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**COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, CRIME AND DISORDER, 19 MARCH 2026**

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**Attendance:**

**COUNCILLORS:** Annwen Hughes (Chair) and Delyth Lloyd Griffiths (Vice-chair)

Beca Brown, Stephen Churchman, Wendy Cleaver, Elwyn Edwards, Jina Gwyrfai, Berwyn Parry Jones, Dafydd Davies, Linda Morgan, Edgar Wyn Owen, Elfed Powell Roberts, Peter Thomas, Elfed Williams and Gruffydd Williams.

**Officers present:**

Bethan Adams (Scrutiny Adviser) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

**Present for Item 5:**

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being), Mannon Trappe (Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and Community Safety), Laura Evans (Senior Operational Officer – Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership) and Stephen Pawson (Chief Inspector – North Wales Police).

**Present for Item 6:**

Councillor Craig ab Iago (Cabinet Member for the Environment) and Roland Thomas (Assistant Head of Environment Department).

**Present for Item 7:**

Councillor Craig ab Iago (Cabinet Member for the Environment), Gerwyn Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department), Iwan ap Trefor (Traffic and Projects Service Manager) and Gwyn Lloyd Evans (Footpaths Team Leader).

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Beca Roberts, Arwyn Herald Roberts and Robert Glyn Daniels.

**2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received.

**3. URGENT ITEMS**

None to note.

**4. MINUTES**

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 22 January 2026, as a true record.

**5. ANNUAL UPDATE BY THE GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and the Senior Operational Officer of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership.

It was confirmed that the report provided a comprehensive update on the work of the Community Safety Partnership, showing how it works together to tackle crime and disorder across Gwynedd and Anglesey and to improve safety for our communities.

It was explained that the Partnership worked to an annual plan that was based on the priorities of the Safer North Wales Board's Strategy. It was elaborated that the Partnership receives quarterly data from the police in order to identify trends, steer discussions, support early intervention and solve local problems within communities.

It was stressed that the Partnership did not have permanent core funding and it does not commission services directly except for Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR). It was explained that the partnership relied mainly on short-term or competitive grant opportunities to support its wider work.

Details were provided of the Partnership's activity, confirming that it continued to deliver a Community Safety Plan and provided quarterly reports on it to the Safer North Wales Partnership Board. It was also noted that the Partnership provides an active contribution to the North Wales Serious Violence Strategy, which was a new national duty.

They were pleased that £65,000 had been allocated for seven preventative projects in Gwynedd and Anglesey. The projects in Gwynedd included:

- 'Don't Steal My Future' sessions held by RASASC Wales (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre) to raise awareness of sexual violence with pupils and to influence attitudes and behaviours.
- An awareness campaign around selling vapes illegally and child exploitation, in order to share intelligence.
- An additional youth provision over school holidays for 11-25 year olds in areas facing a high risk of crime, violence and anti-social behaviour.
- A joint project with the Council's Education Department to reduce exclusions and prevent serious violence through training, mentoring and group work, with the aim of keeping pupils in school and safe.

Reference was made to other projects that the Partnership had carried out, such as upgrading CCTV cameras in Caernarfon, Bangor and Pwllheli; developing and piloting an awareness pack around Serious Organised Crime for local authority staff, and continuing as a Member of the Council's Strategic Safeguarding Panel and Safeguarding Operational Group.

They highlighted that the partnership worked closely with the Regional Lead for Suicide and Self-Harm in the Health Service, noting that a multi-agency workshop had been delivered by the Partnership to examine the link between domestic abuse and suicide. They also referred to the Partnership's ongoing work with a regional Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy that was aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm.

It was explained that the Partnership had delivered professional training on the themes of sexism, masculinity and violence. It was confirmed that the Welsh Government had approved a VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) capital grant application to purchase 100 security cameras for survivors of domestic abuse and contribute to regional work on standardising 'target hardening' by making the homes of victims and survivors safer.

