

Complete Agenda



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CABINET

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE	Tuesday, 10th March, 2026
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Cyfarfod Am-Leoliad / Hybrid Meeting
CONTACT POINT	Gwen Alaw Roberts cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Nia Wyn Jeffreys	Council Leader
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Environment
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Paul John Rowlinson	Cabinet Member for Housing and Property
Menna Trenholme	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
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 and the Welsh Language

AGENDA

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12	ADOPTION OF A NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR GWYNEDD	Cllr. R Medwyn Hughes	<p>Dylan Griffiths Manager, Economic Development Service</p> <p>Nia Bowden Business Support Programme Manager, Economic Development Service</p>	138 - 197
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CABINET, TUESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2026

Present -

Councillors: Nia Jeffreys, R. Medwyn Hughes, Craig ab Iago, Huw Wyn Jones, June Jones, Dilwyn Morgan, Dewi Jones and Paul Rowlinson.

Also present -

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Catrin Thomas (Corporate Director), Dylan Owen (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance), Gwern ap Rhisiart (Head of Education), Debbie Jones (Assistant Head of Education Services), Cllr Cai Larsen (Chair of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee), Ffion Madog Evans (Assistant Head of Finance – Accounting and Pensions), Dafydd Wyn Williams (Head of Environment), Gerwyn Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department), Ceri Hughes Thomas (Parking and Street Works Manager), Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community), Llyr B Jones (Assistant Head of Economy and Community), Nia Bowden (Business Support Programme Manager), Cllr Elfed Powell Roberts (Trawsfynydd Ward Local Member).

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Cllr Menna Trenholme and Cllr Llio Elenid Owen.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

A declaration of personal interest was received from Cllr June Jones in relation to Item 6 as she was a Governor at the School. Cllr June Jones sat as a Local Member for Item 6, therefore, she did not have a vote on the matter.

The Chief Executive declared a personal interest in relation to Item 6, and he left the meeting.

3. URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent matters.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January were accepted as a true record.

6. PROPOSAL PAPER - YSGOL Y GARREG

The report was presented by Cllr Dewi Jones

DECISION

To approve the publication of a statutory notice, allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the School Organisation Code 011/2018: on the proposal as follows -

“To close Ysgol Y Garreg on 31 August 2026 and denote Ysgol Cefn Coch as the alternative school from 1 September 2026.”

The Ysgol Cefn Coch catchment area would be extended to include the existing Ysgol Y Garreg catchment area.

DISCUSSION

Sadness was expressed at this item being presented and it was highlighted that Ysgol y Garreg had been serving the village of Llanfrothen and the wider community for a long period.

It was noted that school closures were a result of the changes in the County's demographics. Referring to the impact of these changes, it was revealed that there were just over 1,500 fewer children aged 0-15 in the County in 2021 compared to 2011. The importance of discussing the situation of Ysgol y Garreg in a wider context was emphasised, as the situation of this School was not unique to Gwynedd or Wales – reference was made to fewer children living in our communities.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the 2 pupils currently attending Ysgol Y Garreg were in year 6. It was added that no pupils had registered to start at the School in September either, meaning that there would be no pupils at the School and noting that the future of Ysgol y Garreg was no longer sustainable.

All the staff and governors of the School were thanked for their service over the years.

The sadness of the situation was echoed by the Glaslyn Ward Local Member, noting that the School had been serving the community for approximately 143 years. This change in demographics and the fall in the number of children in our society was emphasised, and reference was made to parents' right to send their children to a school of their choice. The Local Member encouraged the Council to consider restructuring the School building as a specialist centre for pupils who have trouble settling in mainstream schools, but are not eligible for a Special Learning Needs School.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- The views of the local community were sought on the current and future situation should a decision be made to close the School. In response, it was noted that the procedure for closing a school with fewer than 10 pupils differed to that required for a larger school. It was confirmed that discussions had taken place with the School and the governors. It was highlighted that 92% of the children in the catchment area were already being educated in other catchment areas, which showed that a number of parents had already made the decision to send their children to another school.
- The difference in the procedure for closing a school with fewer than 10 children was explained - it was noted that no consultation was held as part of the procedure to close a school with fewer than 10 pupils but that engagement sessions were still held, following which the procedure moved immediately to issue the statutory notice to close the school. It was confirmed that there would be an opportunity for people to object, and that the objections presented would be taken into consideration before reaching a final decision.
- There were concerns about the staff at Ysgol y Garreg and it was asked whether there would be alternative posts for them. It was highlighted that a number of staff were on short-term or temporary contracts so those would come to an end. It was explained that discussions had taken place with the catering and cleaning staff as to the next steps.
- Concern was expressed about how fast pupil numbers had fallen. An impact assessment had been carried out, which was noted as something to be proud of, despite the low number of pupils in the School.
- Officers from the Education Department echoed the surprise that pupil numbers had fallen, noting that there were 17 pupils at the school a year ago. It was explained that small schools did not have the resilience to cope with changes in numbers to the same extent as larger schools, so this was a frequent emerging issue in Gwynedd.
- In terms of the impact of closing Ysgol y Garreg on nearby schools, it was explained that no impact was foreseen as most parents were already choosing to send their children to schools in other catchment areas. It was acknowledged that it was not possible to provide a definitive answer about the long-term impact at present.
- It was discussed that considerations had been given to a possible after-use for the building. It was highlighted that no decision had been made as yet as it was subject to the Education Department's resources and the demand for provision.

7. SCHOOLS STRATEGY 2026–2036

The report was presented by Cllr Dewi Jones.

DECISION

The Gwynedd Schools Strategy 2026 - 2036 (Appendix 1) was approved, and authority was delegated to the Cabinet Member for Education, in consultation with the Head of Education, to make insignificant and editorial changes to the

Strategy prior to its formal publication, provided that those changes do not materially affect the content, strategic direction, priorities or financial implications of the Strategy.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the previous Strategy had ended and that it was crucial that another strategy was put in place for the next decade.

It was highlighted that lengthy discussions had been held in relation to the Strategy, and that the views of the sector, the education workforce and the County Children and Young People's Forum had also been sought. The importance of this Strategy was emphasised to highlight the Council's vision and ambition for the next decade. The document outlined the challenges facing the County, and the importance of the Authority and the public being aware and alert to those challenges was noted.

The Chair of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee was welcomed to the meeting to present the Committee's recommendations. The Strategy was identified as being a key document to inform the direction of education in the County and it was explained that the Committee believed that some elements of the Strategy needed to be reinforced before moving forward. It was reported that the well-being and safeguarding of children and young people needed to be more clearly incorporated into the document, and that there was a call to ensure that the child's voice was central to planning. Amendments had been made to the document in light of these recommendations, which were welcomed. In reference to inequality, it was noted that there was a lack of clear measures to assess the impact of strategic decisions on the most vulnerable learners. It was also explained that the Committee had discussed the persistent difficulties with recruiting and retaining the workforce, adding that more emphasis was needed on workforce planning to ensure long-term sustainability. The further recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee, as noted in the report, were then explained. It was confirmed that all recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee had been addressed in the report.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- When referring to the change in the area's demographics, it was asked whether this Strategy provided a solution to the challenge of recruiting and planning the workforce. In response, it was noted that this Strategy did not cover all aspects of the area and that several other strategies and procedures covered those aspects. References were made to other challenges such as language medium, the need for teachers to teach several subjects, and a number of young people in the County moving away. There was acknowledgement that these challenges were not unique to Gwynedd, and that they received ongoing attention in the Strategy.
- There was disappointment and disbelief that a total of only 19 responses had been received to the electronic questionnaire, despite having been open for 8 weeks. Officers shared this disappointment, noting perhaps that it reflected the fact that it had already been discussed widely with schools. It was revealed that a number had started but had not submitted the questionnaire.

- It was noted that it was good that the Department had engaged with the Children and Young People's Forum and the discussion that had taken place at the session was explained. It was emphasised that there was a strong opinion that the Welsh language should be a fundamental part and a priority in all the Council's procedures.
- It was asked whether there was an intention to conduct further consultation and engagement, following the lack of response to the electronic questionnaire. It was pointed out that people had been given a fair opportunity to voice their opinions and that no further engagement was planned.
- It was asked how the success of this Strategy would be measured, and how it would be reviewed over time. Reference was made to realising the aim for children in the County to reach their full potential, and that pupils received the best education and support. It was added that schools would not be identical but it was confirmed that there would be no difference in the standards and opportunities young people received.
- A question was asked about how the improvement in pupils' emotional well-being and general well-being would be measured. In response, it was noted that a number of schools did this in the form of several questionnaires. It was added that pupils' attendance and attainment were also being used as indicators.
- It was noted that discussions were ongoing regarding measuring pupils' well-being, and the role of governors in schools to discuss this was mentioned. The importance of discussing and measuring well-being at both an individual school level and at a county level was highlighted.
- Reference was made to the discussion at the Children and Young People's Forum, stating that the intention was to convene the local forums in one county forum. The importance of this being sustainable and embedded into the Council's work was identified.

8. 2026/27 BUDGET

The report was presented by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

To recommend to the Council (at its meeting on 5 March 2026) that:

1. A budget of £379,701,110 should be set for 2026/27, to be funded by £264,009,390 of Government Grant and £115,691,720 of Council Tax income (which is a base increase of 4.75% plus a further 0.42% to meet the levy from the Fire Authority, which gives a total of 5.17%).
2. A capital programme of £40,179,430 in 2026/27 should be established, to be funded from the sources set out in Appendix 4 of the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented noting the financial forecasts from the current financial year. It was noted that there was approximately a £5.3 million overspend across the Council, where departments' budgets did not meet the demand for service.

Reference was made to the increase in the settlement received by the Council from the Welsh Government to 4.1%. It was noted that despite being a better increase than expected, it was still amongst the lowest in Wales. As part of the budget setting process, a possible salary increase of 4% for teachers, and 3.4% for all other Council staff was anticipated.

An overview was provided of the revenue bids for next year, and the cross-section for every department.

It was seen that there was the usual increase in levies, including £458,000 to the Fire Authority, and then smaller amounts to Natural Resources Wales, Eryri National Park and the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee. It was estimated that an additional £23.3 million would need to be spent in the next financial year to maintain the Council's services. Salary inflation, general inflation and the increased demand for services were highlighted as being the main pressures.

Spending requirements for the 2026/27 financial year were confirmed to be around £380 million. It was highlighted that the settlement from the Welsh Government was approximately £264 million, leaving a void in excess of £116 million to be covered by Council Tax and savings.

It was noted that a total of £644k in savings had already been approved for the 2026/27 Budget - with around a quarter of a million pounds of these savings being available to cover the funding gap during the next financial year.

Since the report was published, attention was drawn to the fact that the Council had received confirmation that it would receive a subsidy towards its contribution to the Fire Authority costs, which was approximately an additional £50,000. It was revealed that the Council had also seized the opportunity to repay a capital loan very recently, which decreased the annual amount that needed to be earmarked for paying off these loans.

It was noted that this allowed for the increase in Council Tax for next year to be lowered from 4.9%, as noted in the report, to 4.75%. It was added that the fire element would be additional to this.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- An observation was made regarding the obstacles that a year-by-year budget created for councils, asking once again for a multi-year budget from the Government to enable forward planning.
- Members were glad that additional money had been budgeted to support Special Schools and Additional Learning Needs services within mainstream schools. It was pointed out that this merely touched the sides, and that a national investment in this area was needed.
- Further details were sought about the repayment of a loan. In response, it was disclosed that an opportunity had arisen for early repayment without

incurring extra charges. It was confirmed that the Council had accepted, and that the early repayment meant savings for the Council. It was added that this did not happen often.

- Support was declared in the investment in the Council's buildings, including schools and homes for the elderly, following years of austerity.
- The permanent bids that go towards the overall lack of budget was welcomed, which showed that the Council was eager to do right by the County's residents by meeting the increased demand for services.
- It was appreciated that any Council Tax increase would have an impact on the County's people. Support was said to be available, and that the information could be found on the Council's website or by contacting Galw Gwynedd.

9. PARKING SCHEMES AND FEES

The report was presented by Cllr Craig ab Iago.

DECISION

To approve and enable the Parking Service to proceed with the realisation of two savings plans which required further consideration before a final decision is reached, namely:

1.1.1 Short stay car park enforcement hours extended from 10:00 to 16:30 to 9:00 to 17:00.

1.1.2 Adjustment to Band 2 Long Stay Fee Structure.

A new parking order that reconciled current arrangements and included the above changes was approved.

DISCUSSION

The background to the item was given, noting that this scheme was part of plans to meet the deficit between the parking income target and what was being achieved. The item was said to have been presented to Cabinet in 2024, and it was confirmed that what had been approved then was now up and running and performing as anticipated.

It was noted that the income target had increased since the report was presented in 2024/25, necessitating further action for it to be met.

It was revealed that the changes introduced in 2025 had been fairly well received, with minimal reaction. Attention was drawn to the season tickets that offered good value for money compared to paying per visit.

It was explained that the Department had reviewed the parking order, concluding that a new order needed to be introduced which brought more consistency in terms of maps of the car parks for example.

It was highlighted that the service was currently introducing 32 new pay and display machines, intended to give customers a better standard of service as well as securing income.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was noted that it was extremely difficult to compare Gwynedd's parking structure situation with other counties, as structures varied from one county to the other. However, it was noted that it was possible to make a comparison between some aspects such as the costs of annual season tickets - adding that these tickets were very reasonable in Gwynedd. It was reported that feedback from visitors also supported the fact that parking in Gwynedd was reasonable compared to their own local areas. It was explained that it was felt that a balance had been struck here between providing for local needs and generating income where possible.
- Reference was made to the cost of both local and season parking tickets, with an explanation given of what was available to residents. All information regarding this provision was said to be on the Council's website.
- A question was asked as to whether consideration had been given to the impact of extended enforcement hours on local businesses. Assurance was given that there was an on-street parking strategy, enabling people to park on the street for periods of 30 minutes-1 hour for quick visits to shops.
- It was asked how this change would be communicated to the public, to avoid people being caught out. In response, it was proposed that there was an opportunity to go further than the statutory requirement by warning about this change to raise residents' awareness in general.
- It was proposed that a grace period be granted for the initial stage of the extended enforcement period, but assurance was given that there would be plenty of time between the proposal being approved and enforced in order to raise sufficient awareness of the change. The challenges that introducing a grace period would cause in terms of county-wide consistency were echoed, as were the challenges for the officers enforcing the orders.
- Reference was made to the equality impact assessment, with members pleased that there would be no change for blue badge holders. The challenge encountered by older people using these parking machines was recognised, and it was proposed that attention should be given to making car parks more age-friendly in moving forwards. In response, the new machines introduced to car parks were said to hopefully provide more consistency for residents and that there was an attempt to make the service more accessible.
- Attention was drawn to the fact that there was no mobile coverage in several areas, meaning that some people could not pay.

10. PRIDE IN PLACE IMPACT FUND

The report was presented by Cllr R Medwyn Hughes.

DECISION

To agree to direct the £1.5 million coming to Gwynedd from the UK Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund to the Schemes listed in Appendix 2 of the report.

The Head of Economy and Community Department, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy and the Head of Finance, was authorised to confirm details of the proposed package of schemes to be supported, ensuring operational arrangements in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Fund.

DISCUSSION

It was confirmed in September of last year that £1.5 million had been earmarked for Gwynedd from the UK Government's Pride in Place Impact Fund. It was explained that this was a capital fund programmed for the period 2025/26 to 2026/27.

The 3 main objectives of the Fund were explained, namely refurbishing community spaces, enhancing public spaces, and regenerating high streets and town centres.

The objectives of the Fund were said to align with the Community and Town Centre Regeneration Plan, which was within the Council's Plan 2023-28. Reference was made to the regeneration framework within the plan, and the local regeneration schemes that had been developed for 13 catchment areas across the County.

It was noted that Appendix 1 contained a summary of grant-funded regeneration projects through the Regeneration Programmes Service or Community Support Service during the period 2022/3 - 2025/6. It was highlighted that the total grants administered were £32m, supporting £53m worth of projects across the County. It was added that a package of proposals for the Fund was included as Appendix 2.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was confirmed that fairness across the County was a priority, and that this money was for Gwynedd.
- It was asked why some counties received a bigger amount than others. In response, it was highlighted that this was not due to an application process and that it was up to the Government to decide which counties received the higher share of funding. It was proposed that the Leader could write to the First Minister to seek clarification about this allocation.

- Examples of where this money would be spent were requested. It was noted that this was reflected in the report and that several factors were considered when reaching a decision. Reference was made to the projects listed in Appendix 2, noting that there was an attempt to spread the investment across the County. It was acknowledged that it was not a very significant amount, and that caution must be exercised in spending it.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The report was presented by Cllr Nia Jeffreys.

DECISION

It was resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following item.

12. TRAWSFYNYDD SCIENCE PARK

The report was presented by Cllr R Medwyn Hughes.

DECISION

It was supported that Cyngor Gwynedd should:

- Lead on an application for North Wales Growth Deal funding to establish the Trawsfynydd Science Park and develop an on-site Innovation, Skills and Business Centre.
- Take ownership of the new building when completed and agree a lease with a third party to run the centre, when appropriate.
- Commit £1m of Cyngor Gwynedd's capital funding in the scheme and commit to targeting £1m of additional funding for the area as a contribution.
- Use up to £545,000 of funding from the NDA, Welsh Government and funding already committed by the Department to deliver the next phases up to design and construction.
- Negotiate the required use of the land at the Trawsfynydd Site with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (Site owners).

DISCUSSION

The report was discussed.

The meeting began at 1:00 p.m. and ended at 2:55 p.m.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of Item:	Our Bravery Brought Justice: Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Nia Jeffreys, Council Leader
Relevant officer:	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive
Date of meeting:	10 March 2026

1. The decision sought

To approve and adopt the revamped Response Plan (Appendix 1).

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

2.1 The Response to Offending Plan was adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet in January 2025, and has been a live plan that has evolved over time since then. The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Education and the Cabinet Member for Children, was given delegated rights to make minor editorial adjustments as required. Nevertheless, it was recognised that the Plan would need to be fully revised following the publication of the Child Practice Review report.

2.2 On 4 November 2025, 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' was published and the Response Plan has subsequently been rewritten. This is the biggest change to the Plan since its adoption.

2.3 The revamped Response Plan was submitted to the Response Board on 8 December, and observations and input were received prior to its submission to the Care Scrutiny Committee on 13 January 2026, the Governance and Audit Committee on 15 January and the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 19 January. In addition, a Ministerial Assurance Group has also been established by the Minister for Education, the Minister for Social Services and the Minister for Housing and Local Government and the Leader and relevant Cabinet Members report on the progress of the Response Plan every other month - it last met on 22 January.

2.4 The committees were asked to scrutinise the following stating that the recommendations of those committees would be conveyed to the extraordinary meeting of the Council on 5 February.

- That the Plan responds appropriately and fully to the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' Report.
- Consider the main priorities for immediate action.
- Advise on dealing with dependencies (e.g. waiting for regional or national recommendations) and mitigating potential risks.

2.5 The Full Council was asked for further comments for the Cabinet to consider when adopting the Response Plan.

3. Context

- 3.1 The original Response Plan was adopted by the Cabinet on 21 January 2025, with 4 key work streams:
- Work Stream A – Supporting victims and survivors
 - Work Stream B – Ensuring we have the best possible safeguarding arrangements
 - Work Stream C – Establishing, learning and improving
 - Work Stream Ch – Supporting and stabilising Ysgol Friars
- 3.2 A Response Board was established to scrutinise, challenge and advise on the delivery of the Plan's content, independently chaired by Professor Sally Holland. Board Membership includes a number of external organisations as observers to challenge and monitor the progress of the Response Plan, including Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, Welsh Government, Children's Commissioner and the Regional Safeguarding Board. In addition, there is representation from Ysgol Friars (Headteacher and Chair of Governors), the Gwynedd Secondary sector, Council Officers, along with Cabinet Members from the relevant areas to set the strategic political direction of the areas of work under their responsibility whilst also scrutinising and supporting the work of officers.
- 3.3 The 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' report was published by the North Wales Safeguarding Board on 4 November 2025. Prior to that, and since, work has continued to review what needs to be incorporated into the Gwynedd plan moving forward including addressing the themes and recommendations identified in the report and aligning with those already included in the response plan (which also included recommendations from other reports).
- 3.4 Appendix 1 contains a copy of the revised Response Plan reflecting these changes. These have been set out under 7 main themes to align with the themes of the Our Bravery Brought Justice report:
- Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims
 - Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children
 - Training and Policies
 - School Governance
 - Restrictive Practices
 - Crisis Planning and Crisis Response
 - Ysgol Friars
- 3.5 An easy-to-read version of the Response Plan is presented in Appendix 2.
- 3.6 A detailed work programme is presented to the Response Board meetings and, as this has now grown in size, an overview report is also presented for each of the 7 individual themes, including an update on what has been achieved since the previous Board meeting and setting out what will be prioritised for the next period.
- 3.7 Attached to the progress reports for the 7 themes, a detailed Work Programme is presented to Response Board Members to give them the opportunity to challenge the detail. This work programme includes recommendations and actions from the Our Bravery

Brought Justice report, the original Response Plan and other additional actions that have been identified.

3.8 A copy of the overview reports and a detailed work programme were submitted for information to the Care Scrutiny Committee, the Governance and Audit Committee, the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Full Council and all Response Board documents are now published on the Council's website.

3.9 To ensure and track progress effectively, a set of clear performance measures are being applied across each of the seven themes of the Response Plan. These measures include quantitative indicators (such as receiving training, and compliance checks) and qualitative assessments (such as feedback from youth forums, parents and staff surveys, and the CIW and Estyn inspection). Regular monitoring against these measures will allow the Response Board to identify areas of success and those that need additional focus, ensuring that improvements are sustained and aligned with safeguarding priorities.

4. Recommendations of the Care and Education and Economy Scrutiny Committees, the Governance and Audit Committee and the Full Council

4.1 Several valuable recommendations were made by the Committees and the Council and have been fully considered by the Cabinet (Appendix 3).

4.2 All comments have been considered leading to the modification of the Response Plan prior to its submission today, or adding to the Response Plan's work programme including:

- Note that the door would be open if victims wished to receive a support package in the future
- Reference to the Estyn inspection in 2023 removed
- Added the 'well-being' of children and young people to the description of work stream 7 - Supporting and Stabilising Ysgol Friars.
- Part 2.4 of the Response Plan has been added to in order to provide more context around an investigation into the events of 2019.
- Addressed the voice of the family as well as the voice of the child in safeguarding arrangements as part of work stream 1
- Added an external female contact name to the poster to share information about concerns and ensure that contact details are available on school websites and the Council website, and ensure that safeguarding referral forms are distributed more widely than just to headteachers and chairs of Governors.
- Several changes relating to training, empowerment and behaviour change on topics such as grooming and the use of reasonable force
- Introduce arrangements to measure that training does change behaviour and decisions in practice
- An easy-to-read version of the Response Plan and a simple document to highlight what has changed have now been developed (Appendix 2).
- Arrangements to measure how the voice of the child and victims' experience influence decisions and outcomes as part of Work Stream 1.

- Appropriate attention to children facing challenges and avoid unconscious bias
- Consider the suitability of adults to work with children and vulnerable adults as part of safeguarding arrangements
- An audit of part 5 allegations has already been extended to a five-year period
- Review arrangements to check safeguarding records
- Ensure transparency by releasing as much information as possible

5. Implementation and governance arrangements

- 5.1 The Response Board challenges and monitors the delivery of the Response Plan.
- 5.2 A Response Board was established to scrutinise, challenge and advise on the delivery of the Plan's content, independently chaired by Professor Sally Holland. Board Membership includes a number of external organisations as observers to challenge and monitor the progress of the Response Plan, including Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, Welsh Government, Children's Commissioner and the Regional Safeguarding Board. In addition, there is representation from Ysgol Friars (Headteacher and Chair of Governors), the Gwynedd Secondary sector, Council Officers, along with Cabinet Members from the relevant areas to set the strategic political direction of the areas of work under their responsibility whilst also scrutinising and supporting the work of officers.
- 5.3 The progress report of the Chair of the Response Board is presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis, including to this meeting.

6. Resources to implement the Plan

- 6.1 A year ago, when the original Response Plan was adopted, it was highlighted that the task of responding to this whole situation was being shouldered by a small number of officers and it is fair to say that this has resulted in a significant burden whilst trying to continue to carry out their day to day work as well.
- 6.2 Whilst additional resources have been directed to the implementation of the Response Plan, it should be noted that much of the work remains the responsibility of specific officers and has meant that risks elsewhere continue as some of the Council's key matters have to be given a lower priority.
- 6.3 We are very fortunate to have received a temporary grant from Welsh Government to fund several of the interventions that have been needed in the school itself, and we are placing an additional £600k in our budget for next year to implement several of the Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations.
- 6.4 The requirements to respond to Our Bravery Brought Justice continue to increase and we will regularly review the resource situation to ensure sufficient capacity for this priority.

7. Other considerations

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 involves improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The act places a well-being duty on public bodies which is aimed at delivering the seven well-being goals, namely a prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal Wales with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language which is globally responsible. The plan has been prepared within the principles of the Act and the 5 ways of working.

7.2 In the new Response Plan, we have considered the long-term by establishing a multi-year work programme that strengthens the seven streams (e.g. the voice of the child, training and policies, school governance, and crisis planning and response) and ensures ongoing review, so that people's needs in the years to come – such as ongoing support for victims, trauma-informed services, 'easy to understand' versions for children, and robust safeguarding infrastructure that adapts as risks change – are met sustainably.

Consultation

7.3 Extensive consultation was carried out in the development of the Response Plan in order to receive input from several directions including

- Chair of the child practice review
- Children's Commissioner
- Estyn
- Care Inspectorate Wales
- RASASC
- Welsh Government
- Cabinet Members
- Cyngor Gwynedd Officers

7.4 A wide range of agencies are members or independent observers from national statutory organisations on the Response Board which is valuable in terms of receiving input and expertise from different sectors.

7.5 Representatives of service users have been consulted such as representatives of the schools sector in Gwynedd.

7.6 In addition, at the request of the Leader at the Cabinet meeting on 11 November 2025, the Independent Chair of the Response Board is currently considering the most appropriate approach to include the voice of victims in the work.

Collaboration

7.7 Collaboration is vital to the success of this Plan and through the Response Board we work collaboratively with all the agencies involved in it. The Board meets regularly every other month and there is regular contact between us. Collaboration with all these agencies, as well as others such as the Police, Health Service and other Local Authorities will be key to the success of our Response Plan.

7.8 The Response Plan was developed in the first instance in order to do everything within our power so that no one suffers in the same way again. The Plan includes proactive measures such as ongoing monitoring, regular reviews, staff training, and collaboration with partners to identify risks early, to prevent problems from arising or worsening in the future.

7.9 A large number of the recommendations of the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' report are regional and national, or for all Local Authorities. We have already stated our willingness to take action before any change at a regional or national level and our desire to be working with other bodies such as the Welsh Government to pilot a new plan or guidance if desired.

Impact on Equality, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty

7.10 In accordance with the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 ("The Act") (including Welsh public sector duties) when making decisions, the Council must give due attention to the need (1) to eliminate unlawful discrimination (2) promote equality of opportunity and (3) encourage good relations based on the protected characteristics as well as addressing socio-economic impacts. The Plan will be delivered while addressing our duties under the Act and our responsibilities under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. We are satisfied that it is compatible with our duties.

7.11 An Equality Impact Assessment, Welsh Language Impact Assessment and Socio-economic Duty Assessment have been prepared (Appendix 4). The Equality Impact Assessment concludes that the Response Plan has a significant positive impact (no negative impacts identified). This is reflected in the plan through concrete actions such as trauma-informed training, accessible and bilingual reporting pathways, a 'Voice of the Child' policy, strengthened governance, and ongoing monitoring by the Response Board and scrutiny forums.

8. Next Steps

8.1 The progress of the work streams within the Response Plan will continue to be monitored by the Response Board every other month until all the response plan actions are embedded or addressed within the Authority's performance challenge regime and the Board members are satisfied that evidence in relation to the impact measures listed demonstrates the effectiveness of these actions.

8.2 Cabinet will continue to receive a quarterly progress report from the Independent Chair of the Response Board, Professor Sally Holland

8.3 There is an agreement in place with the Care Scrutiny Committee, the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, and the Governance and Audit Committee to scrutinise progress every 6 months.

9. Observations of the Statutory Officers

9.1 Chief Finance Officer

Many of the actions shown in the Response Plan will be delivered by services within their budgets. On the other hand, other steps will require additional resources, whether permanently or on a one-off basis. The additional permanent costs have been considered in the preparation of the 2026/27 budget that was presented to the Council on 5 March, and one-off bids are the subject of a separate item on the agenda for this meeting and includes consideration of a request for additional funding to cover one-time costs of Our Bravery Brought Justice. As I have previously reported to Cabinet and the full Council, I am satisfied that financial considerations will not be an obstacle to the delivery of the action plan.

9.2 Monitoring Officer

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Our Bravery Brought Justice: Response Plan Cyngor Gwynedd

Appendix 2: Our Bravery Brought Justice: Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan (easy-to-read version)

Appendix 3: Decisions of the Care Scrutiny Committee, Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Governance and Audit Committee and the Full Council

Appendix 4: Equality Assessment

Our Bravery Brought Justice- Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan

"We cannot for a second forget about the most important people in all of this, the children who should have been safe in their school. The whole purpose of every step that we take is to do everything possible to ensure that nobody will suffer in the same way ever again and this should be our main consideration at all times."



December 2024

Version 2. November 2025

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1. Summary of the background

Neil Foden, former headteacher of Ysgol Friars in Bangor, was arrested on 6 September 2023, in his workplace following a disclosure by one of the victims. He faced 19 charges, including 12 charges of sexual activity with a child and two charges of sexual activity with a child whilst he was in a position of trust. The criminal proceedings involved five girls over a period of four years.

In May 2024, after a three-week hearing at Mold Crown Court, the offender was found guilty. On 1 July 2024, he was sentenced to 17 years in prison.

Following his conviction, the North Wales Safeguarding Board established a Child Practice Review (CPR) under an Independent Chair, Jan Pickles, to establish the circumstances of the whole matter, learn lessons and prevent similar cases in future.

Between September 2023 and the court case, the investigations into the allegations against the offender were taking place. This was a criminal investigation led by the Police. With many historical allegations, some of the victims and survivors were now adults and therefore the enquiries about the offences were undertaken by the Police only. For the allegations where the victims and survivors were children at present, these investigations were undertaken in accordance with [Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020](#). This included interviews and joint investigations between the Children Services and the Police.

In accordance with good practice in such investigations, it was crucial that no action was taken during the criminal investigation which may have undermined the Police's ability to investigate an offence. The investigations were undertaken during the period in accordance with [Part 3](#) and [Part 5](#) of [Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020](#). The Council led on the processes under [Part 5](#) of the Procedures to manage and moderate the investigation's activities.

Following the conviction by the Court, in June 2024, the North Wales Safeguarding Board stated immediately that it would open a Child Practice Review. The [North Wales Safeguarding Children Board](#) (NWSCB) is a statutory body under the [Social Services and Well-being Act \(Wales\) 2014](#) and its responsibility is to co-ordinate, monitor and challenge its partner agencies when safeguarding children in North Wales.

The objectives of the NWSCB are to:

- **PROTECT** children in its area who are being, or who are at risk of being, abused, neglected or experience other types of harm at present, and
- **PREVENT** children who are, or who are at risk of being abused, from being neglected or experiencing other types of harm.

The NWSCB notes that its function is to make "Safeguarding everybody's business". The partner agencies are the six local authorities across the region (Cyngor Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey County Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire Council, Flintshire Council and Wrexham County Borough Council), North Wales Police, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, the National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company.

The Regional Safeguarding Board appointed a Chair to lead the CPR, Jan Pickles, a very experienced individual who has been leading high-profile reviews of this nature and who has been specialising in safeguarding children matters for years (further details can be found in part 5 below). Jan Pickles

visited Council Members on 11 July 2024 in order to outline the work ahead of her and the procedure of fulfilling that work. The CPR is led, without doubt, by an experienced, specialist and passionate individual in the field and we as a Council are pleased about that.

We have benefited greatly from Jan Pickles' advice and guidance over the past months. A CPR of such a serious and complex nature as this is unfamiliar to the majority of Cyngor Gwynedd officers and Members and we are treading new ground on a daily basis. This situation is completely unprecedented; therefore, receiving the advice of a recognised expert has been invaluable.

It was originally intended for the CPR to aim to reach conclusions within approximately 6 months, which is the usual timeframe for a CPR. However, the scale of the Review has been extended considerably since then and its terms of reference are broader and more thorough. It is certainly not a usual CPR and the terms of reference place an expectation on the investigators to consider events back to 2017 (two years prior to the arrest would have been usual). This was welcomed and naturally the timeframe for completing the work has had to be extended as well. The final report, *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, was published in November 2025 and consequently this plan has been revised and updated in order to reflect the findings of the report.

It was considered at the time that the CPR was initially best-placed to consider all the facts and reach meaningful conclusions. Consequently, we did not wish to hold our own review or investigation which would not be considered as good as the CPR, or which would cast any shadow over our trust in the statutory and independent process of the CPR. Consequently, the Council did not undertake its own formal reviews or investigations between June and October. Having said that, as outlined in this Response Plan, this did not prevent us from undertaking several steps to ensure that we responded appropriately to the situation.

Following discussions with the Chair of the CPR in the autumn of 2024, it was concluded that it was appropriate by then for the Council to move more swiftly with some aspects of our response rather than wait for the findings of the CPR before undertaking our own investigations, for several reasons, including:

- the change in the CPR timeframe in order to extend the scope of the work,
- the substantial work of gathering and presenting the Council's evidence to the investigators of the Review has now ended,
- new information which came to light as time went on of which we were unaware at the beginning,
- the substantial press coverage, attention on social media and the public interest in the case has led to findings which we do not know if they are correct or not.

The Investigations and Reviews have been completed, and the various findings and recommendations stemming from these investigations and reviews have been added to our plan and the Response Board will monitor the progress of action. We have stated clearly from the beginning that we will embrace all the recommendations from every investigation and will implement them in full and without delay. In addition, further investigations will be carried out where necessary, to ensure that all aspects are thoroughly considered.

