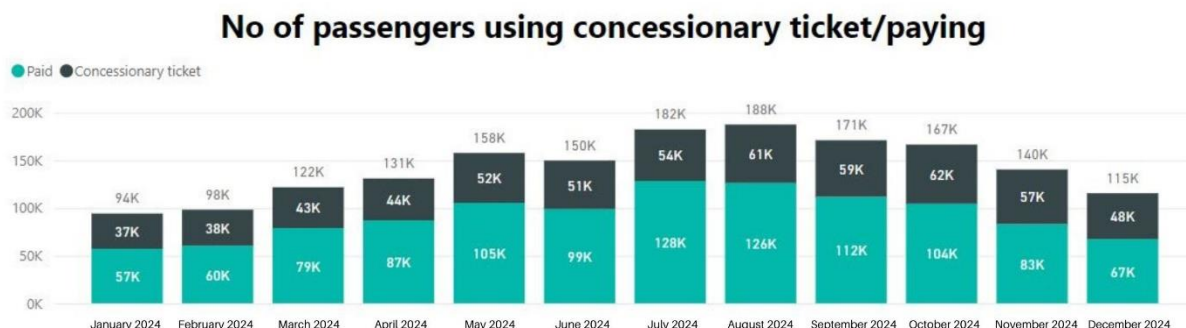


## 5.4 Transport

- 5.4.1 There is an enforcement team of 9 officers within the **Parking Service** who operate across the county, with officers working 7 days a week with the intention of having a positive influence on motorists' practices to park in a responsible, safe and compliant manner. Officers respond to complaints or concerns about illegal parking at specific locations, and for the latest period, officers have successfully visited 70% of locations within 1 day, with all locations receiving a visit within three days.
- 5.4.2 When there are incidents of motorists parking in breach of restrictions, the enforcement officers deal with each case in a consistent, fair and transparent manner, with a right for all those who receive a fine to appeal should they feel that any unfairness or error has occurred.
- 5.4.3 Looking at the situation for the current year it is seen that there is a clear division between the notices issued to on- and off-street (car parks) vehicles. The team's work focuses on on-street parking (57%), with 43% relating to Council car parks.
- 5.4.2 As set out under the Council Plan Priorities, significant work has been undertaken in the field of **Public Transport** over the past two years reviewing and rolling out a new public transport network to communities across the county.
- 5.4.3 A new measure has been introduced this year to monitor punctuality and ensure that planned journeys travel along the routes on time. I hope passengers will be able to be confident that the bus arrives on time and can rely on the service since the changes to the network, with well over 80% of local bus journeys arriving on time (which is up to 1 minute early or 5 minutes late).
- 5.4.4 It is also encouraging that a significant percentage (64%) of passengers on the bus network in Gwynedd pay to use the bus rather than use a concessionary

travel ticket (See Figure 7 below). This again reflects that the current network is attractive, and hopefully helps to ensure that the services remain environmentally and financially sustainable.

**Figure 7**



## 6. FINANCIAL POSITION / SAVINGS

- 6.1 It was reported to the Cabinet on 21 January (Revenue Budget 2024/25 – End of November 2024 Review), that an overspend of £970,000 is forecast for the Environment Department for the current year.
- 6.2 There is a combination of reasons for that, including the pattern of overspending in waste collection and recycling. Although an overspend of £667,000 is forecast for this area this year, improvements are being made and levels of overspending continue to fall. The Cabinet has recommended that £400,000 of permanent revenue be earmarked to meet part of the ongoing overspend and the Department has plans to restructure to try to meet the remaining amount.
- 6.3 Parking income projections are below the target set, but the impact of this is reduced by underspending from other areas. Members will also be aware that the Cabinet has approved an increase in parking fees effective from April 2025 as part of the effort to address this.
- 6.4 At its meeting on 21 January, the Cabinet approved the deletion of a nappy collection savings scheme worth £146,910 for 2025/26, using the provision set aside in the budget to do so. It was also noted that alternative schemes are being proposed for a savings scheme worth £300,000 by reviewing waste contracts worth £400,000.
- 6.5 We anticipate risks in realising 4 savings schemes worth a total of £388,000 - Standardising departmental support arrangements (£150,000), increasing income by collecting Commercial Waste from holiday accommodation (£120,000), Parking and Streetworks - Extending Parking Enforcement Hours in the Council's Short Stay Car Parks (£38,000) and Parking and Streetworks -

adjusting the Band 2 Long Stay Fees Structure (£80,000). There is a delay on 8 schemes worth £402,000 but work is moving forward, with 1 scheme on track to be realised on time.

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## **The Statutory Officers' observations**

### **Chief Finance Officer:**

I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situation of the Environment Department.

### **Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety

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## **Appendices:**

**Appendix A:** Council Plan Priorities (Environment)

### **Background Documents:**

[The-Council-Plan-2023-28](#)

[Revenue Budget 2024/25 – End of November 2024 Review](#)

[Savings Overview: Progress Report on Realising Savings Schemes](#)

# **Appendix A** (Environment Cabinet Member Performance Report)

## **Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028 Priorities**

### **A Homely Gwynedd:**

- Managing second homes and short term holiday accommodation

### **A Green Gwynedd:**

- New Local Development Plan
- Waste and Recycling
- Active Travel
- Public Transport



# **A Homely Gwynedd:** Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities

## **Project:** Managing second homes and short term holiday accommodation







The substantial number of houses in Gwynedd that are being used as second homes and short-term holiday accommodation is having a detrimental impact on the ability of the people of Gwynedd to have access to homes in their communities.

The Council has presented detailed research to the Government which highlights the need to act in the areas of planning, taxation and licensing in order to gain better control of the situation. Following announcements from the Government, including the establishment of the Dwyfor Pilot, which commits to introducing steps to tackle problems in the field, the Council is implementing legislative changes and sets a Council tax premium for second homes and empty homes every year at an appropriate rate to respond to the situation at the time.