It was reported that an application had been submitted to the Welsh Government's Equality and Inclusion Grant Programme to fund awareness signs on cycle routes in order to promote respectful use of the paths, reduce collisions and prevent serious injuries to blind and visually impaired people. Similarly, it was noted that British Sign Language training through Grŵp Llandrillo Menai had been arranged for Siop Gwynedd staff and local domestic abuse organisations.

It was highlighted that the Partnership was developing Safe Zones for the prevention of violence against women and girls in Caernarfon and Bangor as well as Crimestoppers Zones in Maesgeirchen and Blaenau Ffestiniog to encourage confidential reporting of criminal activity.

They referred to a number of the Partnership's priorities for the year ahead, including ensuring continued implementation of all projects and schemes, whilst also attracting additional grant funding to deliver new projects.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

It was highlighted that some of the priorities of the Safer North Wales Board's Strategy included 'Tackling Serious Violence and Serious Organised Crime'. In response to a query on how these offences were defined, the differences between them and how the measures that are in place to prevent them are recorded to ensure that the Strategy works efficiently, the Chief Inspector confirmed that serious offences were cases such as murder and domestic and sexual violence, and that organised crime were incidents that had been planned and co-ordinated by a group of offenders. It was added that measuring the success of work to prevent these crimes from taking place was multi-agency work as several organisations were recording data. It was confirmed that monitoring of this data highlighted whether or not the Strategy's priority was working.

Members were concerned that rates of robbery had increased 112.5% since last year (a total of 34 cases compared to 16 last year) where North Wales as a region had only seen an increase of 12.4%. In response to an enquiry on whether there was a way of identifying clusters where such offences occurred to be able to predict which areas would be targeted, the Chief Inspector confirmed that a successful project had recently been conducted in Bangor to prevent Serious Organised Crime related to drugs. However, he emphasised that no robbery incident can be effectively predicted as there was no pattern to the crime. It was explained that it could happen in any area, to different types of victims and can be triggered by alcohol and drug use or through disputes. However, he stressed that the vast majority of offenders who carried out robberies were arrested and charged.

A member was pleased that there were plans to install signs on cycle paths to protect any blind or visually impaired pedestrians from harm. It was pointed out that it was important to ensure that signs were also installed to protect deaf or hearing-impaired individuals. Similarly, members shared their ideas of placing signs in public places, such as car parks, to remind drivers of electric vehicles that there was a possibility that people may not hear them, to prevent accidents from happening. In response to the comments, the Senior Operational Officer of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership said valuable comments had arisen during the discussion and that every effort would be made to incorporate them into the work, if the application to fund the project was approved. She emphasised that officers were continuously looking for additional grant funding.

In response to an enquiry, the Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and Community Safety confirmed that preventing crimes against women remained a priority for the Partnership once again this year.

In response to an enquiry about the difference between Domestic Violence and a Domestic Incident, the Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and Community Safety clarified that a domestic incident was not a case for the police if no crime had taken place. She elaborated that a report was compiled of all domestic incidents that were non-criminal, and that the Community Safety Service made a decision on whether cases required intervention by assessing whether individuals had access to care.

The officers were congratulated on their work of installing more CCTV cameras. In response to a query if this project was being expanded to more rural areas, the Senior Operational Officer of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership noted that this particular project had developed a safe zone to protect people in urban areas. However, she hoped that grant funding would allow for the installation of more CCTV cameras during the year, and noted that work was underway to assess those areas where it would be most effective to install the cameras.

Details were provided on the 'Don't Steal My Future' project that had been delivered by RASASC Wales, noting that it tied in effectively with the recommendations set out in the recent Child Practice Review Report, 'Our Bravery Brought Justice'. In response to enquiries about the specifics of the event's content, when it had been held, how many schools had taken part and whether it had been shared more widely with organisations such as youth clubs, the Senior Operational Officer of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership confirmed that the project had ended. However, she explained that officers would have a meeting with grants officers in the near future and that they would request all this information in order to report it back to the Members following this meeting. The Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and Community Safety elaborated that the continuation of this project was dependent on grant funding as there was no budget for it, and acknowledged that not every need that arises can be addressed.