This Response Plan explains what we will do in order to try to fulfil our objectives in relation to all of this, and particularly so following the publication of the '*Our Bravery Brought Justice*' report.

2. A statement of the Council's position

Before setting out our objectives, it is important that the Council states its position entirely clearly.

The offender's actions have had a deep and shocking impact on the victims, their families, the school, community, staff and Members of the Council and the entire county.

The essence of a Response Plan such as this is that it is formal in nature, as it refers to several organisational matters. But, we cannot for a second forget about the most important people in all of this; the children who should have been safe in their school. The whole purpose of this Response Plan and every step that we take is to do everything possible to ensure that no one suffers in the same way ever again and this should be our main consideration at all times.

As a responsible public body, the Council states and recognises that the offences committed were abhorrent and devastating for all the victims and survivors. We wish to apologise to all victims and wish to guarantee that we will do our best to discover all the facts and will embrace every lesson that needs to be learned in order to improve things in the interests of future generations.

We will prioritise our resources to respond to the conclusions of all investigations that have already been completed by us as a Council and the statutory CPR. We will collaborate with the Children's Commissioner for Wales and we have invited her to offer input and advice on all our actions.

In addition to the CPR, the Council has also called on the Welsh Government to hold a Public Inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding this serious offending. It is Welsh Government that has the statutory powers to establish a Public Inquiry

We wish to leave no stone unturned, and be completely open and transparent. Otherwise, it will be impossible for us to fulfil our objectives effectively.

3. Child Practice Review Report - November 2025

As noted in the first part of this Plan, the North Wales Safeguarding Board established a Child Practice Review (CPR) immediately after the court judgement and the Council stated its full support to the Review and committed to do everything possible to support it as well as implement all the recommendations immediately. Establishing a CPR is customary in all cases where abuse or neglect have occurred and a child has died or suffered significant harm.

Chair of the CPR, Jan Pickles, is an extremely experienced individual who has been leading high-profile reviews of this nature and has specialised in safeguarding children matters for many years. She is a registered social worker with extensive experience with the Probation Service, the Police and the NSPCC. She is a former Designated Safeguarding Officer at Westminster Council and is a former assistant Police Commissioner in South Wales. She was a member of the National Independent Safeguarding Board Wales for six years, until May 2022.

Amongst her recent work, Jan Pickles has led on and taken part in several high-profile investigations, including chairing the CPR into the sad case of Logan Mwangi in Bridgend. She is the author of the review into historical cases of child abuse in Winchester College and she chaired a review in a prominent school in London and worked as part of the review into historical cases (from the 1970s) of child sex abuse at Chelsea football club. She has also recently completed an independent review of historical cases of child abuse at Caldey Island monastery.

The Chair was supported by two independent investigators, Jane Foster and Anna Henderson, who are experienced in work of this nature. The investigators gathered evidence following a structured process with the initial phase focusing on meeting the victims and survivors and spending time at the School, meeting with relevant professionals and members of the public who had information they felt would support the review process.

Timelines, chronologies and analysis were submitted by 14 agencies, and the Investigators attended the School in July 2024 - nine days were spent on site to meet with over 80 members of staff and another 60 were interviewed over the course of the review.

The Review Panel has focused on key matters such as the behaviour of the offender and professional behaviour. Governance and disclosure management arrangements are also included in the scope of the review.

The following agencies were a part of the Review

- Cyngor Gwynedd
- Isle of Anglesey County Council
- Conwy County Borough Council
- North Wales Police
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- North Wales Probation Service
- North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board

All the evidence that is in the ownership of each agency was pieced together and presented to the Researchers to create a single detailed timeline of all relevant events.

In response to the developing situation, we used an external consultant to identify the cases of children and staff linked to Ysgol Friars and created an initial chronology with the intention of identifying any matter that required urgent attention. This information was submitted in its entirety to the CPR.

The Terms of Reference were reviewed regularly by the Child Practice Review Panel, to reflect any new concerns that the review identified. The final terms of reference have been published on the Regional Safeguarding Board's website ([Terms-of-reference-extended-child-practice-review-21.05.25.pdf](#)).

The North Wales Safeguarding Board provided regular updates to the Welsh Government Safeguarding and Advocacy Unit regarding the progress of the review, and the review was published in November 2025.

The Council also met with the Chair of the Panel regularly to receive updates on the process by her throughout the period of the review and two-way information sharing happens regularly and effectively.

Publication of the Child Practice Review - 'Our Bravery Brought Justice'

On 4 November 2025, two years after the arrest of the offender and eighteen months after his sentencing and starting the Review, the Child Practice Review report 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' was published. The report is very critical of several organisations, particularly so this Council and Ysgol Friars. The Review identified a significant number of missed opportunities and raised a number of questions about the appropriateness of decisions over the years. This report proposes several recommendations, at a local and regional level, but also at a national level. The report is particularly critical of the fact that recommendations from the Clywch review (2004) had not been implemented nationally and that a great many of those recommendations have to be repeated in this CPR report.

A statement on behalf of the Council was shared publicly on the afternoon of the publication:

"The responsibility for many of the failures listed in this report lie with Cyngor Gwynedd. For this, we apologise unreservedly.

As painful as the report is to read, we welcome its contents, we accept all its finding and recommendations and promise that we will continue to put all our energy into responding, as the people of Gwynedd would expect of us.

*Two years on from the arrest, it is also a relief to be able to speak openly about this matter. Today, as we see all the pieces of this heartbreaking story drawn together for the first time, our thoughts **must** turn to those who suffered, and who survived. Children who had every right to be safe at school were betrayed. Once again, we express our respect and admiration for the courage you showed in standing up to a bully and a paedophile.*

We sincerely apologise to all of you. You should not have had to suffer at the hands of a man you should have been able to trust. Your courage drives us to do better.

This report highlights the fact that opportunities were missed on far too many occasions and as one of the organisations that should have acted to prevent the offender, we failed in our response. A school headteacher should have put the welfare and safety of children at the top of his priorities at all times. Instead, he committed serious offences against them.

This was a man who had portrayed himself as a responsible educator on a local and national level, both within the teaching unions and in the media. But he deceived school staff, the Council and other organisations, as well as the pupils and parents who had put their trust in him.

This review gives us the clearest possible understanding of what went wrong, and how we have to put things right. This report is a vital tool as we strive to improve.

Professor Sally Holland, the former Children's Commissioner for Wales, who chairs the Council's Response Board, has reported that we are making progress in implementing a number of improvements. But we still have a lot of work ahead of us, and Professor Holland, and the other institutions who are represented on our Board, will continue to provide constructive challenge in a transparent manner.

Whilst we cannot undo the pain caused, we can fulfil our responsibility to implement local improvements. But ensuring other reforms will require national change.

Over the years, we have seen recommendations made by numerous Wales and UK-wide investigations, but these have not led to change.

Hopefully, the findings of this CPR will be a watershed moment in transforming the safeguarding of children in Wales. All children must be safe – wherever they live and whichever school they attend.

We are grateful to Jan Pickles and her team for their tireless work over a twelve-month period. They have managed to go far beyond what is seen in reviews usually.

*To finish, I make no apology for returning to the most important people in all of this – the children who should have been safe at their school. The whole purpose of this report is to ensure that individuals and public organisations do everything possible to try to ensure that **nobody** suffers in the same way ever again.*

In situations where an organisation is under the spotlight, there is sometimes a tendency to be defensive. I promise today that for Cyngor Gwynedd, this will not be the case. We will not hide from our responsibility to do whatever it takes to protect children today and into the future."

Following the publication of Our Bravery Brought Justice, this plan has been reviewed to ensure that we respond appropriately to the recommendations noted. The intention to review the Plan following the publication of the CPR had been stated clearly from the outset.

4. Objectives of this Response Plan

Seven main objectives have been identified for this Plan. The final objective was added by the Response Board at its first meeting.

We commit to:

1. **Acknowledge** openly and publicly that such offences should never have happened and that no child should suffer such experiences.
2. **Apologise** sincerely to the victims and survivors and their families for what they have had to suffer.
3. **Support** the victims and survivors, the school and the wider community to seek to recover their situations.
4. **Establish** all the facts of the case, the history around the situation and the wider context.
5. **Learn** all lessons identified as part of the findings and recommendations of all investigations.
6. **Improve** by responding in full and at pace to all findings and recommendations with the aim of giving confidence to the public that we are doing everything possible to ensure that nobody will suffer in the same way ever again.
7. **Accountability** by being open and transparent about our improvement progress and commit to measure the effect of the changes that we implement.

As we go about fulfilling the above, it is crucial that we take an open and transparent approach at all times. In this respect, the Communication Plan in part 8 of this Response Plan is crucial in order to ensure that we share information clearly, consistently and in a timely manner with all relevant stakeholders.

5. How do we intend to fulfil our objectives?

In order to fulfil our objectives in full, we will focus on four work streams as shown below. It is only by taking thorough, complete and timely actions to fulfil all the objectives of this Response Plan that we can have peace of mind that we have done everything possible to ensure recovery.

Work Stream A	Support the victims and survivors	Do everything within our ability to support the victims and survivors. Establish a caring relationship with the victims and survivors.
Work Stream B	Ensure we have the best possible safeguarding arrangements today so that the public has trust and confidence in them.	Ensure that our safeguarding arrangements are robust and of the best possible standard
Work Stream C	Investigate what has happened, learn and improve	Do everything possible to ensure that we fully understand everything that has happened and have identified any weaknesses. Embrace and implement the recommendations in order to learn and improve.
Work Stream Ch	Support and stabilise Ysgol Friars	Ensure that the welfare of the school's children continues to be maintained, that staff are confident and that the school's Governing Body and leadership are stable and effective.

Many of the initial tasks have been completed since the publication of the original plan in December 2024. Therefore, following the publication of Our Bravery Brought Justice, these work streams have been revised to ensure that the report's recommendations are a part of the Response Plan. We have re-packaged all these work streams to align with the report's themes, as follows:

	Theme	Description
Work Stream 1	Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims	Do everything within our ability to ensure that the voice of the child is central in relation to matters involving children, and embedded throughout all our activities. Ensure that children are listened to, and that they are believed and taken seriously.

		<p>Give a voice to children and young people in processes that have been planned to keep them safe.</p> <p>Do everything within our ability to support the victims and survivors and establish a caring relationship with them.</p>
Work Stream 2	Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children	<p>Ensure that our safeguarding arrangements are robust and of the best possible standard.</p> <p>Protect children by ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and acted upon quickly.</p> <p>Ensure that Part 5 arrangements support a consistent and robust multi-agency response to allegations and concerns about adults working with children.</p>
Work Stream 3	Training and Policies	<p>Ensure that training packs are appropriate and that staff have received training suitable to their roles.</p> <p>Do everything within our ability to ensure that the county's schools adopt and implement policies</p> <p>Ensure that staff are trained to "think the unthinkable" and understand that "it could happen here"</p>
Work Stream 4	School Governance	<p>Offer the best possible support to our school Governors to equip them to exercise their roles.</p> <p>Ensure that school governors understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe.</p> <p>Ensure that systems are in place which measure the wider culture of schools.</p>
Work Stream 5	Reasonable Force	<p>Do everything possible to ensure that all schools have implemented the practices and use of reasonable force appropriately</p>
Work Stream 6	Crisis Planning and Crisis Response	<p>Ensure there are appropriate arrangements for planning and responding to crises and that all staff</p>

		know how to respond in a safeguarding emergency situation.
Work Stream 7	Supporting and Stabilising Ysgol Friars	Ensure that the welfare of the school's children continues to be maintained, that staff are confident and that the school's Governing Body and leadership are stable and effective.

Later in this Plan, we will explain the governance procedure for monitoring our progress and ensure that we take action in a timely manner. We must acknowledge clearly and openly that we have a long and challenging journey ahead to reach a situation where we would be satisfied that we have taken full and appropriate action.

6. The Plan's Work Streams

Work stream 1 – The Voice of the Child and Supporting the victims and survivors

What has been achieved thus far?

1.1 - Direct Support

Following the first disclosure on 6 September 2023, support was provided to the offender's victims in order to address their direct needs and to give them hope about the next steps. Speedy access was provided to support officers and specialist counsellors, with Police Victim and Survivor Liaison Officers leading from the first day.

The Police victim and survivor liaison officers sat on the Child Practice Review (CPR), ensuring that the voices of the victims and survivors were a core part of any discussion.

The support is ongoing with this work being monitored continuously by a regional partnership group which runs the Wales Victim Liaison Scheme, in which the Council plays a key role. The procedure is recognised nationally. Others affected by all of this have been offered support as well.

Naturally, this support happens quietly in the background and is tailored specifically for the support needs of individual victims and survivors.

1.2 - Wider support in the school

The counselling services at the school were extended by collaborating with organisations such as the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) North Wales, ensuring specialist support for victims and survivors and other pupils who could have been affected. Regular reviews are held to ensure that the support continues to be suitable and effective. Fortunately, Ysgol Friars collaborated with a local company to create a well-being centre on the site in 2023, as well as qualified staff, which has been beneficial as an appropriate space for recovery and emotional support.

We will continue to review the support regularly and the support is available to victims and survivors, pupils and staff. In addition, we ensure that more support is available at crucial times - for example, when there is public attention or breaking news in the press which affects individuals, including victims and the school community. Our priority is to ensure that the appropriate support is available for everyone who needs it, without delay.

1.3 - Acknowledge and Apologise

We have already acknowledged and apologised publicly for what the children and young people have suffered and part 2 of this Plan restates that formally.

However, that is only a public statement, and it was the Council's responsibility and wish to offer a personal apology to each of the victims and survivors. With the support of the Victim Liaison Scheme and the chair of the CPR, we established how to offer that personal apology.

It must be borne in mind that each of the victims and survivors has suffered and our wish in acknowledging and apologising is to offer some support towards their situation. It was essential that this work was led by the victims and survivors. We received advice and guidance from others who are more experienced in this field in doing this while being entirely careful that we did not do anything which would not be welcomed by the young girls.

Personal apologies have been made by the Council Leader and Chief Executive in the way in which each victim and survivor wanted to receive them.

1.4 - Personal Support Plan

Since the Plan was adopted in January, we have made progress in implementing a personal approach to supporting victims and survivors. Individual discussions have now been held with the majority of them to establish their specific needs, including emotional support, access to therapeutic services and practical support. Not all the victims wished to accept the offer, but the offer will remain should they wish to accept it in future. We have established a formal process to review the support regularly, ensuring flexibility to respond to needs that change over time. In addition, additional resources have been allocated to provide specialist support for children and young people who have experienced trauma, working closely with the Children's Commissioner and external partners to ensure that the provision is comprehensive and sensitive to their experiences. We will continue to prioritise the welfare of the victims by providing the appropriate support to help them face the next steps in their lives, reflecting the lessons learned from the review and commit to continuous improvement.

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

1.5 - The voice of the child

We acknowledge the importance of ensuring that the voice of the child is central to our response and our day-to-day activities. Following the Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations, we have committed to adopting a clear policy which ensures that every child which is the subject of a part 5 review has the opportunity to express their opinion in a direct conversation with a social worker. This work is already underway, including practical methods of strengthening children's participation in decisions which affect them. We will also continue to review and extend our training for staff in order to ensure that the voice of the child principles are embedded across all services, reflecting the lessons learned from the review and responding to the national expectations.

1.6 - Wider work to ensure that the voice of the child is central and embedded in the Council's activities

We have re-framed our work streams to reflect the Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations, giving priority to ensuring that children's rights, including the voice of the child, are central to all aspects of our activities. This includes developing one corporate "Voice of the Child" policy across all services, working with the Children's Commissioner for Wales to adopt best practices and establishing a task group with the Education Department to review and amalgamate current arrangements. In addition, we are strengthening the county youth forum to ensure representation of specific groups such as looked-after young people, Derwen children and young carers. This work will ensure that the views and experiences of children will directly influence policy, strategy and decisions, embedding the rights of the child principles in our organisational culture.

Additionally, we are working towards ensuring a "Child-Friendly County" status, collaborating with national partners to create an environment in which the rights and voice of children are respected and promoted in all fields.

1.7 - Identify and act on grooming behaviours

Since the Plan was originally adopted in January, we have strengthened our response to the risks associated with grooming by implementing several definite steps. Amended training packs have been shared with the schools, including specific guidelines on grooming behaviours and how to identify them early. We have standardised safeguarding training across different education levels in order to ensure a consistent and co-ordinate approach. In addition, the role of a Safeguarding Champion has been established to support front-line staff and increase awareness of these matters.

Further work is underway to review the content of the training packs following the publication of Our Bravery Brought Justice, including adding modules on sexual abuse and methods of identifying risk behaviours. Further work is to be done and we will continue to work with national partners to ensure that our approaches reflect the best standard and give priority to child safety.

1.8 - Reporting on concerns to individuals or services outside the school

All Gwynedd schools are required to display the details of the school's designated safeguarding persons including an external member of the governing body. This did not exist in the school in question at the time of the offender's arrest but this has now changed. This is one of the matters that the Safeguarding Quality Officers check when they undertake their quality visits and is therefore monitored regularly.

Since the publication of Our Bravery Brought Justice, we have started consulting with pupils across Gwynedd schools to find the most effective methods of enabling them to contact a person or service outside the school to share concerns. Feedback to date emphasises the need for accessible, confidential and prominent options. As a result, we have agreed key principles to prominently display safeguarding services contact details and helplines in all schools, including on websites and public spaces; to provide training for staff to explain the referral routes; and develop a secure digital method to enable pupils to raise concerns directly. Consultation will continue to ensure that these arrangements reflect the needs of pupils and give priority to their voice.

1.9 - Trauma-Informed Council

Cyngor Gwynedd has committed to become a Trauma-Informed Council in order to ensure that our services respond sensitively to the effect of trauma on individuals. This means building a culture which acknowledges and responds to signs of trauma, avoiding secondary trauma and promoting welfare. We have already started on this journey by providing "Trauma-Informed" training for over 1,000 school staff, and nearly half of Gwynedd schools have trained staff members to diploma level i trauma-informed schools and communities and mental health. We are also developing a baseline assessment across Council departments to identify gaps and priorities, working with the Public Services Board to ensure a co-ordinated approach. This work will set a foundation for policies and procedures which give priority to sensitive support, reflecting the higher risks among looked-after children and ensure that our workforce have the skills and knowledge to respond appropriately.

Work stream 2 - Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children

What has been achieved thus far?

2.1 - Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements

The Safeguarding Policy was reviewed during the second half of 2023, it was adopted by the Cabinet in February 2024 and the new version was submitted to the Full Council in March 2024. [Safeguarding Policy](#)

The Cyngor Gwynedd Corporate Safeguarding procedures focus on ensuring the safety and welfare of children and adults who are at risk of being abused or neglected. All Council employees, elected members and partners have a responsibility to create an environment in which safeguarding is prioritised and where abuse is less likely to happen.

All Council departments are tasked with implementing safeguarding measures as part of their everyday actions, while the Social Services have a specific lead role in addressing cases where individuals are already at risk. At a corporate level, the Council ensures that staff and Members have been trained thoroughly, provide clear routes for reporting on concerns, and use the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure safer recruitment practices.

The corporate safeguarding efforts are co-ordinated via the Strategic Safeguarding Panel and the Operational Safeguarding Group, which oversee and monitor performance, policies and departmental compliance. It is the Panel's responsibility to review and update the Safeguarding Policy regularly in order to ensure that it continues to be effective and responsive to any legislative or procedural changes, reiterating the Council's commitment to safeguarding those who are vulnerable in the community.

2.2 - Safeguarding Arrangements in Schools

Since the offender's arrest, the Schools Safeguarding Policy and training pack for schools have been updated.

Since April 2023, the Education Department's Lead Safeguarding Officer has held Safeguarding Arrangements Monitoring visits at all schools in Gwynedd.

These visits include:

- Checking Safeguarding policies
- Checking training dates and levels
- Checking practical Safeguarding arrangements
- Asking the Safeguarding Designated Person, staff members and pupils about confidence levels and knowledge in relation to safeguarding
- Checking the content of the schools' Safeguarding Arrangements Annual Audit
- Offering general support / guidance.

Every school in Gwynedd has a Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) who plays a central role in ensuring effective child protection and safeguarding. The designated person is a senior member of staff and he / she has the authority and expertise in safeguarding matters and the responsibility for co-ordinating the school's child protection policies and procedures.

The individual acts as the main point of contact for all safeguarding concerns, providing advice, guidance and support for staff. The task of the designated person is to keep records of safeguarding concerns, ensure timely referrals to appropriate authorities and train school staff ensuring that everyone understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Their role is central to nurturing a safe and supportive environment for all pupils.

The designated person works closely with the Education Department's Safeguarding Lead Officer, who provides specialist advice, support and oversight to ensure the effective implementation of safeguarding and child protection policies across all schools in the county.

Every school receives a model policy from the Education Authority and they are encouraged to make minor adjustments (e.g. amending the name of the school and designated safeguarding person to make it applicable to the school) and adopt this policy, which has been drawn up in line with the requirements of recognised guidelines and standards. It is the responsibility of the governors to ensure that effective safeguarding policies have been adopted and are reviewed at least once a year and continued support is provided to them to accomplish this. Governors must work with school leaders to create a safe environment, monitor compliance with safeguarding laws, and address any weaknesses or deficiencies in safeguarding practices in a timely manner.

The Education Authority already undertook Safeguarding inspections in every school every two years, which is above and beyond current requirements, but we have now increased capacity in the field and now undertake inspections our schools on an annual cycle. While there are no formal requirements for us to undertake such a programme, we believe that it is extremely important and we elaborate on this in 2.5 below.

[2.3 – Estyn Reviews in Specific Schools](#)

In accordance with the National Inspection arrangements by Estyn, every school receives a full inspection on a cycle of approximately 5 years. During COVID-19 this procedure was suspended across the country. Since restarting the procedure, 51 Gwynedd Schools have received a full Inspection which includes a part which looks at the Safeguarding arrangements, following a similar process to that explained above.

Each one of these schools reached the expected safeguarding standards.

[2.4– Investigation into events in 2019 which have been the subject of press coverage](#)

During the court case there was reference to specific events in 2019. These events have also had considerable press coverage. As already noted, the timetable and terms of reference of the CPR were extended considerably since Jan Pickles attended a meeting with Council Members before the summer of 2024. Consequently, and in light of public interest in these specific matters, the Council commissioned an Independent Investigation into these specific matters in order reach conclusions sooner than the CPR timetable.

This work has already been carried out by Genevieve Woods, who is a barrister at Raymond Buildings, London. She specialises in such investigations and has collaborated with Jan Pickles in the past on such matters. She has extensive expertise and experience of working on safeguarding matters as well as implementing independent investigations.

She was commissioned to undertake an entirely independent investigation and not to represent the Council.

The purpose of the Independent Investigation was to establish all the facts of the events in question, consider their significance and relevance, decide whether acknowledged procedures were followed, whether appropriate action was taken under the circumstances, whether there were further steps the Council could consider and whether there were lessons to be learned.

The work has been completed and a copy of the full report was provided to the CPR and the recommendations submitted by the investigator have been transferred to the Response Board work programme and shared with Council Members.

Due to the nature of the report, it contains sensitive information such as details of matters relating to children, personal data of individuals, witness statements etc. As with any report containing information of this nature, it was advised that it was not legally possible to share more than the recommendations, particularly as further processes were ongoing.

However, the details of the events which were the subject of the investigation have been included and reported upon in the Our Bravery Brought Justice report.

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

2.5 – School Safeguarding Arrangements

At the time of writing this Plan originally our staffing arrangements allowed us to hold Safeguarding Arrangements Monitoring Visits by the Lead Safeguarding Officer in every individual school every other year. We are not aware of other Authorities who do this in this way, but we believe that these inspections are valuable, and offer support to individual schools to ensure that their safeguarding arrangements are adequate and to offer them general support in this critical field.

It was concluded that it would offer more value if it would be possible to increase the frequency of these visits and that they happen every year in every school. We have therefore invested to increase the staffing resource we have in the Education Department in order to do this and strengthen our support structure for schools. We are currently investing in the Education Safeguarding and Well-being Team once more in order to be able to offer yet more support and challenge to schools on Safeguarding matters.

2.6 – Scrutiny Investigation into Safeguarding Arrangements in Schools

Our scrutiny arrangements have a critical role to play as part of the Council's formal governance arrangements and given the seriousness of the situation we face it is quite appropriate for us to be scrutinising this field.

The item 'Safeguarding Arrangements in Schools' was added as an additional item to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee's annual work programme after the annual workshop at the request of scrutiny members and the matter was scrutinised at the Committee meeting on 18 July 2024. Following that, the possibility of holding a Task and Finish Group or a Scrutiny Investigation into the area was discussed. It was concluded that further discussion should take place on 5 September 2024 where the members present expressed a wish to check and confirm that safeguarding arrangements are as tight as possible within our schools.

The brief for the Scrutiny Investigation was considered by the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee in February 2025 - ([Brief - Investigation into safeguarding arrangements in schools.pdf.](#))

The main question being considered is - '*Are the safeguarding arrangements in the county's schools appropriate and implemented consistently?*'

2.7 – Input by the Children's Commissioner

Following discussions between the Children's Commissioner, officers and Cabinet Members in July 2024 and November 2024, and then a further meeting between the Chief Executive and the Commissioner on 9 December, the Commissioner was invited to provide input to our Response Plan and to be a part of the procedure to monitor our progress on the various work streams.

That discussion is continuing and is a positive discussion.

We have stated our desire to collaborate openly and positively with the Commissioner and her officers and we appreciate the opportunities to have constructive discussions with them and receive their specialist and experienced input into fields such as these.

By now of course the Children's Commissioner is an observer on our Response Board and provides valuable challenge and guidance as we implement this Plan.

2.8 Section 47 and Part 5 Enquiries of the Safeguarding Procedures for Wales

Part 5 Safeguarding Procedures in Wales are being reviewed nationally at present. The Our Bravery Brought Justice report recommends that Welsh Government ensures that the new procedures make it a requirement for the voice of the child to be considered even if a child has not made the disclosure. We are already implementing this and will include it in the Voice of the Child Policy to be adopted in 2026.

We will ensure that other local authorities attend formal Section 47 and Part 5 meetings if they are relevant to a child from their area, and ensure the attendance of the Chair of Governors or a governor deputising on his/her behalf when it involves a pupil or staff member from a school.

We have also introduced measures to ensure that decisions on referrals do not fall on an individual and we will also be piloting new processes for referrals involving individuals in positions of trust and the first step will be to reach out to other agencies - North Wales Police specifically, to consider the practicality and resources needed to do this.

It is recommended that multi-agency arrangements are in place to discuss referrals before reaching a decision about individuals in positions of trust. The recommendation about this is specifically for the Government and until national changes have been made, our Children services will pilot it and are currently in discussions with the other agencies.

We have already introduced changes to Part 5 discussion procedures so that all information on a child's records is reviewed when assessing their risk and vulnerability.

When there is a disclosure or concerns about individuals in a position of trust, we have already strengthened the need to assess 'suitability to work with children'.

2.9 - Low-level concerns

There is a need to strengthen and standardise the process of reporting low-level concerns, which are concerns that do not meet the safeguarding or child protection threshold, across our services. The 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance requires schools in England to develop and implement an Adult Conduct of Concerns Policy. One of the recommendations of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report is that the Welsh Government should consider requiring schools in Wales to do so as well.

While this matter is being considered at a national level, and rather than waiting for change, the Council will develop a central system to ensure that records are kept by Human Resources of any member of staff who has been the subject of concerns under Part 5. These concerns will be noted clearly on the individual's human resources records, with appropriate flagging mechanism to ensure that the concerns are identified and considered. As some members of staff tend to move between neighbouring counties, we will investigate the possibility of sharing this information with the local authorities until such time as national guidelines are in place.

Clear instructions will be developed to accompany this procedure, in order to ensure clarity regarding the responsibilities, role and arrangements of implementation.

[2.10 - Learning from the Our Bravery Brought Justice report](#)

The aim is to develop an electronic version of the referral form to ensure that it is accessible and easy for anyone to find and use without obstacles. Developments are underway at a national level to create a standard referral form and switch to a new data system for social services in Gwynedd and these will inform any further changes to the existing arrangements.

[2.11 - Collaboration / communication](#)

We will improve the working relationship and the Council's contact centrally with schools, ensuring better communication and collaboration between the children and education services also. The Education Safeguarding and Welfare Team has been a significant step in the right direction to that end.

Work stream 3 – Training and Policies

What has been achieved thus far?

3.1 - Safeguarding Training and Policies

Since the offender's arrest, significant progress has been made to strengthen safeguarding arrangements. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation and national guidance, ensuring that safeguarding principles are embedded across all departments. In addition, amended training packs have been provided to all staff, including mandatory modules on child protection, safeguarding adults, domestic abuse and preventing modern slavery. These arrangements are overseen by the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and the Operational Group, providing assurance that safeguarding standards are maintained and improved continually, and by now all Council Departments report on levels of completion of mandatory training at their performance challenge and support meetings.

In order to ensure that safeguarding principles have been embedded across the Council, we have established an internal audit process to assess the awareness levels among the workforce. This audit includes staff surveys, sample interviews and checking compliance with mandatory training. The results will be analysed to identify gaps in knowledge and priorities for further training. In addition, the audit will measure the effectiveness of existing policies and provide evidence of continuous improvement. This work is an essential part of our commitment to safeguarding, ensuring that all members of the workforce understand their responsibilities and act promptly to protect children and adults.

As well as providing amended training packs, we have established a continuous review process to ensure that safeguarding training in schools is current and reflects best practices. This includes monitoring compliance, analysing data on completing training, and reviewing the content of modules regularly to respond to legislative changes or national recommendations. Feedback from schools and partners is gathered systematically to improve the quality and relevance of the training. This process will ensure that all members of staff have the necessary information and skills to protect children effectively.

3.2 - Investigation into arrangements of dealing with requests under the Freedom of Information Act

As a result of the exceptional number of freedom of information requests received as a result of this exceptional case (mainly from the press) we did not manage to answer everything within the usual timescales. All these requests needed to be considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. This meant reviewing the information and consider whether exceptions needed to be implemented to ensure e.g. that individuals' personal data or child protection matters were released inappropriately. We answered every request and either released the information, if appropriate to do so, or implemented an appropriate statutory exception.

In order to ensure transparency and compliance, a voluntary audit was carried out by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on our response arrangements to FOI requests. The Audit Report has now been received and it noted '*there is a reasonable level of assurance that processes and procedures are in place and are delivering FOI compliance. The audit has identified some scope for improvement in existing arrangements to reduce the risk of non-compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)*'. This level of assurance scores second of 4 tiers of assurance levels (High, Reasonable, Limited, Very Limited).

We have adopted an action plan to respond to its recommendations, including:

- Strengthening monitoring processes to ensure responses are provided within deadlines.
- Review and refine the internal structures on using exemptions.
- Provide additional training for staff on the FOI principles and data protection.

Progress will be monitored regularly and reported to the Strategic Panel and Scrutiny Committee to ensure continuous improvement.

What else needs to be done to meet the objectives?

3.3 - Whistleblowing Policy and Training

Significant work has been carried out to review and strengthen the Whistleblowing Policy and associated training arrangements. A new version of the policy has now been created by the task group, with input from the Legal Service, Human Resources and Internal Audit. The next steps include consulting with the unions, submitting to the Corporate Management Team, and then submitting to the Full Council for final approval. After that, an awareness raising programme will be implemented, including mandatory training for managers and a new e-learning module for staff. In addition, there is ongoing work to assess the benefit of commissioning a specialist external company to support the Council to implement the policy. The work programme also includes a plan to commission a new recording and monitoring system to implement the policy, ensuring transparency and consistency. These arrangements will strengthen an open and safe culture within which staff can raise concerns without fear, reflecting recommendations identified in the previous reports.

As this is the Council's policy as an employer, under staff employment conditions, we will also ensure that our systems for reporting concerns by Members will be clear and robust and that they offer a safe and confidential pathway. We will also ensure that these procedures will be given a prominent place in the Members' induction and training programme so that everyone understand how and when to use it.

3.4 – Training on identifying signs of grooming

Further to part 1.7 of this plan which states that Safeguarding training has been adapted to include a part on grooming, we will be providing a training programme on identifying the signs of grooming to staff in the Children's and Education Departments, including admin and facilities staff in schools and relevant elected Members, highlighting how sex offenders operate and use grooming.

We will work with partners to develop an appropriate package as training already available for purchase does not meet the requirements of Our Bravery Brought Justice as it is.

3.4 - Supervision

The 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' report identified that the Welsh Government would need to review Governance arrangements in schools in Wales including ensuring that Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs) and their deputies receive external supervision from qualified Social Workers. The Safeguarding and Welfare Team at the Education Department currently provides information, advice and support to the DSP in schools across Gwynedd and this arrangement is unique to the county with the Team Manager in ongoing contact with the Gwynedd child protection team. With almost one hundred Designated Safeguarding Persons in schools (not including the deputy DSPs), additional resources will need to be secured to effectively implement this recommendation – this will be

discussed further at a regional and national level first to ensure understanding and joint response to this expectation.

Work Stream 4 - School Governance

What has been achieved thus far?

4.1 Support Gwynedd School Governors

The Education system as it currently exists places responsibility on Governing Bodies (as a separate entity to local Government Education Departments) to be responsible for every individual school. These Bodies are a combination of Governors representing various stakeholders in schools and they are voluntary roles.

In order to support Governors to fulfil their role, arrangements are in place to provide training and support. These arrangements often stem from national guidelines and the training has been provided regionally.

We have already provided the following to support Governors:

- Ensure that all governing body members have a valid DBS.
- Safeguarding training for governors in their schools.
- Provide specific safeguarding training for Chairs and DSPs on governing bodies.
- Mandatory training programme for governors is in place across the county.
- Continuous advice and support is available for governing bodies via the Assistant Education Support Officer.
- Support and guidance for clerks to governors, including stepping in directly to clerk at Ysgol Friars to stabilise the arrangements.
- We have published and shared a new handbook for governors, ensuring consistency and clear standards across schools.

The national system places significant burden and responsibilities on Governing Bodies and very often fulfilling the role is extremely challenging, particularly as it is on a voluntary basis for a few hours every now and then. Their duties and responsibilities are wide-ranging and challenging including finance, staffing, buildings, standard of education matters etc. Governors also face, and embrace, the challenge of promoting pupils to be full and healthy citizens, promote propriety and fairness towards everyone, including introducing the new Relationships and Sexuality Education Code successfully.