# Project: Managing second homes and short term holiday accommodation

Milestones for 2024/5	Update on the milestones so far	Completed/ likely to be completed by end of financial year
<p><b>1.</b> Prepare a report following an engagement period on introducing an Article 4 Direction to be submitted to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Communities Scrutiny Committee on 16 May 2024;</li><li>· The Council's Cabinet in June / July 2024 with a recommendation to confirm the introduction of Article 4 Direction, to be effective on 1 September 2024.</li></ul>	<p><b>1.</b> The Cabinet confirmed the Article 4 Direction on 16 July 2024.</p>	
<p><b>2.</b> Subject to the decision of the Cabinet, use the same engagement methods that were used in the summer of 2023, to inform the residents of Gwynedd that the Article 4 Direction will be effective from 1 September 2024.</p>	<p><b>2.</b> Implemented in August 2024.</p>	
<p><b>3.</b> We will put arrangements in place to prepare for the implementation of the Article 4 Direction.</p>	<p><b>3.</b> Arrangements in place and operational since 1 September 2024.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b> Seek to strengthen the Article 4 Team in the period up to September 2024 by recruiting and training 2 Article 4 planning officers (using a resource from the Welsh Government in conjunction with a resource that has already been allocated by the Cabinet).</p>	<p><b>4.</b> Recruited 2 Article 4 Planning Trainees since July and September 2024.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> Regarding the Council Tax Premium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Research into the impact of the Premium in terms of any change of property use, including engagement and analysis of results (April – July 2024).</li><li>· The Cabinet to consider the results in September 2024 if it wants to hold a public consultation on increasing the Premium level for 2025/26.</li><li>· Consultation on changing the level of the Premium - if there is one - (September - October).</li><li>· The Full Council to consider the Premium level for 2025/26 in December 2024 (whether a change is recommended or not).</li></ul>	<p><b>5.</b> The steps have been completed in accordance with the schedule. Following the research, a decision was made by the full Council in December 2024 to keep the Premium at the same level for 2025/6.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b> Following the Welsh Government's announcement of an intention to introduce statutory registration and licensing scheme legislation for holiday accommodation by the end of 2024, consider the implications of the change for the Council regarding possible enforcement/regulatory requirements (further details awaited on new arrangements and possible expectations on Councils).</p>	<p><b>6.</b> The Council has carried out the work that is within our control for 2024/5, and will consider any further developments in due course from the Welsh Government.</p>	



# **A Green Gwynedd:** Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis

## **Project:**


### New Local Development Plan

We will draw-up a new Local Development Plan for Gwynedd that will address housing needs, employment and the social and environmental needs of the county's residents over the next 15 years.





# Project: New Local Development Plan

Milestones for 2024/5	Update on the milestones so far	Completed/ likely to be completed by end of financial year
1. Subject to Welsh Government approval, start implementing the Delivery Agreement in order to facilitate the arrangements for the preparation of a new Local Development Plan for Gwynedd. (It is required to prepare a Local Development Plan within a period of three and a half years.)	1. Delivery Agreement approved by the Welsh Government in April 2024, and has begun being implemented.	
2. Action on the pre-deposit stage which includes gathering evidence for the new Plan which will include: · call for sites (April / May), · developing the strategic options (following on from the main issues, vision and strategic objectives that have been identified in 2023/24), preparing background papers / specific topic, impact assessments (April 2024 onwards, continuing into 2025/26).	2. Call for sites began in July 2024 and extended up to 15 January 2025. Work on developing strategic options ongoing.	Aspects of pre-deposit stage partially completed this year, and to continue in 2025/6.

# **A Green Gwynedd:** Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis

## **Project:** Waste and Recycling

We will prepare a new waste and recycling strategy to try and increase the county's recycling level to meet the national target of 70% by 2025.

We will assess how effective the current litter collection arrangements are in terms of promoting recycling (from door-to door and in our centres) and introduce new arrangements where required.



# Project: Waste and Recycling

Milestones for 2024/5	Update on the milestones so far	Completed/ likely to be completed by end of financial year
<p><b>1.</b> Prepare a Waste and Recycling Strategy that will set a direction for the coming years with the aim of maximising recycling levels with specific steps to transform the waste and recycling services.</p> <p>Feeding into the strategic work, we will:</p> <p><b>i.</b> Review existing waste treatment assets and prepare upgrade options to develop sites that are modern and fit for purpose which will assist us to process more waste ourselves and improve the quality of the product.</p> <p><b>ii.</b> As part of wider work to review collection arrangements, we will trial the use of hessian sacks for recycling collections in up to 2,000 homes, reviewing success in order to consider the suitability of extending to other areas in the county.</p> <p><b>iii.</b> The hessian sack trial will be accompanied by awareness-raising, communication and engagement work, and a data-based behavior change plan will be prepared to support the Waste and Recycling Strategy.</p> <p><b>iv.</b> New commercial waste arrangements that comply with all-Wales workplace recycling regulations and also transform the business to be more efficient and modern.</p> <p><b>v.</b> Moving towards promoting a circular economy by reducing the tonnage of residual waste produced and increasing and supporting reuse and repair through our recycling centres.</p>	<p><b>1.</b> A draft strategy has been drawn up, and expected to be reported to the Council's Cabinet early in 2025/6 for approval to carry out a public engagement/consultation exercise.</p> <p><b>i.</b> Collaborate with Wrap Cymru to prepare initial plans for modern and fit for purpose waste treatment and processing facilities for Caergylchu (Caernarfon) and Ffridd Rasus (Harlech) sites.</p> <p><b>ii.</b> A specialist company has been appointed to lead the monitoring of the trial and the plan is expected to start during February/March 2025.</p> <p><b>iii.</b> A plan to raise awareness and promote the use of specific recycling services targeting an area that has been piloted in the Tanygrisiau area, with the intention of extending to other areas in the new year.</p> <p><b>iv.</b> Restructuring and re-examining how we manage and operate commercial waste including the purchase of a new back office system.</p> <p><b>v.</b> A number of projects including assessing the accessibility of our recycling centres, encouraging more recycling and collaborating with partners to reuse the materials received before recycling them.</p>	<p>Partially completed - A draft strategy has been prepared, with the intention of presenting it for the Cabinet's consideration shortly.</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Ensuring control of the overspend, taking into account the savings plans, as well as setting a staffing structure that is suitable to be able to carry out the work, within the resources available.</p> <p>As part of wider savings plans, we will consider the frequency of residual collections.</p>	<p><b>2.</b> Positive progress continues in terms of control of the overspend.</p> <p>Initial work is currently being done with Wrap Cymru to model different options.</p>	<p>Continue to manage budgets prudently</p> <p>It is expected that the assessment will be ready by summer 2025 and changes to arrangements could begin by April 2026</p>



# **A Green Gwynedd:** Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis



## **Project:** Active Travel

Active travel aims to ensure that walking and cycling becomes the normal choice for daily journeys, to improve our personal health, air quality and to make places more pleasant to live and work.