It was highlighted that the Safer North Wales Strategy 2025-28 stated 'Tackling Serious Violence' including childhood trauma, as a Priority. In response to an enquiry on what actions were in place to realise this priority by working with partners whilst also considering the additional challenges in rural areas, the Cabinet Member explained that a Regional Board looked at the actions relating to this matter. He stressed that the work was a priority and that mandatory training had been delivered to the Partnership and that it was being filtered down to all organisations to ensure that everyone was aware of the most appropriate course of action in such situations.

In response to an enquiry about the work the Council was doing to obtain a Trauma Informed accreditation, the Cabinet Member agreed that it was important work that he would like to see being achieved. He elaborated that it was essential that everyone was informed around trauma and how symptoms of potential trauma can manifest in individuals, stressing that trauma-informed training was a priority. The committee was assured that an application would be submitted soon to obtain a Trauma Informed accreditation, and he thanked everyone who had been working towards it so far.

In response to an enquiry regarding data on the number of sessions and the number of individuals who had undertaken VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) training, the Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and Community Safety stated that the officers had the relevant data and that it would be shared with the Members following this meeting. She added that this information would be included within the Annual Report in future.

In response to a query on how projects were included or removed from the Partnership's work, the Cabinet Member explained that this was decided by the Partnership itself within its meetings. The Assistant Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Mental Health and

Community Safety elaborated that the Partnership looked at the North Wales Region Annual Plan first and then prioritised projects to align with it. The Senior Operational Officer of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership explained that the next Annual Plan would be approved in April and the Partnership would work with the Region to develop any new priorities according to the need. Furthermore, the Chief Inspector emphasised that North Wales Police continually shared data with the Partnership, at regional and community levels, to ensure that it could prioritise projects in line with that data.

It was pointed out that it would be useful to receive a map within this Annual Report in future, to be able to see if there were areas with more crime and to consider whether those areas were popular tourist spots. In response to the comments, the Chief Inspector confirmed that such a map could be developed and he would endeavour to include it within future reports. The Cabinet Member thanked North Wales Police for their continued co-operation and for their willingness to share data regularly with the Partnership.

The members expressed their thanks for the report.

**Resolved:**

- **To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**
- **To request that future Annual Reports include data on performance measures including crime-related measures, and a map highlighting the location of crimes.**
- **To request further data and information about the 'Don't Steal My Future' sessions, hosted by RASASC Wales (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre).**
- **To request data on the number of sessions and the number of individuals who have undertaken VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) training, and that this data be included within the Annual Report in future.**
- **To urge Cyngor Gwynedd to proceed to obtain the 'Trauma Informed Council' accreditation.**

## **6. WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SERVICES**

The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Assistant Head of Environment Department. They highlighted the following main points.

It was reported that the Department was currently working to develop a Waste Strategy and was taking an ambitious approach to solve problems. It was recognised that Governments' targets such as the target of recycling 70% of all waste in the county, were very challenging to meet.

It was confirmed that the Department had adapted the operational structure of waste collection arrangements into two parts to improve performance. It was explained that the South area operated for Dwyfor and Meirionnydd with the North serving Arfon. It was reported that changing the operational structure had improved the service's performance. Similarly, they reminded members that the Bartec system was used by the Department to dynamically adjust routes according to the operational needs of the service. They highlighted that members would receive a presentation on how these systems assist the department at the Council's Area Forums later this year. Similarly, it was reported that the installation of a camera system on the collection vehicles had also helped to improve visibility for the work of staff, improve health and safety and introduced the ability to respond to complaints with robust evidence.