We believe that a national discussion is needed to the suitability of the current system and the burden placed on Governors, and we have written to Welsh Government asking them to consider this, noting our various frustrations with the existing system.

Since then, the Welsh Government has commenced a review of Governance arrangements in schools.

4.2 Review of the response to a report by an Independent Complaints Panel in 2019

In 2019 an Independent Complaints Panel was held in accordance with the complaints procedure in schools, to consider complaints against the Governing Body of Ysgol Friars.

In response, an Independent Investigation was held into the way the recommendations in the Independent Complaints Panel's Report were responded to. The main purpose of this commission was to assess whether the School, Governing Body and Council responded adequately and appropriately to the findings of the Complaints Panel Report.

This work was completed in Spring and the recommendations submitted by the investigator have been transferred to the Response Board work programme

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

4.3 Responding to and implementing any amendments to school governance arrangements

We are eagerly awaiting the result of Welsh Government's review to governance arrangements in schools, but in the meantime, we need to ensure that we offer the best possible training and support to governors in all our schools to deliver their challenging and wide-ranging duties, therefore, we will change our current arrangements in order to try to ensure that these volunteers feel confident to fulfil their role and receive the appropriate support.

What we already intend to implement to support them includes developing and providing further guidance to clerks on prioritising matters, timetabling and content of governors' papers; review the range of existing training and identify alternative or more flexible ways of introducing them to ensure that all governors have timely access; and consider creating a pool of full-time clerks, who would serve the schools as and when necessary and provide independent and professional support, strengthening governance across the county.

Work Stream 5 - Reasonable Force

What has been achieved thus far?

5.1 Reasonable force practices and training

In this case, the offender was operating contrary to schools policy regarding filming incidents where reasonable force was used. The Local Authority has a model policy for schools and they are expected to adopt this policy. The individual school reasonable force policy is checked in quality visits by the Safeguarding Team and training is also provided to Schools by the inclusion service. An additional Safeguarding and Well-being Officer was appointed to the Team recently in order to be able to fulfil the annual quality visits.

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

5.2 Standardise reasonable force practices and training

The authority will continue to review the content of the policy to reflect what the Government will publish as a supplement and will communicate any relevant change to the schools and governing bodies.

Currently, there are two types of training on the use of reasonable force offered by different services and work is underway to reconcile these to ensure a consistent approach across our services. This will happen alongside the work of improving staff and learners' understanding of the use of Reasonable Force.

The authority will establish a brief and commission an external company to evaluate the existing policy, training arrangements, school support, pupil support and methods of monitoring compliance. An Education/Safeguarding/ALN Working Group has been set up to lead and facilitate the actions that will stem from this evaluation.

Work Stream 6 - Crisis Planning and Crisis Response

What has been achieved thus far?

6.1 Responding to an emergency in schools

Training on dealing with emergency situations was provided to all Gwynedd Schools in 2024, arranged by the North Wales Emergency Planning Partnership for emergency situations such as fires, accidents or stabbings.

However, in this case, the emergency involved the Site Manager, the Head, namely the individual who would usually take control of an emergency situation in the school.

Short-term guidelines have been shared with schools and governors, reminding them of the arrangements and to reiterate messages that in a case of an emergency they should phone 999 immediately. However, we will put more firm arrangements in place so that everyone is aware of their responsibility in situations like these.

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

6.2 Review corporate emergency planning arrangements

Emergency response plans are based on the site manager managing the situation - taking control and directing others in order to safeguard children / staff / public. We need to revise these procedures for situations in which the site manager (or the Head himself as in this case) is the one causing the risk / emergency.

In order to strengthen our ability to respond effectively to safeguarding emergencies, the new work streams will focus on creating robust arrangements for planning, co-ordinating and taking action in emergency situations. This will include developing clear protocols to respond to this in a safeguarding emergency in order to protect victims, safeguard evidence and control the alleged offender.

This could, of course, be relevant to sites more widely than schools, such as elderly people's homes or leisure centres and it is essential that emergency plans across the Council respond to this.

Work stream 7 – Supporting and stabilising Ysgol Friars

What has been achieved thus far?

7.1 - School Support Plan

Following the offender's arrest on 6 September, immediate and responsive support was provided to the school, and a School Support Plan was adopted which included external critical guidance. From October 2023 until March 2024, Sarah Sutton was appointed as a critical friend to the Acting Head, whilst Margaret Davies was appointed in order to support the Welfare Deputy Head.

In order to support the school and the welfare of staff throughout this challenging time, the Human Resources Advisers Team Leader and Assistant Head of the Education Department with responsibility for supporting the secondary sector provided supervision and operational support.

In addition, a teacher with significant experience in inclusion who until recently worked in another Secondary School within the County offers further support for between three and four days a week.

Since September 2023, the Education Department has been providing relentless support and resources to the School, which includes the contribution and expertise of all staff of the Education Department, ensuring stability and continuous support for the recovery of Ysgol Friars. Support was provided to review their safeguarding policies and new policies have been adopted by the school.

Officers from the Education Department have been meeting Union representatives regularly as well, taking the opportunity to listen to concerns and try to share timely information with them.

7.2 - Amend the Governing Body

Following the offender's sentencing in May 2024, the Council reviewed the Authority's membership on the Governing Body including appointing four Members on behalf of the Authority.

In addition, other members left and by now 14 out of the 19 members of the Governing Body are new to their roles with a new Chair appointed.

Ongoing support is given by Officers of the Education Department in order to train and offer practical support to the new governors of the School.

The Authority now provides clerking support to the Governing Body.

7.3 - Changes to the Senior Leadership Team

The School's Senior Leadership Team has seen substantial changes since the offender's arrest. As well as the imprisonment of the offender, other members of the Senior Leadership Team have left their roles and an entirely new Team is now in place.

The responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officer who was part of the Senior Leadership Team have also been transferred to a different member of staff.

The School received supervision from Margaret Davies, who is an experienced headteacher and, at the time, a headteacher of a school in another county.

7.4 - Appointment of Interim Head

After significant recruitment challenges, Lynne Hardcastle was appointed as acting Head to provide leadership in the period between November and the end of December 2024, initially.

Margaret Davies was appointed Head of the school for 4 terms from Easter 2025 until August 2026. The extended period in the role will be an opportunity to stabilise the school and review the operational arrangements thoroughly. It will also give an opportunity to support staff for an extended period and will give faith to the parents that the school is under new, experienced leadership with a strong background in safeguarding.

What else needs to be delivered in order to meet our objectives?

7.5 - Appointment of a new Permanent Head

Until now, the Governors have not been able to appoint a new Permanent Head for the School which is why the temporary arrangements have been put in place. The appointment of Margaret Davies until the end of the Summer Term 2026 will give the school an opportunity to stabilise and start a new chapter.

The school will start a recruitment process in order to appoint a new permanent Head early in 2026.

7.6 - Commission to review operational arrangements at the school

As the new Governing Body establishes itself, and as the interim Head has the opportunity to review all the school's arrangements, we as a Council will support them to undertake a piece of work to compare Ysgol Friars' operational arrangements with the operational arrangements in the rest of the county's schools, trying to identify differences in order to consider whether there are any operational changes that need to be made.

This work is intended to be accomplished jointly between the new Governing Body and the Education Department.

7. Further Investigations

Detailed consideration is underway into what further investigations it may be appropriate for the Council to commission, taking into account the review that have already been completed and the ongoing work at a local, regional and national level.

Through this Response Plan, we are committing to doing everything possible to strengthen safeguarding, ensure accountability, and restore public confidence.

While the Our Bravery Brought Justice report has provided us with in-depth insight and information, the Council has stated the need to consider what further investigations and reviews are needed to achieve the objectives set out in part 4, which are acknowledge, apologise, support, establish, learn, improve and accountability.

We are seeking views and input from organisations and external experts to assist us in drawing conclusions as to what further investigations would support our objectives and subsequently it will be necessary to conclude which work will be commissioned and a remit will need to be established for them.

In reaching that conclusion, we will need to be clear whether we have the power to carry out an investigation into a particular area and whether we are the appropriate organisation to be commissioning such work or whether it would be more transparent for us to call on others to consider this. We have already declared our support for a Public Inquiry and this may be the right vehicle for fulfilling some aspects if the are beyond the powers of this Council.

The purpose of these investigations and reviews will be to learn lessons in order to ensure continuous improvement.

In due course, we will receive the findings of the above-mentioned investigations and we will need to act on the various findings and recommendations. What will be expected of us will depend on those conclusions and recommendations.

We have stated clearly from the beginning that we will embrace all the recommendations and every investigation and will implement them in full and without delay, and it is appropriate for us to restate this here.

8. Ownership and governance arrangements of the Plan

It is the Council's Cabinet that has commissioned this Response Plan.

The Response Plan was adopted by the Cabinet on 21 January 2025 following which a specific Response Board was established in order to co-ordinate and ensure appropriate and timely progress. Several external bodies were invited to be a part of the Board and an independent Chair was appointed and the Response Board met for the first time in March 2025.

The Response Board is chaired by Professor Sally Holland, former Children's Commissioner, who has the relevant background and experience to facilitate challenging the delivery and implementation. There are also a number of observers on the Response Board including Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, Welsh Government, North Wales Safeguarding Board and the Children's Commissioner.

The Chair of the Response Board reports to the Cabinet every quarter and to be confirmed in the Terms of Reference referred to above.

There is a role for the Governance and Audit Committee, the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Care Scrutiny Committee also to scrutinise progress and delivery (as well as undertaking the Scrutiny Investigation noted in part 2.7).

The content of this Plan will need to be reviewed regularly and as the situation develops. This is a live plan, and it is unavoidable that it will change as we move from the investigation and learning phase to the recovery phase.

It is unavoidable that progress will be difficult to measure as many matters will be open to personal opinion. One measure will be completing all the individual steps identified in the Plan's Work Streams and a comprehensive and detailed action plan exists to track them which has over 200 tasks and actions to deliver the objectives of this plan. The Board has also agreed on a series of impact measures, including monitoring the opinion of young people, parents and staff regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding in schools regularly. However, it must be acknowledged that delivering all of this will be a long-term process and we will commit to doing so, come what may.

9. Communication plan

Prior to the publication of Our Bravery Brought Justice in November 2025, there were constraints on the Council's ability to communicate information in full so as not to impair the work of the independent reviewers. Following the publication of the report, the Council is now able to share much more information about the work of adapting and strengthening our arrangements in response to the findings and recommendations. Nevertheless, it is important to note that we must continue to tread carefully with matters surrounding children and/or adults' individual cases or Human Resources matters.

The original Communication Plan - which included a series of sub-plans to communicate information to key stakeholders - has been completed. Work has now started to create a new Communication Plan which will be based on the work streams in the amended Response Plan.

In addition, a web page has been set up in order to keep any relevant statements and information in the same place - www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/ymatebidroseddau

OUR BRAVERY BROUGHT JUSTICE

Gwynedd Council's Response Plan

Easy read version

1. WHAT HAPPENED

- The former headteacher of Friars School was arrested in 2023 for serious crimes against children.
- He was found guilty in 2024 and sentenced to 17 years in prison.
- In July 2024, an independent Children's Practice Review (CPR) was set up to find out what went wrong and to learn lessons.
- The final report of the CPR, *Our Bravery Brought Justice* was published in November 2025.

2. WHAT THE COUNCIL SAYS

- The Council apologises clearly and openly to the victims.
- The Council agrees that failures have occurred and accepts responsibility.
- The Council's aim is to ensure that this never happens again

3. CHILD PRACTICE REVIEW

Following the court's decision, a Child Practice Review (CPR) was immediately established. This happens every time serious abuse or neglect has occurred to a child. The Council was full of support and pledged to act on all recommendations.

The review was led by Jan Pickles, a highly experienced child protection expert, supported by two independent reviewers. They gathered evidence by speaking to victims, survivors, school staff, professionals and members of the public.

14 agencies submitted detailed information to create a timeline of the events. The Inspectors spent 9 days at the school and over 140 people were consulted.

The Panel focused on the offender's behaviour, professional conduct, and how disclosure and governance issues are managed.

A number of local and regional agencies were involved, including North Wales Councils, the Police and the NHS.

During the process, all relevant evidence was collected and presented, the review Terms of Reference were reviewed regularly, and updates were provided to the Welsh Government. The review was published in November 2025.

The Council also met frequently with the Chair of the Panel to ensure that information was shared clearly and effectively.

Publication of the report - *Our Bravery Brought Justice*

On the 4th November 2025, the Child Practice Review report *Our Bravery Brought Justice* was published, two years after the arrest of the offender and eighteen months after the start of the Review. The report was highly critical of several organisations, particularly the Council and Friars School. It was found that a large number of opportunities had been missed over the years, and there were serious questions about some decisions made. The report also highlighted the fact that important recommendations from the Clywch Review (2004) had not been implemented nationally.

On the day of the announcement, the Council shared a public statement. The Council accepted responsibility for several failures, and a full apology was expressed. The statement stressed:

- that the Council apologises in full sincerity,
- the Council accepts all the conclusions and recommendations of the report,
- they are determined to improve and are prepared to deal openly with the issue,
- remembering the victims and their courage in speaking out,
- acknowledging that the Head who committed the crimes abused trust and deceived many people,
- and that local and national change is needed to strengthen child protection.

4. THE RESPONSE PLAN

After the report was published, an action plan was established, this Response Plan which explains what we will do in order to respond to the recommendations of the *Our Bravery Brought Justice* report.

The Council also noted that Professor Sally Holland, former Children's Commissioner for Wales, chairs the Council's Response Board, and that improvement work is already underway. Nevertheless, there is a lot of further work to be done.

The purpose of the Response Board is to look, challenge and drive all the work streams arising from the reviews and investigations following the crimes of the former Headteacher of Friars School.

The Board is an independent one made up of professionals from other organisations such as Estyn, the Welsh Government, the Children's Commissioner and Care Inspectorate Wales, so it is able to look at the work objectively and offer independent external challenge. The Board looks at the impact of the changes that Gwynedd Council is introducing, and reports on what is working and what has changed. More

information about the Board's membership and work can be found at the bottom of this page.

This is important to give children, young people and their families confidence that steps are being taken to learn lessons from this case.

Following the publication of the report, the current action plan was reviewed to ensure that it fully responded to the recommendations. This was planned from the beginning.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESPONSE PLAN

Seven main objectives have been identified for this Plan and we commit that we will:

1. **Acknowledge** openly and publicly that such crimes should never have happened and that no child should tolerate such experiences.
2. **Sincerely apologise** to the victims and survivors and their families for what they have had to endure.
3. **Support** the victims and survivors, the school and the wider community to try and restore their situation.
4. **Establish** all the facts of the case, the history surrounding the situation and the wider context.
5. **Learn** all the lessons that are identified as part of the conclusions and recommendations of all investigations.
6. **Improve** by responding fully and quickly to all conclusions and recommendations with the aim of giving the public confidence that we are doing everything possible to ensure that no one suffers in the same way ever again.
7. **Be accountable** by being open and transparent about our improvement progress and committing to measuring the impact of the changes we implement.

6. HOW THE COUNCIL WILL DO THIS

Since the original plan was announced in December 2024, many of the first tasks have already been completed. Following the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, the workstreams were reviewed and rearranged to ensure they reflected the report's recommendations. The work was organised according to clear themes.

Later in the Plan, we will explain how our progress will be monitored. We clearly recognise that we have a long and challenging journey ahead of us before we can say that we have implemented everything fully and appropriately.

Theme 1: Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims



We want to ensure that Cyngor Gwynedd is:

- **Listening to children and young people, believes them and takes them seriously.**
- **Doing everything possible to support victims and survivors.**
- **Including children and young people when making decisions.**

What does the *our bravery brought justice report* say?

- **Professionals had not listened to children's concerns.**
- **When safeguarding concerns were raised, workers had not spoken to the child to listen to their story at all times.**
- **More needs to be done to support victims who have experienced trauma.**

What has already been done to improve things?

- **A personal apology has been offered to the girls who were abused by the former Headteacher.**
- **Cyngor Gwynedd is working with experts from the North Wales Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASAC) and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) to ensure that personal support is available to those who have suffered. This includes emotional support, access to therapeutic services and practical support. Not all victims have taken up the offer, but the support will continue to be available for them whenever they require it.**
- **The Council has changed the arrangements when a safeguarding concern is reported about a child and a professional adult (known as 'Part 5 referrals'). Cyngor Gwynedd's Children Department now ensures that the child is given an opportunity to speak with social workers on every occasion.**
- **Cyngor Gwynedd is employing a worker to support the Youth Forum to ensure that young people can voice their opinion and contribute to the Council's decisions.**

- The Council has reminded every School of the need to display posters with the NSPCC's contact details in prominent places in their schools to ensure that children and young people know how to get support if they need it.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will

- Develop the Child's Voice Charter that will explain how Cyngor Gwynedd listens to children and young people.
- Hold a Child's Rights workshop for the Youth Forum and Members of the Programme Board (February 2026).
- Look at how children and young people have their say across the Council and look at what would need to be changed to ensure that Gwynedd is a "child-friendly" council.

What will Cyngor Gwynedd have achieved by February 2027?

- All Cyngor Gwynedd staff will have an opportunity to receive training to ensure that they understand how difficult experiences can impact children. The aim is to make Cyngor Gwynedd a place that thinks about feelings and is "trauma-informed".
- Cyngor Gwynedd will ensure that every school pupil can recognise the signs of grooming and know how to confidently report it.
- An arrangement will be in place to ensure that the Youth Forum is an important part of the decision-making process, and that the Forum members can give their opinion on the Council's work.

Measuring impact

- Feedback from the Victims Support Group about the experience and quality of the support offered by Cyngor Gwynedd.
- Feedback from the Gwynedd Youth Forum, considering young people's confidence and experience of the safeguarding procedure in schools.
- The percentage of Council staff who have completed the Trauma-Informed Training.

- The Child's Voice/Participation Policy are reviewed and updated regularly, with input from children and young people across Gwynedd.



Theme 2: Managing Allegations and Concerns about Adults Working with Children

We want to:

- Protect children by ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and are addressed promptly.
- Ensure that Cyngor Gwynedd, the Police and the Health Board work together when responding to concerns about adults working with children.

What does the *our bravery brought justice* report say?

- The referral form system was not flexible, easy to find or easy to use.
- Professionals didn't report their concerns.
- Information wasn't shared with professionals in the right ways, at the right time.
- Not every professional understood the field enough or understood what had to be done to respond to safeguarding concerns.
- Previous safeguarding information was not always considered when making decisions.
- Councils disagreed on what should happen when concerns about safeguarding matters arose. The right people were not present at meetings to discuss safeguarding, and decisions were not always shared.

What has already been done to improve things?

- The sheet that is being used to record safeguarding meetings and discussions ('Strategy Part 5') has changed. By now, any previous or historical safeguarding information about the child is recorded and shared.

- The referral form for allegations of abuse is now available more prominently on the Council's website on the [Child abuse page](#).
- The Council has ensured that every school in the county has received a copy of the referral form for allegations of abuse.
- The Council has adapted arrangements to ensure that responsibility for safeguarding decisions does not fall on one worker only. Every referral is read by the Referrals Team, and then a conversation is held with the Safeguarding Officers.
- Create a Safeguarding and Well-being Team to visit and support schools.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will:

- Ensure that the Human Resources Service has a list of Cyngor Gwynedd staff who have been subject to safeguarding concerns (through the procedure known as 'Part 5').
- Work with North Wales Police to look at ways of strengthening the collaboration.
- Recruit an additional Designated Officer for Safeguarding (or *DOS*) to help with the work of receiving concerns about child abuse.
- Introduce stronger collaboration arrangements between the employees in Cyngor Gwynedd's Children's Department and Education Department.

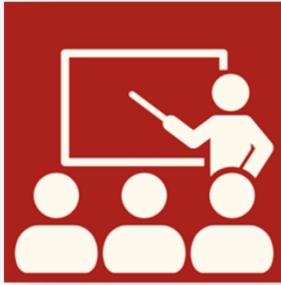
What will Cyngor Gwynedd have achieved by February 2027?

- There will be a new procedure to check that the Children and Supporting Families Department's work is high-quality. As part of the new arrangement, the Council will be expected to review which officers attend safeguarding discussions (strategy "Part 5") and the quality of the records kept when making decisions about safeguarding.
- Make it easier to report a concern by creating a digital referral form through the Council's website, so that a PDF form does not have to be downloaded and sent via e-mail. A wider plan is also underway to introduce a national referral form for all Welsh councils.

Measuring impact

- **A regular review by the Regional Safeguarding Board of the child safeguarding referrals ("Part 5") that are being made.**
- **Collect, analyse and report on evidence of staff confidence relating to safeguarding decisions ("Part 5").**

Theme 3: Training and Policies



We want to make sure:

- That Cyngor Gwynedd staff are trained to be more suspicious, that is to think the 'worst possible' and understand that 'it could happen here'.
- That we develop and strengthen policies to ensure that there is clear guidance for Cyngor Gwynedd employees

What does the *our bravery brought justice report say?*

- The Designated Person for Safeguarding in the school where the former Headteacher offended had not received suitable safeguarding training. (The Designated Person for Safeguarding is the person that has been appointed to be responsible for safeguarding matters in a school).
- The school's staff and Governors had not received suitable safeguarding training.
- The School staff or Cyngor Gwynedd staff did not know when and how to raise a concern (a procedure known as "Whistleblowing").

What has already been done to improve things?

- Cyngor Gwynedd has included information about grooming in the training pack for every school at the start of the school year (September 2025).
- A Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team has been newly established. The Team provides information and support to the Designated Person for Safeguarding in every school in Gwynedd.
- A worker has been appointed to raise awareness of the safeguarding field across the Council and inform staff of the safeguarding training available.
- Every department within Cyngor Gwynedd checks how many staff members have attended the Safeguarding training, and the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence training.
- Since January 2025, every school in Gwynedd is visited by the Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team once a year. The Team will look at safeguarding within the school, and ensure that posters and information are available, and that staff know how to deal with concerns.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will:

- **Arrange additional training for staff working with children to help them recognise changes in a child's behaviour that could be a sign of an inappropriate relationship or abuse.**
- **Adopt a policy to raise concerns ("Whistleblowing" Policy) and do more work to raise staff awareness across the Council. A similar policy will also be introduced to Gwynedd Councillors.**
- **Introduce training on keeping safeguarding records.**
- **Members of the Council's Scrutiny Committees (a group of councillors who check that the Council is doing things right) will finish looking into safeguarding arrangements in schools.**

What will Cyngor Gwynedd have achieved by February 2027?

Cyngor Gwynedd will:

- **Ensure that every new member of staff receives safeguarding training timely at the start of their post.**
- **Receive the outcome of the investigation by members of the Scrutiny Committees and draw a plan to implement any recommendations.**

Measuring impact

- **That every staff member who requires a DBS Certificate for their post has a current DBS Certificate. (A DBS Certificate is the inspection to check whether a person is safe to work with children or vulnerable people).**
- **Report on the number of staff who have completed the Safeguarding training and the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence training.**
- **That every school receives a visit from the Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team, and the number of schools following the Council's safeguarding policies.**



Theme 4: Governance in schools

We want to make sure that:

- Gwynedd school governors understand their role and responsibilities to keep children safe. (Governors are a group of people who volunteer to manage a school.)
- Systems are in place to measure the well-being of pupils, staff and schools' wider culture.

What does the *our bravery brought justice* report say?

- The former Headteacher had too much control in the School.
- The school's governors did not feel confident to challenge the Headteacher. They said that they were not allowed to disagree with him, as this could lead to them being forced to leave the governing body.
- The school operated safeguarding policies that had been written by the Headteacher, not the county Policy.
- Governors didn't have enough safeguarding training.

What has already been done to improve things?

- Safeguarding training is being completed by every school governor in Gwynedd. In addition to this, additional training is given to Chairs and Governors who are responsible for Safeguarding on every governing body.
- A new governor handbook has been created and shared with all Gwynedd governors.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will

- Prepare, develop and share a standing agenda for the governing bodies of Gwynedd schools. The programme will focus on the matters of safeguarding well-being and provide them with information to understand how their school is doing.
- Employ an additional officer to support school governors.

What will Cyngor Gwynedd have achieved by February 2027?

- Cyngor Gwynedd will have implemented every relevant recommendation for county councils after the Welsh Government's review of school governance in Wales.

Measuring impact

- Estyn school inspections (A team of people who visit schools to see how well they are doing) show that every school is following the safeguarding procedure.

- **Measuring governors' confidence levels after receiving safeguarding training.**



Theme 5: Restrictive Practices

We want to ensure:

- **That restrictive practices are only used to keep a child safe or to prevent serious harm. It should never be used to punish, control or humiliate a child.**
- **That school staff receive training and clear rules regarding when and how to use reasonable force.**
- **If force is used, the child must receive help and support if they have been hurt physically or mentally.**

What does the *our bravery brought justice say?*

- Unlawful levels of force were being used in the school in question during the former Headteacher's period.
- The former Headteacher misled school staff to think that it was acceptable to use such force.
- The former Headteacher encouraged school staff to film physical restraint on children.
- When physical restraint was used on a child, there were no arrangements in place to ensure that the child had not been hurt and to offer trauma support.
- The parents of children who had been physically restrained did not feel that their complaints were being understood or respected.

What has already been done to improve things?

- When the Education Safeguarding and Well-being Team visits schools, they always look at the school's Restrictive Practices Policy.
- Restrictive Practices training is given to staff who require it.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will

- **Review the county's Restrictive Practices Policy and ensure that every school fully adopts this policy.**
- **Align the training being used by the Council's Children and Education Services in the field of restrictive practices to ensure that the same methods are being used.**



Measuring impact

- That every Gwynedd school complies with the county's Restrictive Practices Policy.
- When there are incidents of restrictive practices in a School, the Council will retain evidence that professional discussions have been held.

Theme 6: Crisis planning

We want to ensure:

- That there are suitable arrangements to respond to emergencies and that everyone knows what to do when a safeguarding emergency arises.

What does the *our bravery brought justice* report say?

- The school, where the former Headteacher abused pupils, had no emergency plan.
- It was unclear what needed to be done as the emergency related to the Headteacher.
- The police were not called straight away when one of the school's pupils was at risk.
- The former Headteacher was not blocked from coming to school when staff found out about the crime.

What has already been done to improve things?

- A team within Cyngor Gwynedd has had a meeting to review the emergency plan.
- Conversations with key staff members to understand what went wrong on the day of the arrest and how to improve future arrangements.
- Review of existing information sharing arrangements for safeguarding and crisis planning to see whether they need to be strengthened.

What will happen between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will

- Work with the Police to ensure that there are robust arrangements in place should an emergency safeguarding situation arise in the future.
- Prepare a training resource on how to respond to safeguarding emergencies.



What will Cyngor Gwynedd achieve in a year?

- Staff will receive training on how to deal with safeguarding emergencies.
- The Council will work with different services and other local authorities through the Regional Emergency Planning Board.

Measuring impact

- The percentage of Council staff who have attended emergency planning training
- Percentage of Gwynedd schools who have adopted the Emergency Management Policy
- Number of satisfactory inspections of emergency plans on Council sites

Theme 7: Support and Stabilising Ysgol Friars

We want to:

- Support and Stabilising Ysgol Friars.

What does the *our bravery brought justice* report say?

Although there is no specific recommendation for Ysgol Friars only in the Report, it clearly shows that the former Headteacher who had offended:

- controlled every aspect of the school.
- challenged anyone who raised a concern about him.
- created an atmosphere of fear and mistrust, including bullying pupils, parents and staff.

What has already been done to improve things?

- A new Headteacher has been appointed to lead the School.
- Since September 2023, Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Department has helped the school by providing additional staff and support for the new leadership to review the policies.
- The school's staff and pupils receive support to look after their well-being.

- The school's governing body has changed. Four new members have been appointed to represent the Council, and a new clerk is helping to arrange and keep order during the meetings.

What will Cyngor Gwynedd do between January 2026 and July 2026?

Cyngor Gwynedd will

- Compare the school's implementation arrangements with the arrangements of other schools in the county to consider whether there is a need to make any changes.

What will Cyngor Gwynedd have achieved in a year?

- The School will have had a further opportunity to stabilise.

Measuring impact

- Feedback from the School Council on safety and well-being at the school has been gathered and considered.

7. FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

We are carefully considering what further investigations are appropriate, thinking about the reviews that have already taken place and the work that continues locally, regionally and nationally.

Through this Response Plan, we promise to do everything possible to strengthen safeguarding, ensure accountability and restore public confidence.

Although the [our bravery brought justice](#) report has given us a lot of information, we have recognised that it is necessary to look at what further investigations or reviews are needed to:

- acknowledge what has happened,
- apologise,
- support people,
- establish the facts,
- learn lessons,
- improve,
- and ensure accountability.

We are asking for opinions and advice from external organisations and experts to help us decide which investigations would support us the most. After that, it will be necessary to decide what work to commission and create a clear remit for them.

When making decisions, we will need to check:

- do we have the powers to carry out a specific investigation,

- are we a suitable body to commission the work,
- or would it be more transparent to call on another body to consider the matter.

We have already supported the call for a Public Inquiry, and this may be the best place to deal with some aspects that are beyond the Council's powers.

The main purpose of these investigations is to learn lessons and ensure continuous improvement.

We will receive the conclusions of the investigations when they are ready, and then we will need to act on the findings and recommendations. What is expected of us will depend on those conclusions.

We have been clear from the start: we will accept and act on every recommendation from every investigation, fully and immediately. It is appropriate for us to reaffirm that here.

8. OWNERSHIP AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE PLAN

- The Response Plan has been commissioned by the Council's Cabinet.
- The plan was adopted on 21 January 2025.
- Thereafter, a Response Board was set up to coordinate the work and ensure timely progress.
- Several external bodies have been invited to join, and Professor Sally Holland is an independent Chair.

The Board includes observers from Estyn, Care Inspectorate Wales, the Welsh Government, the North Wales Safeguarding Board and the Children's Commissioner.

The Chairman reports to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

Several committees within the Council are also scrutinising the progress:

- Governance and Audit Committee
- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- Care Scrutiny Committee

The Plan must be updated regularly as it is a live plan. It is likely to change as we move from review and learning to a period of recovery.

Measuring progress is difficult due to the sensitive nature of the issues, but:

- there are over 200 tasks in the detailed work plan, and

- agreed impact measures, including the views of children, parents and staff on safeguarding in schools.

We recognise that this is a long journey, and we are committed to completing it.

9. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Prior to the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice* in November 2025, there were limits on what the Council could share, so as not to impair the review. It is now possible to share more information about the improvement of safeguarding arrangements.

However, caution must be exercised with:

- individual cases of children or adults,
- and Human Resource issues.

The original Communications Plan has already been completed. We are now developing a new Communications Plan, based on the revised work streams in this Response Plan.

In addition, a webpage has been set up so that any relevant statements and information are kept in one place - www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/crime_response.

Appendix 3

1. Decision of the Care Scrutiny Committee

- To note the work programme
- To request a progress report in 6 months on the work programme including information on the whistleblowing policy and its implementation
- To request a report on securing a Child Friendly County status and becoming a Trauma-Informed Council.
- To ask the Cabinet to consider
 - adding an external female contact name to the poster to share information about concerns and ensure contact details are available on school websites and the Council website
 - addressing the voice of the family as well as the voice of the child in work stream 1
 - amending the text under the heading '2.3 – Estyn inspection of the Council's Education Department' on page 18 of the Response Plan to include a sentence reflecting the context that, despite the commendation by Estyn, a school head was arrested a few months later
 - ensuring that grooming training is available to all who need it
 - providing external specialist safeguarding training for members and governors
 - adding the "well-being of children and young people" to the description of work stream 7 - Supporting and Stabilising Ysgol Friars

corresponding with Welsh Government to express concern about the challenges and risks surrounding the role of school governors

2. Decision of the Governance and Audit Committee

- To accept the detail of the Response Plan
- To thank the Officers for their work and welcome that the Response Plan was being discussed at several forums
- That a simple and definite summary/front cover of the main action points was needed
- That the Committee received regular updates on the actions that had been taken or were being considered as a suitable and appropriate response to the situation
- A request by the Committee for Estyn to acknowledge the weaknesses of their report on the Council's safeguarding arrangements, June 2023
- That Whistleblowing Arrangements and Safeguarding Arrangements need to be among the best - reviews to these policies are welcome - need an update on the work, timetable and manner in which they are adopted
- Note: Request to review the last paragraph of 2.5 of the Response Plan: 'Investigation into the events of 2019 that has been the subject of press coverage' – more context is needed about the independent investigation that was completed and what the reason was for the decision not to share the report/findings. Request to set out the context for Estyn's

commendation of the Council's safeguarding arrangements (June 2023). The wording as it is is inappropriate given the failures that later emerged.

3. Decision of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee

- To accept and note the report and work programme, and request an update in 6 months.
- To recommend to the Cabinet:

Work Stream 1: Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims

- Measurable arrangements should be established that clearly show how the voice of the child and victims' experience directly influence decisions and outcomes;
- Long-term support for victims needs to be ensured without causing further trauma;
- Children facing challenges need to be given appropriate attention and unconscious bias should be avoided;
- Relevant information should be easy to read and accessible to children.

Work Stream 2: Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children

- The arrangements for managing allegations and concerns should ensure that any doubt about the suitability of adults to work with children and vulnerable adults is assessed at an early stage, is appropriately escalated, and independently challenged, regardless of the status of the practitioner;
- Clear safeguards are needed for individuals who raise concerns;
- Incidents that do not directly relate to children need to be examined;
- Evidence should be gathered to show that change is taking place and to enable future scrutiny;
- Consideration should be given to extending the time period for the audit in Part 5, Wales Safeguarding Procedures, by more than two years;
- Checks should be made that there is a mechanism in place to ensure, if necessary, that there is a transition from human resources processes to Part 5 procedures.

Work Stream 3: Training and Policies

- Policies and training should be rigorous and reviewed to support professional judgement and challenge;
- There needs to be evidence that training changes behaviour and decisions in practice, and is not solely a matter of attendance;
- Safeguarding records should be regularly reviewed and supervised by a specific officer to ensure that they are in accordance with the requirements;
- Grooming should be specifically identified in training arrangements and given timely attention.