We will improve the county's existing walking and cycle paths, and introduce new active travel routes to facilitate more walking and cycling in our communities.



# Project: Active Travel

Milestones for 2024/5	Update on the milestones so far	Completed/ likely to be completed by end of financial year
<p>1. Following the submission of detailed proposals to the Welsh Government for Active Travel and Safe Routes in Communities schemes, the following successful schemes to be implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Ffordd Penrhos Bangor (second phase);</li><li>· Ysgol Rhostryfan;</li><li>· Ysgol Treferthyr, Cricieth.</li></ul>	<p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ffordd Penrhos Bangor (second phase):</b> The first element of the second phase has been carried out with the intention of completing the second element by the end of the financial year.</li><li>• <b>Ysgol Rhostryfan:</b> The work of building a new path to the back of the school and improvements to the front of the building is out for tender with the intention that the work will start in February 2025.</li><li>• <b>Ysgol Treferthyr, Cricieth:</b> Work started on site in December 2024 with the main work starting in January 2025 and scheduled to be completed by mid-March 2025.</li></ul>	
<p>2. Promote routes for residents and visitors to the county for the walking and cycling opportunities on Gwynedd's active travel network.</p>	<p>2. Promote the network of routes in operation and in collaboration with others (eg Visit Wales)</p>	 Permanent work








# **A Green Gwynedd:** Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis

## **Project:** Public Transport

We will review our existing public transport provision with the aim of developing a public transport network that will be convenient, reliable and reasonably priced to allow the residents of Gwynedd to travel every day of the week. As a part of this plan, we will also introduce new electric buses.



# Project: Public Transport

Milestones for 2024/5	Update on the milestones so far	Completed/ likely to be completed by end of financial year
1. Following a review and procurement process, implementation of the new public bus network in the Meirionnydd area.	1. New network operational in Meirionnydd.	
2. After reviewing the public bus network in the Dwyfor area, tender process completed and implemented.	2. A review has been carried out in Dwyfor, and despite tender on a new network, historic services re-tendered for 2 years, and the intention is to review arrangements in this period.	 Yes/ Partial
3. Tender process for the rest of Arfon (following changes already in place in Dyffryn Nantlle and Caernarfon), and implementing a new network.	3. Review completed and network operational.	
4. As part of the above, consider alternative options such as Fflecsi to accompany more traditional services as part of an integrated network that offers local and longer travel opportunities.	4. Alternative Fflecsi provision introduced in parts of Meirionnydd (Dyffryn Dulas and Dolgellau). Provision continuously monitored in terms of operational issues, use and costs.	
5. Ensure a clear financial picture in terms of the cost of providing the network and the various existing sources.	5. The purchasing processes that have taken place as part of the county-wide review have identified the costs associated with maintaining the network for which the Council is responsible. This in the context that there are different elements to the network beyond the control of the Council (eg commercial which has been commissioned by others - Transport for Wales: TrawsCymru T2, T3 and T10.) Officers working together with Transport for Wales and Welsh Government on various financial issues that maintain and support the network in Gwynedd. There are changes to the funds, the amounts available and how these are administered, so it is necessary to remain alive to this and respond appropriately. This extends and includes the situation and significant and general financial challenges the Council is facing.	  Yes but with continuous review





## GWYNEDD COUNCIL – Report to Gwynedd Council's Cabinet

<b>Item Title:</b>	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and YGC
<b>Aelod Cabinet:</b>	Cyng. June Jones
<b>Related Officer:</b>	Steffan Jones, Head of the Department for Highways, Engineering and YGC
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	11 March, 2025

### 1. Decision Sought:

To accept and note the information in the report.

### 2. The reason why Cabinet needs to make the decision:

In order to ensure effective performance management.

### 3. Introduction and Rationale

3.1. The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on what has happened in the areas for which I am responsible as the Cabinet Member for Highways, Engineering and YGC. This report will outline the following: -

- What has been achieved as part of the priorities of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28.
- Overview of the department's performance measurements.
- The latest in terms of savings and cuts schemes.

3.2. Overall, I am satisfied that significant progress is being made with Department-led projects in line with the Council's Plan and the performance measures for which I am responsible. The Department continues to face challenges, but I am confident that the Department has suitable plans to greet these situations to the best of its ability.

3.3. All matters set out here are regularly discussed, and scrutinised by myself in conjunction with the Corporate Director, Head of Department along with Department Service Managers.

### 4. Council Plan Projects 2023-28 (Improvement Priorities)

4.1 The table in APPENDIX 1 provides an update on the progress of the Department's three priority projects that have been identified in Gwynedd Council's Plan 2023-28.

4.2 From this information, you will note that the Department has made good progress against the main milestones of the Scheme. However, there has been a halt in improvement priority 3, 'Extending play and socialising opportunities for children and young people in the County'. Unfortunately, there has been no support for our bid for capital funding, therefore, we will try to maximise the revenue funding to introduce an improvement to the assets.

## 5. Department Services Performance

Here is an outline of some of the key issues arising from the last performance report submitted by the Department in July 2024. The information does not refer to all services in the department, only those that we feel need to be brought to your attention. I would like to say that I am pleased with the performance of the Services included in this report.