It was explained that a consultation had recently taken place as part of developing the Waste Strategy. They noted that 1,245 responses had been received to the consultation. They reported that 62% of respondents indicated that their residual waste bin was only about three-quarters full or less at the end of the 3-week period. They elaborated that 15% of respondents stated that they were unable to cope with the current capacity of the bin and the collection schedule as it was full before the collection day. They noted that re-assessing the collection frequency and the size of residual bins were adjustments they could implement to support the Council in meeting the target of recycling 70% of waste. It was emphasised that the Department was working with WRAP Cymru (Waste and Resources Action Programme) to research the actual difference that changing this would make.

The members were reminded that the Department had begun trialling the use of hessian sacks instead of the recycling cart, reporting that the results of that trial were relatively successful. It was noted that they planned to carry out trials in other areas of the county before the summer. They explained that the sacks were cheaper than the 'cartgylchu' (recycling cart) and would allow residents more recycling capacity if the Council decided to recycle more goods such as soft plastics.

They confirmed that work continued to improve residents' behaviours towards recycling and stated that a letter would be sent to every household in the County over the next week to improve recycling in Gwynedd. In considering enforcement issues within the waste service, it was confirmed that enforcement actions could not be carried out if households over-produced waste unless it led to issues such as fly-tipping.

They were pleased that the service's overspend position had improved but recognised that there was room for improvement to be in a position of a balanced budget. They were proud that the service's performance was improving while the overspend in the budget was decreasing, and also stressed that work was going on to try to reduce that overspend further.

It was acknowledged that the Department's focus had been on the waste collection and recycling service, noting that they had work to do to improve the bin distribution service. This had been highlighted within a recent consultation where several comments had been made that this service needed to be improved. It was emphasised that the service would be managed by a new Manager within the Department to ensure that this service received attention for the future.

During the discussion, the following observations were made by the Members:-

Concern was expressed that the Council had failed to meet the Government's target of recycling 70% of waste this year, and it was asked how much of a fine the Council faced and how other services were negatively impacted as a result. In response to the enquiries, the Assistant Head of Department emphasised that a significant change was required to meet this target and acknowledged that the Council would not manage to do so in the short term. He reminded members of the need to assess the frequency of collections or the size of residual bins in order to meet this target and that discussions were taking place with other Local Authorities to gain insight into the success of this change. He confirmed that, presently, the Council had not been fined for not meeting the target but warned that it could be up to £600,000 in costs. It was emphasised that the Council was in regular discussions with the Government, and it was hoped that demonstrating plans to ensure that Gwynedd met the 70% target would satisfy them, and that the Council would not receive a fine.

There was a discussion about the timing of waste collections, with some Members believing that collections were taking place too early in the morning and caused noise and disturbance to residents, while others were pleased that they were collected early in the morning. In response to the discussion, the Assistant Head explained that the service's staff

worked from 6:00 a.m. until 1:45 p.m. and that no complaints had reached the service from the public or members of staff stating that the routes were taking place too early in the morning. He added that the intention was to ensure that collections were made early in the morning so that no difficulties arose as residents travelled to work or school and that the bins could be put away before they left the house in some cases so that they were not blown away or damaged.

A member commented that a number of shops and supermarkets accepted plastics and pet food packaging for recycling, and asked the Department to ensure that they also investigated these to ensure that they were recycled effectively by Gwynedd homes.

In response to an enquiry regarding the contamination rate of recyclable materials, the Assistant Head noted that the contamination rate was considered to be comparatively high in Gwynedd because the amount that Gwynedd received from companies for the recycling material was lower than in other counties.

In response to an enquiry on whether there were plans to recycle small batteries from homes, the Assistant Head explained that these could be recycled by visiting any local recycling centre. He elaborated that they were planning to include batteries within collection routes but the focus at the moment was on ensuring that soft plastics could be recycled effectively, as Welsh Government regulations on that issue could come into effect in April 2027. He also pointed out that adding a box or sack to collect the batteries would be costly for the Council as it was unlikely that batteries would need to be collected frequently. However, he noted that research was being conducted on this issue.