Work Stream 4: School Governance

- School governance arrangements should be strengthened to identify patterns of risk over time, ensure clear pathways of escalation, and include an element of independent challenge or assurance;
- Appropriate support should be offered to equip governors to appropriately challenge and identify patterns;
- Consideration should be given to the training provided for Chairs and Designated Safeguarding Governors.

Work Stream 5: Reasonable Force

- It should be ensured that staff understand when the use of reasonable force is appropriate, and that they feel confident and supported to take action to protect children;
- It should be ensured that reviews focus on learning lessons rather than blaming.

Work Stream 6: Crisis Planning and Crisis Response

- Crisis planning and response should be treated as a live process that is part of the safeguarding process and should be tested regularly;
- Clarity is required in relation to roles;
- Effective communication with staff should be ensured;
- Arrangements need to be continually reviewed to ensure that lessons learned from Ysgol Friars remain operational over time.

Work Stream 7: Supporting and Stabilising Ysgol Friars

- Supporting and stabilising Ysgol Friars should be used as a basis for whole-system learning, proving that stability has led to sustainable improvement in safeguarding and cultural change across schools;
- Schools should be required to:
 - include information about their safeguarding arrangements prominently on their websites;
 - consider adapting the content of their relationships education curriculum to reflect what happened at Ysgol Friars.

General

- There is a need to ensure that there is an overview of the work streams in their entirety;
- Consider putting arrangements in place to ensure that the Council responds immediately and checks its systems when a significant concern arises which may be systemic in nature;
- Attention should be given to the arrangements for communicating information with parents and families to ensure effective communication;
- Consideration should be given to releasing as much information as possible to ensure transparency;

The 2023 Estyn Inspection Report of the Council's Education Department should not be quoted or referenced in the Response Plan.

4. Decision of the Full Council

- To reiterate the request to the Welsh Government for a public inquiry, and share the Government's response to the request with the Members of the Full Council.

- To emphasise the importance of the efficiency of Whistleblowing, Safeguarding and Reasonable Force Policies.
- To ask for the wider distribution of Safeguarding Referral Forms rather than only to Headteachers and Chairs of Governing Bodies.
- To share information about expenditure on support, therapy and counselling for victims to give assurance that we are spending enough on this support.
- To emphasise the importance of the Reasonable Force Policy and that it is given due consideration in the response.
- To give consideration to how to ensure that the safeguarding policy is followed when the information is confidential and not known to all members of a school's governing body.
- To give consideration to ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and that this is reinforced in culture.
- To ensure that record-keeping arrangements, and any relevant training, are reviewed and that a dedicated officer be considered to verify the quality of records.
- The need for reassurance of what would be different if someone was to raise concerns today.
- The need to publish a concise and easy-to-read version of the document.

RESOLVED:

- To ask the Cabinet to consider the above observations, as well as those from the Extraordinary Meeting of the Care Scrutiny Committee (13 January 2026), the Extraordinary Meeting of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee (19 January 2026) and the Governance and Audit Committee (15 January 2026), in adopting the new Response Plan.

Aseiad Effaith Cyfansawdd

This document assesses what impact the policy, procedure, plan, etc. will have on the county's population and will be implemented based on a number of legislations.

- **Equality Act 2010.** The Act places a duty on public organisations to give due attention to the impact of any new (or amended) policy, procedure or plan, etc. on persons with protected characteristics. We are required to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
 - promote equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In Wales, the specific duty notes the need to undertake an impact assessment following specific guidelines to consider the impact that any changes in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on persons with protected equality characteristics. A timely assessment should be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

- **Socio-economic Duty.** Wales has implemented this further duty which is part of the Equality Act 2010 and places a duty to address socio-economic disadvantages in strategic decisions.
- **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011).** The Council is required to consider the impact that any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use made of the Welsh language.
- **Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.** The Council has a duty to put the five ways of working in place and to respond to the seven national well-being goals.
- **Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must give due attention to the impact of this proposal on those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, as well as their families.

Response Plan

Author: Eleri Jones (TA)

Job Title:

Date: 2 January 2026

Version: Response Plan

STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation (refer to any national EqIA and consider local impact)

2. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

The Equality Impact Assessment assesses the strategic, operational and cultural impact of Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan to matters noted in the Our Bravery Brought Justice statutory report (November 2025).

The Response Plan seeks to:

- Acknowledge historical failures and provide a clear and transparent response.
- Support the victims and community of Ysgol Friars.
- Restore public trust in safeguarding arrangements.
- Strengthen multi-agency policy, training, governance and response.
- Ensure that children will never again experience the harm that occurred under organisational supervision.

3. Who are the main consultative groups (stakeholders)?

- Women / Young girls
- Children with ALN
- Children who have experienced trauma
- New staff or staff in safeguarding roles

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Impact Assessment

4. Has there been any attempt to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has enough information been gathered to move forward?

No

Details of the engagement. Note any consultation or engagement you have conducted or intend to conduct.

Action	Dates	Information
Care Scrutiny Committee	13 January 2026	
Governance and Audit Committee	15 January 2026	
Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	19 January 2026	
Full Council (Extraordinary)	5 February 2026	

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the following characteristics and subjects?

	Evidence, Information and Relevant Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds that may be less likely to report abuse because of language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display information in clear, accessible language, and multi-lingually where appropriate.

	<p>barriers, lack of trust or experiences of organisational discrimination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with youth forums and parents from ethnic minorities when updating policies. Training for staff on cultural awareness and identifying risks in different communities.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with disabilities (physical, learning or neuro-diversity) more likely to be at risk of over-use of reasonable force or abuse Experience of the context of de-traumatising being able to worsen symptoms (e.g. ADHD, ASD, Anxiety). Staff with disabilities who could face barriers when completing training, reports or using digital processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable force policy being reviewed and reconciled nationally and locally. Trauma-informed training for the staff of all schools Provide optional reporting pathways - including digital, face-to-face and in accessible ways.
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The criminal case involved young girls, which means a disproportionate impact on women and young girls in the education system. Risk that more examples of sexual abuse could be raised organisationally, considering the historical governance failings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific training on sexual abuse, grooming, and the behaviour of adults in positions of trust who work with children. Wider work with specialist organisations such as RASASC. Ensure that there is an independent point of contact (outside school) for children to be able to raise concerns, with a male or female. Review pupil reporting processes to ensure that there are no gender-related obstructions to raising concerns.

Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial impact on children and young people who suffered abuse • Parents who have experienced secondary trauma • Looked after children, ALN learners, or pupils experiencing emotional challenges are more vulnerable to harm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New 'Voice of the Child' strategy ensures access to social workers and involvement in decisions. • Substantial extension of therapeutic support, including trauma services and school counselling. This will remain open for the future. • Strengthen referral processes and access to external agencies.
Religion and Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious beliefs may affect the tendency to report abuse (e.g. taboo, stigma). • Safeguarding frameworks may conflict with the family values / community values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that safeguarding practices are sensitive to religious backgrounds. • Create confidential pathways that do not require parental support. • Consult with different forums, e.g. youth forum, in order to ensure inclusive representation, including consideration to religion and belief.
Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBTQ+ pupils more likely to face organisational abuse, and sometimes less likely to report. • Risk of discrimination from staff or fellow pupils in sensitive situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice of the child strategy to secure that the views of all children are heard, regardless of their identity. • Training on discrimination and equality a part of safeguarding packages. • Ensure safe ways of reporting where there is no risk.
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many trans young people experience abuse or bullying and are maybe less likely to trust adults to share concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice of the Child Policy - the policy ensures that every child has an opportunity to express their view directly and in a safe and respectful manner - this includes young trans people.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma and previous experiences of discrimination can reduce the likelihood that trans individuals will use reporting pathways, particularly if they have previously faced organisational abuse. • Increased risk if staff are not trained - if safeguarding training does not include sensitivity to gender identity, staff can either misinterpret behaviour as "attention seeking" or failing to identify signs of abuse that are specific to trans people (including targeted abuse). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative reporting pathways - direct access to external services and confidential methods of particular importance to young trans people who need safe pathways that do not rely on parents, specific teachers, or staff who are not LGBTQ+ friendly. • Trauma-informed council - Trauma-informed methods are particularly important to trans people, where previous experiences of discrimination or de-humanisation is common. Training will provide support to respond to this in a sensitive manner.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific impact on parents or staff in traumatic relationships or where there is dispute. • Concerns about child safety may cause tension in the home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals to family support services. • HR support to staff who are under pressure.
Pregnancy and Maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff who are pregnant or on maternity leave are more open to concerns and crisis-related stress. • Pregnant pupils or young parents are more vulnerable to harm if there is a lack of trust in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-being support at school and through HR. • Staff training on recording specific risks.
The Welsh Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to children and young people by not sharing disclosures or concerns if they are unable to do so in the language they feel is safest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual web pages and communication plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk that pupils, victims and staff have less access to support services (counselling, trauma, helplines) in Welsh, affecting accessibility and the quality of the experience. • Risk to services supplied by third parties (e.g. trauma and specialist support), failing to comply with Language Standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare, safeguarding and education officers in Gwynedd, operating naturally through the medium of Welsh. • Voice of the Child Policy - a child's right to express views in the language they feel most comfortable. • Safeguarding quality assurance arrangements to check the availability of bilingual communication. • Ensure that training provision is available through the medium of Welsh.
<p>Socio-economic Considerations</p>	<p>Children from lower-income families or families at social disadvantage are more likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experience abuse or neglect without being heard, also • face barriers to using support services • rely more on school support as a main source of welfare. <p>Communities with higher levels of deprivation are more vulnerable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of potential trust in authorities • challenges in accessing external services • less access to digital resources for reporting pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to considering the voice of the child and ensuring that clear reporting pathways are in place can help the children who are most vulnerable to economic harm. • The extension of counselling and support services in schools supports families without the financial ability to obtain private services. • Mitigation measures can include monitoring school and social services data to identify patterns and gaps according to economic class.

Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of a parent in the armed forces may mean that disclosures go unnoticed or that risk behaviours are not noted early. • School moves may happen without transferring adequate safeguarding information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better reporting pathways and the emphasis on the voice of the child can ensure that children from military families do not fall through the net. • Multi-agency collaboration to help as families move across counties and regions.
Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of staff awareness or gaps in training can reduce the ability of children to identify their rights. • Failure to communicate in a clear and transparent way can undermine the rights of parents to adequate information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Response Plan reinforces the rights of children by focusing on the voice of the child, transparency and accountability. • Incorporate the principles of the Rights of the Child into mandatory training across the Council.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No other impact has been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No other impact has been identified.

6. Are there any data or information gaps, and if so, what are they and how do you intend to address them?

- No gaps have been identified at present.

7. When considering other key decisions that affect these groups, is there an increasing impact (cumulative impact)?

- No increasing impact has currently been identified.

8. What does the proposal include to demonstrate you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equal opportunity; help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation and foster good relations and wider community cohesion) as covered by the three aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

- The proposal demonstrates due regard to the Public Sector Equity Duty by ensuring that the principles of equality, safety and children's rights are embedded in all aspects of the Response Plan. This includes promoting equal opportunities through training, accessible reporting pathways and voice of the child policy; removing discrimination by strengthening policies and responding to allegations quickly and consistently; fostering good relationships by working closely with parents, the school community and multi-agency partners, restoring trust and building a safe, open and transparent culture.

9. How does the proposal show that due regard has been given to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this relates to closing the inequality gap, rather than just improving outcomes for everyone.)

- The proposal demonstrates due regard to address socio-economic inequality by ensuring that support, reporting pathways and safeguarding services are accessible, free and targeted specifically to the children and families who are most vulnerable to harm in order to close inequality gaps.

10. How does the proposal show implementation in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language, and to ensure opportunities for people to use the Welsh language? Also, how does the proposal operate in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Welsh Language Strategy to take advantage of every opportunity to

promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

- The proposal demonstrates compliance with the Welsh Language Standards by ensuring that the Welsh language is never treated less favourably than English, providing all communications, reporting pathways, training and safeguarding service bilingually and actively promotes and expands opportunities for children, families and staff to use, live and learn in Welsh in line with the Council's language policy and strategy.

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and respond to the seven national well-being goals, including creating a More Equal Wales?

- The proposal meets the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working - i.e., taking preventative steps, long-term working, integrating services, collaborating with external agencies and meaningful engagement with children, parents and staff - making a direct contribution to the seven well-being goals, particularly creating a more equal, safe and resilient Wales, where every child is safeguarded and supported.

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or in partnership with another organisation(s)?

- Not direct, but it is possible that some associated elements will derive from the Plan such as counselling, training and therapeutic support being provided in part via contractors.

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice

13. When considering proportionality, does the policy or practice have a significantly positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:

- Systematic strengthening of all safeguarding arrangements.
- Re-establish school culture on children's rights and being trauma-informed.
- Improve school governance and accountability arrangements.

Significant Negative Impact:

- No negative impact

14. Any intentional negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for operating in this way should be explained (for example, on the grounds of improving equal opportunities or developing good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not or due to objective justification or positive action)

No negative impact

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful discrimination albeit they are unavoidable (e.g. budget cuts)?

No

Note the reason for stating this and the justification for proceeding

N/a

16. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to equal opportunity; help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation; and foster good relations and wider community cohesion; as covered by the improvement aim of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

A series of measures to measure the impact of the plan are in place and are regularly checked by the Response Board.

17. What measures or other changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?

N/a

18. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and in treating the Welsh

language no less favourably than the English language as set out in the **Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011** and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the **Welsh language?**

N/a

19. Is there enough information to make a balanced judgement and to proceed?

Yes

STEP 5 - Decision to Proceed

20. Given the information gathered in Steps 1–4 above, is it possible to move forward with the policy or practice or not, and if so, on what basis? Choice of:

Continue with policy or practice in its current form

STEP 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Outcomes and Reviewing Data

The EqIA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqIA is agreed and implemented. There is a specific legal duty to monitor the impact of policies/practices on equality on an ongoing basis to identify if the outcomes have changed since you introduced or amended this new policy or practice. If you do not hold relevant data, then you should be taking steps to rectify this in your action plan.

To review the EHRC guidance on data collection you can review their [Measurement Framework](#)

21. What actions noted in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work would help to monitor the policy/practice when implemented:

Action	Dates	Timetable	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Regular review of risks deriving from the Plan	Response Board	2 months	Dafydd Gibbard	Yes

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or practice will be implemented, including timeframes for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Review Arrangements (including where outcomes will be recorded)	Timeframe and Frequency	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Ongoing review as a part of the Response Board's arrangements	2 months	Sally Holland	No
Review of the Response Plan through the Scrutiny Forums	6 months	Dafydd Gibbard	No

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd’s Cabinet

Item Title:	Quarterly Report – Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board (March 2026)
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Nia Jeffreys, Leader of the Council
Relevant Officer:	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive
Date of meeting:	10 Mawrth 2026

1. The Decision Sought:

The Cabinet is asked to accept the report which is the third quarterly report from the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board.

2. The reason for the need for a decision:

A Response Plan was adopted by Gwynedd Council's Cabinet in January 2025 to collate all support, reviews, audits and other workstreams relating to the response to crime by the Head Teacher, Neil Foden.

There was a commitment to report quarterly to Cabinet Members on the progress of the Response Board's work programme and operation.

The report is shared by the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board, with the intention of raising awareness of the developments and what has and needs to be achieved by the Response Plan Programme Board.

3. Introduction and rationale

3.1 Background/ Introduction

The Chief Executive was commissioned to put arrangements in place for the implementation of the content of the Response Plan including establishing a dedicated Programme Board and regular reporting on progress to Cabinet.

Professor Sally Holland was appointed to the role of Independent Chair of the Board in February 2025. Sally is Professor of Social Work at the Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre (CASCADE) at Cardiff University and a former Children's Commissioner for Wales (2015-2022).

As promised, Sally will report quarterly to Cabinet Members on the progress of the Response Board's work programme and operation. This is the third of these reports (see previous reports - July 2025, November 2025).

This quarterly report gives an overview of the progress being made since adopting the revised Response Plan following the publication of the Child Practice Review (Our Bravery Brought Justice) report in November 2026.

3.2 Next Steps

The Board's work continues with the intention of reporting back to Cabinet on progress in 3 months' time.

4. Comments of Statutory Officers.

4.1 Chief Finance Officer

The decision sought will not create a new spending commitment and I have no further comments to add.

4.2 Monitoring Officer

The Programme Board has been established by the Cabinet to co-ordinate and ensure progress on the Response Plan which it adopted. It is key to this governance arrangement that the Cabinet receives regular updates on progress in this all-important work. A report by the Independent Chair, Professor Sally Holland is a transparent and robust method of providing that assurance. I welcome the report.

QUARTERLY REPORT TO CABINET: RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD

PROFESSOR SALLY HOLLAND: CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE BOARD

DATE: 10th March 2026

Introduction

Since my last report to Cabinet in November 2025, the Response Plan Programme Board (“the Board”) has continued to meet and oversee progress in response to the Child Practice Review (‘Our Bravery Brought Justice’ report) and the wider Response Plan.

This report summarises key Board activity, developments, and oversight work since the last quarterly update.

Current Position

Strategic Phases of Work

Cyngor Gwynedd has undertaken the response work in two overlapping phases, and the Board’s discussions, scrutiny and advice has reflected this.

a. *Immediate Response to the Crimes and ‘Our Bravery Brought Justice’ Report Publication–*

The initial response plan and actions were primarily ameliorative including support for victims and survivors, supporting and stabilizing Ysgol Friars and improving policies, procedures and uptake of training.

The Board supported and scrutinized Cyngor Gwynedd through the period surrounding the CPR ‘Our Bravery Brought Justice’ report’s publication, with a focus on ensuring appropriate support for the victims and survivors of the crimes, and on assisting the Council in preparing for the publication and response planning.

b. *System-Wide Response and Monitoring –*

The CPR (‘Our Bravery Brought Justice’) report was published on 4 November, 2025 and this led to the biggest change to the Response Plan since its adoption. There has been a shift in emphasis towards a whole-system approach to ensure that measures to prevent harm are in place alongside suitable responses when harm may have occurred.

The Response Plan has been revamped to reflect the key recommendations and learning identified in the Our Bravery Brought Justice report including streamlining priorities and ensuring existing plans are fully integrated into the Response Plan.

The seven key themes are;

1. Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims
2. Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children

3. Training and Policies
4. School Governance
5. Restrictive Practices
6. Crisis Planning and Crisis Response
7. Supporting Ysgol Friars

A detailed work plan is circulated to members prior to the Response Board meetings and an overview report is also now included for each of the 7 themes with a 'theme leader' identified to strengthen accountability. Overview reports include updates on key milestones achieved since the previous meeting and priorities moving forwards including any dependencies, risks and resource issues.

Child-Centred Focus and Victim Engagement

A continued priority has been advancing child-centred approaches within the Response Plan activities. The Board has supported Cyngor Gwynedd in its efforts to further embed child-centred practice, and in my role as Chair I have worked with Jan Pickles who led the CPR review and SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) to explore ways to communicate with victims and seek their views on progress in a manner that is sensitive, meaningful, and respectful.

Children's Rights and Participation

The Board has also engaged with efforts to strengthen children's rights and participation across the local authority. A children's rights training day was held on 2 February, bringing together young people, Cabinet members, directors, heads of department and other staff. The event focused on how children's rights can be integrated into Council policy. In addition to ensuring that everyone present had a shared understanding of children's rights, and local authority's duties to uphold them, the session included discussion about using Children's Rights Impact Assessments and the development of a participation strategy. I am grateful to officers from the Children's Commissioner for Wales office for working with me to plan and lead the session.

I was encouraged by the draft children's participation strategy that was shared at the last Board meeting, and I look forward to seeing it implemented in Cyngor Gwynedd.

Board members welcomed the energy and commitment shown by all participants at the training day to drive forward these endeavours. Further work will be required to ensure that this approach is embedded into the processes and culture of Cyngor Gwynedd.

Examples of how this might be done include;

- Development and implementation of the Voice of the Child Strategy
- Further development of the Youth Forum and their involvement in policy and service-development in Cyngor Gwynedd

- Involving the youth forum with the work of the response board, e.g. attending Board meetings to share the work they are doing; consideration for how Gwynedd might involve them and be accountable.
- Work on the principles (5 Principles of the Right Way Approach) that underpin a preventative and foundational approach to safeguarding to create the conditions for children in Gwynedd to thrive.

Scrutiny and Assurance

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government has established a Ministerial Assurance Board following the publication of 'Our Bravery Brought Justice'. The Response Board does not have formal governance links with the Ministerial Board, but as Chair I attended the January meeting of the Board to update Ministers on the continuing work of the Response Board.

Joint safeguarding inspection by Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales

This report was published in January 2026 and was shared with the Board. The recommendations from that report are included in the response plan, and therefore Cyngor Gwynedd's progress in meeting these will be available for scrutiny and advice by the Board.

Evolving Role of the Board

In my view, during the last few months the Board's role has continued to mature in terms of scrutiny. While continuing to provide advice and support to Cyngor Gwynedd, the Board has increasingly exercised a robust scrutiny function. The Chair notes that internal members and elected members of the Board are taking a stronger lead in scrutiny activity, complementing the valuable contribution of external Board members.

Triangulating Insight and Engagement

To strengthen understanding of progress beyond formal Board meetings, the Chair has implemented structured triangulation activities, including:

- Quarterly bilateral meetings with external Board members and individual Cabinet members to review progress and agree key priorities.
- Engagement with key informants outside the Board, including representatives from SARC, RASASC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre), and Ysgol Friars leadership (including the Headteacher / Chair of Governors), to ensure diverse perspectives on system changes.

These activities enhance assurance about progress and support the Chair's oversight role.

Measuring Impact

Work to develop and refine rights-based impact measures continues. The Board emphasises the importance of tracking meaningful indicators of progress, including training completion rates, qualitative conversations with young people, parents, and staff, routine surveys and

other outcome measures. At the most recent Board a new set of outcome measures was presented to align with the new work programme.

Transparency and Governance

In line with the Board's commitment to transparency and accountability, Board minutes and papers will be published routinely.

Next Steps

As the Board moves into the next quarter, it will:

- Continue to review and advise on the implementation of the Response Plan and relevant priorities arising from the CPR.
- Support further embedding of safeguarding improvements across services.
- Maintain robust scrutiny of progress through enhanced triangulation and engagement.
- Continue work with partners to embed rights, participation, and impact measurement in a sustainable way.

The Board continues to review how long it should continue as a separate entity. This has also been discussed with the Welsh Government Ministerial Assurance Board. Current plans are for the Board to continue until the summer of 2026, with a further review at that point.

Closing Remarks

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the commitment shown by Board members during what has been a complex and sensitive period of work. Attendance and participation continues at a high level. The Board recognises that strengthening safeguarding arrangements and embedding a child-centred, rights-based approach across a whole system takes time, sustained leadership, and requires careful scrutiny. I am encouraged by much of the progress being made and the willingness to learn and adapt. The Programme is ambitious and will continue to demand senior staff time and other resources to be successful. The Board will continue to provide constructive support and robust oversight to Cabinet as this work progresses, with a continued focus on impact, transparency, and the lived experiences of children and young people.

Professor Sally Holland

Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board

23/02/26

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of Item:	Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 - 2026/27 Review
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Nia Jeffreys
Relevant officer:	Catrin Thomas, Corporate Director & Dewi Wyn Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager
Date of meeting:	10 March 2026

1. The Decision Sought:

- 1.1 Cabinet approval of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028 – 2026/27 Review (the Plan) to be presented to the Council on 14 May 2026.
- 1.2 Delegate the right to the Corporate Director in consultation with the Leader to make editorial changes and to amend the Plan, including updating the foreword, before it is presented to the Full Council

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

- 2.1 To ensure that there is agreement on the content of the Plan, including any updates that have been made to it, before it is presented to a meeting of the Full Council for adoption at its meeting on 14 May 2026.

3. Introduction and Relevant Considerations

- 3.1 The Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 is our public statement as a Council regarding what we intend to deliver for the people of Gwynedd. It conveys our priorities and our ambition for the next five years together with the projects we will be carrying out.
- 3.2 The Plan comprises a series of projects for five years (2023-2028) under seven priority areas: Tomorrow's Gwynedd, A Prosperous Gwynedd, A Homely Gwynedd, A Caring Gwynedd, A Welsh Gwynedd, A Green Gwynedd and An Efficient Gwynedd. The priority areas are our Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The objectives will directly contribute to achieving the seven national well-being goals. A copy of the current version can be found here - [Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28](#)
- 3.3 The purpose of reviewing the Plan is to look at where we have reached as we are now over halfway through the Plan, looking specifically at:
 - **Reviewing the ambitions and delivery of projects** (looking at where we want to be by the end of 2028 and are the current projects the right ones for us to get there)
 - **How do we want to get there?** (outline what actions we intend to take and establish meaningful milestones for the final 2 years of the Plan).

- **Establishing the impact on the people of Gwynedd** (Looking to improve how we measure the impact on residents and how to report on this).
- 3.4 It is also noted that we are expected to review our Well-being Objectives (Priority Areas) annually to ensure they remain up to date.
- 3.5 We considered what has changed, looking at priority areas, ambitions and the projects in the current Plan and considered if there are any that should be added, modified or removed/moved because they have been delivered or the projects are now incorporated into the day-to-day business of the departments.
- 3.6 In January we held two workshop sessions (one for the Cabinet Members and the other for the Management Team) to look at where we have reached and to review the content of the current Plan. A further session for Cabinet Members was held on 12 February to consider the issues raised in the first two sessions and agree modifications to the 2026/27 version of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28.

4. Reviewing ambitions and projects

- 4.1 The issues that Cabinet members need to consider before approving the modifications to the Plan are set out below. Details regarding these modifications have been highlighted in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.1.1 It is suggested to include a New Section within the Plan in order to recognise the importance of the work of the Response Plan:
- **Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice**
- 4.1.2 In order to convey the importance of Equality and treating everyone equally it is suggested to establish a New Priority Area (An Equal Gwynedd) and move the following projects to that priority:
- **Ensuring fairness for all** - move from *An Efficient Gwynedd*
 - **Women in Leadership** - move from *An Efficient Gwynedd*
- 4.1.3 The following projects have been added:
- Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd/A Welsh Gwynedd**
- **Return to Gwynedd**
 - **Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy**
- 4.1.4 The following projects/programmes need to be adapted or their scope or content changed:
- Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd**
- **Extend opportunities for play and socialising for the county's children and young people**
- Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd**
- **Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive.**
 - **Regenerating communities and town centres**
 - **Keeping the Benefit Local**

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- Control of second homes and short-term holiday lets

Priority Area: A Caring Gwynedd

- Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community
- Autism Plan
- Llechen Lân

Priority Area: An Efficient Gwynedd

- Developing the Council's Culture

4.1.5 The following projects transfer to be part of another priority project; have been incorporated into the day-to-day work of the relevant Department from 2026/27 onwards, or have been carried out:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- Promote the well-being of children and young people and reduce the cost of sending children to school

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty

Priority Area: A Welsh Gwynedd

- Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children

Priority Area: A Green Gwynedd

- Clean and Tidy Communities
- Public transport

Priority Area: An Efficient Gwynedd

- Strategic review of Health and Safety management
- Workforce Planning
- Manage the impact of national budgetary cuts

4.1.6 In addition, it is suggested that the title of the following projects be adjusted (changes are indicated in red) to better reflect the emphasis of the projects and what is aimed to be achieved for the remainder of the Plan period:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- ~~Formulate and~~ Implement a 10-year strategic direction for education in Gwynedd

Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd

- Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work **which enables them to live a good life**

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- Increasing the supply of **suitable** housing for local people

Priority Area: A Caring Gwynedd

- Develop **further** the residential provision for looked-after children in small group homes

Priority Area: A Green Gwynedd

- **Establish** a new Local Development Plan

Priority Area: An Efficient Gwynedd

- **Implement the** Digital Plan

4.2 It is suggested that the remaining projects under the seven priority areas will continue from 2025/26.

4.3 Over 20 Councillors attended a workshop session on 24 February, where they had the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to the Plan as part of the review. The main issues they identified are outlined below. In summary, these are areas that can be incorporated within the Plan's existing projects by adding actions or milestones.

- **Increased emphasis on job creation and quality employment across the County.** – suggest that this be covered by projects within the A Prosperous Gwynedd Priority Area
- **Promoting and enabling disabled people to work by ensuring the right support and environment.** – a suggestion to keep the project **Developing training and employment opportunities for individuals in need of support** in the plan rather than it.....*transfer to be part of another priority project; incorporated into the day-to-day work of the relevant Department from 2026/27 onwards or has been carried out.*
- **Support for parents and carers of (non-Welsh-speaking) children in immersion provision so that they can support them confidently.** – a suggestion to include milestones within the project **Review the Gwynedd Education Language Policy and conduct an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all the education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language**
- **More social opportunities and activities for young people.** – this is already being covered within the project **Extending opportunities for play and socialising for children and young people.**

4.4 We have also consulted with the trade unions (as required under the Social Partnership Duty) to receive their input on the recommendations but have not receive a response.

4.5 Over the coming weeks, it is suggested that the Corporate Director work with the Leader to produce a foreword that will set out the political direction and priorities for the final two years of the Plan. The foreword will be presented as part of the review to the Full Council meeting on 14 May.

5. How do we want to get there?

5.1 Once the list of projects has been confirmed it is suggested that the following steps should be followed in order to identify the outcomes and milestones for the final two years of the Plan:

5.1.1 New Projects

- a) Cabinet to confirm the commission and ask Departments to identify outcome and milestones to implement the project over the next two years.
- b) Departments to identify the impact on residents and how they will measure it.

5.1.2 Projects to Keep

- a) Departments to identify outcome and milestones to implement the project over the next two years.
- b) Departments to identify the impact on residents and how they will measure it.

c) Emphasis shifts to delivery and completion.

5.1.3 **Projects with Changes or Modifications**

Cabinet Members to work with Departments to:

- a) Set the Cabinet's expectations on the changes required.
- b) Agree the outcome and milestones to implement the project over the next two years.
- c) Emphasise the need to identify and outline the impact on residents and how this will be measured.

5.1.4 **Projects transferring to Day-to-day Work**

- a) Departments to identify and report on performance through measures and Departmental Performance Challenge.

6. **Establishing the impact on the people of Gwynedd**

6.1 To strengthen the attention given within reports to the impact that projects have on the County's residents, the Business Support Team has adapted the reporting template for the performance challenge and support meetings. A column will be added asking Departments to outline the impact (or likely impact) on residents and how this is intended to be measured (outlined in bright yellow). An example of the template can be found in **Appendix 2**.

6.2 The template for reporting on what has been achieved at the end of the year already requires this information, although everyone may not be paying full attention to this. We will be taking steps to remind Departments of the importance of highlighting the impact on residents when reporting at the end of the year in the coming weeks. An example of the template can be found in **Appendix 3**.

6.3 It is noted that as Cabinet Members (with the support of the Chief Executive/Corporate Directors) you have a key role to play in ensuring that attention is paid to the impact on residents in reports submitted to performance challenge and support meetings, as well as questioning and challenging if meaningful information is not presented.

7. **Resources**

7.1 Additional resources are required in order to achieve the commitments noted for a number of projects within the Plan. Without the resource, it may not be possible for us to deliver what is noted.

7.2 Proactive steps have been taken to identify resources for the matters that are being included as new in the Plan or where the scope of work has changed. Several of these bids will be considered at the same Cabinet meeting that will consider the Review of the Council Plan and further information can be found below:

Plan/Project	Resource
Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice	£600,000 of permanent revenue has been included in the revenue budget which has already been approved by Cabinet which will be considered by Full Council on 5

	March. £200,000 of one-off revenue funding is also being considered at this Cabinet meeting.
An Equal Gwynedd	£200,000 of one-off revenue funding is being considered at this Cabinet meeting.
Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for community enterprises and businesses to thrive. (Trawsfynydd Science Park)	£1M of capital already committed by the Council and an Outline Business Case (OBC) for £10M of Growth Deal funding will be considered by the Corporate Joint Committee's Economic Well-being Sub-Committee at its meeting on 13 March. Bids for funding from other sources are also in hand.
Return to Gwynedd	£200,000 of one-off revenue funding is being considered at this Cabinet meeting.
Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy	Delivered within existing Economy and Community Department resources

8 **The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

8.1 The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, public bodies are required to publish well-being objectives that outline how they will improve well-being. Our seven priority areas are our Well-being Objectives under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The objectives will directly contribute to achieving the seven national well-being goals. Our Well-being Statement for 2023-28 remains current.

9 **Public Consultation**

9.1 A new public consultation on the review was not carried out as extensive work has already been done during the formulation of the Council Plan 2023–28, including the use of information from the previous plan, the '**Ardal Ni' (Our Area)** engagement, and Well-being Assessments for Gwynedd and Anglesey.

9.2 As noted above, a workshop session for the Elected Members was held in February 2026. There was general agreement to the modifications as well as a welcome opportunity to feed into the process prior to the formal submission of the review of the Plan to Cabinet and the meeting of the Full Council.

10 **Equality Act 2010**

10.1 There is a statutory requirement to prepare and consider the findings of an equality impact assessment when preparing the plan in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 as is implemented in Wales. The assessment is attached in **Appendix 4**.

10.2 The assessment on the Plan in its entirety does not identify any impact that would justify a departure from the recommendation, and there are elements for which a positive impact is anticipated. The Project Leaders will be responsible for undertaking a full Equality Impact Assessment on individual projects.

11 Next Steps and Timetable

11.1 With approval of the modifications to the Plan, the revised Plan is scheduled to be submitted for adoption at the next full Council meeting on 14 May 2026.

12 Observations of the Statutory Officers

i. Chief Finance Officer

I can confirm the financial information contained in this report. The Council Plan is a key part of the Council's governance arrangements and keeping it under review is essential. I support the decision sought.

ii. Monitoring Officer

The Council Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework which is in the hands of the Full Council for adoption and adaptation. However, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007 reflected in the Constitution, the matter is referred to the Council's decision on a Cabinet recommendation. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Modifications to the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 - 2026-27 Review

Appendix 2 – Year 4 and 5 Milestones Template

Appendix 3 – Model End of Year Milestones Template

Appendix 4 - Equality Impact Assessment - 2026/27 Review

Proposed amendments to the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 (2026/27 Review)

Suggestion of an adjustment to project titles in **Red**

New Department

Response Plan : Our Bravery Brought Justice

Because of the importance of the work, the 2 workshops noted a desire to include the presentation of a new section in the Council Plan document to acknowledge the work of the Response Plan.