### 5.1 Highway Maintenance Service

5.1.1 It was reported last year that we had adopted a new Highway Maintenance Manual. The service has now completed the introduction of arrangements within their road asset system (WDM) to ensure they implement the following:

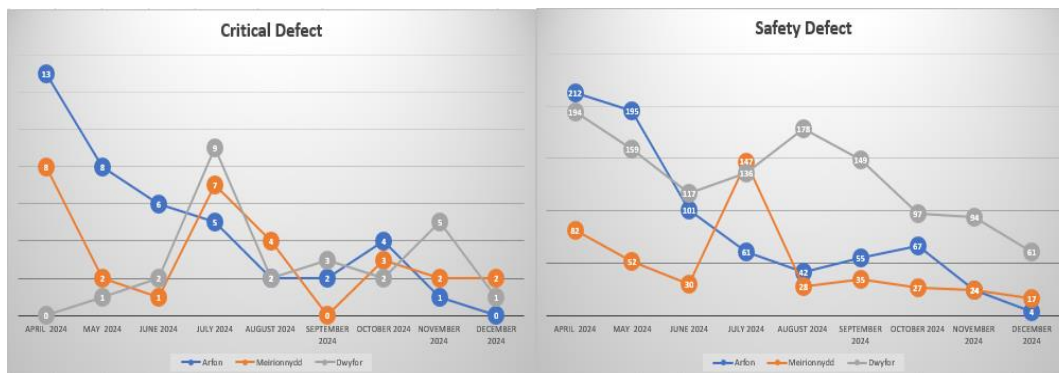
#### 5.1.2 Revise Network Hierarchy

The previous network hierarchy of roads had to be made according to the recommendations of the most recent highway code of practice. The changes have been completed and included within the new Highway Maintenance Manual.

#### 5.1.3 Defect Categories

The information recorded during road checks is used to determine defects categories. The main change of the manual is to see a safety defect (previously category 1), being dealt with by the end of the next working day. These changes in defect reporting are fully operational and the numbers are being reported as part of the department's performance meetings.

See below the measures related to the Defect Categories:



#### 5.1.4 Budget Allocation

The highway maintenance budget is split between regular and planned work. The Service is working towards establishing a priority-based work regime/programme for the worst roads across Gwynedd which will be effective from April 2025.

## 5.2 Street Scene Service

5.2.1 We have now incorporated the following services within a single service (Street Scene Service) this has enabled the department to focus on the look and image of our streets and roads. The three units within the Street Scene service are:

- Street Cleaning
- Street Enforcement
- Timau Tacluso 'Ardal Ni'

5.2.2 A high-level review of the Service was undertaken to establish whether there were any barriers preventing it from working effectively and efficiently following the principles of 'Ffordd Gwynedd'. The review included various elements to look at the overspending, overtime, health and safety situation and route efficiency.

5.2.3 In conducting the review, the need to invest in a route optimisation system was highlighted, and an internal bid was put forward to fund this investment. We have now invested in a system called Bartec that will play an integral role in the service's improvement plan.

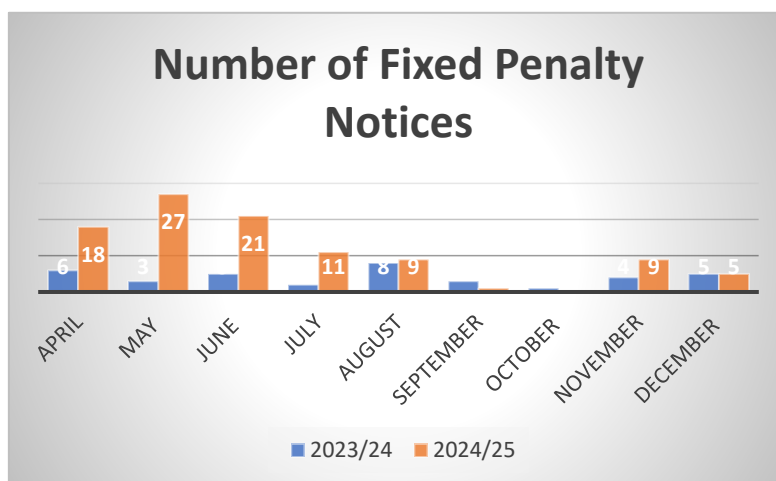
### Timau Tacluso 'Ardal Ni'

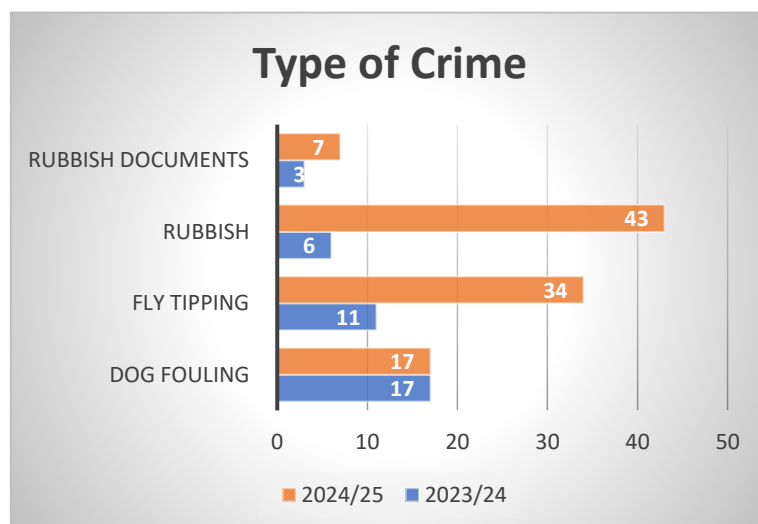
5.2.4 The Teams continue to go from strength to strength working closely with local members to beautify the County. Many job requests reach the teams, and they are able to cope with the demand by acting on the requests when visiting the different areas.

### Street Enforcement

5.2.5 The Enforcement Team continues to run campaigns and respond to any incidents affecting the cleanliness of the County. The team is very proactive in dealing with complaints and enquiries received from the public ensuring timely checks into the incidents.