It was reported that several local shops were now selling some goods such as milk and orange juice in glass bottles, but those bottles could not be returned back to the store to be reused. In response to the comment, Members' attention was drawn to the Welsh Government's Deposit Return Scheme which would be operational very shortly. It was explained that this scheme would allow residents to return glass bottles back to shops to get money off the product as they purchased it again.

It was highlighted that 12 Local Authorities in Wales had managed to reach the Government's target of recycling 70% of their waste. It was asked what schemes these local authorities were implementing and whether they could be incorporated in Gwynedd. In response to the enquiry, the Assistant Head confirmed that there was a discrepancy in the method of recording the work towards achieving this target across Wales so it was not possible to compare effectively with any other County. However, he considered that there was room for improvement by working with businesses to ensure that their recycling rates improved from the current rates.

It was pointed out that waste was still coming out of the lorries as they completed the routes, leaving rubbish on the sides of roads. The Assistant Head accepted the comments and stated that staff would be reminded to ensure that all vehicle doors were shut adequately before driving away to ensure this did not continue to happen. The Cabinet Member added that this situation had improved compared to the past.

A member stated that litter left on roadsides was more visible after the grass on the verges had been cut, and asked the Department to consider ensuring that waste collection teams went round after verge cutting circuits to resolve this problem.

In response to a query on how companies package goods for postal delivery, the Assistant Head confirmed that a tax has been imposed on companies since last year to ensure that all packaging was recyclable. He noted that not enough time had passed since this taxation had come into effect to be able to see if companies had made changes as a result. He

explained that the money made from this tax would be allocated to the Local Authorities in order to respond to packaging challenges.

It was reported that recycling collections were sometimes carried out using vans when lorries were not available or for collections on narrow roads. It was pointed out that in these cases the contents of the boxes were mixed together, and the member asked if they were sorted once they reached the recycling centre. In response to the comments, the Assistant Head confirmed that these particular vans had been developed by Gwynedd and were now roughly 7-8 years old and dated. He added that difficulties often arose with these vehicles as they broke down frequently and were not fit for purpose because the waste was mixed. However, he reported that the Department had commissioned a company to design purpose-made lorries to address the situation. He emphasised that when the vans were used for collections, work was done to go through the waste in order to sort it.

In response to an enquiry as to whether hessian sack trials would be conducted in the Dwyfor area, the Assistant Head confirmed that there were no specific plans at present but hopefully more trials would take place before the summer, and he invited Members to contact the Department if they are aware of any communities that would be keen to get involved. He elaborated that another trial was required to ensure that the sacks were high quality, were not caught by the wind and to provide an opportunity to educate residents on their use. Some of the advantages of using hessian sacks over the use of the recycling cart were highlighted, stating that if the sacks were swept away by the wind, the waste was still confined to the sack, whereas this was not the case for the cart as we could see the waste scattered if it was taken by the wind. It was pointed out that around 60,000 recycling carts were located across Gwynedd and it was emphasised that there was no requirement for people to stop using them, ensuring that switching to the use of sacks would be a process over time. It was confirmed that no one would be forced to stop using the recycling cart and they would continue to be used in the future. Nevertheless, it was confirmed that the cost of providing a new cart was high compared to the cost of providing hessian sacks.

In response to an enquiry regarding the need to collect broken bins and boxes when delivering new equipment, the Assistant Head confirmed that arrangements were in place to collect any broken equipment when delivering new ones, and he asked anyone to contact the Department's bin collection service if this did not happen. The members expressed their thanks for the report.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**
- 2. To recommend to the Cabinet Member for the Environment that:**
  - **consideration should be given to intensifying training/campaigns to educate on the importance of recycling.**
  - **consideration should be given to introducing penalties for failure to recycle appropriately.**

## **7. FOOTPATHS**

The report was presented by Cabinet Member for the Environment, the Assistant Head of Environment Department, the Traffic and Projects Service Manager and the Footpaths Team Leader. They referred briefly to the following main points:

They reported that public right of way paths were a valuable resource that addressed several of the Council's strategic objectives, while their users got to enjoy the diverse landscape of the County. They elaborated that they were a means of ensuring access to fresh air for their users, a good way of keeping fit and healthy and that they also reflected the history and culture of the communities. It was expressed that Gwynedd's public rights of

way network was long, with so many miles of footpaths to walk that it was equivalent to walking from Caernarfon to Cairo (2,418 miles).