The purpose of our Response Plan is to explain how the Council will do everything within our power to ensure that such crime does not happen again in Gwynedd and that our arrangements for Safeguarding children and young people are of the highest possible standard. The themes of the Plan include the Child’s Voice and supporting victims, managing allegations and concerns, training and policies, governance, reasonable force, crisis response, and supporting Ysgol Friars. The Plan is comprehensive and as part of our ambition we will become a trauma-informed and child-friendly county and Council.

New Priority Field (Equal Gwynedd)

Priority Field	Project
Equal Gwynedd	Ensure fairness for all
Equal Gwynedd	Women in Leadership

TOMORROW'S GWYNEDD – Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Education	Transforming education for children in their early years
Education	Modernising buildings and the learning environment
Education	Review and improve the range of inclusion provisions in Gwynedd
Education	Formulating and Executing on a 10-year strategic direction for education in Gwynedd

The original scope or purpose has changed

Dept	Project	The adjustment being sought
Education	Extending opportunities for play and socialising for the county's children and young people	The elements related to the provision and arrangements of playgrounds have been completed. Work to support the Gwynedd Youth Forum continues under one of the streams of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Response Plan. Therefore, the scope of the project is to focus on socialising opportunities for children and young people.

Transfer to become part of the daily work of the Department

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Education	Promoting the well-being of children and young people and reducing the cost of sending children to school	The work on completing the audit, mapping, and guide on the cost of sending children to school has been completed. Implementation of the findings will be passed on to the daily work of the Department and will report to the priority project Supporting People.

A PROSPEROUS GWYNEDD – Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Economy & Community	Promoting our culture and a sustainable visitor economy.
Economy & Community	Support the people of Gwynedd into work which enables them to live a good life.

The original scope or purpose has changed

Dept	Project	The adjustment being sought
Economy & Community	Create the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for business and community enterprises to thrive.	Following the Cabinet’s decision at its meeting on 10/2/26 to consider how the intention to establish the Trawsfynydd Science Park and develop the Skills and Business Innovation Centre can be included within the work programme and milestones.
Economy & Community	Regenerating communities and town centres	Milestones to show communities’ involvement in driving regeneration. Need to focus on issues where we have influence. Show the difference and measure it.
Economy & Community	Keeping the Benefit Local	Consideration of milestones to show support for small businesses and local businesses through our procurement arrangements. Consider how we can look at who supplies our suppliers and track products. Identify where the greatest expenditure is and try to target those areas where there is the most impact.

New Projects

Project

Back to Gwynedd

Our intention will be to strengthen the population of Gwynedd by attracting and retaining Welsh speakers, young people and skilled workers. By doing this, we will respond to demographic challenges and skills shortages in order to contribute to sustainable, vibrant and economically competitive communities.

Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy

The Strategy aims to create a more productive, sustainable and inclusive economy for Gwynedd, strengthening the Welsh language, increasing local opportunities and improving community well-being. The aim will be to help people and businesses thrive by creating better jobs, improving skills and ensuring that economic benefits remain in the county.

A HOMEY GWYNEDD – Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Housing and Property	Increasing the supply of suitable housing for local people.
Housing and Property	Ensure that no one is homeless in Gwynedd.

The original scope or purpose has changed

Dept	Project	The adjustment being sought
Housing and Property	Managing second homes and short-term holiday accommodation	Consider milestones that evaluates the interventions that have been implemented and measure the impact of the premium and its use.

Transfer to become part of the daily work of the Department

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Housing and Property	Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty	The project has achieved its objectives of establishing collaborative arrangements with partners to promote energy-saving schemes. The Energy Team is now in place to maintain those arrangements, and supporting residents with energy costs is part of their day-to-day work.

A CARING GWYNEDD – Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Adults	Modernising our care resources to meet future needs
Children & Supporting Families	Further develop residential provision for children who are looked after in small group homes
Adults	Ensuring that full and timely support is available to support people to live at home with their families
Adults	Using more of technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care
Cross-sectional	Supporting People's Well-being

The original scope or purpose has changed

Dept	Project	The adjustment being sought
Adults	Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community	Consideration of milestones and associated measures in commissioning the third sector and homelessness services.
Children and Families	Autism Plan	Consideration of milestones for preparing the future of the work beyond the current funding.
Adults/ Children & Families	Llechen Lân	Consider milestones for Llechen Lân Plant; and milestones to implement the recommendations of Llechen Lân Oedolion

Transferred to be part of another priority project; incorporated into the day-to-day work of the relevant Department from 2026/27 onwards, or completed

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Adults	Developing training and work opportunities for individuals who need support.	The milestones have been achieved in terms of investment in the Dolfeurig day centre and the appointment of the Training and Work Opportunities team. The team will continue to support individuals in training opportunities and paid employment.

A WELSH GWYNEDD – Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community.

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Education	Reviewing Gwynedd’s Education Language Policy together with conducting an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all educational policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd lay a solid foundation for the Welsh language.
Corporate Services	Promoting the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd

Transfer to become part of the daily work of the Department

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Education	Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children.	The modernisation element of the language units, the website, resources, and workforce training has been achieved. Evaluation and impact assessment of the immersion system will continue as milestones under the above ‘Language Policy Review’ project.

A GREEN GWYNEDD – Protecting the county’s natural beauty and responding positively to the climate change crisis.

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Environment	Waste and Recycling
Leadership Team	Climate and Nature Emergency Plan
Highways, Engineering and YGC	Acting on flood risks
Environment	Establish New Local Development Plan
Environment	Active Travel

Transfer to become part of the daily work of the Department

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Environment	Clean and Tidy Communities	Tîm Tacluso and collaboration arrangements with communities have been developed and implemented, and therefore the work will continue in the departments under normal Performance Challenge arrangements.
Environment	Public Transport	The project objectives have been achieved, namely completing a strategic review of the network and introducing electric vehicles.

AN EFFECITIVE GWYNEDD – Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently.

The original scope or purpose of the projects continues

Department	Project
Finance	Digital Scheme
Housing & Property	Adopting a Property Assets Management Plan to ensure that our estate is fit for purpose for future working

The original scope or purpose has changed

Dept	Project	The adjustment being sought
Corporate Services	Developing the Council's Culture	Consider milestones that emphasise enhancing consideration for residents' experience when providing a service. Consider adding milestones for customer contact training and front door/service access efficiency.

Transfer to become part of the daily work of the Department

Dept	Project	Reasoning
Corporate Services	Strategic review of Health and Safety management	Moving to the day-to-day work of the Department.
Corporate Services	Workforce Planning	Moving to the day-to-day work of the Department.
Corporate Services	Managing the impact of national budgetary cuts	Moving to the day-to-day work of the Department.

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 - Year 4 and 5 Actions

A Homely Gwynedd: Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable homes in their communities

Department	Project	What we want to achieve during Years 4 and 5 26-28 (milestones):	An update on progress with the milestones so far (specify date)	Is the milestone completed/likely to be completed by the end of the financial year? (Yes/No)	Outline what the impact (or likely impact) is on the residents of Gwynedd and how you will measure that
Housing and Property	Increasing the supply of housing for local people	1	1	1	
		2			
		3	2	2	
		4	3	3	
			4	4	
			5	5	

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28

A Homely Gwynedd: Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable homes in their communities

Department	Project	What we want to achieve during the THIRD year 2025-26 (milestones):	An update on progress with the milestones so far (specify date)	Is the milestone completed/likely to be completed by the end of the financial year? (Yes/No)	What has been achieved during the year and the impact (or likely impact) on the people of Gwynedd? Information or evidence should also be included to confirm this (measures or data confirming etc.)

Assessing the Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh language and Socio-economic Disadvantage

Please see the sheet *How to Make an Equality Impact Assessment* for assistance to complete this form. You are also welcome to contact Delyth Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708, or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru, for further assistance.

The Council is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the impact that changes to any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure) will have on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has additional general duties to ensure fairness and to foster good relationships. Therefore, a timely assessment must be made before any decision is taken on any relevant change (i.e. that affects people with protected equality characteristics).

The Council is also required, under the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to consider the impact that any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions safeguard and promote the use made of the Welsh language.

From 1 April 2021, the Council has a duty to give due attention to addressing socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

1) Details

1.1 What is the name of the policy / service in question?

The Council Plan 2023-28, Revision 2026/27

1.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

The purpose of the Council's Plan is to identify priorities and key areas to implement between 2023 and 2028. This is the fourth year of the Plan. The original version of the Plan was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2 March 2023.

The new Plan states our vision for the next 5 years, and then every annual review will offer an update that summarises where we have reached on the journey, and what our priorities will be for the year to come.

Here are the changes made to the 2026/27 Revision:

The following new Section has been added:

Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice

- Due to the importance of this work, the desire to include the introduction of the new section to acknowledge the work of the Response Plan was noted. The purpose of the Response Plan is to explain how the Council will do everything within its power to ensure that such crime does not happen again in Gwynedd and that arrangements to Safeguard children and young people are of the highest possible standard.

The following New Priority Field has been added:

Equal Gwynedd – two projects under An Effective Gwynedd will be moved here (**Ensure fairness for all** and **Women in Leadership**)

The scope or content of the following project has changed:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- **Extending opportunities for socialising for the county's children and young people** - modifications to the project overview.

Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd

- **Create the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for business and community enterprise to thrive.**
- **Regenerating communities and town centres.**
- **Keeping the Benefit Local**

- modifications to the projects overview.

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- **Managing second homes and short-term holiday accommodation**

- modifications to the project overview.

Priority Area: A Caring Gwynedd

- **Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community.**
- **Autism Plan.**
- **Llechen Lân.**

- modifications to the projects overview.

Priority Area: An Effective Gwynedd

- **Developing the Council's Culture**

- modifications to the project overview.

The following projects have been newly added:

Priority Area: A Prosperous Gwynedd

- **Back to Gwynedd**
- **Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy**

The following project has transferred to being part of the day-to-day work of the relevant Department during 2026/27:

Priority Area: Tomorrow's Gwynedd

- **Promoting the well-being of children and young people and reducing the cost of sending children to school.**

Priority Area: A Homely Gwynedd

- **Dealing with the energy cost crisis and fuel poverty.**

Priority Area: A Welsh Gwynedd

- **Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children.**

Priority Area: A Green Gwynedd

- **Clean and Tidy Communities**
- **Public Transport**

Priority Area: An Effective Gwynedd

- **Strategic review of Health and Safety management.**
- **Workforce Planning.**
- **Managing the impact of national budgetary cuts.**

This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Each individual project within the Plan is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire project and/or for specific sections of it. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake the Assessment(s).

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Dewi Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager, Leadership Team

1.4 When did you commence the assessment? Which version is this?

January 2023 – version 1, full assessment of the Plan.
This is version 4 – February 2026 – 2026/27 Revision of the Plan

2) Action

2.1 Who are the stakeholders or partners whom we will have to work with to carry out this assessment?

Elected Members, service users, Gwynedd residents.

2.2 What steps have you taken to engage with people who have protected characteristics, regarding the Welsh language or with communities (either due to location or due to need), who are living with a socio-economic disadvantage?

A consultation was undertaken during December 2022 and January 2023 to introduce and explain the draft priorities to the public, partners and local organisations and raise awareness of the opportunity for them to participate in the exercise by completing a short on-line questionnaire at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/consultations Paper copies were also available in local libraries and Siopau Gwynedd.

We encouraged as many as possible of Gwynedd's residents to complete and return the questionnaire by using the Council's website, the local press, spreading the message through our partners, social media websites and elected members' e-newsletter and Council staff.

We contacted organisations that represent or work with people and/or children with equality characteristics to inform them of the engagement and to ask them to notify their users of the questionnaire.

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

The consultation remained open from 8 December 2022 until 3 January 2023.

We received 643 responses to the questionnaire. On the whole, respondents agreed with the priority areas and the projects and there were no specific concerns relating to the equality characteristics.

The following table shows the number of respondents per area – Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.

Area	Number	Percentage
Arfon	282	43.9%
Dwyfor	137	21.3%
Meirionnydd	203	31.6%
Outside Gwynedd	9	1.4%
No response	12	1.9%
Total	643	100.0%

The respondents were asked to answer questions about their equality features (optional) and the information gathered was as follows:

Gender

	Number	Percentage
Man / Male	267	41.5
Woman / Female	313	48.7
I identify in a different way	1	0.2
I prefer not to say	47	7.3
No response	15	2.3
Total	643	100.0

Age

	Number	Percentage
15 years old or younger	4	0.6
16 - 24 years old	11	1.7
25 - 34 years old	59	9.2
35 - 44 years old	60	9.3
45 - 54 years old	119	18.5
55 - 64 years old	162	25.2
65 - 74 years old	128	19.9
75 - 84 years old	38	5.9
85 + years old	4	0.6
I prefer not to say	46	7.2
No response	12	1.9
Total	643	100.0

Do you understand, speak, read and/or write in Welsh?

	Number	Percentage
Speak Welsh	329	51.2
Can understand Welsh verbally	281	43.7
Read Welsh	279	43.4
Write in Welsh	243	37.8
I do not understand Welsh (none of the above)	107	16.6
I prefer not to say	66	10.3
Other	75	11.7
Multiple choice question		

Nationality or national identity

	Number	Percentage
Welsh	304	47.3
English	83	12.9
Scottish	5	0.8
Northern Irish	1	0.2
British	161	25.0
I prefer not to say	46	7.2
Other	30	4.7
No response	13	2.0
Total	643	100.0

Race

	Number	Percentage
White	556	86.5
Black / African / Caribbean	0	0.0
Asian	1	0.2
Gypsy / Irish traveller	2	0.3
Mixed / several ethnic groups	8	1.2
I prefer not to say	57	8.9
Other	7	1.1
No response	12	1.9
Total	643	100.0

What is your religion?

	Number	Percentage
No religion	238	37.0
Christian	286	44.5
Muslim	0	0.0
Buddhist	4	0.6
Hindu	0	0.0
Jewish	3	0.5
Sikh	0	0.0
I prefer not to say	71	11.0
Other	26	4.0
No response	15	2.3
Total	643	100.0

Which of the following describes you best?

	Number	Percentage
Heterosexual / Straight	506	78.7
Gay man	10	1.6
Gay woman/lesbian	8	1.2
Bisexual	10	1.6
I prefer not to say	79	12.3
Other	10	1.6
No response	20	3.1
Total	643	100.0

Has your gender identity changed from what you were assigned at birth?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	1.6
No	541	84.1
I prefer not to say	67	10.4
No response	25	3.9

Total	643	100.0
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It was not possible to identify a trend in the responses for any of the equality characteristics.

Individual projects should use the information gathered and engage further with the residents of Gwynedd as required.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence are you acting?

As part of the process of drawing up the Council Plan for 2023-28, in July 2022 the Heads of Department were asked to identify and consider potential priorities and schemes for the next five years. In order to do this, consideration was given to several pieces of work/information, including the projects that were in the current 2022-23 Plan, feedback from engagement on the 'Ardal Ni' Regeneration Framework, and the Well-being Assessments by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board.

In addition, in October 2022 a workshop was held with the Cabinet Members to discuss potential schemes for the new Plan.

Two further workshop sessions were held with elected members in December 2022 in order to give local members the opportunity to express their views and to highlight any additional issues that needed addressing.

To ensure that we meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd, we decided to engage on the 2023-28 version of the Plan with the public during December 2022 – January 2023. This was an opportunity for residents, businesses, groups and organisations, elected members, and City, Town and Community Councils to have their say on the draft priorities.

Council Plan review workshops were held with Cabinet Members and Elected Members in **January and February 2026** and the issues raised in these workshops have fed into the review.

2.5 Are there any gaps in the evidence that needs to be collected?

The Council's Departments are responsible for implementing the individual schemes within the Council Plan. The Council's performance-challenge processes, where the Cabinet Member and members of scrutiny committees challenge the progress and development of the work being carried out on the Plan, is continuous work throughout the year. The reports on these performance challenge meetings are published as part of the Cabinet's meeting papers.

If it is necessary to change the content or direction of any individual project then the Equality Impact Assessment will be revisited for that project.

The Council Plan 2023-28 together with the Equality Impact Assessment are submitted to the

Cabinet and the Council for scrutiny and will be reviewed annually.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must duly address the impact that any changes will have on people with the following equality characteristics. What effect will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics? We must also consider the impact on socio-economic disadvantage and on the Welsh language.

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	Positive	<p>The Council's Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-28 will give particular regard to any matters arising from the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" within the Council Plan will act on every characteristic, including race.</p>
Disability	Positive	<p>Care is a priority area; therefore it is expected to have a positive impact. All other individual schemes are expected to look at the impact on disability when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>9.8% (N=63) of the respondents to the public consultation noted that they have a disability.</p> <p>A higher percentage of the respondents who noted that they have a disability (95.2%, N=60) agreed with Priority Area 3 compared with the proportion of the total number who responded to the consultation (85.1%, N=547).</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including disability.</p>
Gender	Positive	<p>There is one specific individual plan in this area namely "Women in Leadership" therefore a positive impact is expected here. Nevertheless, it is not possible to identify the impact of the Plan in its entirety without completing impact assessments on the other individual schemes.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including gender.</p>
Age	Positive	<p>Age is prioritised in a number of fields therefore we expect the Plan to have a positive impact on children, young</p>

		<p>people and older people.</p> <p>Each individual plan is expected to look at the impact on different ages when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>91.3% of the respondents to the public consultation agreed with Priority Area 1.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including age.</p>
Sexual orientation	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including sexual orientation.
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including religion.
Gender reassignment	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including gender reassignment.
Pregnancy and maternity	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including pregnancy and maternity.
Marriage and civil partnership	Positive	The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including marriage and civil partnership.
The Welsh language	Uncertain at present because of a lack of evidence	<p>There is a specific priority within the Council Plan that involves promoting the use of the Welsh language, with two projects identified under that priority. There are a number of individual projects within the Council that contribute to the Council's strategic objective of promoting the use of the Welsh Language. As no individual assessments have been prepared/submitted for the individual projects, it is very difficult at this point to assess the impact of the entire Plan on the Welsh language and its speakers, whether positive or negative.</p> <p>Each individual plan is expected to study the impact on the Welsh language when conducting a separate Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>66.9% of the respondents to the public consultation agreed with Priority Area 5.</p> <p>The project titled "Ensuring Fairness for Everyone" will act on every characteristic, including language.</p>
Socio-economic Disadvantage	Positive	The Council is aware that a number of Gwynedd residents are living in unequal living conditions due to socio-economic disadvantage. Therefore, a number of the

		<p>projects that are already included in the Council Plan relate to reducing socio-economic disadvantage. Examples of projects are noted below:</p> <p>Employment – Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for businesses and community enterprises to thrive. Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work which enables them to live a good life</p> <p>Education – Transforming education for children in their early years</p> <p>Health – Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community.</p> <p>Justice and Standards of Living – Supporting People's Well-being</p>
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3.2 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to contribute positively to a fairer society through advancing equality and good relations in its activities in the fields of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, transgender, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must duly address the way any change impacts on these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?*	In what way? What is the evidence?
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes	The priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.
Promote equal opportunities	Yes	The priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.
Foster good relations	Yes	The priority areas and the individual plans should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual plans will need to identify whether there are any particular matters to consider.

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language, and that every opportunity is taken to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

Project – Modernising and extending the immersion provision to teach Welsh to children

It is essential that learners who are latecomers get the opportunity to learn Welsh as soon as possible, through a first-rate modern provision that is spread across Wales. It is essential that learners who are less confident in Welsh also have an opportunity to gain confidence and to improve their Welsh skills with the support of the Immersion Education System. We also wish to see our language immersion methods extended to support the Welsh language expanded in schools that serve communities where opportunities to use Welsh in the home and outside school are limited. This project in cooperation with the Immersion System and our schools will give all our learners the best opportunity to become confident Welsh speakers who can use the language in all aspects of life.

Project – Reviewing Gwynedd's Education Language Policy together with undertaking an evaluation of the Immersion System to ensure that all education policies and services provided to children and young people in Gwynedd set a firm foundation for the Welsh language.

Project – Promote the use of the Welsh Language by the residents of Gwynedd

We will conduct specific projects that will promote the use of Welsh and increase the opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community. This will include increasing the use of the Welsh language when dealing with public and community services.

Information from the individual Impact Assessments will provide further information around how the projects will operate in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards.

3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy/practice so as to have a positive impact on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language, and to reduce or prevent any detrimental impacts that the policy/practice could have on the Welsh language?

The purpose of the Council's Plan is to identify priorities and key areas to implement between 2023 and 2028. This Equality Impact Assessment looks at the Plan in its entirety. Each individual project is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire project and/or for specific sections of it. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake these Assessment(s). These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to promote the Welsh language in their areas.

3.5 How does the proposal show that you have given due regard to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage? (Please note that this relates to closing the inequality gap, rather than only improving outcomes for everyone).

The following are examples of projects that are included in the Plan which respond to the need to address inequality due to socio-economic disadvantage:

Employment – Creating the best possible circumstances in Gwynedd for businesses and community enterprises to thrive.

Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work which enables them to live a good life

We will support businesses and community enterprises in Gwynedd to thrive in many ways such as developing produce and accessing new markets, helping enterprises to save money by reducing waste and make better use of technology, supporting businesses in Gwynedd to trade together and prioritise helping enterprises that commit to paying a 'real living wage' to their employees. We will promote businesses to make the most of the Welsh language, will develop more business units to let, and will strive to ensure that the North Wales Growth Deal projects benefit the people of Gwynedd. In addition, we will help the people of Gwynedd to fulfil their potential and support those who are excluded from the labour market to return to employment and will work with employers to help them to ensure they have a sufficient workforce.

Education – Transforming education for children in their early years.

The early years are key to children's social development, and the importance of this phase was particularly evident during the pandemic. We wish to transform this service and will collaborate with the health service and Mudiad Meithrin in order to ensure that all of the county's children have the best possible start to their time in education.

Health – Using more of technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care.

We need to enable the people of Gwynedd to live a good life as long as possible within their local communities. To achieve this, they need to have the required information to take advantage of community opportunities that would promote their well-being, as well as flexible methods of organising the support they need.

Justice and Standards of Living – Support People's Well-being.

Some residents find it difficult to cope with life's challenges and the situation of a number of residents has been exacerbated as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to keep healthy.

We have a wide network throughout our communities which helps and supports residents to cope and to respond to their various needs. This network needs support to sustain that voluntary effort, and we will work to strengthen this essential work over the coming years.

3.6 What other measures or changes can you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice to demonstrate that you have given due regard to the

need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Socio-Economic Act?

Each individual project is expected to have a separate Assessment, whether for the entire project and/or for specific sections of it, and this will include assessing the socio-economic disadvantage. It is the duty of the person responsible for the individual projects to undertake these Assessment(s). These assessments will need to identify any further opportunities to reduce inequality as a result of socio-economic disadvantage in their fields.

4) Analysing the results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the above? What is the reason for this?

It appears that the priority areas should have a significant, positive impact on many of the equality characteristics. Each individual equality impact assessment is expected to look at the impact in greater detail. This is particularly true if Covid considerations are to be fully considered in their impact assessments.

4.2 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the above? What is the reason for this?

No significant, negative impacts have been identified with the Plan as a whole. Each individual impact assessment looks at the impact in greater detail.

4.3 What should be done?

Select one of the following:

Continue with the policy/service as it is robust	X
Revise the policy to remove any barriers	
Suspend and abolish the policy as the harmful impacts are too great	
Continue with the policy as any harmful impact can be justified	
No further steps at present, it is premature to decide, or there is insufficient evidence	

4.4 If you decide to continue with the plan, what steps will you take to reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

The individual assessments identify any negative impacts and the steps to mitigate them.

4.5 If you are not taking any further action to remove or reduce the negative impacts, please explain why here.

We have not identified any actions for the Plan as a whole, but it will be taken into consideration in the individual assessments.

5) Monitoring

5.1 What steps will you take to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy or service (action plan)?

The Council's Departments are responsible for implementing the individual schemes within the Council Plan. The Council's performance-challenging processes, where the Cabinet Member and members of scrutiny committees challenge the progress and development of the work being carried out on the Plan, is continuous work throughout the year. The reports on these performance challenge meetings are published as part of the Cabinet's meeting papers.

If it is necessary to change the content or direction of any individual project then the Equality Impact Assessment will be revisited for that project.

The Council Plan 2023-28 together with the Equality Impact Assessment are submitted to the Cabinet and the Council for scrutiny and will be reviewed annually.

REPORT TO CABINET

10 MARCH 2026

Cabinet Member: Councillor Nia Jeffreys, Council Leader

Subject: One-off Bids 2026/27

Contact Officer: Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive

1. Decision sought

1.1 Cabinet will be asked to approve the one-off bids of £2,870,280 for 2026/27 to be funded from the Transformation fund.

2. The reason why a decision is needed

The bids for a one-off resource are presented in a separate report to the Budget report as the allocation of one-off resources does not have an impact on the setting of our annual revenue budget and is not a consideration when setting the Council Tax rate. This report is submitted prior the start of the 2026/27 financial year so that it can be implemented from 1 April 2026.

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 investigation to examine whether it makes sense to provide a permanent budget.

3.2 Although the departments have submitted a number of bids, it has been necessary to prioritise and limit the bids to be approved to ensure that no excessive use of the funds was made.

3.3 Normally the Council's Transformation Fund / Council Plan is used to fund the one-off bids. There is an uncommitted balance of £4.19 million in the fund, so it is available to fund the £2.87 million bids.

	Balance 31/03/2026	One-off bid funding	Revised balance
Financial Strategy Fund	17,575		17,575
Transformation Fund	4,191	(2,870)	1,321
Total Amount	21,766	(2,870)	18,896

4. One-Off Bids 2026/27

4.1 The bids received have been assessed by myself, the two directors and the Head of Finance and details of the recommended one-off bids to receive financial support for 2026/27 are set out in the table below.

4.2 It is recommended that 19 bids worth £2,870,280 be approved as listed in **Table 1** below. The transformation fund available to fund the Council's priorities, is to be used as a source to fund these bids.

Table 1 One-off Revenue Bids 2026/27

	Bid Title	Recommended Amount (£)
1	Costs relating to the preparation of a new Local Development Plan for Gwynedd	374,000
2	Learning and Development Budget	240,000
3	Additional one-off costs in safeguarding as a result of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Response Plan	200,000
4	Review and assess internal and external transport risks across Gwynedd schools	185,325
5	Emergency Planning and Response Arrangements	114,000
6	Costs relating to preparation for the Visitor Levy	100,000
7	Support to remove the backlog of the Tax Service's application processing	99,900
8	Improving the accessibility of the corporate website	82,420
9	Transitional budget Event Support Fund	70,000
10	Donation to Menter Iaith	30,000
11	Budget for the Youth forum	20,000
12	Language Strategy – Implementing the Language Strategy 2026 – 2032	300,000
13	Continuing with the regeneration of Communities and Town Centres	279,696
14	Children's and Adult Solicitor	177,462
15	New/additional street lighting within our communities across the whole of Gwynedd	75,000
16	Llewyrch o'r Llechi: Supporting Northwest World Heritage	82,477
17	Increase in costs of testing the structure of street lighting columns	40,000
18	Costs to implement the 'Back to Gwynedd' project	200,000
19	Costs to implement 'Equal Gwynedd' priority area	200,000
	TOTAL	2,870,280

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Following approval of the bids set out in Part 4 of the report, the money will be allocated to the relevant Departments so that they can act to spend on the services during the 2026/27 financial year.

Local member's views

N/A

The views of statutory officers

The Monitoring Officer:

No observations to add in relation to propriety

Head of Finance:

I can confirm the accuracy of the figures contained in the report. I am satisfied that adequate resources have been identified, as shown in part 3.3, to finance the one-off bids shown in Table 1.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of Meeting : 10 March 2026
Cabinet Member : Cllr. Craig ab Iago
Relevant Officer : Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services
Title of Item : Delegation of Expenditure Responsibilities Arrangements

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

1. Decision Sought

- i. That Cabinet approve a change in the right to delegate expenditure of the climate plan fund from the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader and members of the Climate and Nature Board, to the Cabinet Member leading the climate and nature portfolio in consultation with the members of the Climate and Nature Board and the lead Director on the Climate and Nature Board.
-

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

- i. The Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Authorities Regulations 2007, and the constitution of Cyngor Gwynedd outline where responsibilities lie in setting a budget, and then who gets to make decisions on how to spend that budget.
- ii. At the Council meeting on 3 March 2022 it was agreed to create a £3m 'climate plan fund' through the one-off revenue bidding process, for the purpose of implementing the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.
- iii. Then, at a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on 12 March 2024 it was agreed that Cabinet would delegate the right to prioritise expenditure from the remainder of the climate plan fund to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Members of the Climate and Nature Board.
- iv. Since summer 2025 there have been changes in the membership of the Climate and Nature Board, of which neither the Chief Executive nor the Leader of the Council are current members, so the delegated right needs to be amended to reflect the current membership of the Climate and Nature Board.
- v. At a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2026 a request to scrutinise the funding and expenditure arrangements of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan by a member of the public was discussed.
- vi. The proposed new delegation of expenditure responsibilities arrangements would also further strengthen public accountability and transparency, as the decisions would be published via an

Individual Cabinet Member Decision Notice on the council's website. Following the publication there is a further opportunity to challenge the decision in accordance with section 7.25.1 of the Constitution of Gwynedd Council.

3. Background

- i. Cyngor Gwynedd issued a climate emergency declaration in March 2019 and as a result the [Climate-and-Nature-Emergency-Plan.pdf](#) 2022/23-2029/30 (CNEP) was published in March 2022. The CNEP is also one of the projects within the Green Gwynedd heading in the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028.
- ii. The funding to implement the CNEP has come from the climate plan fund (see 2.i above); of direct applications to Cabinet for funding to support projects (e.g. Cabinet decision of 22 November 2022 to allocate £2.8m to install solar PV panels on our assets); and mostly from grants from external sources. Between 2019/20 and 2024/25 we successfully attracted grants of £13.5m to support the work of the CNEP.
- iii. Decisions on expenditure on CNEP projects are taken in accordance with the priorities of the scheme, whilst following the Council's financial management arrangements.
- iv. Since 12 March 2024, when the right to prioritise the remainder of the climate fund was delegated by Cabinet, the funding in the fund has been spent or set aside in its entirety.
- v. If Cabinet decides to set aside additional funding to fund the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan projects from 2026/27, then the new arrangements on which a decision is requested today will come into effect.
- vi. Since the summer of 2025 not only has the membership of the Climate and Nature Board also changed, but in addition the portfolio responsibility for climate change issues has been transferred from the Leader of the Council to the Environment Cabinet Member. Executive responsibility has also been transferred from the Chief Executive to the Corporate Director of Social Services.
- vii. To reflect the current responsibilities, it is timely to change the delegated right over expenditure of the climate plan fund and therefore Cabinet will be asked to delegate the right to the Cabinet Member with the climate and nature portfolio (currently the Environment Cabinet Member) in consultation with the members of the Climate and Nature Board.

4. Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duty

- i. The impact of [Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duties](#) on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan were assessed when it was adopted at a meeting of the Cabinet on 8 March 2022.

5. Next steps and timetable

- i. The new delegation of responsibility for expenditure arrangements will come into force from 1 April 2026.
-

6. Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

Rwy'n fodlon gyda priodoldeb y penderfyniad a geisir. Mae'r dirprwyo yn cynnig trefn briodol a thryloyw ar gyfer didoli gronfa pan gaiff ei hail gyflenwi.

I am satisfied with the appropriateness of the decision sought. The delegation process offers an appropriate and transparent procedure for distribution of the fund when it is replenished.

Chief Finance Officer:

I am satisfied that implementing the decision sought will not weaken the financial control of the Climate Plan Fund, and it is appropriate that the delegated powers are transferred for the reasons noted in the report. I have no objections to the decision sought.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting

Date of meeting:	10 March 2026
Cabinet Member:	Councillor R. Medwyn Hughes Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Relevant Officers:	Sioned Williams, Head of Economy and Community (Senior Responsible Officer, North Wales Shared Prosperity Fund) Dylan Griffiths, Manager, Economic Development Service (Manager, North Wales Shared Prosperity Fund Programme)
Contact Telephone Number:	01286 679547 01286 679611
Item Title:	UK LOCAL GROWTH FUND IN WALES: GOVERNANCE AND OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS 2026/27

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. That Cyngor Gwynedd continues to act as the lead local authority for the Shared Prosperity Fund in north Wales until the end of the programme (30 September 2026) and completes its administration (01 January 2027).
- 1.2. That the Gwynedd Shared Prosperity Fund Panel continues until the revised end date of the Fund; with the Economy and Community Cabinet Member, the Finance Cabinet Member, and the Corporate Services and Legal Cabinet Member together with the Chief Executive, Head of Economy and Community, Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Services (or their representatives) as members.
- 1.3. That Cyngor Gwynedd agrees to act as the lead local authority for north Wales on behalf of the UK Local Growth Fund in Wales for the first year of the programme (2026/27).
- 1.4. That Cyngor Gwynedd agrees to continue the regional governance arrangements of the Shared Prosperity Fund for the purposes of the Local Growth Fund for the first year (2026/27), by submitting a plan outlining the intention to the Welsh Government.

- 1.5. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community – in consultation with the Head of Finance, the Head of Legal Services and the Chief Executive and subject to 1.6 below – to agree and complete the necessary agreements with the government(s) for the purposes of carrying out the lead authority function.
- 1.6. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community – in consultation with the Head of Finance, the Head of Legal Services and the Chief Executive – to establish inter-authority legal agreements and funding conditions with the other north Wales counties in order to protect the interests of Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 1.7. That Cyngor Gwynedd agrees to continue the local governance arrangements for the purposes of the Local Growth Fund in Gwynedd as outlined in the report.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1. The UK Government has extended the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) period by six months. Cyngor Gwynedd is required to continue acting as the lead local authority for the programme for the duration of the extension.
- 2.2. Appropriate internal arrangements within the Council will need to continue in order to monitor the SPF during the additional period, although there is a desire to amend the membership.
- 2.3. The successor to the SPF, the Local Growth Fund, will become operational from 01 April 2026. There is a request to continue with the SPF administrative arrangements for the first year of the Local Growth Fund (2026/27), and therefore Cyngor Gwynedd is asked to act as the lead local authority for the Local Growth Fund in north Wales.