Over the past year the number of fixed penalty notices has increased. It is believed that this is down to the ownership of the Enforcement Officers who are enthusiastic in their role to ensure improvement in the appearance of our environment. The numbers of penalty notices served over the past two years are highlighted below:





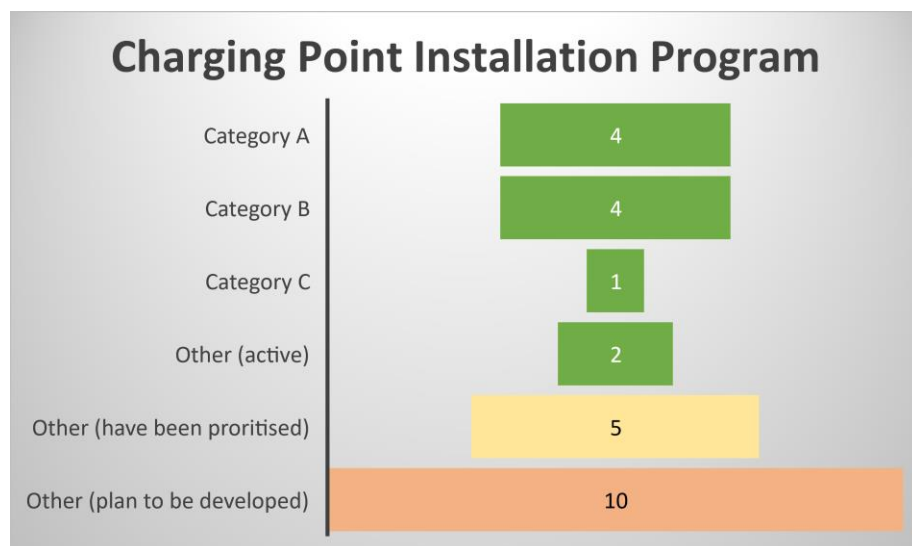
### 5.3 Grounds Maintenance Service

- 5.3.1 The service is responsible for a wide range of locations within towns and villages, mainly within the 20 and 30mph zones, across the County during the growing season. Including road verges, cemeteries, open spaces, play areas, care homes and sports facilities. The service is responsible for 16 cemeteries across the County and coordinates the opening and closing of graves throughout the year in 12 cemeteries in the Arfon and Meirionnydd areas with different arrangements in the Dwyfor area where funeral directors undertake the work.
- 5.3.2 In addition to this, the service undertakes a range of additional work during the winter months, such as contracting work for other departments, fencing and concrete works, bench installation, street bin installation, public toilets refurbishment and painting, renovation and painting of play area equipment, maintenance of promenade benches in Tywyn and Barmouth, maintenance of public parks such as Parc Dre, Caernarfon.
- 5.3.3 The Service is working with the Department for Environment on a roadside project, to promote the biodiversity of nature particularly pollinators.
- 5.3.4 We are currently undertaking a review of the Grounds Maintenance Service which follows the principles of 'Ffordd Gwynedd' that looks at the service through the service user's eyes. We will now move on to the second step by addressing any work that need to be done to improve the service.

### 5.4 Fleet Service

- 5.4.1 Since the adoption of the Green Fleet Plan (2023/2029), the Fleet Service has engaged in discussions with departments/services to truly identify fleet size/true service needs. This was a vital step to carry out before looking at changes to the type of fleet we will need. One of the milestones of the scheme is to reduce the use of fossil fuel vehicles by introducing a fleet of vehicles (cars and vans) ULEV (Ultra Low Emission Vehicles).
- 5.4.2 There has been significant progress with 70 (30%) of the Council's 232 cars or vans now fully electric.

- 5.4.3 This transition to green energy goes hand in hand with a department-led internal charging point installation programme and the programme is built around existing fleet vehicle orders.



- 5.4.4 The Service is also looking at setting up a corporate pool system and the Information Technology team will support the development of the system looking to run a trial soon this year.

## 5.5 CCTV Service (CCTV)

- 5.5.1 Grant funding is being used with the ongoing rollout and upgrading of CCTV software and hardware equipment, following a tender process. CCTV cameras are used in public places in Gwynedd to help keep our communities safe by assisting to prevent and fight crime, to help prevent anti-social behaviour, to provide recorded evidence to North Wales Police, to promote economic wellbeing within communities and to give the public a sense of security.
- 5.5.2 In addition, the authority has installed cameras connected to the same system in many of its working depots, to assist with health and safety responsibilities and day-to-day operation, as well as assisting the Police with theft.
- 5.5.3 This year we were successful in receiving a request for funding (£450,000) through the Shared Prosperity fund (SPF) to extend on our existing provision of CCTV systems in public places. The project involved hiring specialist technical consultants to help write a comprehensive requirement brief for visiting the open market. The winning bidder is now drawing to the end of the submission period, with meetings taking place in the coming weeks to finalise the contract.

## **5.6 Public Toilet Service**

- 5.6.1. The Council has 61 public toilets in Gwynedd which, in terms of numbers, is the highest provision in Wales managed by a Local Authority. Additionally, 37 toilets are available for public use as part of the Public Facilities Grant Scheme which allows members of the public to use toilets at various local establishments in the hours they are open. The toilets can be used free of charge and there is no expectation for those using them to purchase goods or services during the period they would be in the building. The maximum grant for one year is £500 per placement. The grant guidance on the Council's corporate website highlights the purpose of the Scheme and how to apply for the grant.
- 5.6.2. We strive to improve the condition of public toilets to meet the needs of residents and visitors despite declining Council resources. Upgrades this year for Y Maes, Pwllheli and Y Quay Toilets, Aberdyfi have been scheduled. Last year Criccieth toilet was upgraded through the Important Things Fund with an investment of £135,860.
- 5.6.3. Last year, we received internal funds following a bid for replacing payment doors from existing cash ones to offer the option of contactless and cash payment. The procurement process is now complete and new payment doors will be introduced in Pwllheli before the summer period.
- 5.6.4. The Welsh Government agreed to adopt the Public Health (Wales) Bill back in 2017. The overall aim of this legislation was to ensure that all local authorities in Wales assessed the needs of their communities in terms of public toilet provision. In line with these responsibilities, the 'Gwynedd Local Toilets' Strategy was formulated in May 2019. It is timely to review the current Strategy assessing its suitability and relevance to the needs of the Council and the needs of our communities today. We will report to the Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

## **5.7 Gwynedd Consultancy Business and Project Delivery Service (YGC)**

- 5.7.1 Since Gwynedd Consultancy joined the Department, there has been an opportunity to revisit the two existing Business Units centralising administrative services. Recently, we have reviewed processes following the principles of 'Ffordd Gwynedd'. Through this work we have been able to enhance the use of technology by changing processes from paper to digital. There has also been an opportunity to centralize the administration of the Department's core Information Technology systems. See here progress that has been over the past year:
- Order and Payment Processing – system is operational and has launched to 80% of the Highways and Engineering department. The system will be operational for the entire department by the end of March 2025.
  - Debtor and Client Billing – a new system in place for billing in electronics. Currently operational to Municipal works and Highways (Trunk Roads) works only.
  - Incident / Claims System – a medium-sized system in the process of being developed and aiming to be operational by the end of March 2025.
  - Project Management and Daily Works - a new system in place to track packages of work. Currently active to Municipal works only.