It was explained that the public rights of way routes included the Wales Coast Path, the *Lonydd Glas* network in Gwynedd and a number of active travel routes that were being developed by the Council, along with other paths.

They referred to some of the service's challenges arising from budget cuts, while there was an ongoing legislative expectation on the Council to ensure that some of the paths remained open for use.

Reference was made to the work programme of the Footpaths Team, explaining that their main activities included:

- Cutting seasonal growth
- Restoring infrastructure (bridges, walls, gates, stiles, culverts)
- Installing new infrastructure
- Implementing a signage scheme
- Responding to queries, complaints and freedom of information requests
- Dealing with all legal issues in the field:
  - Maintaining the official map/record of public rights of way in the County
  - Dealing with requests for claims, changes and diversions to the official network and map which were subject to legal processes.

It was confirmed that work was underway to ensure that these routes were as accessible as possible, swapping stiles for gates where possible so that more users could follow the paths.

It was added that the effects of climate change and turbulent weather can force officers to change the direction of paths, if it was no longer possible to use them, such as if there had been landslides near any path. It was noted that there were additional costs involved in doing this, which had an impact on the service's budgets.

It was noted that work was underway to revise the rights of way policy and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and they confirmed that the service would undertake a consultation on the matter. It was hoped that a cross-section of various communities from different areas of the County would contribute comments and feedback within that consultation.

During the discussion, the following observations were made by the Members:-

It was pointed out that several paths within the county could not be used due to overgrowth. In response, the Footpaths Team Leader explained that a lack of resources had forced the Team to categorise paths according to their usage, and he stated that there were no budgets or resources available to maintain every single footpath within the County. He elaborated that the Team relied on feedback from Community Councils and Local Members to identify which footpaths were most used within their areas, and to hold discussions with the Team. In response to a further enquiry, he explained that it was impossible to remove any footpath from the network map without following a legal process, this explaining why these paths still appeared to residents.

In response to an enquiry on categorising footpaths, the Footpaths Team Leader explained that there were four different categories, with category 1 and 2 receiving the Team's ongoing attention. It was explained that these categories had been formed with the help of the community councils as they had reported on which footpaths were most used. It was

acknowledged that this work had been carried out some time ago now, but it was emphasised that the Team was considering requests from councils and individuals to re-categorise footpaths. It was noted that the public could view the category of any path they wished to use by accessing Map Gwynedd on the Council's website. It was explained that category 3 and 4 paths were likely to be ones that were not currently receiving maintenance work.

In response to an enquiry regarding having input from occupational therapists and disabled people to ensure access for all, the Assistant Head explained that they had been trying to recruit more stakeholders to become members of the Local Access Forum. The Footpaths Team Leader elaborated that there were members representing disabled groups on the Forum and that their comments fed into the work of ensuring access for all.

Particular attention was drawn to a section of Lôn Eifion in Penygroes which had closed recently due to damage following severe weather. In response to the comments, the Assistant Head acknowledged that it was hoped that the path would have reopened by the Easter holidays this year but the quotes received from companies to work on the path were very costly and did not provide value for money. He explained that they hoped to wait until the new financial year and for the path to reopen as soon as possible afterwards. He confirmed that an update would be shared with the members as soon as possible. It was emphasised that there was no emergency funding within the budgets.

The members expressed their thanks for the report and to the Team for their work.

## **RESOLVED**

**To accept the report, noting the observations made during the discussion.**

The meeting commenced at 10:30am and concluded at 1:25pm

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**CHAIR**