3. INTRODUCTION

Shared Prosperity Fund

- 3.1. The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is a financial programme designed to support community development and the local economy. The UK Government manages the programme, and it is delivered through local authorities. In Wales, counties within each region are required to collaborate, with one county acting as the lead authority for the funding. Cyngor Gwynedd is the lead local authority for the north.
- 3.2. This year (2025/26), £42.42 million is allocated to North Wales through the SPF. Of this total, £8.19 million is allocated to Gwynedd. This is the final year of the SPF.
- 3.3. Programme activity was originally scheduled to end on 31 March 2026, with a final report to be submitted to the UK Government on 01 May and administration of the Fund expected to conclude before 01 July 2026.
- 3.4. On 17 December 2025, the UK Government announced that they would allow SPF-funded activity to continue until 30 September 2026, but without any additional funding. The revised deadline for submitting the final report to the UK

Government will be 02 November, and administration of the Fund is expected to conclude before 01 January 2027.

UK Local Growth Fund in Wales

- 3.5. The Local Growth Fund will be the main successor to the SPF. A total of £547 million will be allocated to Wales through the Fund over three years between 2026/27 and 2028/29. The funding will be routed to the Welsh Government in the first instance.
- 3.6. The Welsh Government [consulted on its proposed approach](#) to the UK Local Growth Fund in Wales during November and December 2025. Cyngor Gwynedd's response to the consultation is available on the [Council's website](#).
- 3.7. The Local Growth Fund will become operational from 01 April 2026.
- 3.8. The purpose of the Local Growth Fund is to support the UK Government's growth mission and contribute to its strategic goals of securing higher real incomes and boosting Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- 3.9. The Welsh Government's proposed objective for the Fund is to *support productivity growth and tackle issues that lead to economic inequalities*.
- 3.10. The Fund will operate on a thematic basis as defined by the UK Government:
 - Business support
 - Skills and employment support for growth
 - Enabling local growth infrastructure
- 3.11. The Welsh Government's proposals emphasise regional collaboration and coordination, although the importance of delivering locally is acknowledged. The proposals also provide scope for national activities/interventions where appropriate.
- 3.12. The Welsh Government regards the first year of the Fund (2026/27) as a transition period.
- 3.13. From 2027/28, they intend to allocate most of the funding to the Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) to plan and manage a portfolio of regional and local projects. This will be part of a three-year regional delivery plan to realise a ten-year vision.
- 3.14. For 2026/27 they wish to use the structures already in place to deliver the SPF (lead local authority working with the other counties within the region) to deliver the Local Growth Fund.
- 3.15. The indicative allocation of the Local Growth Fund for the North Wales region in 2026/27 is £35.69 million. 70% of the funding will be in the form of capital.

4. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

Shared Prosperity Fund

- 4.1. Although no additional funding is being offered, the extra time for SPF expenditure will provide an opportunity for projects to complete their activity and to gather evidence of the outcomes of their work. It will also reduce the risk of activity ending abruptly at the close of the programme.
- 4.2. Every county in the north wishes to offer this opportunity to their projects. It is anticipated that around half of the projects currently in delivery would welcome some additional time.
- 4.3. Extending the project expenditure period will require the continued administration of the SPF for six months longer than originally expected.
- 4.4. For this purpose, Cyngor Gwynedd will need to agree to continue as the lead local authority for the SPF for the extended period, and to extend the associated working arrangements, including the legal agreement between Gwynedd and the other north Wales counties.
- 4.5. Funding had already been allocated for the completion of SPF administration. This budget will remain sufficient; although the period will be longer, the substance of the work will remain the same.
- 4.6. Similarly, at county level, the arrangements for overseeing the SPF in Gwynedd will need to continue.
- 4.7. The Gwynedd Shared Prosperity Fund Panel was established by the Council's Cabinet on 24 January 2023 to undertake this work; membership included the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Finance Cabinet Member, the Chief Executive, the Head of Economy and Community, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Services.
- 4.8. For the period up to 01 January 2027, it is proposed to revise the membership of the Panel to reflect current requirements, to include the Economy and Community Cabinet Member, the Finance Cabinet Member, and the Corporate and Legal Services Cabinet Member, together with the Chief Executive, the Head of Economy and Community, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Services (or their representatives).

UK Local Growth Fund in Wales (2026/27)

Lead Body

- 4.9. The Welsh Government wishes lead local authorities to continue in their role for the first year of the Local Growth Fund in order to allow time to prepare for a new system delivered through the Corporate Joint Committees (North Wales Ambition) from 2027/28 onwards. Cyngor Gwynedd is the current lead local authority for the SPF.

Principles of operation

- 4.10. The north Wales counties have expressed a desire to continue – as far as possible – with the existing arrangements, with an emphasis on local decision-making and local ownership, reflecting the following principles:
- that decisions on the use of funding should be a matter for local areas; and
 - that local areas should be able to choose whether to participate in schemes wishing to operate across counties.

Local allocations

- 4.11. Although the Welsh Government is not providing a Local Growth Fund allocation for individual counties, there is a desire to continue with a distribution model based on the same approach as the SPF (reflecting the method used by the Government to allocate 2026/27 funding across the Welsh regions), namely:

Conwy	19.4%	Gwynedd	19.3%
Denbighshire	20.3%	Anglesey	12.7%
Flintshire	10.4%	Wrexham	17.9%

Regional Governance

- 4.12. A further legal agreement will need to be established between Cyngor Gwynedd and the north Wales counties to protect the Council’s interests. The agreement will ensure that individual counties are accountable for their decisions and any financial liabilities arising from them. The agreement will be based on the existing document, amended to reflect the requirements of the Welsh Government.
- 4.13. In parallel, appropriate governance structures — and suitable teams/budgets — will need to be maintained regionally and within each county to manage and monitor the programme (a proportion of the financial allocation may be used to secure the resources required to deliver the work).
- 4.14. At regional level, it is intended to continue with a Coordination Board made up of the chief officers of the six counties (together with representation from Ambition North Wales and the Welsh Government) to oversee the delivery of the Local Growth Fund in the north Wales region. The Board will continue to be supported by a Coordination Group of managers in each county who are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Fund.

Local Governance

- 4.15. Reflecting the desire for continuity and consistency with current arrangements, decisions on the use of the Local Growth Fund will remain with Cyngor Gwynedd for 2026/27, exercised through Cabinet decision. It will also be necessary to ensure continued input from a range of stakeholders and partners in monitoring the delivery of the Local Growth Fund and prioritising proposals.
- 4.16. The Gwynedd Economy Forum (which will evolve from the SPF advisory group) will act as the mechanism to ensure ownership and input from our partners.
- 4.17. In line with the intention, Gwynedd’s new economic development strategy will provide the basis for identifying and prioritising Local Growth Fund projects.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE

- 5.1. Following the extension, the delivery period for the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) will continue until 30 September 2026, with reporting and administration concluding by 01 January 2027.
- 5.2. It is anticipated that the North Wales proposal for 2026/27 Local Growth Fund allocation will be submitted during March 2026, with the operational period beginning on 01 April 2026.

6. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE DECISION

Consultation

- 6.3. The Welsh Government's proposals for the Local Growth Fund have been the subject of public consultation.
- 6.4. The wishes of the north Wales counties regarding the extension of the Shared Prosperity Fund period and the delivery approach for the Local Growth Fund have been the subject of consultation among officers from the six local authorities.

Observations of the Statutory Officers

- 6.5. Chief Finance Officer:

"I confirm that there is a robust governance and operating arrangement in place to protect the Council's interests, including the Council's role as the lead authority for the North Wales region. In light of the extension for the transition year 2026/27, it is appropriate to continue with the existing arrangements. I confirm the accuracy of the allocations set out in the report and will work closely with officials from the Department for Economy and Community to ensure the implementation of the schemes within the allocation. I therefore support the decisions sought."

- 6.6. Monitoring Officer:

"The transitional nature of the current situation supports continuing based on what is already in place regionally. In this context, the report proposes a pragmatic way forward, acknowledging that it will be necessary to try and coordinate and prepare for transition to a new accountable body. With this in mind, it would be beneficial as part of this work to identify opportunities to prepare for and facilitate the transfer of the role of the accountable body in order to protect the interests of the Council."

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting

Date of meeting:	10 March 2026
Cabinet Member:	Councillor R. Medwyn Hughes Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Relevant Officers:	Dylan Griffiths Manager, Economic Development Service Nia Bowden Business Support Programme Manager, Economic Development Service
Contact Telephone Number:	01286 679611 01286 679774
Item Title:	Adoption of a new economic development strategy for Gwynedd

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. Approve the content of 'An Economy that Works for All: Gwynedd 2035' as set out in Appendix 1
- 1.2. Agree to recommend the adoption of 'An Economy that Works for All: Gwynedd 2035' to the full council of Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 1.3. Authorise the Head of Economy and Community to complete any minor adjustments necessary and agree the design of the Strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member.
- 1.4. Agree to establish a 'Gwynedd Economy Forum' on the basis outlined in sections 4.19 to 4.24 of the report.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1. [Section 4 of Cyngor Gwynedd's Constitution](#) states that an economic development strategy is part of the Policy Framework and is required to be approved by the Full Council on a Cabinet recommendation.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1. The Council has several plans that refer to the development of the economy:
- Within [The Council Plan 'A Prosperous Gwynedd'](#) is one of the seven priorities;
 - the [Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan](#) offers guidance for part of the local economy; and,
 - [Our Area: Local Regeneration Plans](#) identify local priorities for the economy.
- 3.2. It is these schemes – together with regional documents, such as the [North Wales Regional Economic Framework](#) – that have laid the foundations for the Council's work in the area of economic development in recent years.
- 3.3. Through the Council's Plan, the Cabinet recognised that not having a single plan for the county's economy is a loophole and has asked the Department of Economy and Community to draw up a new economic development strategy for Gwynedd.

4. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

The need for an economic development strategy

- 4.1. Funding for the economic development field is increasingly uncertain and dependent on short-term programmes; for example, the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) comes to an end during the year, there is uncertainty regarding the future of ARFOR, and there is no successor to the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), which is funding the *Llewyrch o'r Llechi* programme
- 4.2. There is an increasing emphasis by the Welsh Government on regional collaboration, particularly in the context of the North Wales Ambition and the economic well-being responsibility of the Corporate Joint Committee.
- 4.3. There is significant investment by the Welsh Government and the UK Government in the Anglesey Freeport and the Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, but no equivalent plans for Gwynedd.
- 4.4. By preparing and adopting a strategy, it will be possible to set out clearly the case for developing Gwynedd's economy, establish an agreed set of priorities to respond to our needs, and create a consistent framework for selecting projects and prioritising expenditure in the field
- 4.5. Once a Strategy has been adopted, we will be able to identify and develop appropriate activities and better measure the impact of our efforts.

The challenges that need attention

- 4.6. The key issues that need to be addressed include:
- Fewer working-age people working
 - Fewer people of working age
 - Low wages
 - Too much part-time and seasonal work
 - People in poverty even though they are working

- Low productivity
- Lack of diversity of industries
- Not enough new enterprises starting up
- Enterprises not growing

Steps to develop the strategy

- 4.7. The final text of a new economic development strategy for Gwynedd - 'An Economy that Works for All: Gwynedd 2035' - is included in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.8. The content of the Strategy stems from an extended development process in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders including the Council's key partners from the public, private and third sectors.
- 4.9. The main steps in the development of the Strategy include:
- researching the composition and relative performance of Gwynedd's economy.
 - reviewing good practice in Wales and in comparable areas across Britain.
 - seeking the views of enterprises of all types and from all parts of Gwynedd through a survey.
 - holding individual and joint discussions with stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors; and
 - obtaining input from the Council's elected members through the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- 4.10. Based on the information gathered, a draft of the Strategy was produced. Constructive and helpful feedback on the draft was received from the Scrutiny Committee and the Council's stakeholders across the three sectors before confirming the contents.
- 4.11. Subject to Cabinet approval, the design and layout of the Strategy will be finalised before being presented to the Full Council.

The structure of the Strategy

- 4.12. The structure of the Strategy follows a logical sequence that guides the reader from the case for intervention, to the priorities, and then on to how implementation and the measurement of success are intended to be undertaken.
- 4.13. Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Strategy set out the current position, explain why action is needed, and summarise what needs to change.
- 4.14. Section 5 outlines the basis of the Strategy, the case for joint action, and the alignment of our priorities within a local, regional and national context.
- 4.15. The Strategy's priorities are then presented (Section 6), followed by the concluding section which sets out how the Strategy will be delivered and coordinated, along with how progress will be measured.

The priorities of the Strategy

4.16. The vision for 'An Economy that Works for All: Gwynedd 2035' is:

'An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being'

4.17. It is a vision that places the people, communities and enterprises of Gwynedd at its centre, and to deliver it, three themes have been identified: **Enterprise, People and Place**.

4.18. For each of the three themes, there are two strategic priorities:

ENTERPRISE - prosperous local enterprises that excel

1. Maximise the value of our current economy:
Realising the potential of our existing enterprises and sectors by increasing their value, strengthening their resilience and supporting them to reduce emissions
2. Make the most of new opportunities:
Supporting and making the most of new industries and activities with substantial potential, ensuring that the benefit stays local

PEOPLE - a skilled and inclusive workforce

3. Securing a skilled workforce:
Nurturing, attracting and retaining talent, responding to the county's long-term skills needs
4. Supporting our people:
Supporting the people of Gwynedd to realise their full potential, to obtain quality employment, fair salaries and local opportunities

PLACE - the best conditions to thrive

5. The best possible connectivity and infrastructure:
Acting for better connectivity and business infrastructure to boost the economy
6. A great place to live, work and enterprise:
Promoting Gwynedd as a great place to live, work and enterprise, celebrating the Welsh language and our unique identity

The Strategy in Practice

4.19. A constant theme throughout the Strategy is the need for broad ownership and effort across organisations and sectors to make it a reality.

4.20. The advisory panel set up to support the realisation of the SPF in Gwynedd has highlighted the value of bringing together organisations from the public, private and third sectors.

4.21. We will therefore establish a 'Gwynedd Economy Forum' to implement the Strategy.

- 4.22. Membership of the Forum will include the key organisations that contribute to local prosperity, and the bodies working to develop an economy that benefits our communities. The Forum will bring together local partners from the public, private and third sectors. Relevant regional and national organisations will also be part of the Forum.
- 4.23. We will ensure that different parts of Gwynedd have a voice in order to maintain awareness of the diversity that exists across the county
- 4.24. The Forum will meet at least three times a year in order to:
- formulate and coordinate an annual Delivery Plan for the Strategy.
 - monitor activities and their individual and composite indicators.
 - maintain oversight of progress towards delivering the Strategy.
 - review and update the Strategy as needed.
 - maintain oversight of the wider landscape and developments relevant to Gwynedd's economy and lobby on behalf of our needs.
 - Promote and facilitate collaboration between organisations with a role in developing the county's economy and other partnerships / forums.
- 4.25. The Strategy sets out the aim and identifies a method for addressing the long-term economic challenges that have been identified for Gwynedd.
- 4.26. An annual Delivery Plan will be prepared under the leadership of the Gwynedd Economy Forum to implement the Strategy. The Plan will include activity already underway, as well as projects in development, identifying their alignment with the Strategy and the areas that will benefit. The Strategy's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will then provide a means of measuring the success and impact of these activities.

5. NEXT STEPS AND SCHEDULE

- 5.1. With the Cabinet's seal of approval, the intention is to present the Strategy to be adopted by the Full Council in May 2026.

6. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE DECISION

Consultations

- 6.1. The Strategy has been the subject of extensive engagement and substantial consultation throughout the period of its development, and stakeholders who have contributed their input include:
- Welsh Government
 - North Wales Ambition
 - North Wales Skills Partnership
 - Business Wales
 - Bangor University
 - Eryri National Park Authority
 - Adra housing association
 - Federation of Small Businesses Wales

- Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Tourism Partnership 2035
- National Farmers' Union (NFU) and Farmers' Union of Wales (FUW)
- Gwynedd Social Enterprise Network
- Mantell Gwynedd

- 6.2. Section 4 of the Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) provides a summary of the range of comments that have been received and incorporated into the Strategy.
- 6.3. As well as external partners, the Strategy has been discussed with a range of officers within the Council including:
- Language and Equality Unit (Corporate Services)
 - Procurement Unit (Corporate Services)
 - Sustainable Visiting Economy Plan (Economy and Community))
 - Clean Slate Strategy (Corporate Leadership Team))
- 6.4. There has also been an effort to gather the views of Elected Council Members through Cabinet Members and the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee.

Impact Assessment

- 6.5. The Impact Assessment for the Strategy is attached as Appendix 2. It considers the impact of the Strategy on the residents of Gwynedd by:
- identifying the key features of the relationship between the Welsh language and Gwynedd's economy and demonstrating how the Strategy responds to these features to strengthen the Welsh language.
 - assessing the impact of the Strategy on well-being in a holistic manner, including economic and social, environmental and cultural aspects.
 - explaining how the Strategy meets the requirements and purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, including the Sustainable Development Principles (i.e., the Five Ways of Working) and the Seven Well-being Goals
- 6.6. The preparation of the Assessment has been an iterative process with the Council's equality and language officers to inform the content of the Strategy.
- 6.7. In addition, a standalone assessment of the Strategy's alignment with the requirements and aspirations of the Well-being of Future Generations Act has been undertaken and is enclosed in Appendix 3. The outcome of the assessment has informed the development of Section 3 of the Strategy (the case for intervention).

Observations of the Statutory Officers

- 6.8. Chief Finance Officer:

"The draft Strategy presented here contains a number of activity areas, and both the report and Strategy emphasise that widespread ownership and effort across

organisations and sectors are needed to make it a reality. In this context it is noted that the Strategy does not highlight the revenue and capital costs that Cyngor Gwynedd will face in order to realise it. Whilst many of these costs will be funded from current budgets, if requests for additional budget need to be presented, I expect that this will be done through the Council's usual arrangements.”

6.9. Monitoring Officer:

“The Strategy forms part of the Council's Policy Framework which is in the hands of the Full Council for adoption and adaptation. However, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Functions and Responsibilities) (Wales) Regulations 2007 reflected in the Constitution, the matter is referred to the Council's decision on a Cabinet recommendation. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought.”

Appendix 1

An Economy that Works for All GWYNEDD 2035

An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gwynedd is a unique county. In its close communities, its natural beauty and in the vibrancy of the Welsh language in the county, it has a unique identity and appeal which makes it one of the best locations to live and work in Wales and beyond.

We also have a modern and innovative economy with substantial potential in our existing enterprises and opportunities in new industries and activities for a prosperous future for the people of Gwynedd.

But a lot of this potential is yet to be realised. According to many indicators, there is a substantial gap between the economy of Gwynedd and the rest of Wales and the United Kingdom (UK). In part, this can be attributed to the sense that the area lacks the opportunities, suitable employment or salaries required to live full lives.

This Strategy responds to this gap, and it will shape our work until 2035. It is an honest assessment of today's economy; however, it is ambitious for the future. By identifying our strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities here in the county, and those areas in need of improvement, the Strategy's purpose is to realise the potential of our people and our enterprises and create new benefits and opportunities. Our vision is to create:

"An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being."

Creating growth for growth's sake is not the intention. The purpose of the Strategy is to strengthen the economy in an inclusive and sustainable way so that everyone in Gwynedd - individuals, businesses and social enterprises - actually benefit from it. Essentially, it is a strategy that focuses on the values that mean the most to the people of Gwynedd:

- **Living with dignity:** Everyone should receive enough to sustain themselves and their families, to have full and happy lives without wanting for anything.
- **Opportunities:** Every individual should be able to access the opportunities they need to realise their full potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.
- **Fairness:** No area, person or community should be left behind.
- **Local roots:** Gwynedd enterprises are the essence of Gwynedd's economy, and through them, we are able to retain the wealth that we create locally.
- **Sustainability:** The Welsh language and environment must be nurtured and protected which, together, make Gwynedd such a unique place to live, work and enterprise.

As the funding landscape changes, there will be a need to decide where and how to target resources to secure the greatest economic and social benefit. This may include targeting resources geographically or to specific groups or

sectors. This Strategy gives us the structure to assess and prioritise interventions, in order to strike a balance between growth and quality of life.

This is not solely a Council Strategy. We will need to collaborate with partners on a local, county, regional and national level, to make the biggest possible difference. We will build on positive experiences of collaboration by establishing the **Gwynedd Economy Forum**. The Forum will bring organisations and partners together to draw up and coordinate an annual delivery plan which will include current activity and upcoming projects. This will assist to identify geographical and thematic gaps in terms of implementing the Strategy.

In order to review progress against the Strategy's priorities, a monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed. The indicators within the framework reflect the Strategy's priorities and the change required. This will assist the Forum when evaluating and reviewing progress.

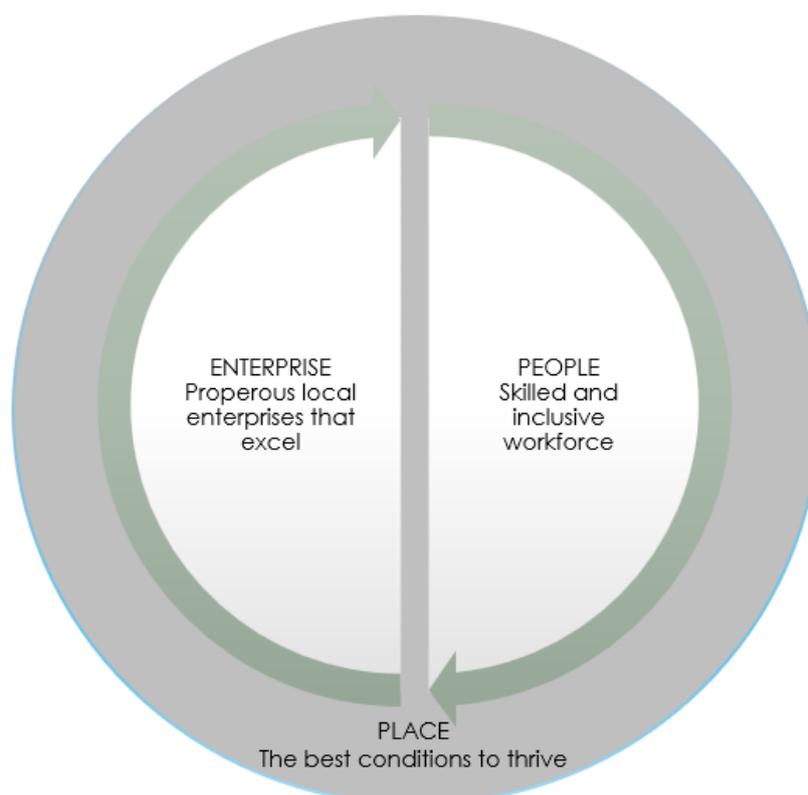
This is a vision that puts the people, communities and enterprises of Gwynedd at the centre. To implement this, we have three themes: *Enterprise, People and Place*.

Local **enterprises** of all shapes and sizes - commercial, community and voluntary - are essential to create opportunities for local **people** to sustain themselves and realise their potential.

Skilled **people** are essential to **enterprises** if they are to succeed.

People and **enterprises** need each other if they are to thrive and make a positive contribution to their communities.

An effective and attractive **place**, which helps them succeed, is critical to **enterprises** and **people**.



For each of the three themes, we have identified two strategic priorities:

OUR VISION:

An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being.

- ENTERPRISE - prosperous local enterprises that excel
 - **PRIORITY ONE**
Maximise the value of our current economy
Realising the potential of our existing enterprises and sectors by increasing their value, strengthening their resilience and supporting them to reduce emissions
 - **PRIORITY TWO**
Make the most of new opportunities
Supporting and making the most of new industries and activities with substantial potential, ensuring that the benefit stays local
- PEOPLE - a skilled and inclusive workforce
 - **PRIORITY THREE**
Securing a skilled workforce
Nurturing, attracting and retaining talent, responding to the county's long-term skills needs
 - **PRIORITY FOUR**
Supporting our people
Supporting the people of Gwynedd to realise their full potential, to obtain quality employment, fair salaries and local opportunities
- PLACE - the best conditions to thrive
 - **PRIORITY FIVE**
The best possible connectivity and infrastructure
Acting for better connectivity and business infrastructure to boost the economy
 - **PRIORITY SIX**
A great place to live, work and enterprise
Promoting Gwynedd as a great place to live, work and enterprise, celebrating the Welsh language and our unique identity

OUR STRATEGY TO DEVELOP THE GWYNEDD ECONOMY UP TO 2035

I. FOREWORD

Here in Gwynedd, we have a strong economic history that we can be proud of. From our world-famous quarrying communities to our university and power stations - all parts of Gwynedd have witnessed substantial innovation and progressiveness.

But we are not going to rely on the past. Today, we have huge potential in Gwynedd - in our residents, our communities and our entrepreneurs; but this potential is not always realised. There is still a substantial gap between the performance of the economy in Gwynedd and the rest of Wales and the United Kingdom.

Therefore, it is a privilege to introduce this Economic Strategy which clearly sets out our vision and long-term priorities for Gwynedd's economy:

"An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being."

Growth for growth's sake is not our intention. We must create an economy which brings benefits to all by creating new employment, reducing poverty and improving quality of life across the county. This is the economy that will give our people the opportunities they need to remain in or return to their communities and thrive. And this will be an economy that will strengthen and protect the Welsh language and environment. At the heart of this, Gwynedd enterprises will realise their full potential, they will be resilient and they will grow, and the wealth we create will stay local.

It is a vision which responds to the call for prosperity expressed by Gwynedd residents during the Ardal Ni consultation. We heard calls for full-time higher-salary jobs, for a more stable and diverse economy, for lively town centres, and for opportunities for our young people to thrive in Gwynedd.

We want an economy that gives everyone an opportunity to live full lives and realise their full potential, and for an economy that strengthens the natural and cultural wealth which makes our county so unique.

Prosperity that is not only sustainable but is also **inclusive** and **fair** and **restores** the community, natural and cultural wealth of our county.

With substantial economic changes afoot, there is an exciting opportunity ahead of us to make Gwynedd a destination of excellence in new industries - in the creative and digital industries, professional services, clean energy and low-carbon activity, life sciences, advanced manufacturing and aerospace. Similarly, we must be supportive of those industries that already exist in Gwynedd which are essential to our communities, enterprises and residents -

this is the second largest area in Wales in terms of agricultural land, for example, and we must nurture and add value to our traditional sectors, such as agriculture and tourism, as a firm foundation and full part of a modern and innovative economy.

Consequently, there is a need for a clearer and stronger voice to steer development which affects us and keeps the benefits local. This Economic Strategy was formulated for this purpose. It acknowledges that we will need to collaborate with partners on all levels and influence them if we are to take advantage of opportunities and overcome challenges, and as the funding landscape and economic policy changes, the value and importance of collaboration increases.

We look forward to seeing this Economic Strategy deliver its vision.

Cllr R. Medwyn Hughes
Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Cyngor Gwynedd

II. THE PROFILE OF GWYNEDD'S ECONOMY

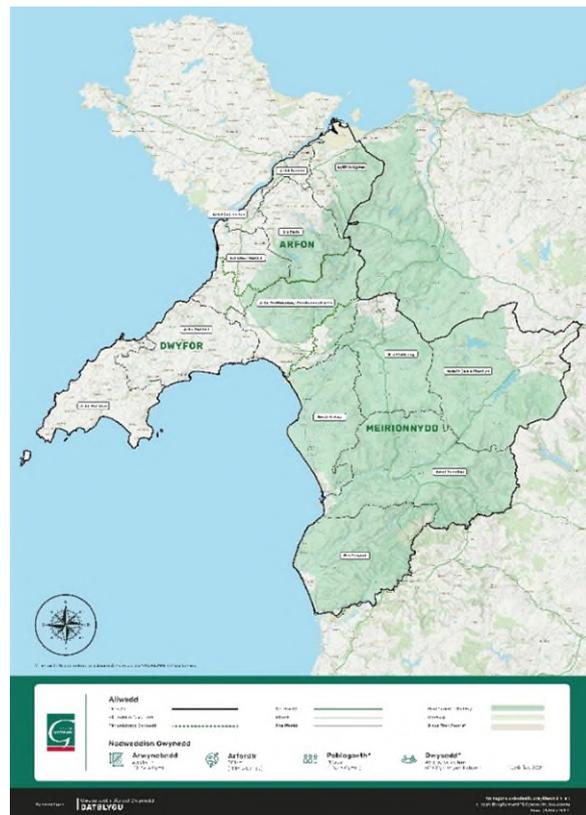
Geographically, Gwynedd is the second largest county in Wales. Located in north-west Wales, Gwynedd extends from Cardigan Bay in the west to the banks of the Menai Straits in the north, and a substantial part of the county is located within Eryri National Park. This geography shapes the spatial distribution of the population, with most living along the coastline and low-lying areas, particularly in the north of the county, and the rest live in villages, smaller towns or in the countryside.

Gwynedd is a special county with outstanding cultural and environmental wealth. Gwynedd is the county with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in Wales and 92% of the county's local areas * are above the threshold of the Welsh Communities Commission's high-density Welsh threshold. The county is also environmentally rich and includes the mountains of Eryri, the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the Bro Dyfi Biosphere Zone. There is also world-famous and unique heritage, which is reflected in the two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Castles of Edward I and Gwynedd Slate Landscape.

Population
117,000

Area
2,535km²

Population density
46 persons per km²



* The areas have been defined by the Office for National Statistics as a Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) - standard statistical areas used to collect and publish data on a small local level, which usually include around 1,500 people.

THE LABOUR MARKET

- 72.1% of Gwynedd's population is in employment, which is lower than Wales (73.4%) and the UK(75.4%).ⁱ
- The proportion of the workforce that is self-employed is over 50% higher in Gwynedd than in Wales, and 26% higher than the UK.ⁱⁱ
- Gwynedd workers earn some of the lowest wages in the UK: £669.20 per week, compared with £719.30 in Wales, and £766.60 in the UK.ⁱⁱⁱ

PRODUCTIVITY

- In terms of productivity, gross value added (GVA) per person in Gwynedd is comparative with the north and rest of Wales but is 33% less than the UK.^{iv}
- Considering GVA based on each job filled, Gwynedd performs at a level that is 35% lower than the UK, and 20% lower than north Wales.^v
- The GVA figures per hour worked shows not only that Gwynedd has the second lowest figure for north Wales, but that it also experienced the smallest growth in the region between 2004 and 2023.^{vi}

SKILLS

- There are fewer working-age people without any qualifications in Gwynedd (4%) than in north Wales (8.5%) and Wales (7.9%).^{vii}
- People of working age in Gwynedd have higher qualifications than the north Wales and Wales region with 70.6% of the population having a higher qualification than A Level.^{viii}
- More people of working age who are economically inactive want employment in Gwynedd (32.7%) than in Wales (19.3%) or the UK (20.5%).^{ix}

THE COUNTY'S ENTERPRISES

- Over half the businesses established in Gwynedd in 2019 were still trading in 2024 – the highest five-year survival rate in Wales. This was 45% higher than the total rate for Wales, and 44% higher than the UK rate. Gwynedd's businesses are therefore more likely to survive in the medium term. ^x
- 93.3% of Gwynedd's native businesses employ fewer than 10 people, which is comparative to the rest of Wales and the UK.^{xi}
- Although only 225 large businesses (businesses employing over 250 people) exist in the county, this percentage (1.7%) is lower than north Wales and Wales.^{xii}
- There are almost 13,000 native enterprises in Gwynedd^{xiii}, spread across a number of sectors, as follows: *(information to be included as a graph in the final designed document)*

SECTORS

- Gwynedd has the highest percentage of hospitality enterprises (14%) in north Wales.^{xiv}
- The county also has the highest percentage of agricultural enterprises (23%, which is equal to Anglesey).^{xv}
- At the other end of the spectrum, the three counties in the west of the region (Gwynedd, Conwy and Anglesey) have only 5% of manufacturing enterprises.^{xvi}

ⁱ Welsh Government data for the year ending 31 March 25 [Employment rate by Welsh local area and year](#)

ⁱⁱ Nomis data on employment and unemployment for the period October 2024 – September 2025 for working age population (18-64) showing 11.9% self-employed in Gwynedd, 7.9% in Wales and 9.5% in the UK [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Nomis data of weekly and hourly pay by location shows that Gwynedd is below Wales and the UK [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

^{iv} Welsh Government data on GVA for 2023 shows £23,848 per head for Gwynedd, £27,395 per head for north Wales, £25,742 for Wales and £35,661 for the UK [Gross value added by Welsh local authority and year | StatsWales](#)

^v Office for National Statistics data measuring productivity for the period 2004 to 2023, shows GVA per job filled of £43,076 in Gwynedd, £66,402 for the UK, and an average of £53,042 for North Wales [Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district - Office for National Statistics](#)

^{vi} Office for National Statistics data measuring productivity for the period 2004 to 2023, showing GVA of £29.30 per hour worked in Gwynedd in 2023, a growth of 43% since 2004 [Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district - Office for National Statistics](#)

^{vii} Welsh Government data – Highest qualification level held by adults of working age (18-64) for the year 2024 showing percentage with no qualifications [Highest qualification level of working age adults by region and local authority | StatsWales](#)

^{viii} Welsh Government data – Highest levels of qualification for adults of working age (18-64) for the year 2024 showing percentage qualified to level 3 (A Level) or above [Highest qualification level of working age adults by region and local authority | StatsWales](#)

^{ix} Data on population economic inactivity by Nomis for the period October 2024 – 2025 [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics](#)

^x Office for National Statistics data measures the numbers of businesses that have survived after 5 years since their establishment. Gwynedd has a survival rate of 55.2% after five years, the highest rate in Wales, compared to 38.1% for the whole of Wales, and 38.4% for the UK (Table 5.1a) [Business demography, UK - Office for National Statistics](#)

^{xi} Welsh Government data for all industries shows that 93.3% of businesses in Gwynedd, 94% of businesses in North Wales, 94.6% of businesses in Wales and 95.6% of UK businesses are micro businesses (0-9 employees). [Size analysis of businesses by industry \(SIC2007\), size band, area and year | StatsWales](#)

^{xii} Welsh Government data analysing businesses by size and industry, shows that only 1.7% of businesses in Gwynedd employ 250 or more employees, compared to 2.2% for Wales and North Wales [Size analysis of businesses by industry \(SIC2007\), size band, area and year | StatsWales](#)

^{xiii} [Size analysis of businesses by industry \(SIC2007\), size band, area and year | StatsWales](#)

^{xiv} Office for National Statistics data measures business numbers by sector in each county (Table 1) [UK business: activity, size and location - Office for National Statistics](#)

^{xv} Office for National Statistics data measures business numbers by sector in each county (Table 1) [UK business: activity, size and location - Office for National Statistics](#)

^{xvi} Office for National Statistics data measures business numbers by sector in each county (Table 1) [UK business: activity, size and location - Office for National Statistics](#)

III. THE CASE FOR ACTION

According to many indicators, there is a substantial gap between Gwynedd's economy and the rest of Wales and the UK. This represents a deep structural inequality and places the people of Gwynedd under a comparative disadvantage. This restricts our people's ability to obtain suitable employment which offers security and fair salaries, and the potential of the local economy to improve living standards and life opportunities.