- Asset System – core system operational and used to track H&S assets (First Aid Kits, Defibrillators etc)
- Training System – we are in the process of disposing of the old paper systems and moving to full deployment of MODS.

## **5.8 Gwynedd Consultancy Water and Environment Service (YGC)**

- 5.8.1. The Council has published its Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, which refers to how we as a Council respond to the impacts of climate change, which include the impacts of flooding. As a result of this, the Water and Environment Service has produced a Local Flooding Strategy that runs parallel to the Climate Emergency Plan in order to realise both targets.
- 5.8.2. The department submitted the strategy to the Welsh Government for approval and expects their response before the end of the financial year.
- 5.8.3. We are working with Natural Resources Wales on several projects in Pwllheli and Porthmadog to meet the objectives of our Local Flooding Strategy.
- 5.8.4. Two significant schemes are moving forward in the Barmouth area supported by Welsh Government grant funding.

## **6. The Department's Business Plan / Accreditations**

- 6.1 **Business Plan** - Work to update the Gwynedd Consultancy Business Plan (YGC) to incorporate it into the department-wide Plan (PP/YGC) continues. The plan is to launch the new plan in April 2024.
- 6.2 **Investors in People Accreditations (IIP)** – YGC received the ‘Investors in People’ accreditation for the third time this year. The accreditation report and the Service’s action plan will weave into the Service’s business plan.
- 6.3 **BSI accreditations** - The Department has managed to retain the accreditations below following the yearly BSI management audit:
  - BSI 9001
  - BSI 1401
  - BSI 4501
- 6.4 These accreditations are crucial and essential to the work of services across the Department.

## **7. Financial Situation**

- 7.1 Following a recent review of the Department's budgetary position submitted to cabinet (23/01/24) an overspend of around £699k is anticipated this year. It has been noted that there is a reduction in the work being commissioned by external agencies which is negatively affecting the income of highway services. In municipalities, there is a combination of factors, including additional pressure on street cleaning budgets and cleaning public toilets.
- 7.2 Income losses are seen in maintaining public lands and toilets, but bereavement services are experiencing higher incomes which reduce reported overspending.
- 7.3 Total Savings plans 2024-25 are £419,500. The Department has or is on track to achieve savings of £278.5k with 141k either slipping or with a risk that they might not be delivered.

## **8. Statutory Officers' Views**

### **The Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

### **Head of Finance:**

I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situation of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department.



## APPENDIX 1

Projects	Overview	What we want to achieve during the second year 2024-25 (milestones)	Update- March 2025
<b>1. Clean and Tidy Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fulfilling what was promised within the Council's Plan 2018-23 namely, 'for every community in Gwynedd to prosper' and that as people they 'enjoy a happy, healthy and safe life' by 'taking advantage of the County's natural beauty'.</li> <li>To facilitate physical improvements to the built environment within and in the vicinity of towns and villages in Gwynedd, by focusing on public open spaces, e.g., roads, streets, parks, promenades, etc.</li> <li>Promote local ownership and develop a sense of pride in the area by working at a cross-service level by building relationships with local groups/organisations, volunteers and the third sector.</li> </ul>	1. Hold a formal launch of the 'Street Scene' Service to inform local staff and members of this development.	A launch of the service has already taken place. We have seen units within the service work together since the change which shows the value of the restructuring under the new Street Scene Manager.
		2. Introduce a route optimization system to ensure effective and efficient street bin and cleaning routes. This investment is linked to the cut/savings targets and the overspend situation. Therefore, there is an expectation for the system to partially improve the situation during the 24/25 financial year.	The Bartec system has now been purchased and a clear outline of the project's work has been shared with the task group. We had an initial conversation with the company on the 07/01/25 and meetings have been scheduled fortnightly with the Project Manager and task group.
		1. The introduction of Town Cleaners in Caernarfon and Bangor as part of the Street Cleaning Service.	Drwy'r bid ariannol mewnol rydym wedi penodi Glanhawyr Tref ym Mangor a Chaernarfon sy'n weledol i'r cyhoedd ac yn cadw'r ardaloedd yn lân ac yn dachus gyda ysgubwr trydan a chart.
		3. Strengthen the Timau Tacluso'r relationships by working with local organisations/communities with	Mae'r Timau Tacluso yn parhau i gydweithio gyd mudiadau/cymunedau lleol. Enghraifft diweddar cawsom oedd cais gan y gymuned yn Blaenau

		particular attention to public open areas.	Ffestiniog i dacluso ardal ger y murlun newydd sydd wedi ei osod yno.
<b>2. Gweithredu ar Risgiau Llifogydd</b>	<p><b><u>Risgiau Llifogydd Arfordirol</u></b></p> <p>Mae gan Wynedd yr arfordir mwyaf yng Nghymru ac oherwydd natur ein tirwedd mae canran uchel o'n cymunedau, a'r isadeiledd sydd yn eu gwasanaethu nhw, ar yr arfordir.</p> <p>Yn naturiol, mae risgiau yn codi yn sgil codiad yn lefelau môr yn ogystal â stormydd mwy dwys, sy'n digwydd mwy aml ac sy'n cael gwaeth effaith ar ein cymunedau.</p> <p>Mae'r prosiect yn ceisio ymrwymo i'r drefn o flaenoriaethu risgiau llifogydd.</p> <p><b><u>Risgiau Llifogydd Mewndirol</u></b></p> <p>Mae newid yn ein hinsawdd yn cael effaith sylweddol ar lifogydd a stormydd, chyfnodau o law sydd yn mynd yn fwy dwys ac yn digwydd mwy aml.</p> <p>Mae Gwynedd wedi ei rannu yn 15 dalgylch afonol. Mae posib blaenoriaethu'r dalgylchoedd yn ôl risg damcaniaethol o wybodaeth mapiau Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru,</p>	1. Cwblhau y Strategaeth Llifogydd Lleol.	Strategaeth Llifogydd Lleol wedi ei gwblhau ac wedi ei gyflwyno i Gabinet y Cyngor. Ers hyn, cyflwynwyd yr un adroddiad i sylw Llywodraeth Cymru ac nid ydym wedi derbyn unrhyw gynigion o welliant i'r cynnwys hyd yma.
		2. Ffurio a chynnal trefn o ymgysylltu ar y gynnwys y strategaeth gyda thrigolion a rhanddeiliaid perthnasol.	Rydym bellach yn cwrdd gyda Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru yn gyson i drafod ein strategaeth ynghyd materion eraill.
		3. Ymgorffori neu cyfarch unrhyw adborth ble yn bosib.	Mae'r gwasanaeth wedi cyflwyno adroddiad i'r Tîm Arweinyddiaeth ac wrthi'n paratoi rhaglen weithredu ar sail yr arweiniad a gafwyd.
		4. Mabwysiadu'r strategaeth a chyflwyno'r ddogfen i Llywodraeth Cymru yn unol â'r gofyn	Rydym yn disgwyl adborth terfynol gan Llywodraeth Cymru.

	<p>gan hefyd gymryd i ystyriaeth yr wybodaeth mae'r adran yn ei gasglu ar ôl pob digwyddiad o lifogydd mewn tai yng Ngwynedd (Mae casglu'r wybodaeth yma yn rôl statudol o dan Adran 19 Deddf Rheoli Llifogydd a Dŵr 2010 - fe'i gelwir yn adroddiadau Adran 19).</p> <p>Mae'r prosiect yn ceisio ymrwymo i'r drefn o flaenoriaethu risgiau llifogydd mewndirol.</p>		
<b>3. Ymestyn cyfleoedd chwarae a chymdeithasu ar gyfer plant a phobl ifanc y Sir</b>	<p>Ers ail agor canolfannau wedi'r pandemig, mae gofyn ar ein darpariaeth caeau chwarae y Sir wedi cynyddu. Mae disgwyliad trigolion y Sir hefyd yn uwch ac eisiau gweld cyfarpar chwarae o radd uchel er sicrhau cyfleon chwarae cyfartal. Ers blynyddoedd lawer nid oes buddsoddiad wedi bod yn newid/ychwanegu at yr offer chwarae ac ond cyllideb refeniw fychan iawn sydd ar gael i'w cynnal. Mae sawl her yn ein wynebu er sicrhau cyfleon a chyfarpar chwarae o safon i'n cymunedau. Bydd y cynllun felly yn ein galluogi i ddatblygu'r asedau cyfredol gan sicrhau ardal ddiogel a braf i'n cymunedau ei ddefnyddio.</p>	<p>1. Adnabod y caeau chwarae delwedd uchel gan adolygu stoc y gwasanaeth.</p>	<p>Bydd ein tîm dros y 3 mis nesaf yn adolygu'r stoc gan amlygu'r caeau chwarae delwedd uchel er ystyried cynllun gweithredu.</p>
		<p>2. Darparu rhaglen waith ar sail blaenoriaeth fydd yn gysylltiedig â'r bid ariannu. Gweithredu ar y rhaglen waith yn rannol (yn ddibynol ar llwyddiant y bid ariannol)</p>	<p>Ni fu ein bid am arian dderbyn cefnogaeth. Wedi cwblhau rhan 1 uchod byddwn yn gweithredu ar gynllun i wneud y gorau o'r arian refeniw er cyflwyno gwelliant. Mae'r egwyddor yma yn cael ei ddilyn ar hyn o bryd.</p>
		<p>3. Ail-ymweld â trefniadau cydweithio gyda partneriaid drwy gefnogi partneriaethau i fanteisio ar unrhyw gyfleon grant</p>	<p>Mae'r gwaith yma yn parhau a byddwn yn gweithredu ar unrhyw gyfle fel yma sydd yn dod i'n sylw. Mae'r enghreifftiau canlynol yn cadarnhau yr hyn sydd yn cael ei weithredu arno ar hyn o bryd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangor- Cae Chwarae Maes Tryfan</li> <li>• Prosiect Cymunedol Gardd Cae Doctor</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trafodaethau parhaus gyda Cyngor Dinas Bangor am leoliadau eraill o fewn y ddinas</li></ul>
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## A report for a meeting of the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

**Date:** 11 March 2025  
**Title of Item:** Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Menna Trenholme  
**Contact Officer:** Marian Parry Hughes, Head of Children and Supporting Families Department

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### THE DECISION SOUGHT

To accept and note the information in the report.

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### THE REASONS WHY A DECISION IS NEEDED

To ensure effective performance management.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on what has happened in the Children and Family Support Department. This will include an outline of works against the promises made in the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan, which will include works from the end of 23/24 and so far in 2024-25; and an outline of where the Department is with their performance measures; and the latest in savings and cuts plans.
- 1.2 The purpose of Children and Supporting Family Service is to ensure that we do the best we can to put children, young people and the people of Gwynedd at the centre of our services. This will be measured through the Challenge and Support Performance regime. It is important to the Service that the voices and experiences of individuals who receive and use our services are heard to ensure the best experience for them.
- 1.3 The priority projects through the Council's Plan are moving forward, which are the Autism Plan and the Small Group Homes Scheme.

## 2 CYNGOR GWYNEDD PLAN PROJECTS

- 2.1 Below, we note the progress that has been made to date against the Department's priority projects. These priorities address the department's main risks. Overall, I feel that all projects are making progress against the pledges we have made in the Council Plan.
- 2.2 Small Group Homes Scheme

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We want to improve the experiences of children who receive care and those with intensive and complex needs, who currently have to leave the county or Wales in order to access suitable provision. We will develop registered residential homes for small groups of up to two children, which will allow them to be cared for in Gwynedd, attend local schools, and take a complete part in the life of their communities.

We have now bought properties in Morfa Bychan (Dwyfor), Deiniolen (Arfon) and Edern (Llŷn).

A project group has been set up for the work and they meet monthly. The project group includes members from education, housing & property and health. Recruitment for the Golygfa'r Gest home (Morfa Bychan) has been completed. The post of manager, deputy manager and 6 resident employees, and casual workers have been filled. These workers have started work by receiving mandated training and shadowing shifts at Hafan y Sêr to gain in-house residential service experience within the Council. Care Inspectorate Wales' registration application for Golygfa'r Gest (Morfa Bychan) has been submitted as we expect a response shortly.

We will be placing the first child at Golygfa'r Gest (Morfa Bychan) in February, 2025.

We intend to commence tendering for work for the second and third properties in the upcoming weeks, in the hope of commencing work in month 1 of the next financial year. Recruitment for the second and third homes will commence from February to March, 2025. We are also continuing to search for a fourth property in Gwynedd. This will be to locate a specific child who currently lives in Hafan y Sêr. We have also had an offer received on a house in Farrar Road, Bangor, in December, 2024. This house is designed to support children / young people leaving care.

#### Autism Plan

Autistic children, young people and adults are struggling to get the specialist support they need. We will therefore improve provision and make it easier for individuals and their families to transition between different services. The team now offers an IAA (Information, Maintenance and Support) service. They provide unbiased and confidential information, advice and support to autistic individuals and their families to make informed choices about wellbeing; explore the options available and support them to access appropriate services. The knowledge and understanding of what was needed for this came following experience gained over the last 12 months by the team, and by working closely with SPOA/IAA employees to develop this in line with the autism code of practice. This is a priority for the government and senior Children's management have attended the Neurodivergence Improvement Programme - Information, Advice & In-person Assistance information day to start implementing this work.

The team receives a number of referrals from autistic adults, parents / carers of children / autistic young people, education, health, carers etc. Many of the referrals are handled through consultation with the referring employee and thereby developing knowledge, skills and their ability to deal with autistic individuals. The team's intention is not to do the work for other employees but to upskill them.

The team continues its consultative role and works collaboratively with professionals to provide advice and guidance. The team has developed a wealth of resources they can share as well as evidence-based or practice-based to support intervention. As part of the consultation offer, key workers can offer short-term, outcome-based direct support to

individuals and undertake 1-1 interventions. Progress and change are measured using the result of the result star.

The team continues to develop and have access to a wide range of training based on the work we provide. Cygnet edition 4 (2024), sensory integration training, diet/sensory circularity proves to be successful.

Work continues with Derwen to identify young people aged 14+ who are diagnosed with autism but will not meet the criteria for adult services. A social worker works collaboratively with Derwen employees to develop outcome-based pathway plans to increase independence to ensure needs are met but also focus on skills development, opportunities to socialise, upskill and provide information and education to parents to realistically prepare for when the individual turns 18.

The team continues to work on the Llwybrau Ni project, which provides social opportunities for young people, breaks for parents and carers of individuals diagnosed with autism, individuals awaiting assessment/diagnosis and individuals who will not meet the criteria for specialist services when they transition to adult age. The groups are proving to be successful. The team have developed their own autism training workshop supported by the developmental neuro service and co-produced it with the neuro diversity community. The 'Social work through a diverse neuro lens' training has been carried out twice. This training sits on the national autism training framework under 'autism enhanced training', therefore practitioners who assess needs and work directly with autistic individuals and their families are targeted to attend.

A Task and Finish Group on the Autism Scheme has been replaced as a result of a recommendation from the Care Scrutiny Committee. This work will be reported back to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2025.

### **3. PERFORMANCE AND MEASURES**

- 3.1 I wish to draw your attention to the following matters, which are unrelated to the Priority Projects, but are being addressed by the department because they are affecting the performance of services and/or causing us concern.
- 3.2 Workforce Capacity - The workforce situation remains a matter of concern. Through the Workforce Planning and Gofalwn Cymru project we have started to implement targeted recruitment campaigns. 40 names were referred forward to the services through the SOS campaign during this period. There was also a highly successful recruitment drive in Porthmadog in early June 2024 which saw success in attracting resident workers for the Small Group Homes. We attracted 36 people to the event, and it is with pride we can note that all of the posts have now been filled.
- 3.3 Demand and Type of Support - The department continues to see that the nature of the cases being referred and supported demonstrates that the needs of children and families are complicating and intensifying, to the extent where a broad, comprehensive, and extremely specialist support and care package is needed. This can be seen for all services within the Children's Department. Demand for service is rising, with numbers open to teams at its highest. The Referral Team has received 1906 addresses / enquiries in quarter 1, which is 200 more than the same period last year. It is also noted that there is a significant increase in Section 5 Matters (allegations against individuals in positions of trust). The 16+ Team also

continues to report that demand for services is at its highest, with 210 cases being opened to them present. In addition, the demand for the Derwen service, especially the supporting element has increased. Concern was noted about this element and the high workload of staff. The workload is not sustainable or healthy in the long term.

- 3.4 In terms of the department's measures, I am generally happy with their performance. There are no measures that currently cause me any concern, but I will be working with the Head of Department through the usual performance challenge arrangements.

#### **4. FINANCIAL SITUATION / SAVINGS**

- 4.1 Since the previous financial review when an overspend of £3.2 million was reported it has now increased to £3.7 million; primarily as a result of an increase in the costs of out-of-county locations. There has been an increase in package complexities and an increase in the use of unregistered placements due to a lack of suitable placements to meet the needs of young people. As a result of the extraordinary overspending by the Department for Children and Families, the Chief Executive has commissioned work to clarify the detail of the picture in childcare, to gain a better understanding of the issues and a clear programme to respond. The work will be led by the Statutory Director of Social Services.
- 4.2 There are 2 savings plans in the department for 2024-25. The first for £7,960 relating to efficiencies in the Youth Justice Service. This has been realised. The second for £150,000 relating to the establishment of small group housing. 3 houses have now been purchased with the intention of one being operational before the end of the financial year.

#### **5. Views of the Statutory Officers:**

##### **i. Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

##### **ii. Head of Finance Department:**

I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situation of the Children and Supporting Families Department.

##### **a. Views of the Local Member:**

- i. Not a local matter.

##### **b. Results of Any Consultation:**

- i. None to note.