According to the [Competitiveness Index \(2025\)](#), Gwynedd is amongst the 10% of counties that under-perform most economically across England and Wales - in the 308th position across 330 local areas, and the eighth lowest amongst the counties of Wales.

It is a central challenge that directly affects the well-being of the people of Gwynedd. Indeed, as shown below, the biggest gaps show the under-performance of Gwynedd in more than one [National Well-being Indicator](#):

GAPS IN GWYNEDD'S ECONOMY

1. WORKFORCE GAP

Low unemployment rate, but the county's inactivity rate (i.e. the proportion of the 16- to 64-year-old population not in employment) is higher than the average for north Wales and the UK.

(Well-being Indicator 21: Proportion of the population in employment)

2. POPULATION GAP

The population is ageing quicker than in Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of older people of retirement age and high levels of outward migration amongst young people.

3. PAY GAP

The weekly average salary of a full-time employee and gross household spending income is consistently lower in Gwynedd since 2010 than the average for Wales and the UK.

(Well-being Indicator 10: Gross Household Spending Income per Head)

4. WORK CONDITIONS GAP

Substantially higher rates of workers in Gwynedd are part-time and seasonal employees, compared with Wales and the UK.

(Well-being Indicator 16: Percentage of the population in employment, on permanent contracts and earning the Real Living Wage).

5. WELL-BEING GAP

Low salaries and part-time jobs causing high levels of poverty in rural and urban areas, with poverty in employment particularly high in Gwynedd compared with Wales and the UK.

(Well-being Indicator 18: Percentage of households in poverty compared with the UK)

(Well-being Indicator 19: Percentage of households in material deprivation)

6. PRODUCTIVITY GAP

The value of what is produced in Gwynedd (per hour worked; per each job filled), is substantially lower than the averages of Wales and the UK in 2023, and the rate of productivity growth in Gwynedd is substantially lower than the averages of Wales and the UK since 2004.

(Well-being Indicator 09: GVA per hour worked compared with the UK average)

7. INDUSTRIAL GAP

A relatively narrow range of industries with employees and enterprises more numerous in a smaller range of industries.

8. NEW ENTERPRISE GAP

The business start-up rate in Gwynedd is amongst the lowest across the counties of Wales in 2023, lower than the Wales national average and substantially lower than the UK average.

9. HIGH PERFORMANCE GAP

Percentage of enterprises that saw an increase of 20% in the number of employees over a three-year period is consistently lower in Gwynedd than in Wales and the UK between 2018 and 2023.

10. DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY GAP

Percentage of property with access to gigabyte connectivity (>1,000 Mbps) is lower than the average for Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of property also with poor connectivity (<15 Mbps). 4G and 5G coverage is also lower in Gwynedd.

(Well-being Indicator 50: Digital inclusion)

IV. THE CHANGE REQUIRED

The gaps facing Gwynedd shows a clear need for a fundamental change in the economy: change which, on one hand, addresses the comparative under-performance of the economy, and creates the best possible conditions for our enterprises, and on the other hand, change which has a direct positive impact on the well-being of our people and life opportunities in Gwynedd. The Strategy has been developed in order to start-up and support these types of change.

Within the framework we have noted the changes to the economy and the positive difference to the lives of the people of Gwynedd that we wish to see.

On the whole economy level, it includes:

- **Raising the productivity levels of our enterprises and our workers** to stimulate higher salaries and better work conditions.
- **Increasing the competitiveness of our native enterprises** so that they are more effective and efficient, realising their long-term business objectives and creating quality jobs.
- **Strengthening digital connectivity and the county's business infrastructure** to create the best possible conditions for enterprising.
- **Creating a more diverse industrial foundation** with local enterprises in a range of industries, creating new opportunities and a more resilient economy.
- **Supporting our people to gain the skills they need** so that they, as well as the enterprises employing them, can take full advantage of opportunities.
- **Retaining more of the wealth that we have created locally in Gwynedd** to maximise benefits for the people, enterprises and communities of Gwynedd.
- **Building an economy that is environmentally, linguistically and culturally sustainable.**

We are going to implement this mainly to make a positive difference to the lives of the people of Gwynedd. The most important outcomes affecting the people of Gwynedd are:

- Higher salaries and gross household income
- More people employed in stable jobs
- Lower levels of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage
- Broader variety of work opportunities locally
- More people able to stay, live and work in their local communities
- More people enjoying their work and realising their full potential
- A green economy which protects the outstanding natural environment of the county
- A Welsh economy which increases the use and visibility of the language with customers and in the workplace across Gwynedd.

We will need to be brave when implementing this Strategy, encouraging others to do the same. We will need to be prepared to experiment with new and different methods, accepting that not all efforts will bear fruit.

V. DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY FOR GWYNEDD'S ECONOMY

The Strategy was developed through desktop research and extensive engagement with stakeholders between 2024 and 2025. It is an honest, but also ambitious assessment of the economy. We planned it in the light of the opportunities, challenges and needs of Gwynedd, and an understanding of what can be achieved by Cyngor Gwynedd and its partners.

Research and Engagement

First, we considered the profile of Gwynedd's economy - its features and its performance, how it compares with other areas of Wales and the United Kingdom (UK), and the issues that they need a response to most. Through exercises, we highlighted the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing Gwynedd, as well as the broader influences affecting Gwynedd today, or are likely to do so in the future. Alongside this research, the strategic and policy context was mapped - on a county, regional and national (Wales and the UK) level - in order to build on, complement and obtain the best possible benefit for Gwynedd from the broadest possible range of economic development activities.

We also engaged extensively with stakeholders, as strategic partners to the Council, and as businesses and residents in the county. A series of individual meetings were arranged with the Council's main partners, on a county, regional and national level, in the economic development field. In order to encourage input from the Gwynedd business community, the Council's Business Surveys were used in 2024 and 2025; the messages from businesses about their intention for the future, the opportunities and challenges facing them, and the types of support they need.

Responses to the Council's public consultations were also used. It includes the extensive consultation on the Gwynedd economy and community, namely the Ardal Ni Consultation. Messages were gathered from the people of Gwynedd about what they felt were good about their local areas, things that are not as good, and what they felt needed changing. It is a useful measure of what matters for the people of Gwynedd and the type of economy they wish to see.

Influence and collaboration

Employers from the public sector, private sector and the third sector all have a key part to play across this Strategy. Through them, many of the changes will bear fruit, and we are required to support them - whether through the direct influence of the Council, or our partners. The fields within local influence include:

- Business development grants
- Development loans
- Adorning and regeneration plans
- Administration of business and non-domestic rates

- Business licences and trading standards
- Land, property and business units
- Planning and building control
- Procurement, tendering and public spending
- Career support and advice
- Education and skills, including further education and higher education
- Research and Development
- Health and care, housing and social services interventions to keep the workforce healthy, safe, and with the ability to work.

One area of specific significance when developing the economy is to ensure that public contracts support local suppliers. Whether individually, or when formulating cooperative enterprises, local suppliers, with support, have the capacity to supply substantial contracts. Keeping the pound local is more important than ever. There is a duty, not only to the Council, but to all our partners, to make a specific effort to support the local supply chain, directly through procurement exercises, and indirectly by encouraging individual businesses to use them.

Many of these fields are shaped by national policy with many of the biggest forces within those governance tiers - at the UK Government and Welsh Government. There is a need for collaboration and influence to secure the biggest possible benefit for Gwynedd. We will continue to make the strongest case for securing a fair proportion of economic investment from all future sources.

All types of investments - public, private and joint enterprises – will be all-important when realising this Strategy. We are already working on projects through partnership, and we will continue to maintain and expand our network of funding partners. We will pro-actively investigate traditional and innovative methods of bringing bodies together to fund appropriate projects for the county.

The strategic and policy context

This collaboration work asks for a firm understanding of the policy and strategic context we operate within, particularly in the field of economic development. The Strategy responds to this context, building on what is already in place to add value and secure the biggest possible benefits for Gwynedd. This context will be monitored over the period of the Strategy in order to ensure that it is live to broader policy changes.

It also acknowledges that Gwynedd is a part of a broader region with people and businesses working and operating across county boundaries. It is not possible for the economy of Gwynedd to thrive without receiving and contributing ideas, methods and talent within the region and beyond.

Local Areas

- [Ardal Ni: Local Regeneration Plans](#): In 2022, Cyngor Gwynedd consulted with communities across the county. The output was used to develop 13

local regeneration plans. The plans are live documents which are updated annually with the input of the communities. Collectively, they are formulating a regeneration framework for the county. Economy-related issues are a common theme across the plans, and they have shaped this Strategy. In turn, the Strategy is a means of meeting some common needs.

- [Town Regeneration Plans](#): Cyngor Gwynedd has eight plans to improve its main commercial centre, which will be a guide for future investment.
- [Local and community connection](#): Networks across Gwynedd operate locally, both town and community councils, and are broader local forums. Several of these bodies have documents setting out local priorities and needs.

Gwynedd

- [Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28](#): The Council's corporate plan identifies A Prosperous Gwynedd amongst its strategic priorities. The intention is to *"strengthen the economy and support the people of Gwynedd to earn a worthy wage"*. The Plan outlines the priorities of Cyngor Gwynedd within the field for the period in question.
- [Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Strategic Plan 2035](#): The Strategic Plan has been adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd and Eryri National Park Authority to realise their visitor economy principles to *celebrate, respect and protect our communities, language, culture and heritage; maintain and respect our environment and ensure that the advantages to Gwynedd and Eryri communities are greater than any disadvantages*.
- [Cyngor Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023 - 2033](#): The Language Strategy notes Cyngor Gwynedd's priorities in terms of promoting the Welsh language and facilitating its use across the county. There is particular attention to the relationship between the language and the economy in the "Work and Service" priority area.
- [Cynllun Eryri](#): Cynllun Eryri is Eryri National Park Authority's Statutory Management Plan to protect the unique features of Eryri. It is a joint plan with a broad partnership, and it ensures that *Eryri being a great place to live, develop and work*, is amongst the desired outcomes.
- [Planning Policy](#): Gwynedd's territory in terms of town and country planning is shared between the Cyngor Gwynedd and Eryri National Park Authority's planning authorities [Cyngor Gwynedd](#) and [Eryri National Park Authority](#). Consequently, there are two Local Development Plans managing land use, including employment land.

Regional

- [North Wales Growth Deal](#): By means of Ambition North Wales, the Growth Deal has secured funding of £120 million from the Welsh Government and £120 million from the UK Government to invest in a selection of projects across five programmes. The Plan aims to produce 4,000 jobs by 2036. It is now being led by the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee, which brings

six local authorities and the Eryri National Park Authority together to deal with the regional priorities.

- [North Wales Skills and Employment Plan 2023-2025](#): The North Wales Skills Partnership recognises the needs of employers and employees within the economy and offers guidance for organisations on how to meet the demand.
- [North Wales Regional Economic Framework](#): In 2021/22, Ambition North Wales and Welsh Government published a framework outlining how the region worked towards common priorities.
- [ARFOR programme](#): ARFOR is a partnership between the councils of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion, and Carmarthenshire, which is funded by the Welsh Government. ARFOR is looking at the socio-economic challenges affecting the viability of the Welsh language in areas with a high density of Welsh speakers, focusing on economic planning that will benefit from native Welsh communities, and thus, benefit the language.

Wales

- [Regional investment in Wales: a framework](#): Welsh Government Framework which outlines its proposed implementation method for the regional investment field, combining national, regional, and local actions.
- [Economic Mission: priorities for a stronger economy](#): Welsh Government Priorities for building a more prosperous, equal, and greener economy based on four priority areas; *green prosperity and justified transformation, supporting young people, stronger regional collaboration and investing in growth*. The document also emphasises inclusive growth.
- [Foundational Economy: mission statement](#): A Statement of Welsh Government priorities for the sectors they consider foundational to the economy, including health and care services, social housing management, construction of homes and commercial buildings, energy and utilities, food, high street shops and services, tourism, and public transport.
- [Innovation strategy for Wales](#): Welsh Government Strategy on how to use innovation to improve the lives of people in Wales and stimulate the economy.
- [The Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#): Responsibility is placed on public bodies in Wales to consider the well-being of the population and future generations, and to act in accordance with the Five Ways of Working and the Seven Well-being Goals. This Strategy has been developed in accordance with the principles and purpose of this Act, and this is explained in the supplementary well-being assessment.

The United Kingdom

- [Economic Mission](#): Economic growth is the main priority of the current government in London. The aim is to increase productivity and create a competitive, varied, and innovative economy.
- [Industrial strategy, 2035](#): The UK Government Industrial Strategy, *Invest 2035*, is central to the UK Government's Economic Mission. It identified eight

important strategic growth sectors based on their potential for growth and identifies a combination of interventions to support them. The Government's Artificial Intelligence Action Plan is also central to the growth agenda and seeks to increase the use made of the technology amongst Gwynedd enterprises and the broader economy.

VI. THE STRATEGY'S PRIORITIES

OUR VISION:

An innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes towards everyone's well-being.

Enterprise

Prosperous local enterprises that excel

PRIORITY ONE: Maximise the value of our current economy

Aim (what?):

Realising the potential of our existing enterprises and sectors by increasing their value, strengthening their resilience and supporting them to reduce emissions.

Activity areas (how?):

- 1.1 Supporting enterprises to become more productive and competitive and create more value.
- 1.2 Supporting enterprises to become more efficient and reduce costs and waste.
- 1.3 Supporting enterprises to adopt and/or respond to new technologies.
- 1.4 Supporting enterprises to innovate by using the resources available to create and develop new products and services.
- 1.5 Supporting local enterprises to reach new markets.
- 1.6 Supporting succession plans that keep ownership local.
- 1.7 Retaining more public spending in the local area.
- 1.8 Regular engagement with Gwynedd enterprises to highlight business opportunities and information.
- 1.9 Supporting the transition to a net zero economy and take advantage of the opportunities that come from that.
- 1.10 Encouraging micro and small enterprises to collaborate in order to build on each other's strengths.
- 1.11 Encouraging and supporting local ownership of economic assets.

PRIORITY TWO: Make the most of new opportunities

Aim (what?):

Supporting and making the most of new industries and activity with substantial potential, ensuring that the benefit stays local

Activity areas (how?):

- 2.1 Attracting investment to create quality employment for the county.
- 2.2 Taking advantage of substantial investments in the north Wales region to ensure the greatest possible benefits for Gwynedd from the North Wales Growth Deal, Wrexham and Flintshire Investment Zone and Anglesey Freeport.
- 2.3 Supporting local enterprises with potential in new industries and activity, to keep the benefit local.
- 2.4. Supporting local enterprises to take advantage of alternative and private investment opportunities.
- 2.5. Making the most of our strategic assets with potential to attract substantial developments.
- 2.6. Ensuring that new developments in Gwynedd benefit the communities in which they are located.
- 2.7 Ensuring that Gwynedd enterprises take advantage of opportunities arising from major changes in the global economy.
- 2.8 Encouraging and enabling enterprises and education organisations to collaborate on research and development opportunities.

People

A skilled and inclusive workforce

PRIORITY THREE: Securing a skilled workforce

Aim (what?):

Nurturing, attracting and retaining talent, responding to the county's long-term skills requirements

Activity areas (how?):

- 3.1. Supporting Gwynedd enterprises to overcome recruitment challenges and skills needs.
- 3.2 Working with education sector partners in order to plan for long-term skills needs.
- 3.3 Keeping in contact with young people who leave the county, or who consider doing so, and showing the work opportunities here in Gwynedd.
- 3.4 Promoting schemes to attract and develop talent.

- 3.5 Supporting young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) to take advantage of opportunities and achieve their full potential.
- 3.6 Supporting volunteering opportunities.
- 3.7 Encouraging use of alternative work arrangements and patterns to enable more convenient working in terms of location and time, particularly within our rural areas.

PRIORITY FOUR: Supporting our people

Aim (what?):

Supporting the people of Gwynedd to realise their full potential, to obtain quality employment, fair salaries and local opportunities

Activity areas (how?):

- 4.1. Supporting people who are unemployed, inactive or facing additional challenges into employment.
- 4.2 Supporting people in employment to progress to a better post with higher salaries or more certain work conditions.
- 4.3 Promoting the Real Living Wage amongst the county's employers.
- 4.4 Promoting inclusive types of employment to make it easier for people to be able to work.
- 4.5 Promoting work opportunities that give people security.
- 4.6 Supporting people of retirement age to continue working and volunteering if they wish to do so.
- 4.7 Reducing inequality between men and women to ensure that everyone is treated the same and are able to participate fully in the labour market.
- 4.8 Ensuring that disabled people have fair opportunities, by removing barriers and ensuring equal access to services and to opportunities.

Where

The best conditions to thrive

PRIORITY FIVE: The best possible connectivity and infrastructure

Aim (what?):

Acting for better connectivity and business infrastructure to boost the economy

Activity areas (how?):

- 5.1. Expanding access to the best possible digital connectivity in areas where it is weak.
- 5.2 Pressing for improvements in transportation in order to facilitate the movement of people locally.
- 5.3 Pressing for improvements in the Gwynedd roads network in order to facilitate business development.
- 5.4 Pressing for improvements in local grid capacity and utility infrastructure.
- 5.5 Supporting town centre regeneration plans.
- 5.6 Creating and improving work unit stock in order to ensure suitable provision.

PRIORITY SIX: A great place to live, work and venture

Aim (what?):

Promoting Gwynedd as a great place to live, work and venture, celebrating the Welsh language and our unique identity

Activity areas (how?):

- 6.1. Strengthening self-confidence and the belief that success can be achieved locally in Gwynedd.
- 6.2 Energising and support the unique cultural and social scene of Gwynedd.
- 6.3 Strengthening the use and visibility of the Welsh language as a unique aspect of Gwynedd's economy.
- 6.4 Engaging with the Gwynedd diaspora to attract different experience, expertise and investment back to the area.
- 6.5 Encouraging more people and enterprises to buy locally.

VII. THE STRATEGY IN PRACTICE

Working in Partnership

The Strategy is not a document for a single organisation alone. Its success will require effort across organisations and sectors.

We will build on the positive experience of implementing the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund and the appreciation that organisations have expressed for the opportunity to come together to collaborate, coordinate their efforts, and express the needs of their stakeholders. Therefore, we will establish the '**Gwynedd Economy Forum**' in order to implement the Strategy.

The Forum membership includes the main organisations that contribute to local prosperity, and the bodies who work to develop an economy that benefits our communities. The Forum will bring local partners together from the public sector, private sector and third sector. Relevant regional and national organisations will also be a part of the Forum.

We will secure a voice for different parts of Gwynedd to ensure that there is awareness of these variances across the county.

The Forum will formally meet three times a year, to:

1. Formulate and coordinate an annual Delivery Plan for the Strategy.
2. Monitor activities and their individual and composite indicators.
3. Maintain an overview of the progress towards achieving the Strategy.
4. Review and update the Strategy as needed.
5. Maintain an overview of the field and broader developments that are relevant to the Gwynedd economy, lobbying in favour of our needs.
6. Promote and facilitate collaboration between organisations with a role in developing the county's economy and partnerships / other forums.

Strategy Delivery Plan

The Strategy establishes the goal and identifies the method of addressing the long-term economic challenges identified for Gwynedd.

A Delivery Plan will be formulated annually under the leadership of the Gwynedd Economy Forum to implement the Strategy. The Plan will include current activity, and projects that are underway, noting their alignment with the Strategy and the areas that will benefit.

The plan will also be a way for the Forum to identify gaps in provision and of influencing regional and national plans.

Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

It is crucial that we can measure what the plans and activities deliver individually, and their composite impact.

To this end, we have developed a monitoring and evaluation Framework which includes a series of indicators to measure:

- OUTPUTS
Direct products of a project or activity
 - OUTCOMES
Medium-term indicators arising from plans and activities, reflecting changes in behaviour
 - EFFECTS
Indicators of a long-term, strategic change over a period of years

By having a consistent selection of indicators, it will be possible to evaluate the impact of activities and review our progress against the Strategy's priorities.

The indicators identified reflect the change needed and the priorities within the Strategy

MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

THE CHANGE REQUIRED

Changes to the Economy

- Raising the productivity levels of our enterprises and our workers
- Increasing the competitiveness of our native enterprises
- Strengthening digital connectivity and the county's business infrastructure
- Creating a more diverse industrial foundation
- Supporting our people to gain the skills they need
- Keeping more of the wealth that we have created locally in Gwynedd
- Building a sustainable economy

Positive Difference to People's Lives

- Higher salaries and gross household income
- More people employed in stable jobs
- Lower levels of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage
- Broader variety of work opportunities locally
- More people able to stay, live and work in their local communities
- A green economy which protects the outstanding natural environment of the county
- A Welsh economy which increases the use and visibility of the language with customers and in the workplace across Gwynedd

THE STRATEGY'S PRIORITIES

ENTERPRISE Prosperous local enterprises that excel		PEOPLE A skilled and inclusive workforce		PLACE The best conditions to thrive	
PRIORITY ONE Maximise the value of our current economy	PRIORITY TWO Make the most of new opportunities	PRIORITY THREE Securing a skilled workforce	PRIORITY FOUR Supporting our people	PRIORITY FIVE The best possible connectivity and infrastructure	PRIORITY SIX A great place to live, work and venture
Supporting enterprises to become more productive and competitive, and create more value	Attracting investment to create quality employment for the county	Supporting Gwynedd enterprises to overcome recruitment challenges and skills needs	Supporting people who are unemployed, inactive or facing additional challenges into employment	Expanding access to the best possible digital connectivity in areas where it is weak	Strengthening self-confidence and the belief that success can be achieved locally in Gwynedd
Supporting enterprises to become more efficient, and reduce costs and waste	Taking advantage of substantial investments in the north Wales region to ensure the greatest benefits for Gwynedd from the North Wales Growth Scheme, Wrexham and Flintshire Investment Zone, and the Anglesey Freeport	Working with education sector partners to plan for long-term skills needs	Supporting people in employment to progress to a better post with higher salaries or more certain working conditions	Pressing for improvements in transportation in order to facilitate the movement of people locally	Energising and supporting the unique cultural and social scene of Gwynedd
Supporting enterprises to adopt and/or respond to new technologies	Supporting local enterprises with potential in new industries and activity, to keep the benefit local	Keeping in contact with young people who leave the county, or who consider doing so, and showing the work opportunities here in Gwynedd	Promoting the Real Living Wage amongst the county's employers	Pressing for improvements in the Gwynedd roads network in order to facilitate business development	Strengthening the use and visibility of the Welsh language as a unique aspect of Gwynedd's economy
Supporting enterprises to innovate by using the resources available to create and develop new products and services	Supporting local enterprises to take advantage of alternative and private investment opportunities	Promoting schemes to attract and develop talent	Promoting inclusive types of employment to make it easier for people to be able to work	Pressing for improvements in local grid capacity and utility infrastructure	Engaging with the Gwynedd diaspora to attract different experience, expertise and investment back to the area
Supporting local enterprises to reach new markets	Ensuring that new developments in Gwynedd benefit the communities in which they are located	Supporting young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) to take advantage of opportunities and achieve their full potential	Promoting work opportunities that give people security	Supporting town centre regeneration schemes	Encouraging more people and enterprises to buy locally

Maximise the value of our current economy	Make the most of new opportunities	Securing a skilled workforce	Supporting our people	The best possible connectivity and infrastructure	A great place to live, work and venture
Supporting succession plans that keep ownership local	Make the most of our strategic assets with potential to attract substantial developments	Supporting volunteering opportunities	Supporting people of retirement age to continue working and volunteering if they wish to do so	Creating and improving work unit stock to ensure suitable provision	
Retaining more public spending in the local area	Ensuring that Gwynedd enterprises take advantage of opportunities arising from major changes in the global economy	Encouraging use of alternative work arrangements and patterns to enable more convenient working in terms of location and time, particularly within our rural areas	Reducing inequality between men and women to ensure that everyone is treated the same and are able to participate fully in the labour market		
Regular engagement with Gwynedd enterprises to highlight business opportunities and information	Encouraging and enabling enterprises and education institutions to collaborate on research and development opportunities		Ensuring that disabled people have fair opportunities, by removing barriers and ensuring equal access to services and opportunities		
Supporting the transition to a net zero economy and take advantage of the opportunities that come from that					
Encouraging micro and small enterprises to collaborate in order to build on each other's strengths					
Encouraging and supporting local ownership of economic assets					

THE STRATEGY IN PRACTICE

Outputs - Short Term

- Enterprises supported to adopt technology
- Enterprises receiving succession support
- Enterprises supported to transfer to employee ownership
- Enterprises adopting green technology
- Local enterprises engaging with business support
- Enterprises that have received procurement support
- Enterprises supported to expand into a new market
- Enterprises supported to win public sector contracts
- Enterprises supported to become more productive and competitive
- Manufacturing enterprises supported to start up or grow
- Enterprises in high value sectors supported to start up or grow
- Major developments engaged
- Major developments consented
- Inward investment into capital projects
- Public sector investment into capital projects
- Public sector investment to support the growth of existing businesses
- Inward investment to support the growth of existing businesses
- Enterprises receiving recruitment support
- People enrolled in a qualification
- Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) receiving support
- People supported through schemes to attract and develop talent
- People supported to volunteer
- Unemployed, economically inactive or people facing additional challenges supported into employment
- People in work who have received training or support
- People of retirement age supported to continue working or volunteering
- Disabled people supported into training, work or volunteering
- Women supported into training or to return to work
- Digital infrastructure improvements supported
- Towns that have received investment
- Empty buildings returned to use
- Public spaces improved
- Improvements to transport connectivity
- Improvements to grid capacity and other utility infrastructure
- Work units built
- Commercial floor spaces permitted
- Commercial floor spaces built
- Welsh speakers supported to secure a job and return to the area
- Enterprises committing to using more Welsh
- Young people engaged before they graduate from education
- Enterprises supported to increase spending in the local supply chain
- Cultural or social activities supported
- Number of activities to promote positive perceptions of Gwynedd

Outcomes - Medium Term

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Enterprises remaining locally owned following founder's retirement | 8. Enterprises being established or growing as a result of inward investment | 14. People volunteering as a result of support | 19. People of retirement age in employment or volunteering as a result of support | 25. Enterprises located within new work units or new commercial floor spaces |
| 2. Enterprises more productive as a result of support | 9. Enterprises being established or growing as a result of public sector investment | 15. People who were unemployed, economically inactive or facing additional challenges in employment | 20. Disabled people who have received training, are in employment or volunteering following support | 26. Enterprises using more Welsh as a result of support |
| 3. Enterprises that have reduced their carbon footprint as a result of support | 10. Major developments spending with local enterprises | 16. People increasing their earnings (increased hours/wages) as a result of support | 21. Individuals/businesses with access to improved digital infrastructure | 27. People who have participated in a cultural or social activity |
| 4. Increase in business start-up rate | 11. Enterprises reporting a reduction in recruitment challenges | 17. Enterprises paying the Real Living Wage as a result of support | 22. Residents living / visiting towns that have received investment | 28. People engaged in activities to promote positive perceptions of Gwynedd |
| 5. Increase in business survival rate | 12. People gaining a qualification as a result of support | 18. People in employment as a result of support | 23. People benefitting from improved transport connectivity | 29. Enterprises creating an action plan to use the Welsh language |
| 6. Public sector spending with local enterprises | 13. NEET young people in education, training or work as a result of support | | 24. Increase in the number of visitors to town centres | |
| 7. Increase in spending in the supply chain in North Wales | | | | |

Effects - Long Term

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 1. Gwynedd economy's productivity gap narrowing compared to Wales, UK and similar areas | 6. Growth in employment across the economy, particularly in the high value/high productivity sectors | 11. Increased sense of community pride and community engagement | 17. Increase in the rate of people over the age of 50 continuing to work | 22. Reduction in the rate of young people emigrating from the county |
| 2. Proportion of businesses hiring closer to the Welsh and UK average | 7. An economy that will be better able to seize global opportunities | 12. Economic inactivity rate closer to the average in Wales and UK | 18. Digital infrastructure availability rate closer to the average in Wales and UK and better than similar areas | 23. Increase in the perception that Gwynedd is a good place to live or venture among young people |
| 3. Increase in the proportion of medium-sized enterprises | 8. Business growth increases as talent supply strengthens | 13. Narrowing in the average pay gap with Wales and the UK | 19. Town centres that are more resilient and sustainable, with fewer dilapidated or vacant buildings | 24. Reduction in the rate of people commuting from the county |
| 4. Growth in employment across the economy, particularly in the high value/high productivity sectors | 9. The skills level in the county maintained and improved | 14. Household income closer to the average in Wales and the UK | 20. Reduction in the risk that grid capacity or other infrastructure will restrict or delay development | 25. Increase in the use of Welsh across the county |
| 5. A more diversified economy by sector | 10. Reduction in young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) | 15. Part-time working rate closer to the average in Wales and UK | 21. Reduction in the barrier that transport connectivity creates for jobseekers | 26. Communities where the percentage of speakers has been maintained or improved |
| | | 16. Reduction in the rate of children in workless households | | |

Composite Impact Assessment

This document assesses the impact that the policy, procedure, plan etc. will have on the population of the county and is undertaken based on a number of legislative requirements.

- **The Equality Act 2010.** It places a duty on public bodies to give due regard to the impact that any new (or amended) policy, procedure, plan etc. may have on people with protected characteristics. We are required to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act.
 - promote equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In Wales, the specific duty sets out the requirement to conduct an impact assessment following specific guidance, to consider the effect that any change to a policy or procedure (or the creation of a new one) will have on people with protected equality characteristics. An assessment must be undertaken in a timely manner before any relevant decision is made (i.e. one that affects people with a protected equality characteristic).

- **Socio-economic Duty.** Wales has now implemented this additional duty, which forms part of the Equality Act 2010, placing a requirement on public bodies to address socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.
- **Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011).** The Council is required to consider the impact that any change to a policy or procedure (or the creation of a new one) will have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and to ensure that Welsh is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.
- **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.** The Council has a duty to implement the five ways of working and to respond to the seven national well-being goals.
- **Armed Forces Act 2021.** Councils must give due regard to the impact of this proposal on those who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces, as well as their families.

Gwynedd Economic Strategy Equality Assessment 30/01/2026

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STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives of the Policy or Practice

1. What kind of document or procedure is being assessed?

Set objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh Language strategy)

2. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy or practice?

The vision of the Gwynedd Economic Strategy is to foster an innovative, productive and low-carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes to everyone's well-being. The aim of this new Strategy is to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth, so that individuals, businesses and community enterprises in Gwynedd genuinely benefit from the economy. The Strategy will remain in place until 2035.

By identifying the county's strengths and weaknesses, together with the opportunities available and the areas in need of improvement, the objective is clear: to enable the people and enterprises of Gwynedd to reach their full potential, creating new benefits and opportunities for the future.

3. Who are the main advisory groups (stakeholders)?

Gwynedd Businesses

The people and communities of Gwynedd

Community enterprises

Social enterprises

Gwynedd's educational institutions

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Impact Assessment

4. Has an attempt been made to comply with the duty to engage in accordance with what is described above and has sufficient information been gathered to proceed?

Yes

Details of engagement. Please note any consultation or engagement you have made or intend to do

Stakeholder	Date	Information
Chief Officer Mantell Gwynedd	21/11/24	<p>Areas to consider in the Strategy: Staff recruitment is challenging for community enterprises. Need to measure the social value of projects and invest in the places that contribute more. Community transportation challenges need to be addressed. Need to promote and protect the environment of Gwynedd and the Welsh language.</p>
Bangor University business department officers	21/11/24	<p>Areas to consider in the Strategy: Need to show the regional context to Gwynedd's economy Start-ups need support to develop Increase the link between the university and the communities of Gwynedd – to use the expertise and resources to increase the skills of the workforce, to conduct research. Comments on draft: Welsh identity and culture are important for growth. Need clarity on which infrastructure is being targeted Include work patterns in Place / People More space to plan</p>
Chief Executive of GISDA	26/11/24	<p>Initial input to the Strategy: The challenge of having short-term funding programs, and the importance of equality need to be addressed. Need to demonstrate that there is collaboration between the different departments in the Council to deliver the Strategy Supportive of keeping more of the benefit local Greater emphasis on the value of the arts</p>
Chief Executive of Eryri National Park	03/12/24	<p>Consultation to gather input for the strategy: There was strong support for the ambition to develop a Strategy. It was noted that there is a need to target actions towards the rural areas of the county. Apprenticeships were highlighted as important to address the skills required for available jobs and to help retain young people in the area</p>

Gwynedd and Anglesey Services Board	03/12/24	<p>Consultation to gather input for the strategy: Ensure that the Strategy aligns with the current Well-being Plan.</p> <p>Address how to retain young people, attract them back to the area, and prioritise the Welsh language within employment.</p> <p>Consider how to ensure that the local community benefits from tourism</p>
Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)	13/12/24	<p>Consultation to gather input for the strategy: The strategy needs to be realistic – ambitious but achievable. The geography of the county needs to be considered – transport needs and digital connectivity.</p> <p>Address how to take advantage of tourism to bring benefits to the local economy. Include support for businesses in the strategy.</p>
Procurement Manager Cyngor Gwynedd	08/01/25	Supportive to the reference to procurement. The Economy Strategy needs to be aligned with the Procurement Strategy.
County advisor NFU	27/05/25	Consultation to gather input for the strategy
Representative of the Gwynedd Community Enterprise Network	29/07/25	Consultation to gather input for the strategy
Ambition North Wales	21/11/25	Comments on the draft: Supportive but have corrected some of the facts on projects in the Delivery Plan
Skills Manager - North Wales Regional Skills Partnership	01/25 & 31/10/25	Consultation to gather initial input for the strategy and then comments on the draft: Very positive about the strategy. Specific work programmes could be referred to by the Skills Partnership.
Senior Language Consultant Cyngor Gwynedd	07/02/25 & 28/10/25	Consultation to gather initial input for the strategy and then comments on the draft: Positive that the Welsh language gets attention in the vision. Eager for the language to have a more prominent place in the priorities, and to have an indicator to measure the impact of the number of Welsh speakers holding professional positions. Reference should also be made to the Council's language strategy.
Welsh Government	21/02/25 & 31/10/25	Consultation to gather initial input for the strategy and then comments on the draft: The document is well structured, but the strategic intent needs to be better strengthened. It could be better shown how objectives will be realized, and which ones are most key. Provide more information about the role of the Gwynedd Economy Forum. Supportive of the monitoring framework.

Gwynedd Sustainable Tourism Partnership Representative	28/07/25	Comments on the draft: Need to focus more on attracting inward investment. Tourism should be referred to in the preface, and is there room to refer to the tourist levy?
Business Wales	31/07/25	Consultation to gather input for the strategy: Need to demonstrate the importance of collaboration with partners, quality and sustainable growth.
Chief Executive Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai	21/08/25	Comments on the draft: Supportive but need to address upskilling young people to meet the demand for new industries. Collaboration between enterprises, organisations and communities is important.
Director of Policy and Delivery - Adra Housing Association	15/09/25	Comments on the draft: The Strategy hits the mark in terms of the main areas. Need for clear indicators linking to the priorities that could be used to measure success Need to address how to encourage private sector investment, and the role of Governments. Strengthen the direction of keeping spending local and procurement.
Scrutiny committee Cyngor Gwynedd	16/10/25	Comments on the draft: It needs to be demonstrated that resources will be targeted towards deprived and rural areas. Need to ensure that departments work together. The hospitality and agriculture sectors should not be coupled – they are very different. Need to review what has been achieved annually
Managing Director Menter Môn	30/10/25	Comments on the draft: Supportive that the important economic role of social enterprises is recognised. It needs to include how to support and encourage social enterprises to grow, and guidance on realising the potential of cultural and heritage assets. There is no reference to trialling new ideas or acknowledging the innovation hubs that exist. The reference to the local supply chain needs to be strengthened.

5. What information is available about the impact on each of the characteristics and topics below?

	Relevant Evidence, Information and Data	Potential Positive and/or Negative Impact
Race	No evidence	No impact recognised so far
Disability	The percentage of properties with access to gigabyte connectivity (>1,000 Mbps) is	Positive Impacts from the implementation of the Strategy: Improving accessibility to Gwynedd's

	<p>below the Welsh and UK averages, with a higher proportion of properties also having weak connectivity (<15 Mbps). Reach of 4G – and 5G is also lower in Gwynedd.</p> <p>Therefore, there is not as much opportunity for employers to offer hybrid or work-from-home terms.</p> <p>The employment rate for disabled people in Gwynedd is lower as a percentage than in Wales and the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>business buildings</p> <p>Increasing digital inclusion among the people of Gwynedd</p> <p>Increasing digital infrastructure in Gwynedd that will allow more services and businesses to operate online</p> <p>Encourage employers to adopt inclusive recruitment practices, including accessible interviews and flexible jobs</p> <p>Increasing diversity in the workforce</p> <p>Increasing opportunities and jobs for people with diverse needs</p> <p>Reducing the pay gap in the local economy</p> <p>Ensure that Gwynedd's businesses and enterprises adhere to and implement legislation, accessibility standards and the rights of disabled and/or neuro-diverse people</p> <p>The council is part of a disability scheme <i>Hyderus</i> up to level 2, and age-friendly.</p>
Gender	<p>There are more men than women in employment, and women's average weekly wage is lower than men's Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics</p>	<p>Reduce the gender pay gap by offering more flexible opportunities and reduce the impact of seasonal wages and part-time work.</p> <p>Increase the opportunities for women to return to work after maternity leave.</p>
Age	<p>Population ageing faster than the Welsh and UK average, and high levels of emigration among young people creating a challenge to maintain a skilled and adequate workforce.</p>	<p>Reduce pressure on the labour market by supporting people of retirement age to continue working or volunteering if they wish.</p> <p>Increase the number of people over 50 in employment by improving the digital inclusion of the workforce, improving the flexibility of working conditions in Gwynedd, and increasing training and advice for career change or re-entry.</p> <p>A more skilled workforce by ensuring that suitable training is available to young people for the industries/careers/sectors available in Gwynedd, which in turn will increase the number of young people employed in the county.</p> <p>More young people who are not in work are supported on the journey from education to employability.</p>

Religion and belief	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Sexual orientation	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Gender reassignment	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>More men than women are in employment, and women's average weekly wage is lower than men's</p> <p>Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics</p>	<p>Increased job security for pregnant women, by reducing the risk of insecure contracts or unstable hours.</p> <p>Increasing the opportunities for women to return to work after maternity leave, by encouraging more flexible and supportive working conditions from initiatives in Gwynedd.</p> <p>Improved access to training and career development after a period of maternity leave.</p> <p>Encourage employers to adopt more inclusive policies that support women after a period of maternity leave – e.g. gradual return, flexible hours, health support, childcare</p>
The Welsh Language	Gwynedd is the Welsh county with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers	<p>Strengthening the visibility and use of Welsh – the language will be part of the customer experience and in the workplace.</p> <p>Access to services and activities by county enterprises will be improved.</p> <p>Ensuring employment opportunities that support the language, this will enable Welsh speakers to stay in their communities or return.</p> <p>A monitoring framework will include the commitment to use the Welsh language by the county's enterprises.</p>
Socio-Economic Considerations	<p>The county's inactivity rate (i.e. the proportion of the population aged 16-64 who are not in work) is higher than the average for North Wales and the UK.</p> <p>The average weekly wage of a full-time worker and gross household spending income</p>	<p>Reducing poverty and deprivation by seeking to raise wages and secure stable jobs, which in turn will increase household incomes.</p> <p>Supporting individuals who are unemployed or inactive to overcome barriers to employment or training.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that no community or group is left behind by promoting inclusive</p>

	<p>have been consistently lower in Gwynedd since 2010 than the Welsh and UK averages. Significantly higher rates of employees in Gwynedd are part-time and seasonal employees compared to Wales and the UK.</p> <p>Low wages and part-time jobs cause high levels of poverty in rural and urban areas, with in-work poverty particularly high in Gwynedd compared to Wales and the UK.</p>	<p>employment to enable people of different backgrounds and ages to work.</p> <p>Strengthening local communities through the regeneration of infrastructure and town centres.</p>
Those who serve or have served in the armed forces, together with their families	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Human Rights	No evidence gathered so far	No impact recognised so far
Other	Not applicable	Not applicable

6. Are there any data or information gaps, and if so, what are they and how will they be addressed?

A comprehensive consultation has been undertaken, and no gaps have been identified

7. When considering other key decisions that affect these groups, is there an incremental impact (cumulative effect)?

There is an increasingly positive impact as the Strategy is a long-term plan.

8. What does the proposal include to demonstrate that you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equality of opportunity; help eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation; and foster good relations and wider community cohesion), as encompassed by the three aims of the General Duty in the Equality Act 2010?

The strategy seeks to promote equality and prevent discrimination through several concrete approaches – it emphasises that no person, area or community is to be left behind, and aims to ensure that employment opportunities, training and support for entrepreneurship are available to all, regardless of their socio-economic background, age or location.

There will be support to overcome barriers for people who are unemployed or inactive due to additional challenges.

There will be plans to prevent young people from being NEET (not in employment, education or training). The strategy seeks to ensure inclusive forms of employment by promoting flexible working patterns and alternative arrangements to enable people from different backgrounds, including parents, carers and people with disabilities, to work.

Volunteering opportunities to strengthen skills and community cohesion will be supported – this will encourage people within a community to come together through different activities. This will foster good relationships within communities and wider cohesion on community and social plans.

9. How does the proposal demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to address inequality arising from socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this relates to closing inequality gaps rather than simply improving outcomes for everyone.)

The county's enterprises will be encouraged to pay the Real Living Wage to reduce poverty for those in work.

There will be equitable access for all to skills and training including under-represented groups.

Short, medium and long-term indicators will be monitored to assess progress towards an inclusive economy, for example:

- number of people being supported to overcome barriers
- the number of businesses committing to fair pay
- number of individuals from underrepresented groups taking advantage of opportunities.

10. How does the proposal demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English, and to secure opportunities for people to use the Welsh language? Furthermore, how will the proposal be delivered in line with the Council's language policy and strategy to take every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing bilingual services) and to increase opportunities to use and learn the language within the community?

The current Language Policy of Cyngor Gwynedd is based on the principle that Welsh is the Council's natural language and that Welsh is the main administrative and public language, with all services, meetings, correspondence and signage being bilingual but with priority given to Welsh. It ensures that the public and staff receive a full service in Welsh, that Welsh language skills are essential for all posts, and that organisations receiving support from the Council are also expected to promote the Welsh language.

One of the main priorities of the Strategy is to 'Promote Gwynedd as a great place to live, work and venture, celebrating our unique identity and the Welsh language.' Priority will be given to strengthening the use of the language in the workplace and among customers, ensuring that Welsh is visible and naturally used within enterprises in the county.

The Strategy recognises that economic factors influence language transmission, especially in households facing poverty. By creating quality jobs and fair wages, it seeks to reduce the economic pressures that contribute to the loss of the language.

Ensuring employment opportunities for Welsh speakers is a key focus of the Strategy, aiming to retain young people locally by creating attractive jobs and reducing emigration – one of the main causes of the decline in the number of Welsh speakers. It also promotes opportunities for local people to progress into managerial and professional roles.

The Strategy emphasises the importance of Gwynedd's cultural scene as part of the economy, supporting events and activities that promote the language and local identity.

11. How does this proposal meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by implementing the five ways of working, and respond to the seven national well-being goals, including creating a More Equal Wales?

Five Ways of Working in Practice

Involvement:

Feedback from Gwynedd residents through the *Ardal Ni* consultation and two surveys of Gwynedd businesses was used to understand the needs of people, communities and enterprises. Meetings were held with key partners to ensure a diversity of perspectives and expertise.

Long-term:

The Strategy sets a clear direction for the future despite funding uncertainty. It addresses long-term economic gaps such as low productivity, an ageing population, poor digital connectivity and low wages.

Prevention:

The Strategy proactively responds to prevent a series of socio-economic problems from worsening by raising productivity levels, strengthening connectivity, creating a more diverse industrial base, increasing skills, and keeping more of the benefits locally. Expected outcomes include more stable jobs, higher wages, reduced poverty, a green economy and a thriving Welsh language.

Integration:

The Strategy aligns with the Council's existing plans and local regeneration frameworks. It also complements tourism and procurement plans to retain benefits within the local area.

Collaboration:

The Strategy has been developed with input from partners in the public sector, private bodies and community enterprises. Local action plans will be co-developed with partners throughout the Strategy period (2025–2035).

Responding to the Seven Well-being Goals

1. A Prosperous Wales:

The Strategy's vision is for an economy that places emphasis on the socio-economic well-being of the population, rather than traditional macro-economic indicators.

2. A Resilient Wales:

Gwynedd has exceptional natural assets that make it one of the best places to live and work. Protecting and enhancing the environment is therefore central to the Strategy – with action intended to reduce waste, encourage circular and green business practices, promote and take advantage of new opportunities in the green economy, and advocate for improvements to local grid capacity to make renewable and low-carbon energy developments more viable in Gwynedd.

3. A Healthier Wales:

People living in poverty, with insecure work or low wages are often more likely to experience poorer physical and mental health. The Strategy works to improve wages and working conditions, which will ultimately help improve the health of the people of Gwynedd. The Strategy also recognises that enjoying one's work is important for mental health, therefore ensuring that people access jobs that provide satisfaction is a key consideration.

4. A More Equal Wales:

A core priority of the Strategy is supporting the people of Gwynedd to reach their full potential by accessing quality work, fair wages and local opportunities. Practical steps to achieve this include:

- Supporting people who are unemployed, inactive or facing barriers to work.
- Helping people already in work to move into better jobs with fairer pay and conditions.
- Promoting the Real Living Wage.
- Promoting inclusive employment to make work more accessible.
- Promoting secure employment opportunities for the people of Gwynedd.
- Supporting older people to continue working or volunteering if they wish.

The Strategy also seeks to prevent young people from leaving Gwynedd for work-related reasons, by creating local opportunities and demonstrating that it is possible to build a successful future here.

5. A Wales of Cohesive Communities:

Connectivity is a fundamental part of the Strategy because broadband coverage is weaker than average in Gwynedd, particularly in rural areas. Action will therefore be taken to improve digital connectivity, ensuring that more people and businesses have access to fast and reliable broadband.

6. A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language:

The Welsh language is central to the Strategy. It recognises that economic factors can influence the viability of the language in Welsh-speaking communities such as Gwynedd. The Strategy therefore works to prevent or reverse language shift and to increase the use and visibility of Welsh among customers and in the workplace.

Any business or enterprise receiving support from the Council will be required to demonstrate progress in its use of the Welsh language, and a new monitoring system has been created to verify

this.

The Strategy also recognises the importance of Gwynedd's culture, particularly in contributing to energy, identity and a rich social life locally, and a specific priority area addresses this.

7. A Globally Responsible Wales:

The Strategy looks beyond Gwynedd, recognising that many people from Wales living abroad are keen to support their home communities. This presents an opportunity to bring their experience, expertise and talent back to Gwynedd, and this group is being specifically targeted.

In addition, the Strategy supports the global movement towards a net-zero economy, responding to the climate emergency.

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

12. Will this policy or practice be undertaken as a whole or in part by contractors or in partnership with other organisation(s)?

Yes

What action will be taken to comply with the General Equality Duty, Human Rights and Welsh language legislation and the Socio-Economic Duty in relation to procurement and/or partnerships?

Procurement:

The Strategy promotes the duty by the Council and their partners to support local suppliers in the procurement of services and the appointment of contractors.

Any tender documents and specifications will follow Cyngor Gwynedd's procurement policies and comply with any relevant rules and legislation.

Partnerships:

The Strategy promotes the duty by the Council and their partners to support local suppliers in the procurement of services and the appointment of contractors.

Any tender documents and specifications will follow Cyngor Gwynedd's procurement policies and comply with any relevant rules and legislation.

STEP 4 - Dealing with Negative or Unlawful Impact and Strengthening the Policy or Practice

13. When considering proportionality, does the policy or practice cause a significant positive or negative impact, or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:

1. More secure jobs and fair wages – the Strategy will help create quality jobs, reduce job insecurity, and promote the Real Living Wage.

2. Reducing poverty and socio-economic disadvantage – by improving household incomes and offering local employment opportunities, there will be less in-work poverty and deprivation.
3. Retaining young people and talent locally – employment and training opportunities will reduce the emigration of young people and attract talent back to the county.
4. Improved skills and access to training – training programmes and skills initiatives will ensure a skilled workforce for emerging industries.
5. Strengthening the Welsh language and Gwynedd’s culture – businesses will increase their use of Welsh, and support for the cultural scene will promote local identity.
6. Improved digital connectivity and infrastructure – investment in broadband and transport will in turn create more accessible and diverse employment opportunities.
7. A green and sustainable economy – the Strategy supports a net-zero economy, creating opportunities in green technologies and protecting the environment.

Significant Negative Impact:

1. Funding uncertainty – delivering the Strategy depends on funding from the Welsh Government, the UK Government and partners. If funding is not available, some projects may be unable to proceed. As the Strategy is long-term, it is hoped that any available funding can be channelled into delivering the projects that will bring the greatest benefits to the people of Gwynedd.
2. Implementation risks – major projects can take a long time to complete, which may lead to delays before results are seen. This could in turn cause frustration among businesses and communities.
3. Unequal impact – resources will need to be targeted carefully to avoid some areas or groups benefiting more than others, which could increase inequality within the county. The Delivery Plan will consider the geographical spread of projects to ensure that all areas benefit and to reduce geographical inequality.

14. Any intentional negative impact should be explained and why it is believed that there is justification for such action (for example, on the basis of improving equal opportunity, or fostering good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, or because of objective justification or affirmative action).

Not applicable

15. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful but unavoidable discrimination (e.g. funding reduction)?

No

Please note the reason for saying so and the justification for continuing

Not applicable

16. What other measures or changes could be included in order to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to the promotion of equal opportunities; helping to eradicate unlawful discrimination, harassment or persecution and

foster good relationships and wider community cohesion; as addressed in the General Duty of the Equality Act 2010?

As consideration has already been made, no additional measures have been identified at this time.

17. What other measures or changes could be included to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due attention has been given to the need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage?

As consideration has already been made, no additional measures have been identified at this time.

18. What other measures or changes could be included in order to strengthen or change the policy/practice to demonstrate that due regard has been given to the need to increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and not to treat the Welsh language less favourably than English in accordance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy/practice may have on the Welsh language?

As consideration has already been made, no additional measures have been identified at this time.

19. Whether there is enough information to form a balanced opinion and move forward?

Yes

STEP 5 – Decision to Proceed

20. Given the information gathered in Steps 1-4, is it possible to proceed with the policy or practice or not, and if so, on what basis?

Proceed with the policy in its current form

STEP 6 - Actions and Arrangements for Monitoring Results and Reviewing Data

The IEA process is an ongoing one and does not end when the policy/practice and the IAE have been agreed and implemented. There is a specific legal duty to monitor the impact of the policies/practices on equality on an ongoing basis to identify whether the outcomes have changed since you introduced or modified this new policy or practice. If you do not have the relevant data, you should be taking action to correct this in your action plan.

21. What actions identified in Steps 1-5 or any additional data collection work will assist in monitoring the policy/practice when implemented:

Action	Dates	Timeline	Lead Responsible	Add to Service Plan
Present to Cabinet	10/03/2026	once	Sioned Williams	Yes
Present to Full Council	14/05/2026	once	Sioned Williams	Yes

22. What arrangements to monitor and review the ongoing impact of this policy or practice will be implemented, including timeline for when it should be formally reviewed:

Monitoring and Reviewing Arrangements (including where the results will be recorded)	Timeline and Frequency	Lead Responsible	Add to Service Plan
Strategy Delivery Plan	Annually	Economy Department Officers	No



APPENDIX 3

TITLE **Assessment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

1. PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 1.1. This assessment introduces the Gwynedd Economic Strategy, and explains how the Strategy has been developed, and how it meets the requirements and purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACT

- 2.1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a responsibility on public bodies in Wales to act in a sustainable manner and contribute to the well-being of today's generations, as well as future generations. It considers well-being in a holistic manner, including economic and social, environmental and cultural aspects.
- 2.2. Decisions made by public bodies are required to meet two requirements – the Five Ways of Working and the Seven National Well-being Goals. The Five Ways of Working identify a series of actions that should be acted upon when making decisions, and the Seven Well-being Goals outline the long-term outcomes towards which to contribute.

Five Ways of Working (Principles of Sustainable Development for Wales):

- Involvement
- Long-term action
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaborate

National Well-being Goals:

- A Prosperous Wales
- A Resilient Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- A more Equal Wales
- A Wales of Cohesive Communities
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
- A Globally Responsible Wales

3. THRIVING WALES

- 3.1. While the well-being goals are holistic and interdependent, *it is a prosperous Wales* that looks most at economic issues. It is defined in the following way:

"An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing [...] fair work."

It recognises the value and importance of productivity, but stresses that "prosperity" is not growth for its own sake. Rather, the emphasis is on socio-economic well-being – on life outcomes, not traditional economic indicators, without overusing the planet's resources.

- 3.2. In his [2025 Annual Report](#), the Future Generations Commissioner said that economic policy in Wales has not moved sufficiently towards a wellbeing economy model (p. 86.), and that this should be done at all levels, including local government. In its definition, it includes decent work, fair and local procurement, local economies, skills for the future and a low-carbon society.

- 3.3. In light of these definitions, it is argued that the vision of the Strategy aligns very closely with the meaning of the well-being aim emphasised by the Commissioner:

"An innovative, productive and low carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes to everyone's well-being."

The vision is defined against five principles that focus on the well-being needs of the people of Gwynedd:

- **To live with dignity:** That everyone should receive enough to sustain themselves and their families, to have full and happy lives without wanting for anything.
- **Opportunities:** That every individual should be able to access the opportunities they need to realise their full potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.
- **Fairness:** That no area, person or community should be left behind.
- **Local roots:** That Gwynedd's enterprises are the essence of Gwynedd's economy, and through them, we are able to retain the wealth that we create locally.
- **Sustainability:** That the Welsh language and environment must be nurtured and protected which, together, make Gwynedd such a unique place to live, work and venture.

4. PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

METHOD	HOW WAS IT IMPLEMENTED?
<p>CONTENT</p> <p>To elicit input from individuals and groups with an interest and/or expertise in relevant issues, and to reflect the diversity of the area served.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The messages conveyed by the people of Gwynedd in the <i>Ardal Ni</i> Consultation (2022) were used to identify what the people of Gwynedd feel is good about their local areas, and the things that need to be improved. These messages have been incorporated into the vision of the Strategy to ensure that we reflect what is important to the people of Gwynedd. It is a useful resource for understanding the views of Gwynedd residents, and the diversity of views in different parts of the county. ▪ Enterprises in Gwynedd were invited to respond to two <i>Business Surveys</i>, the first in 2024 and the second in 2025. While hospitality businesses have been somewhat over-represented, there have been responses from businesses in a diverse range of industries. Messages were conveyed about businesses' intentions for the future, the challenges they face and the types of support they value. The Strategy responds to this input, particularly in its treatment of Gwynedd's enterprises – responding, e.g., to the challenges they have identified, including recruitment. ▪ The economic terrain is complex and involves policy actors at many levels. In order to elicit input from the greatest possible variety of actors and bring their expertise, a series of meetings were organised, including with the following bodies: Welsh Government, Business Wales; Federation of Small Businesses Wales; the agricultural unions (FUW, NFU Cymru); North Wales Ambition Board; North Wales Skills Partnership; Snowdonia National Park; Bangor University; Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai; Gwynedd Community Enterprise Network, and; Mantell Gwynedd for the volunteer field in Gwynedd.
<p>LONG-TERM ACTION</p> <p>Identify long-term trends and plan for them in a way that is balanced with short-term needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The policy and economic planning context is uncertain and rapidly changing in Wales. There is uncertainty as to the future of funding schemes from the Welsh and UK governments, and there is an increasing emphasis on regional collaboration. This Strategy responds to these uncertainties, setting a long-term strategic direction, regardless of the funding plans provided to the Council and its partners. ▪ The Strategy responds to a series of "gaps" that reflect the structural underperformance of the economy in Gwynedd over the longer term, when compared to Wales and the UK. Over half of them are National Well-being Indicators and show Gwynedd's relative disadvantage in terms of economic well-being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Productivity Gap (Well-being Indicator 09): The value of what is produced in Gwynedd (per hour worked; per job filled) is substantially lower than the Welsh and UK averages in 2023, and the productivity growth rate in Gwynedd is substantially lower than the Wales and UK averages since 2004. ○ Industrial Gap: A relatively narrow range of industries, with employees and enterprises more numerous in a smaller range

of industries.

- **New Enterprise Gap:** The business start-up rate in Gwynedd is amongst the lowest across Welsh counties in 2023, below the Welsh national average and significantly below the UK average.
- **High Performance Gap:** The percentage of enterprises that saw an increase of 20% in the number of employees over a three-year period was consistently lower in Gwynedd than in Wales and the UK between 2018 and 2023.
- **Digital Connectivity Gap (Well-being Indicator 50):** The percentage of properties with access to gigabyte connectivity (>1,000 Mbps) is lower than the averages for Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of properties also having the weakest connectivity (<15 Mbps). 4G and 5G coverage is also lower in Gwynedd.
- **Workforce Gap (Well-being Indicator 21):** The unemployment rate is low, but the county's inactivity rate (i.e., proportion of population aged 16-64 who are not in work) is higher than the average for North Wales and the UK.
- **Population Gap:** The population is ageing quicker than in Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of older people of retirement age and high levels of outward migration among young people.
- **Pay Gap (Well-being Indicator 10):** The average weekly salary of a full-time worker and household gross disposable income has been consistently lower in Gwynedd since 2010 than the Welsh and UK averages.
- **Work Conditions Gap (Well-being Indicator 16):** Substantially higher rates of workers in Gwynedd are part-time and seasonal employees, compared with Wales and the UK.
- **Well-being Gap (Well-being Indicators 18 & 19):** Low salaries and part-time jobs cause high levels of poverty in rural and urban areas, with in-work poverty particularly high in Gwynedd compared to Wales and the UK.

- Along with these long-term "gaps", other long-term trends that are likely to have an impact on the Strategy and its effectiveness have also been identified:
 - Moving to a net-zero and low-carbon economy is an economic opportunity; but, if the new wealth created is to be preserved locally, it is necessary to ensure that the people of Gwynedd have the skills to take advantage of work and business opportunities.
 - New technologies, e.g., artificial intelligence is an opportunity; but poses risks, especially if the people and businesses of Gwynedd are not attuned to the latest developments and able to respond to them effectively.
 - The language shift in Gwynedd is partly influenced by the economy (Welsh Communities Commission, 2024); e.g., lower language transmission in socio-economically disadvantaged households.

PREVENTIVE ACTION

Prevent problems from happening in the first place or getting worse.

- The Strategy deliberately responds to a series of "gaps" where Gwynedd performs below national averages or peers, and which create socio-economic wellbeing problems. The following changes are therefore implemented which, in essence, seek to alleviate the "gaps" or prevent them from getting worse. On the one hand, structural change in the economy, including:

- **Raising the productivity levels of our enterprises and workers** to stimulate higher salaries and better working conditions.
 - **Increasing the competitiveness of our native enterprises** so that they are more effective and efficient, realising their long-term business objectives and creating quality jobs.
 - **Strengthening digital connectivity and the county's business infrastructure** to create the best possible conditions for enterprise.
 - **Creating a more diverse industrial foundation** with local enterprises in a range of industries, creating new opportunities and a more resilient economy.
 - **Supporting our people to gain the skills they need**, so that they, along with the enterprises that employ them, can take full advantage of opportunities;
 - **To retain more of the wealth created in Gwynedd locally**, in order to maximise benefits for Gwynedd's people, enterprises and communities, and;
 - **Building a net zero and naturally Welsh economy**, that is environmentally and culturally sustainable.
- This is primarily done in order to prevent or reduce the socio-economic wellbeing challenges faced in Gwynedd. To this end, the change implemented will include:
 - Higher salaries and gross household income;
 - More people employed in stable jobs;
 - Lower levels of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage;
 - Broader variety of employment opportunities locally;
 - More people able to stay, live and work in their local communities;
 - More people enjoying their work and realising their full potential;
 - A green economy that protects the county's exceptional natural environment, and;
 - A Welsh economy which increases the use and visibility of the language with customers and in the workplace across Gwynedd.

INTEGRATE

To act in a way that is compatible with, and adds value to, rather than undermines other plans and priorities.

- The Strategy builds upon the strategic direction already set out in the Council's Plan: *"Strengthening the economy and supporting the residents of Gwynedd to earn decent wages"*. The Strategy takes this direction, but because it is one of several corporate priorities, the purpose of this Strategy is to define the economic vision in further depth and to pay particular attention to the economy; that is to ensure priorities and meaningful action.
- The new Economic Strategy lies alongside the Gwynedd and Snowdonia Sustainable Visiting Economy Plan, following the direction set out in that Plan for tourism, and complements its vision for a sustainable wellbeing economy.
- *Gwynedd Ni* is Gwynedd Council's local regeneration framework. It focuses on 13 local areas across the county. To ensure

	<p>meaningful action in each of these local areas, individual action plans will be prepared for them and added to the framework. The content of these schemes will be co-developed with the Council's local partners – local representatives, community enterprises and private and charitable bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Council's new Procurement Plan, meaning that they blend very closely together, particularly when trying to keep the benefits of public spending local.
<p>COLLABORATE To act in collaboration with partners (both internal and external) and with enterprises and the people of Gwynedd.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy has been developed in light of the input provided by a series of partners, as listed above in the Content Section. It recognises that it will be necessary to work with them to maximise the value of the Strategy and that the Council as a single body cannot act independently. Therefore, this Strategy lives up to the forces that are in the hands of the Council, as well as the forces that lie in other bodies. ▪ The Strategy recognises that the people and enterprises of Gwynedd are the essence of the local economy. Therefore, the Council will continue to elicit their input over the full duration of the Strategy, including the annual Business Surveys. There will also be a need to continue to work together in the implementation of the Strategy's projects. ▪ The local action plans developed in light of the Strategy will be co-created with the Council's local partners – local representatives, community enterprises and private and charitable organisations. This will ensure co-production and co-operation over the full lifetime of the Strategy, 2025-35.

5. HOW WILL THE NATIONAL WELL-BEING GOALS BE MET?

Thriving Wales

"An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work."

See Part 3. The vision of the Strategy is explained very closely with the Future Generations Commissioner's definition of the Prosperous Wales goal, i.e., an economy that places emphasis on the socio-economic well-being of the population, not traditional macro indicators.

A Resilient Wales

"A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change."

Gwynedd has an exceptional natural wealth which makes it one of the best places to live and work. Therefore, protecting and nurturing the environment is central to the Strategy,

Action is planned to reduce waste, encourage circular and green ways of doing business, promote and take advantage of new opportunities in the green economy, and push for improvements in grid capacity locally to make renewable and low carbon energy developments more feasible in Gwynedd.

A Healthier Wales

"A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood."

It is known that people who are socio-economically disadvantaged, facing low wages, job insecurity or poverty, are more likely to face poorer physical and mental health. Improvements in pay and working conditions will be implemented in the Strategy – and this, in due course, will have a positive structural impact on health outcomes.

It is also recognized in the Strategy that mental health is partly shaped by the enjoyment gained from work, or not. Therefore, ensuring that people in Gwynedd have access to work that they enjoy is also important.

A more Equal Wales

"A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances."

Unleashing the potential of the people of Gwynedd is a central objective in the Strategy, and it is emphasized on several occasions in the document itself. At the moment, the "gaps" which mean that Gwynedd is underperforming economically when compared to Wales and the UK, mean that the people of Gwynedd face a relative disadvantage - and, as such, face structural challenges reaching their full potential. Therefore, action will be taken to mitigate the "gaps" and prevent them from worsening across the Strategy's six priorities.

In particular, the fourth priority – *Supporting Our People* – deals

specifically with supporting people to reach their full potential: *"Supporting the people of Gwynedd to reach their full potential, to access quality employment, fair salaries and opportunities locally."* It consists of the following operations:

- Supporting people into work who are unemployed, inactive or facing additional challenges;
- Supporting people in work to get better jobs with higher wages, or more secure working conditions.
- Promoting the Real Living Wage among the county's employers.
- Promoting inclusive forms of employment to make it easier for people to be able to work.
- To promote employment opportunities that provide security to the people of Gwynedd.
- Supporting older people of retirement age to continue working and/or volunteering, where they want to do so.

It is also known that many of the young people who leave Gwynedd do so not because they necessarily want to leave, but because they feel it is necessary to do so to find work. Because of this, the migration challenge is specifically addressed to support young people to be able to succeed locally, regardless of their background and aspirations.

Wales of Cohesive Communities

"Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities."

Connectivity is an essential part of the Strategy, particularly in light of the digital "gap" which means that broadband connectivity is weaker in Gwynedd. Improvements in broadband connectivity are therefore being implemented, especially in rural areas facing the weakest digital connectivity.

A Wales with a Vibrant Culture where the Welsh Language Thrives

"A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation."

The Welsh language is central to the Strategy. Structural economic influences are known to have an impact on the viability of the Welsh language in those communities with a high density of Welsh speakers (Welsh Communities Commission, 2024), including Gwynedd – and the Strategy fully accepts that. The Strategy will act to mitigate or reverse the language shifts faced in Gwynedd and are partly driven by the economy, as well as increasing the use and visibility of the Welsh language more generally in Gwynedd, both among customers and in the workforce.

The largest language shifts include:

- Emigration of young people – More likely to be speaking Welsh.
- Local people are under-represented in the highest managerial positions in Gwynedd, and;
- Households with one or more Welsh speaking parents but

who are at socio-economic disadvantage, are less likely to pass on Welsh to children.

Any body, enterprise or business in receipt of support from the Council, whether financial or non-financial, will have to demonstrate an increase in their use of the Welsh language; and a new monitoring document has been developed for this purpose.

The Strategy also recognises the importance of Gwynedd's cultural scene, particularly in creating vibrance and a rich social life locally – and as an important aspect of the economy. Because of this, culture is specifically addressed in the sixth priority of the Strategy.

A Globally Responsible Wales

" A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being."

There is an international orientation to the Strategy. It recognises that Gwynedd and Wales have an international "diaspora" which often looks back to Wales and wants to make a difference to the communities it originally came from. It is an opportunity to bring resource, expertise and talented people back to Gwynedd, and they are targeted in the Strategy to do so.

Beyond this opportunity, the Strategy supports the move towards a net zero economy due to the climate change crisis internationally.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Following this assessment, it is concluded that Gwynedd's Economic Strategy very closely meets the requirements and purpose of the Well-being Act. The Five Ways of Working have been fully incorporated into the development of the Strategy, and there is a clear well-being orientation in it – an orientation that veers from a traditional focus on economic growth for its own sake, towards a new model of economic development that prioritises the socio-economic well-being of the population.

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME



CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET

Date of discussion at the Cabinet	Items to be discussed	Cabinet Member
Quarter 1 April 2026 – July 2026		
April 2026		
May 2026	Capital Programme 2025/26 - End of Year Review (31 March 2026 position)	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Final Accounts 2025/26 - Revenue Outturn	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
June 2026	Trees Policy	Cllr June Jones
	Waste Strategy	Cllr Craig ab Iago
July 2026	Medium Term Financial Plan	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones