

Complete Agenda



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CABINET

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

DATE	Tuesday, 15th September, 2026
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Cyfarfod Hybrid / Hybrid Meeting – Siambr Dafydd Orwig and Zoom.
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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THE CABINET, TUESDAY, 7 JULY 2026

Present -

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

Also present -

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Catrin Thomas (Corporate Director), Dylan Owen (Corporate Director), Nia Grisdale (Legal Services Manager), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance), Bethan Richardson (Climate Change Programme Manager), Cllr Delyth Lloyd Griffiths (Former Vice-chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee), Dafydd Wyn Williams (Head of Environment Department), Roland Thomas (Assistant Head of Environment Department), Cllr Sian Williams (Vice-chair of the Care Scrutiny Committee), Sioned Eirian Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department), Dylan Rhys Griffiths (North Wales Shared Prosperity Fund Manager), Siwan Evans (Gwynedd Shared Prosperity Fund Manager), Aled Gibbard and Sianed Jones (Assistant Heads of Children and Families Department), Gwen Roberts (Democracy Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

It was highlighted that this was the last Cabinet meeting before the summer recess, and the opportunity was taken to thank all Council staff and Members for their work throughout the year. It was confirmed that much had been achieved by the Council in the last busy six months, with many exciting plans in the pipeline for the second half of the year.

Attention was drawn to the Euro Under-19 Football Championship which was currently being held in Gwynedd. Pride was taken that the County had been able to welcome teams from all over Europe to play here, and the Welsh team's effort in the competition was praised.

No apologies were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Declarations of interest were received from Councillors June Jones and Dewi Jones in relation to Item 13. Both Members left the meeting during the discussion.

3. URGENT ITEMS

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 meetings held on 9 June 2026 were accepted as a true record.

6. SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The report was submitted by Cllr Nia Jeffreys.

DECISION

To accept the submitted report which reported on the work of the Supporting People Programme for 2025/26.

DISCUSSION

It was stated that the submitted report was the first annual report on the progress of the Supporting People programme.

It was explained that the aim of the programme was to assist residents of the County as they attempted to cope with the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis, offering support, information and access to a service that ensured fairness for all. Reference was made to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on residents' well-being, and therefore there was a clear need for practical assistance in this area. It was then explained that the report showed the support offered to residents, and stories from the recipients of the support about the positive impact the support had had on their lives.

Council staff, its partners, local organisations and communities were thanked for their work in supporting the people of Gwynedd.

It was noted that this work was an addition to the Council's day-to-day work, highlighting that the report noted the additional interventions that had been put in place by the Council to prioritise this area. The arrangements in place, in conjunction with local partners, were detailed to ensure that there are hubs within communities to enable access to information and support for residents locally. It was mentioned that well-being champions were present within these hubs to offer support to residents as well. Reference was made to the training on nurturing an empathetic way of working based on being trauma-informed, and which placed the person at the centre. The importance of this work having a positive impact on the people of Gwynedd was emphasised, highlighting the case studies of the experiences of users of the services, which were included in the report.

It was confirmed that automatic registration for social tariffs would continue to be promoted, ensuring that those people who are eligible for them were aware of the support available to them. It was added that campaigns would be carried out to ensure that people have access to information and activities available across the County at certain times. It was noted that the hub network continued to develop and evolve, and it was planned to continue working with services to try to run the Trauma Informed and children's rights awareness training across the Council.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Reference was made to the programme's focus of trying to put the person at the centre, mentioning that 'Dewi's Story' which was included in the Report was an example of this in practice. It was noted that an informal conversation, developed from the original request made by 'Dewi' had resulted in him being able to receive additional support.
It was highlighted that the rise in artificial intelligence was affecting several services, and it was enquired about the future of telephone services for example, in going forward. In response, reference was made to the "Gafael Llaw" pilot project noting that this work highlighted the positive impact of holding informal conversations on individuals' ability to receive support beyond the requirements of their original request, to meet all their needs. In relation to the future of this type of service, the enduring importance of a conversation with a person to cohorts of the community was emphasised. Furthermore, it was highlighted that offering this service could assist with isolation as well, by providing contact with another person to individuals.
- The community hubs were highlighted, mentioning their importance to the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, as they provided an opportunity to bring services closer to the residents of the County. A discussion was then held on the broader work taking place within these hubs as well, such as elements of respite care, preventative work and carer support. Gratitude was expressed for this provision.
- It was suggested that those within the most rural areas of the County may not be aware of the provision and services offered by the Council. This was expanded upon, proposing that promoting the services available through Community Councils, for example, would mean that the message could be further shared and more residents could be reached.
It was confirmed that the hubs were mostly located in town centres, but that a bulletin would be included in local papers stating contact details in order to be able to access the information should an individual be unable to reach one of the hubs. It was noted that a communication plan was in place, and it was agreed that cascading the information and cost-of-living bulletin for Community Councils was something to consider for the year ahead. The Cabinet Member was thanked for her recommendation.
- It was enquired about the ability of the Council's provision to respond to the current increasing demand for support services, and its ability to respond to anticipated future demand. In response, it was acknowledged that the programme was evolving to try to meet the challenges posed by the increase in demand, as well as the change in that demand. Looking to the future, it was explained that an investment would be made to up-skill workplaces to respond to the change in the type of people being supported, and with what they were being supported.

7. UPDATE TO CYNGOR GWYNEDD CLIMATE AND NATURE EMERGENCY PLAN 2022/23 - 2029/30.

The report was submitted by Cllr Craig ab Iago.

DECISION

That Cabinet approves the modifications to the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and adopts Cyngor Gwynedd's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30 (V.2).

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the Climate and Nature Plan had been adopted for four years now, and therefore it was timely to review it.

It was highlighted that Cyngor Gwynedd was a leader in this area in Wales and more widely, recognising that this Council was one of the first councils to declare a climate change emergency, and subsequently established a Climate and Nature Board. There was pride in the fact that officers had been working on reducing the Council's carbon footprint for over a decade now, and the calibre of staff working in this area within the Council was praised.

It was acknowledged that the next step in relation to the Plan was to work with residents, and it was mentioned that the public consultation held last year had highlighted the need to do so as well. It was explained that groups had discussed the Plan at conferences, and those discussions informed this review.

Cabinet was reminded that applications for funding for the projects identified in the Plan would be submitted before it in due course.

The former vice-chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee was welcomed to the meeting to present the Committee's recommendations to the Cabinet. It was noted that the Plan had been re-scrutinised by the Committee in January this year, explaining that the Committee had scrutinised the proposed changes to the Plan, the responses to the public consultation, and the funding sources that had been identified. It was stated that the Committee had welcomed the intention to revisit the Council's target of Net Zero Carbon by 2030. The message raised at the Scrutiny Committee was detailed, namely the need to be more ambitious.

It was confirmed that the Department had responded to all the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee, and that the majority of them had been incorporated into the Plan as well.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was emphasised that it was key for the Council to remain ambitious in this area, especially given the extreme heat affecting the country at the moment. In light of the Welsh Government's review of the national Net 0 target and associated carbon budgets, it was asked if there was any update on this. The relevant Cabinet Member revealed that the Department was currently awaiting guidance from the Government, noting

that it would be prepared to work with officers within the Government to try to turn the ambitions of this Council into a reality.

- In response to a question about the next steps of this Plan, it was intended to share the Plan on social media and on the web, seeking to ensure that it was as accessible as possible. The photographs used throughout the document were praised.
- An update on the plans to move towards a fleet of electric vehicles was requested. It was confirmed that this work was in the hands of the Council, while also acknowledging that support would be received from the Government to undertake some of this work. It was then noted that the turnover of lorries and heavy equipment took time as a result of having to wait to see what the market had to offer in terms of these heavy vehicles.

8. WASTE AND RECYCLING STRATEGY AND USE OF EPR FUNDING

The report was submitted by Cllr Craig ab Iago.

DECISION

Resolved:

To adopt Cyngor Gwynedd's Waste and Recycling Strategy 2025–2030 as the strategic document setting out the Council's direction, vision and priorities for waste and recycling over the next five years.

To approve the principle of using Extended Producer Responsibility Funding (EPR) as the main source of funding to support and enable the implementation of the Strategy's priorities, including plans to increase recycling, improve services, maintain existing infrastructure and invest in future infrastructure.

To approve the strategic direction for the use of EPR funding to:

- manage the service's direct financial risks by creating "just in case" financial provision, such as dealing with overspending on service delivery where there is no alternative approach, reducing the risk of penalties for failing to meet recycling targets and preparing for Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) costs.
- provide a sound financial basis for the implementation of the schemes set out in the Strategy, including the steps to reach the 70% recycling target and the short-term investments needed for upgrades.
- establish a Co-funding Fund to support significant development at future sites in Caernarfon and Harlech.

To note that further decisions will be required on some individual operational elements of the Strategy and the use of the EPR funding, but that adopting the Strategy and approving the EPR use direction provided a policy framework and the financial foundation to move forward with the work programme.

To note that the Council will need to consider all possible sources of funding when setting the revenue budget for 2027/28 and subsequent years and that the possibility of having to revisit the above decisions cannot be ruled out if an element of the EPR funding needs to be diverted in order to be able to set a balanced budget.

DISCUSSION

It was highlighted that this was the first Waste Strategy that the Council had developed, and added that it set a clear direction for the Council's handling of the topic of waste.

Reference was made to the Welsh Government's target of recycling 70% of the County's waste, and the Cabinet Member stated that he would like to see the County recycle 100% of its waste as well as trying to reduce the amount of waste generated here. Although the Council had no control over the amount of waste generated in the County, it was stated that much more needed to be done than just recycling. The need to strengthen our circular economy, see waste as a resource and also focus on the re-use element was suggested.

Some of those reasons were put forward behind attempting to introduce such a Strategy in the County, noting that the service faced a variety of challenges. Reference was made to the statutory target to recycle 70% of the County's waste, explaining that Gwynedd was not currently meeting this target. The risk of receiving a significant financial penalty was then mentioned if the Council did not meet this target, adding that there was a risk of carbon-related costs on the horizon as well. The Strategy's attempt to modernise the service was explained and its wider vision was then clarified. The six main priorities of the Strategy were identified, namely:

- Communication and Engagement,
- Reduce, Re-use and Repair,
- Increase Recycling,
- Providing a High-quality Service,
- Achieving Net Zero,
- Infrastructure that is Fit for the Future

It was stated that EPR funding was a new funding stream based on the principle that the "polluter pays" the cost of managing the packaging waste they create. It was noted that the Council had received a significant amount of EPR funding last year and that an increase in this figure was forecast for this year. It was highlighted that there was an intention to use this funding in a balanced way, as recommended in the Report. It was said that the Strategy alone was not enough, and that resources were needed to bring about change.

The support received for the Strategy in the public consultation held in 2025 was discussed. It was recognised that some concerns had been raised, relating to the need to ensure that the service was fair and accessible to all.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- The Strategy was welcomed and its importance was emphasised.

- The high cost of the service was noticed, and it was asked what caused the service to be more expensive than services within other counties. In response, it was confirmed that the latest report from the Welsh Local Government Association indicated that the Council was going in the right direction in terms of reducing this cost. Reference was made to geographical factors affecting these costs in Gwynedd, highlighting the rural geography of the County compared to other counties.
- Pride was expressed for the attention given to people with dementia, the elderly, and disabled people, as well as the help available to support them. Concerns were raised about the use of recycling sacks rather than carts, anticipating an increase in demand for back-door collections as the sacks were harder to move.
- An update was provided on the recycling sack pilot that was scheduled to take place in another area. It was noted that it would not be mandatory to use a sack, it was highlighted that these sacks were cheaper than the cart, held more, and had not blown away in the previous pilot.
- In response to a question about the Council's recycling performance over the 2025/26 period, it was confirmed that the Department currently had draft figures. It was reported that Natural Resources Wales had asked all Councils to reconsider their approach to wood recycling, and this had consequently had a negative impact on local authority recycling figures across Wales.
- In relation to the Reduce, Re-use and Repair priority, it was explained that the Council would rely on community enterprises, etc. to assist with this work. It was added that there were plans to open a re-use shop at a recycling centre in September for local people, and that guidance would be available for community enterprises to help deliver the Strategy.
- When discussing a recent conference attended by the Cabinet Member for Environment, rental models for bodies such as the Council were mentioned, in an attempt to promote re-use rather than buying new.

9. QUARTERLY REPORT - CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD (JULY 2026)

The report was submitted by Cllr Nia Jeffreys.

DECISION

To accept the report which is the fourth quarterly report from the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that the submitted report was the fourth quarterly report by the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board. It was stated that the report

raised awareness of the developments in relation to this work, and also reported on what remains to be achieved by the Response Board.

It was noted that Professor Sally Holland was unable to attend this meeting to present her report, therefore it was intended to re-submit the item at the September Cabinet meeting so that the Chair of the Board could present the report. As a result, the intention to hold a more detailed discussion on the item in September was confirmed.

The courage of the victims and survivors was acknowledged, reiterating that they were at the forefront of everyone's minds when discussing this topic.

10. STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The report was submitted by Cllr Dewi Jones.

DECISION

To accept the Safeguarding Strategic Panel's Annual Report for the year 2025/26.

DISCUSSION

The importance of this Panel was highlighted, and it was recognised that the last few years had been challenging for the Council. Pride was expressed at the action taking place following the publication of the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report, to strengthen the Council's arrangements in this area.

Referring to the Council's attempt to be open and transparent in its response, it was explained that this item had been submitted to the Care Scrutiny Committee, and that it was intended to submit it to the Full Council in due course as well.

Concerns were raised about the increase in the number of child and adult referrals being received, and the impact of this on the services and staff of the relevant departments. It was then noted that the number of staff who had completed the VAWDASV training had increased, and that the figure of schools that had delivered safeguarding training to their staff was now 100%.

Thanks were expressed to all Council staff who had undertaken this work, reminding everyone that safeguarding was a matter for all departments.

Attention was drawn to the fact that data at the front of the Report was still being verified, and it was noted that some of these figures may be updated by the time the Report was submitted to the Full Council in due course.

The Vice-chair of the Care Scrutiny Committee was welcomed to the meeting to present the Committee's recommendations to the Cabinet. The Committee's satisfaction with the progress in the work of the Panel was confirmed.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Reference was made to the increase in the number of referrals to children's services in 2025/26, and it was questioned whether increased awareness and higher levels of training among staff was a factor when considering this increase. The increased awareness among staff was welcomed. The concern about the number of referrals was reiterated, but on the other hand the need to ensure that people referred appropriately, without delay and without hindrance was noted.
- In response to a question about the training situation for Governors, reference was made to the data noted in the Report regarding the Safeguarding training sessions for Chairs and designated Safeguarding Governors. Reference was made to the crucial role of Governors in the system, and therefore that it was vital for them to be aware of all the safeguarding arrangements and the responsibility they had. It was highlighted that an additional officer was now working within the team supporting Governors within the Education department.
- When discussing whether this increase in referrals was common across the country, it was explained that the County received slightly fewer referrals on average than other counties. However, it was highlighted that every county in Wales was seeing an increase in referrals and it was assumed that there were national sociological questions about what was behind this increase and how to address it. Attention was drawn to the fact that Gwynedd followed the national trend of recent years, noting that there was an increase in the number of children on the child protection register as well as the number of referrals.
- An observation was made about the clear concern regarding the DoLS service for quite some time now, and it was asked how the department hoped to address this. In response, it was stated that the recent Supreme Court ruling meant that there would be a significant change in this area. While the statutory guidance regarding this decision had not yet been received, it was anticipated that hundreds of people could be removed from the DoLS waiting list as a result. It was stated that nothing would be changed until the guidance was received. As the Council had invested in the workforce, it was hoped that there would be an adequate resource to cope with the pressures of this area going forward.
- Reference was made to the percentage of Council staff who had completed the VAWDASV training and it was asked how it was intended to increase this percentage. It was stated that this training was statutory and the fact that Wales was at the forefront in this regard was welcomed. This was elaborated upon noting that plans were underway to try to increase the number completing that training as well as the safeguarding training. Reference was made to the role of the Safeguarding Promotion Officer in trying to ensure the accessibility of the training to all parts of the workforce and ensuring that staff completed it.
- Attention was drawn to the British Sign Language (BSL) training that had been provided to Siop Gwynedd staff. There was pride in the fact that videos of a person signing on several pages of the Council's website were now available, so that the most general information was accessible.
- In response to a question about the 'Safe Zones' that had been developed in Bangor and Caernarfon, it was revealed that the Council was still working closely

with the Police. It was detailed that they were trying to ensure that there were areas with adequate street lights and CCTV cameras to enable people to walk safely after dark. It was reported that the Council was seeking to undertake a joint assessment with the Police, to try to understand where the greatest risks were and identify those areas where crime had taken place in the past so that this scheme could be developed across the County. A Cabinet Member acknowledged that officers no longer looked at these cameras in real time, and there was concern that this was a step backwards due to the risk of missing an opportunity to intervene if a person was in danger. It was noted that this had been mentioned at a recent meeting of the Bangor/Ogwen Area Forum in a conversation with the North Gwynedd Region Inspector. It was stated that this had not been raised in the Safe Places Group or the Safeguarding Strategic Panel, but it was agreed to discuss it with relevant officers to see if it was something that should be considered.

- Reference was made to a previous comment about Governors, reporting that a questionnaire had been circulated to Governors to express their confidence in their roles and safeguarding roles. It was hoped that the results of this questionnaire would be shared soon.
- When offering more information about the Children's Services' proactive approach to ensure that the child's voice is heard when responding to concerns relating to individuals working with children and young people, it was stated that the change in the system meant that a social worker would go to speak to the child if any allegation about anyone in a position of trust was made. It was mentioned that there were a few occasions where the child themselves or a parent had refused that contact, and that could be challenging.
- Reference was made to the scrutiny investigation carried out by members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, about talking to children to find out their understanding of how to make a referral or allegation, and who to turn to if they had a concern. It was confirmed that a report on this had been submitted to the Scrutiny Committee, and that children seemed generally aware of the processes to follow. The continued work also underway in this area was then discussed. It was noted that a report on the scrutiny investigation was about to be published, and all those involved in the work were thanked. It was highlighted that support had also been provided to the scrutiny investigation by independent investigators.
- There were concerns about the increasing number of children being home-educated, and that parents had the right to refuse any contact from the Council. It was highlighted that it was a matter that arose in the Education Department's performance challenge meetings, and it was explained that this increase was seen nationally. This was elaborated upon by noting that a system had been created for the purpose of visiting those who de-registered, and that this was monitored. The challenges involved in this area were mentioned, and a suggestion was made for the need for national discussions in light of the progress.

The different cohorts within the figure of home-educated children were then highlighted; it was mentioned that some of these children had de-registered from school, and others had never attended school and therefore had received their entire education at home. It was emphasised that cohorts of the children receiving home education were well educated, but that there was concern about other cohorts of these children. It was explained that the support offered to those who were home-educating their children was optional and therefore the Council

had no right to enforce that contact, unless there were safeguarding concerns. It was proposed that this was something that the Government should be looking at, and it was believed that there were some cases where the authority needed more rights.

As a result of the increase in the field of Additional Learning Needs, it was believed that some children did not receive the necessary support within the education system, and that this was a factor in some parents' decision to remove their children from school.

- The work undertaken to prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence was recognised, and it was confirmed that more needed to be done in this area. The need for society to be doing more in this area was also emphasised, highlighting the fact that the number of people experiencing domestic violence in north Wales was one of the highest in Britain. It was noted that there was a need to look at the development of domestic violence services better across the Council and across other public organisations. The need was then noted to ensure that these matters remained at the top of the Council's agenda, and the need to offer ongoing training to staff and residents.

11. SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW (2026)

The report was submitted by Cllr Dewi Jones.

DECISION

That the Cabinet adopt the Revised Safeguarding Policy 2026 and approved the awareness actions set out in the report.

DISCUSSION

It was reported that this Policy was reviewed every two years to ensure that it was up to date and addressed the latest legislation and guidance.

The importance of the Care Scrutiny Committee's views and recommendations as they scrutinised the item was emphasised, noting that their recommendations had been included in the document.

The Vice-chair of the Care Scrutiny Committee was welcomed to the meeting to present the committee's recommendations to Cabinet. The recommendations were presented, namely to move the list of definitions to the front of the document, and to consider including a clause within the Policy relating to raising awareness of the signs that a child is being groomed or bullied on-line.

It was acknowledged that considerable change had been made to the policy since the last review, emphasising that this reflected the lessons learnt in this field.

It was noted that no equality impact assessment had been completed here as only policy revisions were being done at this point. This was elaborated upon stating that an assessment would need to be undertaken when it would be submitted to the Cabinet in two years.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- In response to a question relating to assurance about the effectiveness of this policy, it was stated that the information would be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee, the Leadership Team, and the Cabinet on a regular basis. Reference was also made to the Director's Annual Report, and that it was intended to commission an additional audit to assess staff's understanding of the Safeguarding Policy and how it should be implemented. It was hoped that the work would provide assurance of workforce awareness.
- It was emphasised that safeguarding was a matter for all departments across the Council, and it was recognised that safeguarding was now on the agenda of every meeting of the Corporate Management Team and departmental management teams.

12.ALLOCATION OF INCOME SURPLUS FROM THE SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM FOR 2025-26

The report was submitted by Cllr Huw Wyn Jones.

DECISION

To allocate the additional income from the premium on empty properties and second homes to the priority areas set out in Part 4 below.

DISCUSSION

It was reported that a total surplus of £917,770 for 2025/26 was available for allocation. It was explained that this was a combination of £3,700 of the Premium up to and including 2024-25 which had not yet been committed, and £914,070 of the 2025-26 Premium collected above the commitments.

For transparency, it was highlighted that the Council was expected to announce how the additional income raised would be used to address the problems caused

by long-term empty properties and second homes, or to address other local housing problems. The new proposals to be funded were listed, namely storage and transport of household property in emergency accommodation / temporary accommodation, and a Project Manager post for the Housing Action Plan.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was explained that the purpose of the premium was to try to ensure that no one is homeless in Gwynedd, and then a wider context was given regarding the new proposals noted in the report. It was mentioned that there would also be a significant one-off sum to correspond with one of the proposals, but that this would ensure long-term savings for the Council.

13. LOCAL GROWTH FUND: GWYNEDD SCHEMES 2026/27

The report was submitted by Cllr R Medwyn Hughes.

DECISION

To agree to commit the £6,317,640 from the funding provided for Cyngor Gwynedd to allocate to projects in 2026/27, to the 10 schemes listed in the report.

To authorise the Head of Economy and Community, in consultation with the Head of Legal Service, the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive, to confirm the details of the plans and financial contribution, decide on the provision of a letter of offer and any other documentation for agreeing the funding of the projects.

DISCUSSION

It was reported that the introduction of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) had been presented to Cabinet earlier this year, and it was stated that the first year of the Fund had now begun with an offer of funding from the Welsh Government to north Wales having been accepted.

It was stated that 2026/27 would be considered as a transition year to the new Local Growth Fund arrangements. It was highlighted that the same governance and administration arrangements as the Shared Prosperity Fund would continue to be in place for 2026/27.

It was explained that responsibility for the LGF would transfer to the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee from 2027/28.

It was noted that a budget of £6,317,640 was available to Cyngor Gwynedd for 2026/27, to be committed to projects. This was elaborated upon by stating that

73% of the funding was capital, and that planning was required on the basis that the money was spent before 31 March 2027.

It was explained that the programmes had been selected on the basis of the themes of the Economic Strategy; Enterprise, People, and Place. The identified schemes were then highlighted, which were noted in Appendix 1. Pride was expressed in the fact that around 50 projects had been supported across the County.

The Fund's priorities were noted, which were

- More productive and competitive businesses,
- Increasing skills and supporting people into work,
- Improving regional infrastructure.

It was then noted that the criteria to identify the 10 priority projects had been determined on the basis of these priorities. The key considerations for bringing together a package were listed, highlighting the need to be able to operate within the time constraints of the LGF.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- Pride was expressed in being able to discuss a positive matter and the Department was congratulated for finding exciting projects, which would make a difference.
- Frustration was expressed in reference to the difference between what the Council now received in grants, compared to what had been received before the exit from the European Union. Attention was drawn to the challenge of the barriers that must be overcome to receive this funding, along with the many changes in the rules of these grants, and the tight timetable for spending the money.
- The frustration regarding the constraints in terms of the timetable for spending the money was reiterated, explaining that many good projects were missing out on the funding as a result. It was disappointing that most of the money was capital as well.
- It was believed that the Department had succeeded in meeting the priorities of the Fund.

14. THE NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE AND FOSTER WALES NATIONAL JOINT COMMITTEE - REDUCING THE QUORUM FOR THE MEETING

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Trenholme.

DECISION

To agree to reduce the quorum of the meetings of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales Joint Committee from 60% to 40%, provided that at least three regions are represented.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that 60% of Joint Committee members were required to be in attendance at present, in order to have a quorum to hold a meeting. It was stated that two meetings had been cancelled due to a lack of quorum since the establishment of the Joint Committee in 2024.

It was confirmed that this change would not affect the functions or role of the Joint Committee, and that it was only a practical change to try to prevent the cancellation of meetings due to a lack of quorum.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- In response to a question as to why so few members were present at the meetings, it was explained that the answer was not entirely clear and that a definitive answer could not be provided. This was elaborated upon and it was proposed that holding meetings at a national level caused a barrier in trying to ensure attendance. Frustration was expressed by the Cabinet Member that these meetings were being cancelled.
- It was noted that there was no certainty about the rationale behind the decision to note 40% as a new quorum, rather than 50% for example.
- It was asked if there were any risks in terms of impact on decisions in reducing the quorum to less than half the membership. It was acknowledged that 40% was quite low, but attention was drawn to the condition that ensured that at least three regions out of five were represented.

The meeting commenced at 1:00pm and concluded at 3:35pm.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of Item:	<i>Compact: Cyngor Gwynedd and Third Sector Collaboration Agreement</i>
Cabinet Member:	<i>Cllr Dilwyn Morgan, Cabinet Member for Adults</i>
Relevant officer:	<i>Dylan Owen, Director of Social Services</i>
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. Decision Sought:

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to approve and adopt the Compact: Cyngor Gwynedd and Third Sector Collaboration Agreement as a strategic framework for the relationship between the Council and Third Sector organisations in Gwynedd.

2. The reason why the Cabinet must make the decision:

- 2.1 The current Compact has been in place since 2008 and was last reviewed in 2013. Since then, the operating context has changed significantly as a result of financial pressures, new legislative expectations, developments in procurement and commissioning, and an increasing emphasis on co-production and social value.
- 2.2 The adoption of a revised Compact provides a clear and consistent basis to guide the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector in the future.

3. Background / Introduction

- 3.1 Cyngor Gwynedd and Third Sector have worked in partnership for a number of years to support the county's residents and communities. The Third Sector includes a wide range of charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and community groups that make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of the people of Gwynedd and provide services that complement the Council's work.
- 3.2 In December 2022, Audit Wales published a national report, "[A Missed Opportunity - Social Enterprises](#)", reviewing how Welsh local authorities work with social enterprises and the Third Sector. The report concluded that social enterprises make an important contribution to the well-being of communities, but that their potential is not being fully realised by many local authorities. It was noted that there is a lack of coherent strategies, a lack of understanding of the sector, and missed opportunities to

collaborate, commission and procure services in ways that support the development of the sector.

- 3.3 Audit Wales noted that local authorities are in a position to do more to maximise the impact of the Third Sector, deliver better value for money and improve services for people and communities. The report recommended that local authorities develop more strategic arrangements for engagement with the sector, strengthen collaboration across departments, and make better use of commissioning and procurement arrangements to support social enterprises and community organisations.
- 3.4 The report's findings echo the issues raised locally through engagement with Mantell Gwynedd, and sector organisations, namely inconsistency in funding arrangements, lack of corporate co-ordination, and the need to strengthen collaboration and joint planning arrangements. The revised Compact (**appendix 1**) is an opportunity to respond to these challenges by setting clear principles and expectations for the Council's future relationship with the Third Sector.
- 3.5 The arrangements of the Third Sector Liaison Group which were previously facilitated by Cyngor Gwynedd have been paused for a number of months, but new arrangements are planned to be developed that will avoid duplicating existing engagement structures, namely the Gwynedd Third Sector Network facilitated by Mantell Gwynedd. This will strengthen relations with Mantell Gwynedd and ensure collaboration and co-development towards the future.
- 3.6 **Consultation**
- 3.6.1 The intention of the consultation process was not just to develop a document, but to establish a clear set of principles and expectations to inform the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector into the future.
- 3.6.2 Discussions were held early on with Mantell Gwynedd and Council officers in order to establish the basic principles that should guide the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector, back in 2024. These discussions focused on themes such as trust, transparency, communication, collaboration, co-production and consistency in arrangements across the Council.
- 3.6.3 Following the initial establishment of the principles, a six-week engagement period on the draft Compact took place during October and November 2025. The aim of this period was to test the proposed principles and seek wider views from third sector organisations, stakeholders and individuals. The Compact was also presented to the Gwynedd Third Sector Network, facilitated by Mantell Gwynedd, on 10 October 2025, providing an opportunity for a wide range of organisations to comment on the proposed content and arrangements.

3.6.4 Overall, the response to the draft Compact was positive, with a number of respondents welcoming the intention to establish a clear framework for the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector. Some specific comments were noted about the draft including:

- It was suggested that consideration should be given to using a clearer title such as "Partnership Agreement" rather than "Compact".
- Comments were made on the design of the document and diagrams to ensure that they reflect the principle of putting the residents of Gwynedd at the centre of everything.
- It was felt that more detail was needed in some parts of the document in order to explain how the principles would be implemented in practice.
- It was suggested that it should be emphasised that communication is a two-way process, with a responsibility on both sides to listen, share information and collaborate openly.
- The importance of referring to the Welsh Government's Code of Practice for Third Sector Funding was noted and ensuring that the principles of the code are reflected in the Compact.
- A number of editorial and verbal suggestions were received to improve the clarity and accuracy of the document.

3.6.5 The feedback received was used to refine the content of the Compact and ensure that it reflected the needs and priorities of the sector.

3.7 Care Scrutiny Committee

3.7.1 The Compact was considered by the Care Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2026. There was general support for the intention to renew and strengthen the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector and the fact that the Compact updated arrangements that had not been reviewed for over a decade, and reflected the legislative and policy changes since then, was welcomed.

3.7.2 There was a discussion on how the success of the Compact will be measured, the arrangements for sector representation, the role of Mantell Gwynedd and the financial challenges faced by Third Sector organisations. It was explained that the purpose of the Compact is to establish common principles and demonstrate a collective commitment to future collaboration.

3.7.3 An action plan and areas of work will be developed through the arrangements of the revamped Third Sector Liaison Group, with the agenda and discussions informed by the issues and opportunities identified by the sector itself in partnership with the Council.

3.7.4 The Scrutiny Committee's desire to receive a further report on the implementation and impact of the Compact in two years' time was also welcomed.

4. Equality Impact Assessment and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the process of developing the Compact. The Council has a duty to consider the impact of its decisions on equality, the Welsh language, community well-being, and the needs of people with protected characteristics, ensuring that no group is disadvantaged as a result of the decision.

4.2 The assessment concluded that the Compact is likely to have a positive impact by strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector, improving opportunities for engagement and collaboration, and supporting services and activities that contribute to the well-being of communities across Gwynedd.

4.3 The Compact supports the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 by strengthening collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector for the benefit of Gwynedd's communities. The principles set out in the Compact contribute in particular to creating cohesive communities, improving social well-being, and promoting participation and community involvement.

4.4 In developing the Compact, consideration was given to the five ways of working set out in the Act:

Involvement	The Compact was developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd, Third Sector organisations and Council departments. A period of public engagement was undertaken to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute to the content of the document.
Collaboration	A key purpose of the Compact is to strengthen the relationship and collaborative arrangements between Gwynedd Council and the Third Sector.
Prevention	By strengthening communication, collaboration and mutual understanding between partners, the Compact aims to reduce the risk of inconsistency, duplication of effort and lack of coordination in the future.
Long Term	The Compact establishes a long-term framework and set of principles for the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector during a period of financial pressure and increasing demand for services.

Integration	The Compact supports cross-departmental and partnership working, recognising the contribution of the Third Sector to achieving wider well-being objectives across public services and communities in Gwynedd.
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5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Following the adoption of the Compact, the Council will publish the final document and move forward with the arrangements for the re-establishment of the Third Sector Liaison Group. Discussions will continue with Mantell Gwynedd regarding representation on the group to ensure broad and inclusive engagement across the sector, and appropriate governance and monitoring arrangements will be developed to support the implementation of the Compact.

6. Views of the Statutory Officers.

6.1 Chief Finance Officer

I welcome the review of the Compact with the Third Sector. Updating the Compact as a strategic framework for the relationship between the Council and Third Sector organisations in Gwynedd helps to set out the roles in achieving and supporting the Council's objectives, and the re-establishment of the Third Sector Liaison Group will set new momentum.

6.2 Monitoring Officer

The role of the third sector in delivering on and supporting the Council's objectives is clear. The Compact creates a document that supports this partnership and builds an appropriate collaborative working framework to maintain and develop this. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought

List of Appendices:

1. *Compact: Cyngor Gwynedd and Third Sector Collaboration Agreement*
2. *Equality Impact Assessment*

"THE COMPACT"

CYNGOR GWYNEDD AND THE THIRD SECTOR PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT



OBJECTIVES

Aim:

- The aim of the Third Sector and Gwynedd Council is to support each other to enable Gwynedd's residents and communities to thrive.
- This "Compact" Agreement establishes the principles of collaboration that are essential to achieving that.

Why is this important?

- **Gwynedd Residents First:** Putting the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do.
- **Improving Service Delivery:** Effectively addressing social issues through collaboration.
- **Empowering Communities:** The strategy encourages participatory governance, giving communities a stronger voice.
- **Efficiency:** To ensure the best outcomes and make the best use of resources during times of austerity, collaboration and reducing duplication of efforts can be beneficial.

PRINCIPLES

To achieve the objectives of Gwynedd Council's Corporate Plan, **effective collaboration** and efficient use of **local resources** are essential.

By working with the third sector, Gwynedd Council aims to ensure **local benefit** and **value for money**, while leveraging the **added value** that third sector organisations offer.



The Welsh Government defines the third sector as **independent, non-governmental organisations voluntarily established by citizens, driven by social, cultural, or environmental objectives rather than profit. These organisations reinvest any surplus to promote their objectives.**

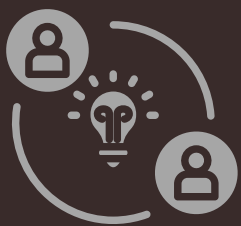
COLLABORATION PRINCIPLES



The following principles celebrate the contribution and successes of the third sector noting the Council's commitment to working together to ensure its future prosperity:



1. Shared goals: Our relationship with the trydydd sector will contribute towards the aims and objectives of the Council Plan in accordance with the legislative priorities of the Welsh Government in order to provide services that **put the people of Gwynedd** at the centre of everything we do.



2. Early involvement: In order to provide support for the growth of the third sector we will **include them from the start** where appropriate and practical when developing policies and designing services and identify and publish commissioning opportunities and co-production opportunities.



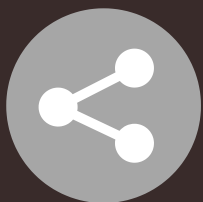
3. Social Value: When commissioning services we will **prioritise social value and local benefit** as much as possible and we will continue to provide funding for purposeful purposes where possible.



4. Accountability: When providing funds to organisations we will do so through a **clear agreement with monitoring and accountability arrangements**.



5. Volunteering: We recognise the role of **volunteers** in maintaining the third sector and encourage their contribution in supporting good citizenship and healthy communities.



6. Sharing Resources: In order to support the sector in a practical way we will **work together to share resources** where appropriate.



7. Clear Communication: Through **sincere, clear and respectful** communication we will promote a mutual understanding of the strengths and challenges of organisations across the sector, ensuring equality and fairness.



8. Engagement: Gwynedd Council will **engage effectively** through Mantell Gwynedd as an umbrella organisation and use regular meetings as forums to implement the principles and actions stated above.

GOVERNANCE - CYNGOR GWYNEDD & THIRD SECTOR

Gwynedd Residents

Welsh Government

Third Sector Support
Wales

Full Council

Council Cabinet

The Constitution



Mantell Gwynedd



Cyngor Gwynedd

Partnership
Agreement

"Compact" Agreement

Third Sector
Organisations/
Agencies

Council
Departments 

THIRD SECTOR LIAISON GROUP

Gwynedd Council and Mantell Gwynedd will hold a quarterly Third Sector Liaison Group meeting to ensure effective communication.

Mantell Gwynedd will collaborate with the Third Sector organisations to select suitable representatives for membership of the Liaison Group.



The Group will do the following:

1. Include equal membership of representatives from the Council and the Third Sector
2. Meet quarterly (more often if necessary)
3. Third sector representatives will be elected from a wide cross section of the sector and Council representatives will be chosen from service areas associated with the third sector
4. The Council and Mantell Gwynedd (on behalf of the third sector) will alternately chair meetings for a period of one year
5. The Council will take minutes and ensure administrative arrangements
6. Ensure that the third sector forum groups and relevant Council groups contribute

COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT

Commissioning

- We will identify the needs of the people of Gwynedd, and prioritise where necessary.
- We will listen to the residents of Gwynedd throughout the entire process.
- We will monitor, analyse and evaluate results.

Procurement

- We will be transparent and open about our intention to acquire from the programming front of our acquisition activities.
- We will assess proposals and award contracts on the basis of value for money, social value and local benefit.
- We will choose from a series of local social measures, which are proportionate to the agreement.
- We will monitor and report against the progress of realising social value propositions as well as the purpose of the agreement.

Gwynedd Council will publish and update all relevant commissioning and procurement opportunities on [Sell2Wales](#).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitor Progress

The "Compact" Agreement will be monitored and evaluated through the Third Sector Liaison Group.

Measuring and Monitoring Progress

The success of collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector will be measured through specific measures including;

1.

Has the partnership contributed to strengthening a culture of collaboration? That is, is it sustainable and has it left a meaningful legacy?

2.

Is there evidence of enterprise and flexibility within the partnership to operate in an innovative way? That is, achieving results that could not be achieved by the Council on its own?

3.

A measurable social impact that shows practical and positive improvements as a result of the collaboration.

4.

Improving commitment and empowering local communities, creating stronger and more inclusive links.

5.

Improving the provision of services, assessing whether the services are more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of the community here in Gwynedd.

Annual Review of the Agreement

The Compact Agreement will be reviewed annually in order to assess progress in the objectives outlined in the agreement and assist with future direction.

Get in touch if you have any enquiries:

Contact Details - Third Sector Contact Group:
trydyddsectorgwynedd@gwynedd.llyw.cymru



Composite Impact Assessment

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.

Compact: Cyngor Gwynedd and Third Sector Collaboration Agreement

Author: Lois Owens (TA)

Job Title: Director of Gwynedd Social Services; Senior Executive Officer

Date: 8/5/2026

Version: Draft Version

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

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

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures (which modify service delivery or employment practices)

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

The aim of the Compact is to provide a clear and up-to-date framework for the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector, establishing common principles for collaboration, communication, co-planning and co-production. Its objective is to strengthen the relationship

between the two partners, promote greater consistency across the Council's services, and ensure that the voice and contribution of the Third Sector is taken into account at an early stage in the development of services and schemes.

The proposed outcome is a more open, effective and strategic relationship between the Council and the Third Sector, creating the conditions for better collaboration for the benefit of the residents and communities of Gwynedd. The Compact will also provide a basis for continued engagement between the Council, Mantell Gwynedd and Third Sector organisations in developing future priorities and collaborative working opportunities.

While the Compact does not introduce a significant change to the nature of the collaboration that is already taking place between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector, it does update and strengthen the existing framework by setting out more clearly the principles, expectations and commitments that underpin that relationship.

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

The main stakeholders are Mantell Gwynedd as the umbrella body for the Third Sector in Gwynedd, along with the wide range of voluntary, charitable, community and social enterprise organisations operating across the county. Many of these organisations work directly with the most vulnerable or disadvantaged people and communities, including older people, disabled people, carers, people with mental health problems, people on low incomes, children and families, and groups that share protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

The Compact has been developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and in consultation with Third Sector organisations.

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?

Yes

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

Action	Dates	Information
Public Consultation	October 2025	The Compact has been developed with Mantell Gwynedd and the Third Sector. A 6-week public consultation and questionnaire was held in October/November 2025, along with a discussion with the Gwynedd Third Sector Network to gather feedback on the draft.

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	N/A	The Compact is unlikely to have a direct impact on the basis of race. However, many Third Sector organisations work with diverse communities and individuals who face barriers or inequalities. Strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector is likely to support more equal access to services and opportunities for people of all ethnic backgrounds. No specific concerns were raised about a negative impact on the basis of race during the engagement and consultation process.

Disability	N/A	A significant number of Third Sector organisations provide services and support to disabled people, including people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health conditions and long-term conditions. While the Compact does not directly change service delivery arrangements, it is expected that strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector will support better collaboration and access to support for disabled people. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement process.
Gender	N/A	The Compact is unlikely to have a direct impact on the basis of gender. However, many Third Sector organisations provide services and support targeted at women, men and people with specific characteristics or needs. It is expected that strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector will support access to services and opportunities for people of all genders. No specific concerns were raised about gender-based negative impacts during the engagement process.
Age	N/A	Many Third Sector organisations provide services and support to people across all age groups, including children and young people, people of working age and older people. It is expected that the Compact will support better collaboration between the Council and the sector, helping to maintain and develop services that respond to the needs of people of all ages. No specific age-based negative effects were identified during the engagement and consultation process.

Religion and Belief	N/A	The Compact is not likely to have a direct impact on the basis of religion or belief. However, some Third Sector organisations work specifically with faith communities or individuals from diverse religious backgrounds, while others provide inclusive services to the whole community. It is expected that the Compact will support better collaboration and equitable access to services for people of all religions, beliefs or those who do not have a religious belief. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
Sexual Orientation	N/A	The Compact is unlikely to have a direct impact on the basis of sexual orientation. However, the Third Sector includes organisations that support LGBT+ individuals and communities and others who may face inequalities or barriers in accessing services. It is expected that strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector will support equitable and inclusive access to services for people of all sexual orientations. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.**
Gender reassignment	N/A	The Compact is not likely to have a direct impact on people who reassign gender. However, the Third Sector includes organisations that provide support to transgender individuals and people exploring their gender identity. It is expected that strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector will support equitable and inclusive access to

		services for all, regardless of their gender identity. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	The Compact is not likely to have a direct impact on the basis of marital status or civil partnership. The principles set out in the Compact apply equally to everyone and are intended to support better collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector for the benefit of the residents and communities of Gwynedd. No specific negative impacts on people who are married or in a civil partnership were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A	The Compact is unlikely to have a direct impact on the basis of pregnancy and maternity. However, many Third Sector organisations provide support and services to parents, families, new mothers and people during pregnancy. It is expected that strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector will support access to appropriate support and services for these groups. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
The Welsh Language	N/A	The Third Sector plays a vital role in providing services, activities and support through the medium of Welsh across Gwynedd. Many organisations in the sector offer Welsh language services that are rooted in their communities and make an important contribution to maintaining and promoting the Welsh

		language as a living language. It is expected that the Compact will strengthen the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector and support further opportunities to provide quality services through the medium of Welsh. No negative impacts on the Welsh language were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
Socio-economic Considerations	N/A	The Third Sector plays a key role in supporting individuals, families and communities facing poverty, social exclusion and socio-economic disadvantage. Due to their strong presence in local communities, organisations in the sector are often among the first to see the impact of challenges such as rising costs of living, loneliness, unemployment and lack of access to services. It is expected that the Compact will strengthen the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector, supporting collaboration to better respond to the needs of the most deprived and vulnerable people and communities in Gwynedd. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	N/A	The Compact is unlikely to have a direct impact on this group. It is expected that the Compact will strengthen collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector, supporting access to appropriate support and services for this group. No specific negative impacts were identified during the engagement and consultation process.

Human Rights	N/A	The Compact supports human rights principles by promoting collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector to support the well-being, dignity, inclusion and participation of individuals and communities. Many Third Sector organisations work directly with people who face disadvantage, discrimination or social exclusion, helping to ensure that their voices are heard and that they have access to appropriate support and services. The Compact is unlikely to have any negative impact on human rights and is likely to support and strengthen these principles by encouraging partnership working for the benefit of Gwynedd residents.
Other	N/A	N/A

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

No significant data or information gaps have been identified at this time. As the Compact sets out principles for collaboration rather than directly changing services, it is not expected to have different effects on specific groups. However, the Council will continue to engage with Mantell Gwynedd and Third Sector organisations to understand any issues or impacts that arise in the implementation of the Compact and develop future working arrangements.

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

The Compact itself does not introduce direct changes to services or provision arrangements, and therefore no specific negative cumulative effects on the groups listed above have been identified. Rather, it is expected to support and strengthen collaboration arrangements between the Council and the Third Sector. As many Third Sector organisations work with people who face socio-economic disadvantage, inequalities or

barriers to accessing services, the Compact has the potential to contribute positively to wider objectives and decisions that seek to improve outcomes for these groups.

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 Compact has been developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and Third Sector organisations, including a public consultation period to gather diverse perspectives and experiences. By setting clear principles for collaboration, communication and co-production, the Compact supports a more open and inclusive relationship between the Council and organisations working with people of all backgrounds and protected characteristics.

Many Third Sector organisations provide services and support to individuals and communities who are at risk of experiencing inequality, discrimination or social exclusion. As a result, the Compact is expected to support the promotion of equal opportunities, strengthen access to support and services, and foster positive relationships between different groups within Gwynedd's communities. No negative impacts on these equality goals were identified during the engagement and consultation process.

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 inequality gaps, rather than just improving outcomes for everyone.)

The Compact supports the need to tackle socio-economic inequality by strengthening the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector, which often work directly with people and communities experiencing poverty, social exclusion and disadvantage. The sector plays an important role in providing support, services and advocacy to the most vulnerable, and has an in-depth understanding of the challenges facing those communities.

By promoting greater collaboration, communication and co-planning between the Council and the Third Sector, the Compact seeks to ensure that the needs of people who are socio-economically disadvantaged are better considered in the development of services and priorities. While the Compact does not directly introduce new services or change provision arrangements, it does provide a framework to support action that helps reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for the communities most in need.

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 and Policy 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 Compact recognises the vital role that the Third Sector plays in promoting and supporting the Welsh language in Gwynedd. Many organisations in the sector provide services, activities and support through the medium of Welsh and make an important contribution to sustaining Welsh-speaking communities.

The principles set out in the Compact support close collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector in a way that is consistent with the Welsh Language Standards and with the Council's Language Strategy. By strengthening this relationship, it is intended to take advantage of opportunities to promote the Welsh language, support Welsh-language services, and increase opportunities for people to use the Welsh language in their communities. There is no element of the proposal that treats the Welsh language less favourably than English, and no negative impacts on the Welsh language have been identified during the engagement and consultation process.

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?

Contents:

· The Compact has been developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd, Third Sector organisations and Council departments, with a public engagement period giving stakeholders the opportunity to contribute to the content.

Collaboration:

· The main purpose of the Compact is to strengthen working arrangements between the Council and the Third Sector.

Prevention:

· By strengthening communication, collaboration and mutual understanding between partners, it is intended to reduce the risk of inconsistency and lack of coordination in the future.

Long term:

· The Compact establishes long-term principles for working with the Third Sector at a time of financial pressure and increasing demand for services.

Integration:

· The Compact supports cross-departmental and partnership working, recognising the contribution of the Third Sector to achieving wider well-being objectives across public services and organisations.

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)?

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 Compact is not a formal legal agreement and does not create new contractual obligations. Rather, it sets principles and expectations for the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector, including in areas such as commissioning, procurement and collaboration. The Procurement Service has been involved in the development of the Compact to ensure that the document reflects good practice and lays an appropriate foundation for future partnership, commissioning and procurement arrangements.

In implementing the Compact and any associated partnership arrangements, Cyngor Gwynedd will continue to ensure that the requirements of the General Equality Duty, Human Rights, Welsh Language Standards and the Socio-Economic Duty are taken into account as part of decision-making, commissioning and procurement processes.

Partnership:

In implementing the Compact and any associated partnership arrangements, Cyngor Gwynedd will continue to ensure that the requirements of the General Equality Duty, Human Rights, Welsh Language Standards and the Socio-Economic Duty are taken into account as part of decision-making, commissioning and procurement processes.

This will include carrying out relevant impact assessments where necessary, ensuring that partners are aware of their statutory responsibilities, promoting equal access to services, supporting opportunities to use the Welsh language, and considering the impact of decisions on people and communities facing socio-economic disadvantage. The Council will also work closely with Mantell Gwynedd and Third Sector organisations to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to these issues when developing future services and activities.

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

I3. When considering proportionality, does the policy or practice have a significantly positive or negative impact or create unequal outcomes?

Significant Positive Impact:

Considering proportionality, the Compact is not anticipated to cause any significant negative impact or create disproportionate outcomes for any particular group. As the Compact does not change services or introduce new criteria for access to services, its main purpose is to establish principles for collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector.

The Compact is expected to have an overall positive impact by strengthening the relationship between the Council and Third Sector organisations, many of which work with people and communities facing disadvantage, inequalities or barriers to accessing support and services.

No significant negative effects were identified. However, if the principles of the Compact were not consistently implemented across the Council or appropriate engagement arrangements with the Third Sector were not maintained, this could limit opportunities for effective collaboration and to take full advantage of the knowledge and expertise of community organisations. It is intended to mitigate this risk by conducting regular engagement arrangements with Mantell Gwynedd and the Third Sector.

Significant Negative Impact:

None

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 an objective justification or positive action)

No deliberate or unlawful negative impacts resulting from the Compact were identified. The Compact sets out principles for collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector and has been developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and has been subject to public engagement.

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

None

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) Help to eradicate unlawful discrimination, harassment or persecution

- Ensure that Third Sector engagement arrangements include a wide range of organisations representing groups with protected characteristics.
- Promote awareness of equality, human rights and inclusion in the development of future partnership work.

b) Promote equal opportunities

- Ensure that organisations of different sizes and backgrounds have equal opportunities to contribute to the discussions and priorities of the Third Sector Liaison Group.
- Continue to consider the needs of disadvantaged people and communities when developing future collaboration and service arrangements.

c) Foster good relationships between different groups

- Develop engagement arrangements that encourage the sharing of experience, knowledge and good practice between different parts of the Third Sector and the Council.

Continue to work closely with Mantell Gwynedd to ensure that a wide range of community voices and perspectives are included in discussions and partnership work.

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?

As many Third Sector organisations work directly with people and communities facing socio-economic disadvantage, the functioning of the Compact could be further strengthened by ensuring that the engagement and collaboration arrangements include the voices of those groups and communities. Regular sharing of knowledge and understanding about the challenges faced by people in poverty or socio-economically disadvantaged could also be encouraged to inform future priorities for joint work.

The Third Sector Liaison Group will also provide an opportunity to discuss issues affecting disadvantaged communities and identify opportunities for the Council and the Third Sector to work together to respond to those challenges.

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?

The implementation of the Compact could be further strengthened by ensuring that the Welsh language is regularly considered within the Council's engagement and collaboration arrangements with the Third Sector. The sharing of good practice and raising awareness of the significant contribution that Third Sector organisations make to providing services, activities and support through the medium of Welsh could also be encouraged.

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 the policy or practice in its current form

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

The EqlA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqlA 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
None	None	None	None	No

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 Reviewing Arrangements (including where outcomes will be recorded)	Timeframe and Frequency	Lead Responsibility	Add to the Service Plan
Monitoring: Third Sector Liaison Group	Continuous	The implementation of the Compact will be monitored through engagement arrangements with Mantell Gwynedd and the Third Sector.	No

Monitoring: Scrutiny Committee	Biennial	A review by the Care Scrutiny Committee in two years' time is also welcomed to assess its effectiveness and identify any further improvements.	No
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CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of Item:	<i>Adopt Cyngor Gwynedd's Action Plan for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm 2026-2028</i>
Cabinet Member:	<i>Cllr Nia Jeffreys</i>
Relevant Officer:	<i>Dylan Owen, Director of Social Services</i>
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. Decision Sought:

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked to approve Cyngor Gwynedd's Action Plan for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm, which outlines the activities that will be carried out across Council departments as part of a corporate approach to support the objectives of the Welsh Government's Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy (Appendix 1).

2. The reason why the Cabinet must make the decision:

- 2.1 In December 2025, the Leader submitted a Notice of Motion to the Full Council calling on Cyngor Gwynedd to support the principles of the National Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy and develop local arrangements to respond to these challenges. The motion stated that suicide prevention is a shared responsibility and that the Council should play a leading role in working with partners, reducing stigma and supporting individuals and communities.
- 2.2 The corporate action plan reflects Cyngor Gwynedd's commitment to joint action across services to strengthen prevention, awareness, support and early intervention in relation to suicide and self-harm.

3. Background

- 3.1 Suicide and self-harm are important public health issues affecting individuals, families and communities across Wales.
- 3.2 In 2024, Wales's registered suicide rate was 15.7 per 100,000 of the population, an increase from 14.0 per 100,000 in 2023. Evidence also shows that men account for 76% of deaths by suicide in Wales, with men aged between 30 and 44 among the groups most at risk.

- 3.3 A number of social and economic factors are associated with a higher risk of suicide, including poverty, unemployment, mental and physical health problems, loneliness, bereavement, abuse and substance misuse.
- 3.4 In April 2025, the Welsh Government published the *Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy for Wales 2025-2035*, which sets out the national vision for reducing suicide and attempted suicide rates, improving outcomes for people receiving support for self-harm, and improving the support available to those affected by suicide and self-harm.
- 3.5 The strategy emphasises that the prevention of suicide and self-harm is "everybody's business", and that organisations should work together to identify risks early, reduce stigma, improve access to support and ensure that services respond in a compassionate, fair and accessible way.
- 3.6 To achieve this vision, the strategy is structured around six key objectives: Listening and Learning, Preventing, Empowering, Supporting, Equipping and Responding.
- 3.7 In light of these national priorities, and as a result of the [Notice of Motion](#) submitted to the Full Council in December 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd has reviewed the work already taking place across its services and has developed a more coordinated corporate approach to the prevention of suicide and self-harm.
- 3.8 The Action Plan presented in appendix 2 brings together the contribution of the Council's departments, including Adults, Education, Community Safety, Human Resources and other services, in order to build on existing work and ensure a cohesive response to the challenges identified in the national strategy.
- 3.9 We see that the actions contain several elements including:
- Conducting awareness sessions for senior managers and elected members.
 - Developing and promoting training for staff such as Ask and Act, Mental Health First Aid and suicide awareness.
 - Considering making the Wales Suicide Awareness Module a standard part of staff training.
 - Raising awareness among residents and community groups of the support available.
 - Developing support arrangements for staff or services affected by suicide.
- 3.10 An important element of the work is the prevention of suicide and self-harm among children and young people, and, as a result, a further report (appendix 3) outlines the arrangements in place in Gwynedd schools, explaining the key role of Designated Safeguarding Persons, the arrangements for early identification of concerns, recording

and referral to support, and the collaboration that takes place with CAMHS, school counselling services, educational psychologists, school nurses and social services.

- 3.11 The entire work is strengthened through regional collaboration across north Wales, with Cyngor Gwynedd participating in the North Wales Suicide and Self-harm Forum, contributing to the work of safeguarding and mental health partnerships, and working with the Regional Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm Leader to ensure that local activities align with national and regional priorities
- 3.12 Although the direct impact of suicide prevention activities is difficult to measure, the Council will monitor progress against the actions set out in the plan. This will help assess whether the Council is strengthening its capacity to prevent, identify and respond to concerns relating to suicide and self-harm.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The Council will continue to implement the Action Plan for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm 2026-2028 by working with internal departments and regional and national partners, ensuring that Gwynedd's activities align with Wales's priorities and build on the work already taking place across the Council's services, schools and partner services.
- 4.2 Progress against the plan will be monitored regularly through the relevant departments and the Strategic Safeguarding Panel to evaluate progress, identify areas for further development, and ensure that the Council continues to strengthen its corporate approach to suicide and self-harm prevention.

5. Views of the Statutory Officers

5.1 Chief Finance Officer

I support the decision sought; I have no further comments from the perspective of financial propriety.

5.2 Monitoring Officer

I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought

List of Appendices:

- 1. Understanding: a suicide prevention and self-harm strategy for Wales

2. Cyngor Gwynedd's Plan for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm

3. Self-harm and Thoughts of Suicide in Schools

List of Background Documents:

Link to the Leader's Notice of Motion December 2025: [Agenda item – NOTICES OF MOTION](#)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Understanding

The Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy for Wales

Contents

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Sarah Murphy MS

Minister for Mental
Health and Early Years

Foreword

I am proud of the comprehensive work we have carried out in Wales to strengthen services and support for people facing suicidal thoughts, dealing with self-harm and for the many families and individuals who have lost loved one to suicide.

We have made a lot of progress through the lifetime of the Talk to Me 2 Strategy which, importantly, was informed by the voices of those with lived experience. The publication of this new strategy represents a real opportunity to go even further and begin to turn the tide on suicide and self-harm; to reframe the narrative from one of judgement to one of compassion and ensuring support is available wherever and whenever someone reaches out.

As we embark on a new 10-year, cross-government approach we are making a series of commitments to people and communities throughout Wales. We will take a person-centred, non-judgemental approach and we will work to break down the stigma which acts as a barrier to people seeking support, and to receiving a compassionate response.

The factors which contribute to suicide and self-harm are complex and multi-faceted – they need genuine understanding and, if we are to be successful in preventing suicide and supporting people who self-harm, we must take a cross-government approach to enabling appropriate support, tackling stigma and ensuring services are fit for purpose.

At the heart of this approach is a recognition that people do not always need to access specialist services. Often people just need someone to talk to without fear of being judged or labelled.

We are adopting a whole society and whole-system approach to breaking down stigma, which will help people to access the support they need sooner.

By working seamlessly across social services, welfare support, health and the criminal justice system we will be able to respond faster, with compassion, to prevent escalation to crisis point.

My focus for suicide is on prevention, earlier intervention and tackling stigma. For self-harm my focus is on shifting negative perceptions and fear; to understanding it can be a coping mechanism for people experiencing difficult emotions or situations. An enhanced understanding of self-harm will empower people to offer safe, compassionate and person-centred support.

This strategy should be read in connection with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The risk factors for poor mental health, self-harm and suicide are similar and sometimes inter-related.

Both strategies adopt a preventative approach, working across government departments to tackle the issues which impact on our mental and emotional wellbeing.

This strategy is interdependent on its sister strategy to deliver improvements in mental health support so it accessible for people who self-harm or have suicidal thoughts, providing a timely, compassionate and person-centred offer when needed. Having a separate Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy allows us to take forward actions which reflect the needs of people who self-harm, have suicidal thoughts or have been impacted by suicide and truly make a difference.

We will be publishing a series of delivery plans, which will set out in more detail the actions we will be taking forward over a three-year horizon to deliver on the commitments and ambitions in this strategy.

The strategy speaks to the progress we have already made and the work still to be done. I want to thank all of those who have played a role across the public and third sectors, volunteers, peer support workers and academics who contribute so much to this agenda.

I also want to thank everyone who has shared their own experiences to help shape the way forward. Your contributions have required reflecting on some of the most challenging, and difficult times, but your continued support will help us deliver real change to people throughout Wales.

Overview

Welsh Government is publishing a Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy (2025-2035), which replaces the previous strategy Talk to me 2: the suicide and self-harm prevention strategy for 2015 – 2022.

The Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy aims to reduce the number and rates of suicide deaths that have endured over recent years. It also aims to establish a pathway to support people who self-harm and to improve support for those bereaved by suicide.

The strategy sets out our overarching vision for suicide prevention and self-harm in Wales, alongside sixteen core principles, and six strategic objectives.

Help and support for your own mental health

If you need support with your mental health, you can ring the CALL Helpline: **0800 132 737**. Or for urgent support please call the NHS on **111** and **press 2**.

If you're affected by suicide, the National Advisory and Liaison Service Cymru offer free and confidential support to people in Wales: **08000 487742**.

Contact details

For more information:

Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Policy Team
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

mentalhealthandvulnerablegroups@gov.wales

How to use this Strategy

This is a 10-year Strategy that sets out our strategic objectives to deliver our ambitions to create a more compassionate understanding of suicide and self-harm; reduce the number of people who die by suicide; provide holistic and person-centred support for people who self-harm; and support those affected by self-harm and suicide.

The Strategy is accompanied by Delivery Plans which set out the more detailed actions over shorter timeframes, which will collectively contribute to delivering our objectives.

The title of the Strategy is 'Understanding' as this is the principle upon which the success of the strategy ultimately rests. Part of this is about gathering and consolidating evidence to equip us with the knowledge and skills to understand who is affected, why and what support is needed. It is also about expanding people's basic understanding that suicide and self-harm can often be responses to difficult emotional situations, such as grief and trauma.

It is a lack of understanding that creates a stigma around suicide and self-harm, and this in-turn makes people fearful of accessing support in the same way that we would for a physical illness – those delays can cost lives.

Suicide and self-harm are unique to an individual, in their causes, the way that they present, the impacts on those around them and the support required for everyone affected.

This Strategy and the Delivery Plans have been designed to help people access the information which is relevant to them whether they want to take action to help themselves; seek advice for supporting a friend or loved one; or better understand suicide and self-harm so they feel confident in talking about the issues in a way that ensures those affected feel understood, safe and supported.

To understand more about suicide and self-harm, please refer to page 4 which explores the definitions of suicide and self-harm and the complex relationship between the two.

You may also be interested to read **Objective 1: Listening and Learning**, which, alongside the Delivery Plan explains how we are seeking to better understand suicide and self-harm by listening to those affected and making sure that all of our other actions are meeting the needs of those who are, or could be, affected.

To learn about what we are doing to tackle the issues which can lead to people harming themselves, please refer to **Objective 2: Preventing**, and the accompanying Delivery Plan which details how we are creating structures to work with other Government departments and agencies to tackle issues such as mental health, bullying, domestic abuse and trauma. Reducing the risk factors associated with suicide and self-harm will result in fewer deaths by suicide and a reduction of people using self-harm as a coping mechanism. This section also explores issues like the internet, media and people's ability to access means and locations which they could use to harm themselves.

To understand how we will help everyone to be able to help others, then please refer to **Objective 3: Empowering**, which recognises that people who self-harm and are at risk of suicide are people with whom we might engage with in our everyday lives and might need our support.

This objective and accompanying Delivery Plan set out how we can help people identify others who might need our help, how to have a compassionate conversation and how to sign post those people to services as needed.

To know more about how we will work to improve relevant services for people with suicide ideation and self-harm, please refer to **Objective 4: Supporting**, and the accompanying Delivery Plan which details how we will make sure relevant services are available to support somebody in need by equipping staff with the knowledge and skills through training and support, and filling gaps in provision.

To understand how services and sectors across Wales can work together to identify people in need and provide support, please refer to **Objective 5: Equipping**, and the accompanying Delivery Plan which details how we will identify other services where people might present to share learning and ensure holistic support is provided. Services include but are not limited to domestic abuse services, education settings, prisons and youth offender institutions, and employment support services.

To learn about how we will support those affected by suicide, then please refer to **Objective 6: Responding**, and the accompanying Delivery Plan which detail how we will respond following a suspected suicide. This includes providing timely support to those who are affected and how multiple agencies will come together to manage the wider impacts.

To learn about how we are tackling stigma and increasing compassion, these are intrinsic aspects of each objective whether that is increasing our understanding through **Objective 1**, sharing that information to influence policy and action through **Objective 2**, increasing knowledge and understanding through **Objectives 3, 4 and 5**, or educating and guiding the agencies who respond following a death via **Objective 6**.

Defining suicide and self-harm

Understanding suicide and self-harm is the fundamental starting point in helping those in need. It is through this understanding that we can start the conversation, educate others, increase compassion, reduce stigma and ensure people feel safe and supported.

Suicide

Suicide is defined as death caused by an intentional, self-inflicted act.

Suicidal ideation refers to thinking about, considering or planning suicide. Thoughts can range from a detailed plan to a fleeting consideration.

Self-harm

The definition of self-harm is subject to continuous debate. Our working definition of self-harm is in line with the widely accepted definition published by The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in their recent guidelines (2022) – self-harm is an intentional act of self-poisoning or self-injury, irrespective of the motivation or apparent purpose of the act. In this definition self-harm includes suicide attempts as well as acts involving little or no suicidal intent.

However, we understand that the definition, underlying causes and functions of self-harm are **personal** and **individual**. For other health harming behaviours, such as harmful eating, smoking, alcohol use, substance use, risky sexual behaviours, violence and gambling, the primary factor is not usually intentional self-poisoning or injury. Even so, both self-harm and other health harming behaviours often share similar underlying risk factors and consequently, behaviours and motivations can become blurred.

This strategy emphasises the importance of working with services who offer support to people with other health harming behaviours to share learning and ensure that holistic support is provided to avoid people being passed

between services – consistent with a no wrong door approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Self-harm and suicide attempts

Not everyone who dies by suicide will have previously self-harmed, and not everyone who self-harms will go on to end their own lives. However, according to the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide (NCISH), previous self-harm is the single biggest indicator of future suicide risk. NCISH report that approximately 60% of people who die by suicide have a history of self-harm¹.

In some cases, differentiating between a suicide attempt and an incident of self-harm can be difficult. For example, when self-harming, some people may not be sure of the outcome they intend or are ambivalent about whether they want to live or die. Some have clear suicide intentions while others desire to escape an unbearable situation or emotional pain; to reduce tension and stress; to take control; or to punish self or others, and they do so without suicidal intent. It is also important to note, although the majority of people who self-harm do not die by suicide, self-harm can escalate into suicidal behaviours and intent to die can change with each episode of self-harm.

Consequently, the primary aim of this strategy is to ensure that anyone who self-harms, **regardless of intent**, is provided with compassionate, person-centred support which focuses on ensuring safety. That being said, we will take forward actions which aim to better determine intent and improve our understanding of this complex relationship.

Strategic vision / intent

Our Vision for Wales is:

The annual rates of suicide in Wales will continuously decrease. People who self-injure, self-poison, who have suicidal ideation or have attempted suicide will feel safe and understood. They will belong to informed and compassionate communities and will be able to access support and services which meet their needs when and where they need them.

The objectives within this Strategy are designed to:

- **Increase our understanding of suicide and self-harm by listening and sharing learning to ensure that people's individual needs are met when they reach out for support.**
- **Recognise and develop the contributions of all Government departments' to tackling the issues which increase the risk of a person self-harming and / or ending their own lives.**
- **Improve support for people who self-harm, irrespective of suicidal intent.**
- **Improve support for family, friends or anyone impacted by self-harm and suicide.**

The outcomes we aim to achieve through delivering on our objectives are:

1. An annual reduction in the number and rates of suicide and attempted suicides.
2. Better outcomes for people accessing support for self-harm and suicidal ideation.
3. Better outcomes for people affected by suicide and self-harm.

The relationship between suicide and self-harm

We know that suicide and self-harm share a range of underlying contributing factors (also known as 'risk factors'). Risk factors include interpersonal factors (e.g., unemployment, peer victimisation, substance use, a history of trauma or abuse, relationship breakdown^{2,3,4,5}), psychological factors (e.g., negative affectivity⁶, emotional dysregulation⁷) and health factors (e.g., severe and enduring mental health conditions⁸, chronic physical health conditions across the life course⁹).

We also know that suicide and self-harm prevalence is associated with sociodemographic inequalities where people, or groups of people, with certain characteristics are at greater risk, through no fault of their own^{10,11,12}. Examples include living in poverty, a person's ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation.

According to the theory of intersectionality¹³, the effects of multiple social inequalities can combine in unique ways to enhance disadvantage, further increasing the risk of suicide and self-harm¹⁴.

Inequality issues are not only linked with suicide and self-harm but are societal issues which, when addressed would solve a multitude of problems. Additional risk factors for suicide and self-harm include access to means, inappropriate media reporting and stigma preventing people from seeking help.

These issues are being addressed by Welsh Government as strategic priorities and we are, in part reliant on the success of those cross-government and multi-sectoral activities to achieve our ambitions within this Strategy.

We recognise that suicide and self-harm are complex. There is rarely a single cause and a holistic, whole-system approach is required. We also require leadership and accountability at all levels, particularly from the Welsh Government, to bring the changes required. As a result, we have the same strategic objectives for both self-harm and suicide.

However, we recognise that self-harm and suicide differ in many ways.

As noted above, whilst self-harm is a strong risk factor for suicide not everyone who self-harms will go on to end their own lives^{15,16}.

We know that self-harm and suicide can affect anyone at any age. However, the **groups with the highest prevalence rates are different for suicide than they are for self-harm**. The evidence suggests that suicide is most prevalent in middle aged men between 30-55 in Wales¹⁷ and self-harm is most prominent amongst young girls between the ages of 15 and 19¹⁸. This is fundamental in terms of the different pressures each group will be facing, and people's experiences of stigma.

The **data and evidence** relating to self-harm and suicide are of a different quality and nature. Accurate data representing self-harm prevalence are hampered by under-reporting, due in part to people's reluctance to access medical or psychological services for self-harm treatment, and the poor quality of reporting and recording of incidents of self-harm. However, research has been undertaken to better understand self-harm, informed by those who have lived experience^{19,20,21,22}.

Conversely, while mortality data, used for determining suicide prevalence, is of good quality, more work is needed in terms of developing the evidence base exploring the thoughts, behaviours and experiences of those who experience suicidal thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

We also need better structures and processes to collect data, evidence and information for both so that it can be interpreted in a more meaningful way to inform an agreed way forward.

The strategy's **measures of success** will also be different for self-harm and suicide. Through tackling social inequalities, reducing stigma and increasing support, we hope to see the rates of suicide come down. We also anticipate that this would have a significant effect on the number of people who self-harm. However, due to the lack of data, this will be difficult to determine. Moreover, monitoring reductions in self-harm as a mark of success could be misleading as, paradoxically, an increase in self-harm prevalence based on our ambitions could be the could be something we see. For example, more accessible and welcoming services and communities could result in more people who self-harm having the confidence to come forward and ask for help.

For all these reasons, whilst we have a combined strategy for suicide and self-harm (which allows us to address the commonalities in a consistent way), we have specific actions targeted at suicide and self-harm independently which enables the differences between self-harm and suicide to be addressed through alternative approaches and measurements.

Self-harm and suicide have a devastating impact on families, loved ones, professionals and communities. Suicide is preventable and our ambitions for both suicide and self-harm can be achieved if managed in a safe and non-judgemental way. The response does not belong to any one sector and instead we need to adopt a public health approach to achieve our ambitions driven by effective leadership and support.

Core Principles

There are important principles that are fundamental in delivering both our vision and objectives for self-harm and suicide in a sustainable and meaningful way, but also in the wider policy context within which this Strategy is set. Therefore, throughout the development and delivery of this Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plans the following questions will be considered:

- Is this consistent with the principle that **self-harm and suicide is everybody's business**? This principle recognises that self-harm and suicidal thoughts, feelings and behaviours are different for everyone in terms of their causes, how they present, their impacts and how people manage them. Some people may seek or need support from their GP or specialist services, and it is important that they have the correct information and training to offer that support in a meaningful and compassionate way. However, some people may prefer to talk to a friend, a family member, a work colleagues, their hairdresser or barber, or even a complete stranger. The purpose of making it everyone's business does not mean that individuals are responsible or accountable for supporting the person who confides in them but about recognising that with the right training and support everyone can make a difference, whether that's simply listening and showing compassion or signposting them to support.
- Is it clear who has **leadership, ownership and accountability** over the policies and actions? Although everyone can play their part in offering support to those who need it there will be objectives and actions within the Strategy and Delivery Plans which will need to be 'owned' if they are to be successfully delivered, whether that's a government department, the NHS, local authorities or third sector organisations – or a combination of the aforementioned. The Strategy and Delivery Plans need to be clear on these roles and responsibilities so those responsible can plan effectively in terms of funding and staffing, to ensure there is transparency in terms of everyone understanding who is doing what, and to allow for effective monitoring and reporting to take place.
- Is the focus on **prevention**? This strategy and its actions are guided by an overall focus on prevention. This includes tackling the upstream 'risk factors' which can lead to self-harm and suicide and interventions which provide people with the right support to keep them safe.
- Does this promote **equity of access, experience and outcomes without discrimination**? Services and support should be accessible and appropriate for all. This means understanding the barriers people face and putting necessary systems in place so that when people get support, there is equity in terms of experiences and outcomes. To achieve this, support and services will need to be culturally and age appropriate and meet the needs of Welsh speakers, ethnic minority people, LGBTQ+ communities and people with sensory loss. Services should adopt an approach consistent with the social model of disability focussed on the removal of barriers – structural, cultural, and ableist, which hinder disabled people's participation and will also need to meet the needs of under-served groups such as people with co-occurring substance misuse, people who are care experienced, neurodivergent people, people who are experiencing poverty and people who are experiencing homelessness.

- Does this promote a **focus on at risk groups**? Self-harm and suicide can affect anyone at any point in their lives and we need to make sure that the Strategy and Delivery Plan recognise that, to ensure that everyone has the support they need when they need it. However, there will be people who are disproportionately affected for a variety of reasons so a proportionate approach will be required to identify and mitigate these risks.
- Is this consistent with a **No wrong door** approach? This principle recognises that people need to be able to present at any point in the system and be guided to the right support without delay and without having to explain their needs multiple times. This will involve the strengthening of multi-sector and multi-agency collaboration through effective governance, training, data sharing and funding arrangements.
- Does this reflect the voices of those with **lived experience** and promote a **person-centred** approach? This means treating people as individuals and as equal partners in co-producing policies, services and responses. It is about recognising and respecting individual needs (e.g. a person's preferred language – including British Sign Language and Makaton), providing any reasonable adjustments to meet needs and providing compassionate care.
- Is this supportive of the **Welsh Language**? Welsh language belongs to us all and our aim is for this to be embedded across Wales so that individuals receive care and support that meets their language needs without having to ask for it (the Active Offer), leading to safer and better outcomes.
- Is this **based on robust evidence** and is it **outcome focused**? We will ensure our actions in the strategy are informed by evidence and can be monitored and evaluated.
- Is this consistent with being **trauma-informed**? We will be guided by the Trauma-Informed Wales Framework to ensure any support or services delivered through our strategy are trauma-informed, kind, compassionate and understanding. The Framework will also allow us to play our part in helping everyone in Wales understand how trauma and adversity can impact people and their role in supporting those affected by trauma. It is also important to consider **vicarious trauma** as part of this, recognising that those who offer support can themselves be affected.
- Does this help **tackle stigma** associated with self-harm and suicide and **promote compassion**? We will tackle stigma and societal views associated with self-harm and suicide.
- Is this consistent with adopting a **rights-based** approach? We will respect, protect and fulfil the rights of individuals in the care they receive. This includes taking account of the specific rights some groups have, for example protecting, promoting and embedding children's rights and disability rights into service design and delivery.
- Does this reflect the need of **all-ages**? We have taken an all-age approach to develop this strategy to ensure we have a system which will support everyone, and which promotes better integration between services. Throughout this strategy, when we say "people" we are talking about all ages including babies, children, young people and older people (more detail on the all-age nature of the strategy can be found on page 10).
- Does this recognise the **wider determinants of health**? This recognises that the economic and social conditions that people live and work in are fundamental to their wellbeing, and that good health, and good mental health particularly, is dependent on a wide range of factors.

- Has the **role of digital and technology** been considered? The role of digital and technological solutions could provide a better, more sustainable outcome. Whilst this might not always be the case it should be explored for this reason.
- Is the **funding and resources** available to deliver this? Over the lifetime of the Strategy the availability of funding and resources will change. Self-harm and suicide are serious health issues and the strategic objectives

in the Strategy need to be ambitious in its aspiration to support those at risk or affected. The Delivery Plans will have shorter-term focus and contain more SMART actions to deliver the objectives providing the opportunity to test the deliverability of actions based on the financial landscape at that point in time. The development of each delivery plan will provide an opportunity to test the deliverability of the strategic objectives against finance, resources, and the remaining lifetime of the Strategy.

An all-age approach

The Strategy proposes a comprehensive approach across the life course, recognising that people can experience a range of needs and risks across their lifespan, and that there are opportunities which exist, especially in the younger generation to educate and build resilience against the inevitable challenges which will occur in later years.

Table 1 below provides examples of some of the challenges and opportunities across the life course.

Table 1: Changing risks and intervention points across the life course

Children and Young People	In these early years of a child’s life the direct risk of self-harming or suicidal behaviour is low. However, during this developmental period there are the potential for risks to begin to develop as a result of: • parents poor physical and mental health • deprivation • bereavement • bullying • sexual and physical abuse • social isolation • physical, neurodevelopmental and mental health issues • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) • attachment and bonding. It is vital that effective interventions are offered at this young age to mitigate future emotional challenges. There are also opportunities which exists at this stage to instil habits which can help strengthen their own health and resilience through good education, healthy eating habits and exercise. There is also an opportunity to promote behaviours which contribute to others’ well-being through, for example education around social matters such as race, gender, mental and physical health issues and faith. This will contribute to creating more understanding and more compassionate and effective future generations.
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Adolescents and young adults	There will be additional pressures and risks which can emerge during these critical years including: • puberty • sexuality • exam pressures • work pressures • transitions between services • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) • relationships • moving from the family home and living independently • planning for the future / career and further education decisions. These may be in addition to some of the pressures identified in relation to children and young people and, at the time of writing this strategy, children aged between 15-19 were most vulnerable to using self-harm as a coping mechanism. Opportunities must exist to build on and sustain healthy habits instilled during younger years and ensure that services are available to support this age group.
Adults	The adult years present a particularly difficult time for people with: • work and financial pressures • parenting responsibilities • physical and mental health illnesses • issues with substances • relationship challenges. There are particular challenges faced by women and men during these years. Women may face challenges linked with pregnancy, childbirth and menopause. Men may face distinct challenges linked with stigma. At the time of writing this strategy this age group are the most vulnerable to suicidal behaviour and there is a heightened need for targeted and meaningful interventions that make it easier for people to find and access the right support.
Older adults	Retirement, loss of work and reduced financial stability. Physical and neurological challenges will be heighten during the later years of a person's life – which can also lead to social isolation and loneliness. Access to good quality health support from home and continued belonging to communities are vital to reducing risk in later life.

Strategic context

This strategy has been developed following extensive engagement with stakeholders across Wales. It has been written in the context of **A Healthier Wales: our Plan for Health and Social Care (“A Healthier Wales”)**²³ which sets out the vision for a whole system approach to health and social care in Wales and the recently refreshed actions supporting the delivery of A Healthier Wales published in December 2024.

A Healthier Wales lays out the Welsh Government’s ambitions for progress and improvement, and describes the core values that underpin the system in Wales, including:

Proactively supporting people throughout the whole of their lives, and through the whole of Wales, making an extra effort to reach those most in need to reduce the health and wellbeing inequalities that exist.

It is also set in the context of the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. Achieving the wellbeing goals set out in the Act is vital in relation to tackling some of the key drivers of self-harm and suicide in Wales.

Receiving treatment in one’s preferred language is particularly important for those requiring support for suicide and self-harm because much of the assessment and treatment relies on direct communication rather than objective tests or medication.

We have ensured the strategy is supporting delivery of the [More than just words Five Year Plan \(2022 – 2027\)](#) which is the Welsh Government’s strategic framework for promoting the Welsh language in health and social care, and which identified mental health service users as one of the priority groups. Our vision for “More than just words” is for Welsh to belong and be embedded in health and social care services across Wales so that individuals receive care that meets their language needs without having to ask for it, leading to better outcomes. The More than just words Framework seeks to drive progress through a focus on the three themes of Welsh language planning and policies including data; supporting and developing the Welsh language skills of the current and future workforce; and sharing best practice and an enabling approach. At the core of the Framework is the principle of the Active Offer which places a responsibility on health and social care providers to offer services in Welsh, rather than the onus being on the patient or service user to have to request them.

[The Welsh Language \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) gives the Welsh language official status in Wales and reinforces the principle that the Welsh language should not be treated less favourably than the English language when providing services. Ensuring that suicide and self-harm services are provided through the medium of Welsh, and that this is actively offered to people receiving support, is crucial.

This strategy is separate from, but connected to, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It is connected because having a mental health issue is a risk factor for suicide and self-harm. However, a separate Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy in Wales recognises that neither are diagnosable mental health conditions.

Suicide and self-harm are behaviours in response to emotional pain caused by factors including, but not limited to, mental and physical health conditions, trauma, addiction, poverty and financial strain, bereavement, job losses and relationship breakdowns. Many of the risk factors for self-harm, suicide and poor mental health are the same and actions taken forward through the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy have a vital role to play in treating and preventing suicide and self-harm.

For example, through tackling the upstream issues leading to poor mental health, the offer of crisis support, and establishing a pathway for people who self-harm. However, a broader and more specific set of interventions are required to tackle suicide, such as looking at the physical environment (land and buildings), suicide surveillance, rapid response to suspected suicides, and the provision of specialist bereavement support.

As well as the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the successful delivery of the objectives within this strategy are also reliant, in part, on the successful delivery of other Welsh Government policies which have identified links with self-harm and suicide, such as:

- [The new Child Poverty Strategy for Wales.](#)
- [Connected Communities: A Strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building strong social connections 2020.](#)
- [The Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019](#) and [Substance Misuse Treatment Framework.](#)
- [The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(VAWDASV\) Strategy 2022 – 2026.](#)
- [Challenging Bullying – Rights, respect, equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools 2019.](#)
- [A Guide to Fair Work 2022.](#)
- [Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan 2024.](#)
- [The LGBTQ+ Action Plan 2023.](#)
- [The work of the Disability Rights Taskforce.](#)

In 2023, the Welsh Government also gave legislative consent to the UK Government to introduce regulations within the Online Safety Act (OSA) which received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023.

The Act establishes a new regulatory regime to address illegal and harmful content online, with the aim of preventing harm to individuals. Welsh Government will continue to work with the UK Government on wider regulatory reforms to keep people safe on and offline.

Other key achievements

The cross-Government policies and programmes identified above collectively provide a robust response to some of the key drivers of self-harm and suicide in Wales, delivered through effective cross-Government working. Below are some of the other key achievements we have made since the publication of Talk to Me 2 in 2015.

These have contributed to a step change in our approach to prevent suicide and support those who self-harm and experience suicidal thoughts, feelings and behaviours in Wales. However, with enduring rates of self-harm and suicide in Wales, we recognise that more needs to be done. This strategy provides an opportunity to critically review progress and identify what further action is required.

Other key achievements include:

The appointment of a National Suicide and Self-Harm Programme Lead for Wales with Regional Leads to drive national and local partnership action. We have established local partnerships with the aim of preventing and supporting the response to self-harm and suicide. This [national programme of work](#) is accessible via a digital platform for self-harm and suicide prevention and support.

In 2019, we published “[Responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people: Guidance for teachers, professionals, volunteers and youth services](#)”. The guidance provides information for adults who work with children and young people regarding how to respond to issues of self-harm and suicide. It addresses how to ask questions to children and young people who may have suicidal feelings or be self-harming, and how to respond to disclosure of these feelings and behaviours. It provides guidance on confidentiality, safeguarding and routes of escalation.

In 2022, we established a Cross-Government Suicide and Self-Harm Prevention Strategic Group. It has since been reshaped and renamed to form the Self-harm and Suicide Prevention Strategy Board. The Group has been established to drive forward cross-Government and multi-sectoral work to improve prevention and the response to self-harm and suicide in Wales.

In the same year, we also launched [Real Time Suspected Suicide Surveillance \(RTSSS\)](#) in Wales which was developed in partnership with Public Health Wales, the four police forces in Wales and the British Transport Police, and the NHS Wales Executive. The RTSSS collects data directly from police forces relating to sudden or unexplained deaths that are suspected to have been by suicide. [The second RTSSS report was published in December 2024.](#)

We have published guidance entitled “[Responding to people bereaved, exposed or affected by suicide](#)”. The guidance has been informed by insights into the needs and experiences of people living with bereavement by suicide in Wales. The guidance aims to ensure services provide a more compassionate response.

We have also commissioned a [National Advisory and Liaison Service](#) for those impacted by deaths that might be a suicide. This provides a single point of contact for people across Wales who have been affected by a death by suicide and can be used as a key touch point, and by a wide range of agencies, to signpost people to support.

The digitisation of the nationally recognised [Help is at Hand Cymru resource](#) also enables its continual improvement as a resource for healthcare and other front-line workers to help people who have been affected by suicide or unexplained deaths.

Our wider improvements to mental health support through the delivery of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy will continue to contribute to our efforts to reduce the prevalence of suicide and self-harm in Wales.

Key service transformation includes the establishment of single points of contact for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) the newly developed Sanctuary spaces for Children and Young People in emotional and mental health crisis, intended as an alternative to turning up at emergency departments, and the all-age national rollout of **111 press option 2** for vital and more accessible support.

Also, our Joint Ministerial Whole System Approach aims to improve the emotional wellbeing of our young people.

Within the education system and under the umbrella of the [Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Framework](#) there has been significantly extended support for all learners within schools via the local authority statutory schools counselling provision and roll out of the CAMHS School in-reach advice service, ensuring help and support for the wellbeing and mental health needs of learners, teachers and the wider school community.

What is the current picture? A summary of available evidence

This is a 10-year strategy and, throughout that time the evidence relating to suicide and self-harm will change, and our actions will need to change accordingly.

Therefore, the latest evidence will be published alongside each Delivery Plan which will detail those shorter-term 'SMART' actions based on the most up-to-date evidence.

Strategic Objectives

The objectives are as follows:

- 1. Listening and learning:** We will have streamlined processes for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, evidence and lived experience testimony; and robust infrastructure to ensure the intelligence gathered is used to develop policies, support, and services.
- 2. Preventing:** We will have a co-ordinated cross-Government and multi-agency response to:
 - Tackle the risk factors linked with self-harm and suicide;
 - Restrict access or exposure to harmful information online and in the media;
 - Limit access to methods which can be used to cause harm;
 - Identify and manage locations of concern.
- 3. Empowering:** Everyone will be empowered with the knowledge and awareness to recognise those in need, offer kind and compassionate support; and help them access services if needed.
- 4. Supporting:** People who have suicidal ideation or self-harm, or those supporting them, will have access to timely and person-centred support, intervention and treatment from all relevant services including primary care, mental health, urgent and emergency care, and third sector services.
- 5. Equipping:** Services that support people with challenges which increase their risk of suicide and self-harm are equipped to identify people at risk and work with partner agencies to offer holistic, person-centred and compassionate support.
- 6. Responding:** We will have timely responses to suicides and compassionate and person-centred support is available to all those affected.

By delivering the following objectives, we will achieve the outcomes set out on page 5.

Objective 1: Listening and Learning

We will have streamlined processes for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, evidence and lived experience testimony; and robust infrastructure to ensure the intelligence gathered is used to develop policies, support, and services.

What this objective means

Evidence already exists or is being developed which can inform actions to prevent, predict and respond to suicide and self-harm – including local intelligence and trends.

However, there are known gaps, particularly in relation to the prevalence and characteristics of self-harm in Wales. We therefore need to identify ways to better understand both suicide and self-harm and how we can most effectively help those affected by them.

Part of this will involve developing an infrastructure to gather, share and collectively interpret data and evidence at a national, regional, and local level, from civil servants, academics, services such as the NHS, and grassroots and third sector organisations to develop co-produced and consistent responses.

Most importantly, behind the facts and figures are people and each person's experience of self-harm and/or suicide is unique to them. This objective is also about having streamlined and effective processes in place so that we can continuously learn from those affected to ensure that the policies and services meet the needs for everyone, when and where they need help.

How we will do this

We will:

- Develop and maintain a robust evidence base for self-harm and suicide in Wales to better understand prevalence, causes, impacts and the most effective interventions.
- Ensure all suicide and self-harm policies and interventions are reported and monitored annually to evaluate effectiveness and impact.
- Develop a process to ensure lived experience becomes an integral part of research, policy and service development, implementation and evaluation.
- Strengthen and maintain more systematic structures and processes for the continued analysis, synthesis, sharing and presentation of data and research relating to suicide and self-harm, from within Wales, across the UK and wider to inform policy, practice and support service delivery.
- Explore technological and digital solutions to improve data quality and timeliness.

Objective 2: Preventing

We will have a co-ordinated cross-Government and multi-sectoral response to:

- **tackle the risk factors linked with self-harm and suicide**
- **restrict access or exposure to harmful information online and in the media**
- **limit access to methods that can cause harm**
- **identify and manage locations of concern.**

What this objective means

We know that there are a multitude of risk factors which contribute to a person self-harming or wanting to end their own lives. These include financial pressures, physical and mental health issues, parenthood, relationship breakdowns, unemployment, domestic abuse, bullying and discrimination, to name only a few. An individual can be subject to a number of risk factors at once.

There are also underlying factors which make a person more likely to self-harm or die by suicide, such as their gender, poverty, exposure to adverse childhood experiences and significantly traumatic events. Together, these underlying and situational risk factors combine to heighten the risk of self-harm and suicide.

Additional factors which increase a person's risk, include access to unhelpful or misinformation and advice online or through the media; access to means of suicide and self-harm (e.g., access to medication); access to locations that provide the opportunity for suicide via our natural and built environment; and stigma which prevents people from seeking help.

There are strategies and programmes of work across Government, the public and the third sector, which seek to tackle these social, economic and environmental challenges.

Our ambition is to support those working in these areas to develop a better understanding of suicide and self-harm; consider the impact of their policy / service development on suicide and self-harm; and work in a holistic, collaborative and cross-sectoral way to prevent suicide and self-harm.

We will:

- Raise the visibility of suicide and self-harm within Government and across other public bodies.
- Identify and influence Government policies and activities which could contribute to tackle risk factors linked to suicide and self-harm.
- Identify public services who have a role in tackling the risk factors linked to suicide and self-harm and create leadership within those services.
- Establish and maintain governance arrangements which facilitate effective communication with stakeholders for the dissemination of evidence and sharing of information to inform policy discussions.
- Review processes for considering suicide and self-harm in policy development and service design across Welsh Government departments e.g. employment and skills, communities and regeneration, housing and equality and human rights.

Objective 3: Empowering

Everyone will be empowered with the knowledge and awareness to recognise those in need, offer kind and compassionate support; and help them access services if needed.

What this objective means

This objective recognises that we can all make a difference. People affected by suicide and self-harm are present in our everyday lives. In our families, our friendship groups, our workplaces and the places that we socialise. Many people struggle in silence and can benefit greatly from sharing their feelings with somebody else.

Talking relieves pressure and can help change perspectives, allowing people to understand their negative feelings as valid responses to difficulties and realising that things can get better.

Some people who self-harm or have suicidal ideation may benefit from accessing services, but they do not know it or feel comfortable asking for that help, so will share feelings with people close to them. People often need encouragement to reach out. We can all help with that and learn to provide a compassionate, effective response if someone we know shares suicidal thoughts or discloses self-harming behaviours with us.

This objective is about empowering everyone by providing them with the knowledge and tools to identify and offer that compassionate and meaningful support to those that are struggling and help them access services if needed. It could possibly save lives and can enhance our relationships.

How we will do this

We will:

- Identify opportunities to raise awareness of suicide and self harm in the community, including within schools²⁴, youth clubs, higher and further education settings, workplaces²⁵, homes, hairdressers, gyms and other social settings.
- Develop and maintain training and support products which are universally accessible and equip people with listening skills, knowledge to confidently engage in conversations about suicide and self harm, offer support and signpost to services.

Objective 4: Supporting

People who have suicidal ideation or self-harm, or those supporting them, will have access to timely and person-centred support, intervention and treatment from all relevant services including primary care, mental health, urgent and emergency care, and third sector services.

What this objective means

Anyone can be vulnerable to suicidal ideation or self-harm at any point in their lives and it is vital that everyone receives the support they need when and where they need it. Objectives 3 and 5 seek to ensure that everyone is empowered and equipped with the knowledge and information to support somebody in need wherever they present to keep them safe.

However, some people who have suicidal ideation or are self-harming or may benefit from accessing relevant services.

Examples of these services include GP surgeries, hospitals, mental health crisis services, counselling services and specialised third sector organisations.

It is vital that these trusted services lead by example in offering safe, compassionate, culturally competent and effective interventions and/or treatment when people reach out.

This objective aims to work with those providers to enhance the offer, fill any gaps in provision and ensure that people feel safe in reaching out.

How we will do this

We will:

- Establish and maintain clear national guidelines setting out standards for offering a timely, evidence-based, person-centred interventions to all those who present to relevant services with self-harm or suicidal ideation.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of guidelines and standards across relevant services.
- Develop a workforce and training plan for relevant service staff aimed at increasing understanding of suicide and self-harm.
- Identify gaps in support and fill them.



Objective 5: Equipping

Services that support people with challenges which increase their risk of suicide and self-harm are equipped to identify people at risk and work with partner agencies to offer holistic, person-centred and compassionate support.

What this objective means

We know that some people are at greater risk of suicide and self-harm than others.

Examples include, people who are unemployed or experiencing financial strain, have experienced domestic or sexual abuse, require housing support, are, or have been, in contact with the criminal justice system, experience issues linked with inequality or discrimination, are living, or have lived, in care at any stage in their life, have physical health issues or neurodivergence.

Objective 2 is targeted at preventing these issues; however, it is important that when people do reach out for support that those services are aware of the heightened risk of suicide and self-harm.

This objective seeks to equip those services to identify people in need and offer holistic and compassionate support.

How we will do this

We will:

- Co-produce and maintain mandatory, accessible, universal and evidence-based training resources and standards which are consistent with the trauma-informed Wales framework to generate consistent skills across the services that may be accessed by those in need, and monitor progress.
- Embed training as part of curricular in schools, higher and further education and in relevant under-graduate and pre-registration training, including teacher training.
- Identify opportunities to co-develop, maintain and disseminate resources which facilitate consistent awareness, knowledge and understanding and use of language in relation to self-harm and suicide to dispel myths, increase compassion, offer support, and remove stigma.

Objective 6: Responding

We will have timely responses to suicides and compassionate and person-centred support is available to all those affected.

What this objective means:

Suicide is often preventable and never inevitable and objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 are intended to prevent suicides from happening by tackling the risks factors and ensuring that people get the support where and when they need it.

However, we must be prepared to respond if tragic events do happen. Suicide can have devastating and far-reaching impacts on others, and it is vital that timely, compassionate and person-centred support is available.

There is a need to strengthen and standardise the multi-agency rapid response to a suspected suicide to ensure that appropriate and timely access to support is provided for those affected but also to ensure action is taken to prevent further loss of life.

How we will do this

We will develop and maintain national, regional, and local arrangements to enable rapid response to suspected suicides and cluster recognition, within localities and across borders which are timely, compassionate and person-centred.

How will we know

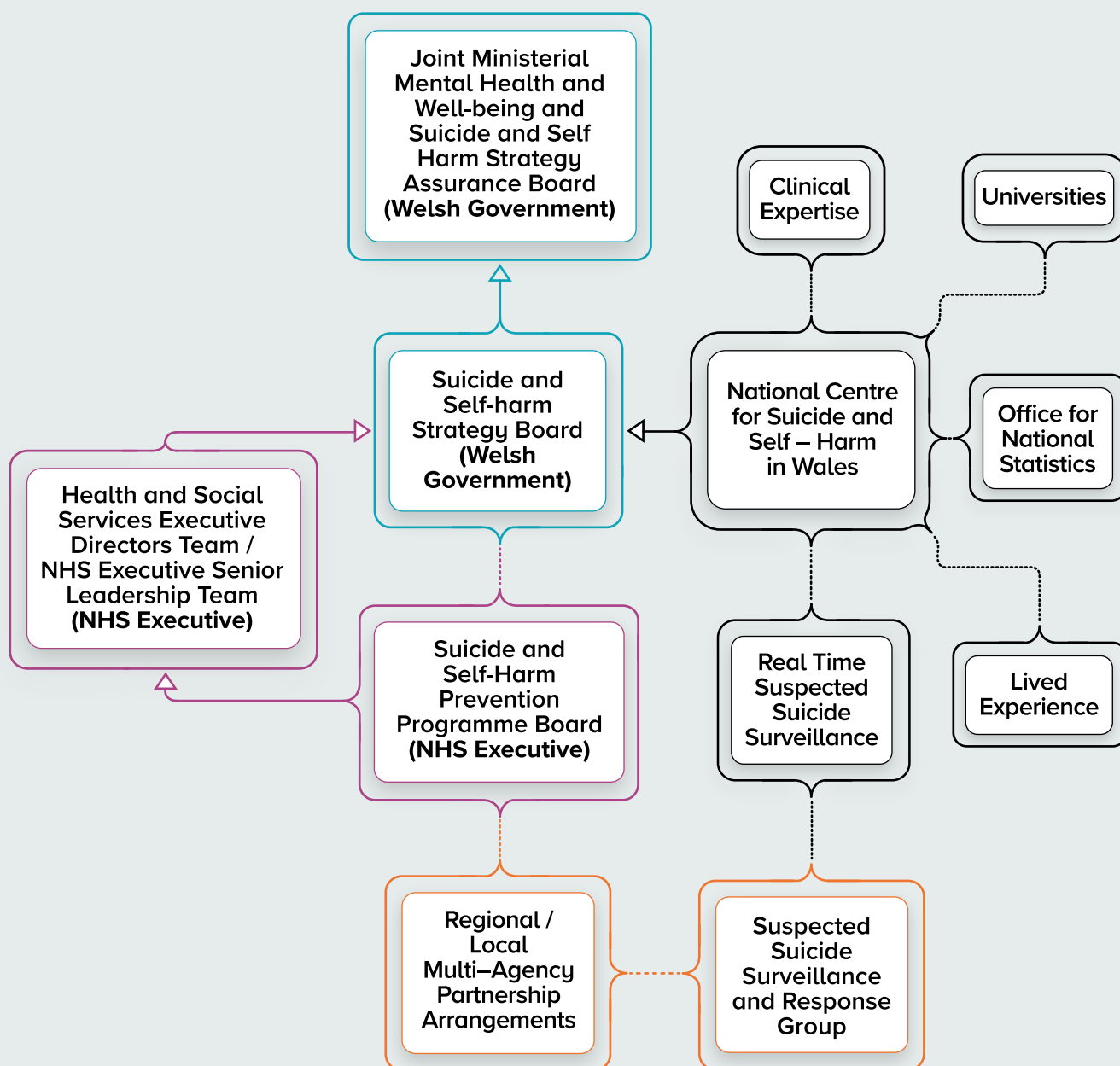
To ensure that we are delivering a strategy that builds upon the work in this area to date, we will focus on the six key objectives listed above. Accompanying the strategy, we have developed a Delivery Plan (outlining detailed activities that will take place as part of the objectives) and an outcomes framework, which sets out how progress against our objectives will be achieved.

The Delivery Plan will set out SMART actions to achieve the objectives. Progress against the timescales set out in the action plan will be monitored and reported via the governance arrangements set out below.

The outcomes framework includes indicators which will enable us to assess the impact our actions are having on achieving the short, medium and long-term outcomes, in addition to, the overall vision of the strategy. We will regularly review the framework to ensure new and emerging indicators are incorporated where appropriate. We will also develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for the strategy. Reports on progress will be published on an annual basis.

Governance and accountability

Using the SMART actions agreed in the accompanying Delivery Plan, the strategy will be delivered through continued multi-sectoral and cross-Government collaboration with strengthened governance in place to drive implementation and monitor progress.



We have established the Joint Ministerial Assurance Board to ensure robust governance arrangements are in place to provide strategic oversight of both the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy. The Board is chaired by the Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, with the Minister for Children and Social Care as the Vice Chair. Progress on the implementation of the Strategies will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

The Strategic Cross-Government Suicide and Self-Harm Strategy Board will be responsible for the ongoing development and delivery of the Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plans. It will drive action across Government and externally, manage risks, provide assurance and monitor impact. The Board will consist of key internal and external partners with responsibility for reporting directly to the Joint Ministerial Assurance Board.

To inform the implementation of the Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plans, we will formalise the relationship with the National Centre for Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Research in Wales which will lead on the Delivery of Objective 1 in the Strategy. The aim will be to ensure we have a systematic, evidence-based and data driven approach to the development and delivery of policy and action.

Local action will be co-ordinated through regional suicide and self-harm prevention partnerships who will report into a National Programme Board that monitors and supports strategy implementation. Statutory agencies across Wales will be key to ensuring these partnerships are effective, and that responsibilities are appropriately assigned to those in statutory roles.

As part of the review of governance arrangements for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, we will ensure links are made with the governance arrangements for this strategy, given the interconnection between the actions and ambitions.

Communication

As part of the pre-consultation engagement on the strategies, stakeholders told us:

- We need to be clearer in terms of how we communicate and explain our vision for the Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy for Wales – and how each of the objectives and underpinning principles will be realised and implemented.
- Specific consideration needs to be given to the language used to describe mental health conditions, mental wellbeing, and mental health / ill-health. Key phrases need clear explanations.
- We need to provide clear and accessible information tailored to needs, including culturally appropriate information for minority ethnic communities; LGBTQ+ communities; neurodivergent people, children and young people; people with sensory loss; and in a person's preferred language.
- We need to develop a standardised approach for services; to provide information about service offers and how to access them (and in so doing, promote the Active Offer for Welsh language and ensure all information complies with the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information, and where appropriate is children and young people friendly).
- We need better and more accessible information for other professionals on how they can assist their own service users to get access to support.

Glossary

Active offer

The Active Offer is providing a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Chronic stress on individuals during childhood. Such stress arises from the abuse and neglect of children but also from growing up in households where children are routinely exposed to issues such as domestic violence or individuals with alcohol and other substance use problems. Collectively such childhood stressors are called ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences).

Affected by suicide

What someone might experience when they lose someone to suicide, which can include intense sadness, shock, anger, frustration, confusion and isolation.

Anti-racism

Anti-racism is about changing the systems, policies and processes which for so long have embedded a negative view of ethnic minority people.

Bereavement / bereaved

Bereavement is the experience of losing someone important to us. It is characterised by grief, which is the process and the range of emotions we go through as we gradually adjust to the loss. Someone who is bereaved is a person who is experiencing this loss.

Bullying

Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts others either physically or emotionally.

CAMHS

CAMHS is the name for the NHS services that assess and treat people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. You might also see CYPMHS used, which stands for Children and Young People's Mental Health Services. They are NHS-provided services that assess and treat children and young people with mental or emotional difficulties.

Care experienced

Care experienced people are those who are either looked after by the state under Wales national legislation or were previously looked after by the state. In Welsh law, they are defined as Looked After Children or Care Leavers.

Cluster (suicide)

A suicide cluster may be defined as a group of suicides, suicide attempts, or self-harm events that occur closer together in time and space than would normally be expected in a given community.

Co-occurring

This refers to having mental health conditions alongside other issues. For example, the co-occurrence of poor mental health with substance misuse, or neurodivergence.

Crisis support

A mental health crisis often means that someone no longer feels able to cope or be in control of their situation. Crisis support is the help and advice available to someone who needs help.

Delivery plans

The Suicide Prevention and Self-Harm Strategy will have supporting delivery plans. These will set out the actions that we will take to achieve our vision for mental health and wellbeing in Wales, and suicide and self-harm prevention.

Disorder

A mental disorder is characterised by a clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotional regulation, or behaviour.

Mental disorder is defined by section 1(2) of the Mental Health Act 1983 (the Act) as “any disorder or disability of the mind”.

Emotions

These are how we feel about something and how our body reacts. For example, if we experience fear, we might feel our heart beating faster or notice our hands shaking.

Equality

Ensuring everyone is treated equally and fairly and ensuring that everyone's human rights are met.

Feelings

These are how we experience our emotions and give meaning to them. They are different for everyone. For example, you might associate your hands shaking with feeling anxious.

Inequality

Inequality of outcome relates to any measurable difference in outcome between those who have experienced disadvantage (for example, socio-economic disadvantage) and the rest of the population.

In-reach service

Services that work in settings outside of their usual location, with the view to improving access to services and outcomes.

Intervention (including early intervention)

The action of becoming intentionally involved in a situation, in order to improve it or prevent it from getting worse.

Legislation

Legislation is law which has been made by a legislature or made by a person authorised by a legislature to make laws. A legislature is a body of persons, usually elected, which is empowered to make, change, or repeal the laws of a country or state.

There are two legislatures which pass laws which apply to Wales: the UK Parliament and Senedd Cymru.

Regulations are an example of laws that can be introduced by the UK Parliament and Senedd Cymru.

LGBTQ+

This refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual/bi, transgender/trans people, queer or questioning. Other letters can be added to the acronym to include other groups, orientations and identities, such as I (intersex) and A (asexual/aromantic). The + (plus) in the acronym is used as a shorthand to include and acknowledge other diverse terms people identify with and use to describe their identities and orientations, including intersex, asexual and aromantic people.

Lived experience

This refers to how people living in Wales experience and articulate the current situation as lived out by them and people they know.

Locations of concern

A location of concern can be broadly defined as a specific, usually public, site that is used as a location for suicide and that provides either means or opportunity for suicide.

One or more incidents of suicidal behaviour at a particular location suggests that action should be considered to address the site in question.

Mental health

This is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and wellbeing that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development. People with poor mental health can have a mental health condition but this is not always or necessarily the case.

Mental health conditions

This is a broad term covering conditions that affect emotions, thinking and behaviour, and which substantially interfere with our life.

Mental health conditions can significantly impact daily living, including our ability to work, care for ourselves and our family, and our ability to relate and interact with others. This is a term used to cover several conditions (e.g. depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia) with different symptoms and impacts for varying lengths of time, for each person. Mental health conditions can range from mild through to severe and enduring illness. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of physical and mental wellbeing, but this is not always or necessarily the case. Some mental health conditions like eating disorders and schizophrenia are associated with a higher risk of mortality.

Mental wellbeing

This is the internal positive view that we are coping well with the everyday stresses of life.

Multi-sectoral collaboration

Where different organisations and agencies work together to achieve common goals.

Neurodiversity and neurodivergent people

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently. We have different interests and motivations, and are naturally better at some things and poorer at others.

Most people are neurotypical, meaning that the brain functions and processes information in the way society expects.

For neurodivergent people, the brain functions, learns and processes information differently.

NHS Executive

The NHS Wales Executive is a national support function, operational from 1 April 2023.

The key purpose is to drive improvements in the quality and safety of care – resulting in better and more equitable outcomes, access and patient experience, reduced variation, and improvements in population health.

Person-centred

This means treating people as individuals and as equal partners in their healthcare, being mindful and respectful of their individual needs (including a person's preferred language), providing any reasonable adjustments to meet needs and providing compassionate care.

Primary Care

Primary care is about those services which provide the first point of care (day or night) for more than 90 per cent of people's contact with the NHS in Wales. General practice (GP) is a core element of primary care, as well as pharmacy, dentistry, and optometry.

Public Health Wales

Public Health Wales is one of the 11 organisations which makes up NHS Wales.

They are the national public health agency in Wales.

Public Health Wales work to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for the people of Wales.

Real Time Suspected Suicide Surveillance (RTSSS)

The RTSSS collects information relating to sudden or unexplained deaths that are suspected to have been by suicide.

This system has been developed due to the delay between an unexpected death and the death being recorded as a suicide following a coroner's inquest.

This makes it difficult to implement an immediate response and support. The RTSSS in Wales will provide information without this delay, enabling services to respond much sooner.

The information from the new system will support services to develop preventative approaches and to ensure support is made available to individuals and communities directly affected. This can include providing bereavement support.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding means keeping people safe from abuse, neglect and harm. Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. Neglect is also a type of abuse. It means not giving someone the care they need.

Secondary health care

Health care provided by hospitals. Testing, diagnostics and treatment usually overseen by a specialist.

Sensory loss

People who are d/Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing; or people who are Blind or partially sighted; or people who are Deafblind (those whose combined sight and hearing impairment cause difficulties with communication, access to information and mobility).

SMART actions

SMART actions refer to goals or objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

Social determinants

The broad social and economic circumstances that together influence health throughout a person's life course.

Socio-economic inequalities

Living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in the same society.

Stigma

This is used to describe the negative attitude that can exist in relation to a person's mental health.

Substance misuse

Substance misuse is formally defined as the continued use of any psychoactive substance that substantially affects a person's physical and mental health, social situation and responsibilities. The most severe forms of substance misuse are normally treated by specialist drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. Substance misuse covers misuse of a range of psychoactive substances including alcohol, illicit drugs and licit drugs including prescribed medications taken in a way not recommended by a GP or the manufacturer.

Suspected suicide

When a person is suspected to have taken their own life intentionally, but this has not been confirmed by a medical professional (a Coroner).

Third sector

The third sector encompasses the full range of non-public, not-for-profit organisations that are non-governmental and "value driven". This means motivated by the desire to further social, environmental or cultural objectives rather than to make a profit.

Timely

Having access to something at the appropriate time. For example: Part 1 of the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 aims to improve access to mental health services within primary care settings, with the view to improving the outcomes for individuals accessing these services.

The Measure also looks to achieve “timely referrals” to secondary mental health services and support for patients discharged from secondary mental health services.

Trauma-informed

Trauma-informed is about understanding that lots of people have adversity and trauma that affects them in all kinds of ways.

Unexplained death

Deaths for which the cause remains unascertained after a full investigation.

Universal offer

Where everyone is offered the same service, support or training.

Vicarious Trauma

The experience of absorbing others’ pain in times of their distress so deeply that it affects your own well-being.

Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

A Framework issued as statutory guidance to governing bodies of maintained nursery, primary, secondary, middle, pupil referral units (PRUs), and special schools and local authorities in Wales which aims to address the emotional and mental well-being needs of all children and young people, as well as school staff, as part of the whole-school community.

Whole System Approach

Mental health and wellbeing support is provided in lots of different ways by lots of different services. These services can include health, social care, housing, education, youth and playwork, sports and leisure and the voluntary sector. A “whole system approach” means that all these services work together to provide a joined-up service that is easy to access and easy to navigate.

Endnotes

- 1 [The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health. Annual Report: UK patient and general population data, 2011-2021. 2024. University of Manchester.](#)
- 2 [The Relationship Between Bullying Victimization and Perpetration and Non-suicidal Self-injury: A Systematic Review | Child Psychiatry & Human Development](#)
- 3 [Suicide, Self-Harm, & Traumatic Stress Exposure: A Trauma-Informed Approach to the Evaluation and Management of Suicide Risk: Evidence-Based Practice in Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Vol 5, No 4](#)
- 4 [Substance misuse disorder linked to high risk of self-harm – The Lancet Psychiatry](#)
- 5 [Gendered experiences of unemployment, suicide and self-harm: a population-level record linkage study – PubMed](#)
- 6 [Negative affectivity and disinhibition as moderators of an interpersonal pathway to suicidal behavior in borderline personality disorder – PMC](#)
- 7 [Emotion Dysregulation and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis – PMC](#)
- 8 [Self-harm and life problems: findings from the Multicentre Study of Self-harm in England | Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology](#)
- 9 [Major Physical Health Conditions and Risk of Suicide – PMC](#)
- 10 [Sociodemographic inequalities of suicide: a population-based cohort study of adults in England and Wales 2011–21 | European Journal of Public Health | Oxford Academic](#)
- 11 [Socioeconomic disadvantage and suicidal behaviour bilingual.pdf](#)
- 12 [Socio-economic disparities in patients who present to hospital for self-harm: patients' characteristics and problems in the Multicentre Study of Self-harm in England – PubMed](#)
- 13 [Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color](#)
- 14 [Socioeconomic inequalities in the risk of suicide attempts among sexual minority adolescents: findings from the UK's Millennium Cohort Study – The Lancet Regional Health – Europe](#)
- 15 [Why have suicide levels risen among young people and what can be done to tackle this? | National Statistical](#)
- 16 [Samaritans believes reducing self-harm is key to suicide prevention | Samaritans](#)
- 17 [Suicides in England and Wales – Office for National Statistics](#)
- 18 [2012-16_MaSH_rpt_finalv4](#)

- 19 [The experiences and needs of supporting individuals of young people who self-harm: A systematic review and thematic synthesis – ScienceDirect](#)
- 20 [A qualitative study of young people's lived experiences of suicide and self-harm: intentionality, rationality and authenticity – Marzetti – 2023 – Child and Adolescent Mental Health – Wiley Online Library](#)
- 21 [Experiences of general practice care for self-harm: a qualitative study of young people's perspectives | British Journal of General Practice](#)
- 22 [Experiences of care for self-harm in the emergency department: comparison of the perspectives of patients, carers and practitioners | BJPsych Open | Cambridge Core](#)
- 23 [A healthier Wales: long term plan for health and social care | GOV.WALES](#)
- 24 Targeting education settings in this objective refers to raising awareness amongst pupils and students so they're able to support friends if required
- 25 Targeting workplaces in this objective refers to raising awareness amongst staff whose role doesn't primarily involve working directly with vulnerable people e.g., hairdressers, bar workers, construction site managers



Cyngor Gwynedd's Plan for the Prevention of Suicide and Self-harm – (Draft July 2026)

The action plan below highlights the work that Cyngor Gwynedd will deliver against the objectives of the [Suicide Prevention and Self-harm Strategy for Wales 2025-35](#). The aim of this Strategy is to:

- reduce suicide and attempted suicide rates
- improve outcomes for people receiving support for self-harm and suicidal ideation
- improve outcomes for people affected by suicide and self-harm

Our action plan is structured in line with the six objectives of the Strategy, namely: **Listening and Learning, Preventing, Empowering, Supporting, Equipping and Responding**. Like other key partners in Wales, we are guided by the actions within the [3-year Delivery Plan \(2025-28\)](#).

STRATEGY OBJECTIVE	ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENTS	TIMETABLE
1) Listening and Learning: <i>more streamlined processes for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, evidence and lived experience testimony; and robust infrastructure to ensure the intelligence gathered is used to develop policies, support, and services.</i>	1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd to be a member of the North Wales Suicide and Self-harm Forum and to provide input to any relevant sub-groups.	Community Safety / Mental Health / Safeguarding	Quarterly and as required
	1.2 Cyngor Gwynedd to be a member of the North Wales Suicide Review Group (when established) – to consider lessons from RTSSS , DHRs, and other reviews	Community Safety / Children and Adult Departments	TBC
	1.3 Identify a corporate leader/champion for the prevention of suicide and self-harm in the local authority.	Corporate Services / Elected Members	As soon as possible



	1.4 Hold a briefing session for the Leadership Team and/or Local Members on the Strategy, the local situation (statistics) and the work in progress	Community Safety in collaboration with the Regional Lead	As soon as possible
	1.5 Monitor the action plans of the Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs/SUSRs) relating to suicide and ensure that learning is widely shared.	Gwynedd & Anglesey Community Safety Partnership / Adult Safeguarding Group	Ongoing
2) Preventing: <i>A multi-agency response to the following:</i> • Tackle the risk factors linked with self-harm and suicide; • Restrict access or exposure to harmful information online and in the media; • Limit access to methods that can cause harm; • Identify and manage locations of concern	2.1 Cyngor Gwynedd to support the North Wales Suicide Prevention Protocol (Safeguarding Board)	To be confirmed	To be confirmed – currently in development
	2.2 Cyngor Gwynedd to provide input and facilitate the work of the Locations of Concern / Cluster groups and other prevention activities in Gwynedd	Community Safety / Mental Health / Safeguarding and any other relevant departments	As required
	2.3 Engage with any regional work in north Wales that focuses on risk factors and priority groups/communities (e.g. domestic abuse, substance misuse, homelessness)	Community Safety / Mental Health / Safeguarding and any other relevant departments	As required



	2.4 Promote good practice in responsible reporting of suicide and self-harm in local media and social media (e.g. follow the Samaritans' Media Guidelines); and escalate any harmful reporting through the North-west Regional Lead	Everybody's responsibility / Community Safety / Communications Team	Ongoing
3) Empowering: <i>the knowledge and awareness to recognise those in need, offer kind and compassionate support; and help them access services if needed.</i>	3.1 Raise public awareness of the support available, e.g. a schedule of social media posts	Community Safety / Communications Team	Ongoing
	3.2 Training and awareness / sharing resources with community groups	Community Safety / Communications Team	As required
4) Supporting: <i>Access to timely and person-centred support, intervention and treatment from all relevant services including primary care, mental health, urgent and emergency care, and third sector services.</i>	4.1 Safety Planning – training and implementation for key services and staff • Mental Health First Aid • Ask and Act • I-Act • Mental Health and Suicide Awareness • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma-informed Practice in Wales	Learning and Development / Social Services	TBC



	And any other relevant training		
	4.2 Incorporate the risk and safety of suicide and self-harm into existing mechanisms (e.g. safeguarding; MARAC; transformation planning)	Community Safety / Social Services	As soon as possible
	4.3 Cyngor Gwynedd to implement the Self-harm Quality Statement (when published by the Welsh Government in 2026).	To be confirmed after Welsh Government publishes the statement	As soon as possible after publication
5) Equipping: <i>Services that support people with challenges which increase their risk of suicide and self-harm are equipped to identify people at risk and work with partner agencies to offer holistic, person-centred and compassionate support.</i>	5.1 Identify and support staff groups that should be prioritised to receive suicide and self-harm training, and support them to gain access to it	Learning and Development	As soon as possible
	5.2 Consider making the Suicide Awareness E-Module Wales mandatory	Management Team / Learning and Development	To be discussed as soon as possible
	5.3 Develop intranet resources to support staff with conversations about suicide; and post-suicide support (examples are available as a starting point)	Community Safety to discuss further with the Regional Lead to understand what options are available	To be discussed as soon as possible



	5.4 Develop and implement a training framework for schools – suicide and self-harm (examples are available from other areas of Wales). Share resources with schools, e.g. Sorts - Recognising and responding to self-harm in schools or Responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people LLYW.CYMRU	Community Safety to discuss further with the Regional Lead to understand what options are available / Education Department	To be discussed as soon as possible
6) Responding: <i>Provide timely responses to suicides and compassionate and person-centred support will be available to all those affected.</i>	6.1 Promote Enfys Alice / NALS	Community Safety / Communications Team	Ongoing
	6.2 Develop a Rapid Response Process after a suspected suicide (examples of a Standard Procedure and Information-sharing Protocol are available)	Community Safety and Adult Safeguarding to discuss with the Regional Lead / Co-operate with Police / BCU Safeguarding	To be discussed as soon as possible
	6.3 Develop and implement a process for supporting staff affected by the suicide of a service user or colleague	Human Resources / Health and Safety	As soon as possible
	6.4 Develop tailored Post-suicide Support policies in schools, e.g. Step by Step Samaritans	Education Department	As soon as possible

Self-harm and Thoughts of Suicide in Schools

1. Purpose

The purpose of this supplementary paper is to summarise the expectations and action schools take in relation to self-harm and thoughts of suicide in children and young people, setting out the relevant guidance, national and regional plans, the available resources, and actions already in place in schools.

This area is a core part of school safeguarding and well-being work, as school staff are in a vital position to identify concerns early, respond compassionately, record appropriately, and ensure that children and young people have access to timely support.

2. Relevant guidance

The national guidance specific to this field is Responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people, which is aimed at teachers, professionals, volunteers and youth services. The guidance includes principles for early intervention, prevention, confidentiality, safeguarding and referral.

An update to this guidance is forthcoming. According to the update shared with North Wales Designated Safeguarding Persons, the updating work includes a discovery and survey workshop, updating support pathways, strengthening links with safeguarding, and considering new developments such as '111 Press 2' and CAMHS support.

Keeping Learners Safe remains a key statutory guidance for safeguarding arrangements in schools, and includes the responsibilities of local authorities, governing bodies and education settings.

The work also aligns with the Framework on establishing a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being, which outlines the expectation for schools to consider the well-being of learners and staff as part of the school's culture, leadership, curriculum, support and partnerships.

3. How schools operate

Schools already operate through their existing safeguarding and well-being arrangements. This includes the central role of the Designated Safeguarding Person, concern-recording systems, referral routes, parental or carer involvement where appropriate, and collaboration with services such as CAMHS, school counselling, social services, school nurses and other support services.

From the regional session for schools in north Wales, it was identified that schools needed training for all staff, clear referral routes, a tiered whole-school approach, practical resources, and a culture of trusted relationships.

Expected action	Purpose
Respond calmly, compassionately and non-judgementally	Build trust and reduce stigma.
Share concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Person	Ensure that the correct safeguarding actions are led and recorded.
Record concerns, decisions and actions	Maintain a clear trail for monitoring, review, and referral.
Consider the immediate safety of the child or young person	Ensure a prompt response when there is an immediate risk.

Involve parents or carers where safe and appropriate	Strengthen support around the child or young person.
Use local or regional referral routes	Connect the learner with the right support at the right time.
Continue to monitor, support and review	Ensure that support does not cease after the first response.

4. Webinar and recent learning

Two relevant webinars have been held and have contributed to strengthening schools' understanding and responses.

Session for north Wales secondary schools' Designated Safeguarding Persons

The session was held on 1 July 2026. It focused on suicide and self-harm in the context of schools, including resources, guidance, national updates, regional developments and the need for clear pathways to support school staff. The session also included data and evidence, the role of trusted adults, online training resources, post-suicide support in schools, and the regional response led by Educational Psychologists in partnership with CAMHS.

All-Wales education webinar

The wider webinar on self-harm and thoughts of suicide in children and young people was held for the education sector in Wales. The content included contributions from Professor Ann John on the evidence underpinning evolving guidance, and Karen Hughes on education and mental health, including the voices of children with lived experience. It also included a brief on a forthcoming update to Welsh Government guidance and the implications for safeguarding and well-being procedures in schools.

5. Resources and training

SSHP Suicide Awareness E-module

A bilingual module for staff at all levels, including volunteers. It provides an understanding of suicide and suicide prevention in Wales, raising awareness of risk factors, showing how individuals can help, and building confidence to refer for help. It is being promoted as a core resource for school staff, with a clear message about self-care as the content can elicit an emotional response.

[SSHP Cymru Training Hub](#): Access to training, resources, events and information about the prevention of suicide and self-harm.

[Papyrus](#): Support for young people and for concerned adults, including providing support for another person and a de-briefing service.

[Staff Well-being Service in Wales](#): Support for

SSHP: [Finding our words: Suicide and self-harm prevention in schools](#): Further learning on suicide and self-harm prevention in schools.

6. Implications for the Local Authority and schools

The current situation indicates that schools are already taking action, but that they need to continue to: the well-being of school staff.

Betsi Cadwaladr's early support: Information about children and young people's mental health support and early access to services.

- strengthen consistency, staff confidence and support pathways;
- ensure that schools continue to use the existing national guidance until the revised guidance is published;
- promote the completion of the SSHP Suicide Awareness E-module as part of a staff training pathway;
- continue to share resources and updates with Designated Safeguarding Persons;
- ensure that school procedures link self-harm and thoughts of suicide to safeguarding and well-being arrangements and a whole-school approach;
- work with regional partners to ensure clear pathways between schools, CAMHS, Educational Psychologists, counselling, social services and other support services;
- review local guidance following the publication of the Welsh Government update.

7. Conclusion

Schools operate as part of their safeguarding and well-being responsibilities, and recent work through webinars, the regional session for Designated Safeguarding Persons, and SSHP resources, has strengthened the foundation for a more consistent response.

The priority now is to ensure that all schools continue to operate confidently, compassionately and consistently, with staff knowing how to identify concerns, how to respond, how to record, and where to refer to for support. We will support schools to review local procedures when the revised Welsh Government guidance is published.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Title of item:	<i>North Wales Regional Anchor Charter</i>
Cabinet Member:	<i>Councillor Dilwyn Morgan</i>
Relevant officer:	• <i>Dylan Owen, Director of Social Services</i> • <i>Dewi Jones, The Council's Business Support Service Manager</i> • <i>Dafydd Gwynne, Strategic Partnerships Director, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board</i>
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. Decision sought

1.1 The Cabinet is requested:

- To note the content of the North Wales Regional Anchor Charter, approved by the Regional Partnership Board on 8 May 2026.
- To note the cross-referencing work completed between the commitments of the Charter and the priorities of the 2023-28 Cyngor Gwynedd Plan and the Council's day-to-day work.
- To acknowledge that the Council's existing work already makes a substantial contribution towards achieving the objectives of the Charter, and that there is an opportunity to strengthen these contributions in accordance with the Council Plan priorities.
- To note the opportunity to share the learning from the cross-referencing process, as well as examples of noteworthy practice, with other partners across the region as a part of the Council's commitment to the Wellbeing, Prevention and Anchor Framework approved by the Regional Partnership Board on 8 May 2026.

2. The reason why the Cabinet must make the decision:

2.1 By submitting this report, the intention is to ensure that the Cabinet is aware of the Regional Anchor Charter and the way its principles correspond with the current priorities and work of Cyngor Gwynedd.

2.2 An Anchor Organisation can be defined as a place-based organisation that has a substantial influence on the wellbeing of their local population, often in ways that are additional to their core business, such as in their role as employers, procurers of goods

and services, building and land owners, their impact on the environment and how they engage with and include their communities.

- 2.3 The aim of the Charter is to encourage public organisations and partners to make the best possible use of their role as employers, service commissioners, asset owners and community organisations in order to improve health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities and increase economic and social opportunities for local people.
- 2.4 There is no request for the Cabinet to adopt a new policy **or** commit to an additional work programme. Instead, the report provides an overview of the regional framework and highlights the contribution already being made by the Council, in the context of the Regional Partnership Board's approval of the Charter earlier this year.

3. Background

- 3.1 Evidence shows that significant inequalities continue across north Wales. The gap in healthy life expectancy between the least deprived and most deprived people is increasing, with the latest data showing a 12-year gap in men, and an 11-year gap in women, on average.
- 3.2 In response, regional partners have been co-developing a method for action that supports prevention, early intervention and improving wellbeing, by collaborating across organisation and ensuring alignment with policy drivers and key evidence, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Marmot Principles.
- 3.3 The Regional Wellbeing, Prevention and Anchor Framework was approved by the Regional Partnership Board on 8 May 2026, and it includes the following components:
- A series of Prevention Missions and high-impact actions, which respond to broader health indicators.
 - A Regional Anchor Charter, making the best of the role of Anchor Organisation.
 - Resources to strengthen the system learning around wellbeing, prevention and early intervention, including a fund of noteworthy practice.
 - A commitment to work with our communities as equal partners.
- 3.4 The aim of the Framework developed under the leadership of the Regional Partnership Board, with support from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, is to provide a whole-system method to enable organisations and partnerships across north Wales to act collectively to address the factors influencing people's health and wellbeing, strengthening the role of anchor organisations both locally and regionally.

3.5 The Anchor Charter was developed using a co-production method with a broad range of partners across the region. The process has drawn attention to several examples of work already taking place across the region to improve the health and wellbeing of communities and reduce inequalities.

3.6 The Charter focuses on five main themes:

- Workforce, employment and skills
- Buildings and Land
- Environmental impacts
- Community participation
- Procurement and expenditure

3.7 Anchor organisations are encouraged to use their influence as employers, service commissioners, asset owners and community partners, to ensure the best possible wellbeing for local people and communities. A copy of the Charter is included as an attachment to this report.

3.8 Mapping Work

3.8.1 To assess the relevance of the Charter to Cyngor Gwynedd, a cross-referencing exercise was completed between the commitments of the Charter, priorities of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28, and the Council's day-to-day work.

3.8.2 The exercise showed that there is a strong connection between the aims of the Charter and much of the Council's core work, including:

- Supporting the people of Gwynedd into work;
- Developing skills and employment pathways;
- Promoting the use of the Welsh Language;
- Supporting the wellbeing of people and communities;
- Achieving the objectives of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan;
- Keeping the economic benefit local through procurement and economic development work.

3.8.3 The assessment also shows that the Council is already operating in a way that reflects many of the Charter's commitments through the day-to-day work of the Council's services. In several areas, the Council's performance was scored over 3 out of 5, with some areas, such as promoting the Welsh language, scoring higher.

3.8.4 In terms of commitment to ensure continuous improvement, see below a list of the elements that scored 3 or less in the self-assessment. There is an opportunity for the

Council to consider opportunities to respond to these as a part of corporate business plans, and to share good practice between Council departments.

- 3.8.5 In order to raise awareness of the Charter and its relevance to the Council's work, the cross-referencing work was presented to the Corporate Management Team. This provided an opportunity to discuss the Charter in a cross-departmental context and identify how the Council's services are already contributing to its objectives. The discussion also highlighted the importance of continuing to collaborate across Council departments in order to make the best possible use of our role as an anchor organisation.
- 3.8.6 In general, the cross-referencing work suggests that Cyngor Gwynedd is on firm footing in terms of the principles of the Charter and is already making a substantial contribution towards its objectives.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The Regional Partnership Board has already adopted the Regional Anchor Charter as part of the broader work of strengthening wellbeing and preventing inequalities across north Wales.
- 4.2 The purpose of submitting this report to Cabinet is:
- To raise awareness and give publicity to the Charter within the Council's governance arrangements.
 - To acknowledge the positive contribution already being made by the Council towards its objectives.
 - To commit to share noteworthy practice and learning regionally.
 - To identify opportunities to strengthen our contribution as an Anchor Organisation by addressing the areas that scored lowest in the assessment.

5. Views of the Statutory Officers.

5.1 Chief Finance Officer

I am satisfied that the decision sought will not create new spending commitments.

5.2 Monitoring Officer

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

List of Appendices:

1. North Wales Anchor Charter
2. Mapping the Objectives of the Anchor Charter against the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan



1. WORKFORCE, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

- 1.1 We will seek to pay the real living wage and ensure fair terms and conditions, reducing insecure contracts and supporting staff wellbeing and financial security.
- 1.2 We will create opportunities for people furthest from the labour market to access training, apprenticeships, and employment within our organisation, and promote progression and training opportunities for our staff.
- 1.3 We will support staff health and wellbeing through a strong prevention focused offer, including opportunities to be physically active at work and access to healthy food and drink.
- 1.4 We will strengthen the health impact of our workforce by promoting access to Making Every Contact Count (MECC) training, helping staff and service users make healthier and more sustainable choices.
- 1.5 We will work with education providers and Anchor Organisations to respond to future workforce skills needs and improve accessible employment pathways.
- 1.6 We will promote the Welsh language by supporting staff to learn and use Welsh, particularly in public facing roles, contributing to the Cymraeg 2050 ambition.

2. BUILDINGS AND LAND

- 2.1 We will explore and review our use of existing buildings and land to proactively identify potential future opportunities for community and voluntary use.
- 2.2 We will involve communities at an early stage in planning new developments.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- 3.1 We will commit to sustainable and active travel by adopting the Healthy Travel Charter and sharing learning across North Wales.
- 3.2 We will work with regional partners to reduce carbon emissions, cut waste, enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity, and adapt to climate change.

4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 4.1 We will address inequalities by adopting the Mission Actions.
- 4.2 We will embed Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approaches to strategy development, planning and service delivery.
- 4.3 We will encourage and enable staff to take part in community and voluntary activity.
- 4.4 We will support fair access to arts, heritage, and cultural wellbeing opportunities for our staff and local communities.

5. PROCUREMENT AND SPEND

- 5.1 We will procure locally where possible, using social partnerships to support local growth, employment, social value, and environmental benefit.
- 5.2 We will work with other public bodies to identify opportunities for joint procurement where this delivers better outcomes.



SIARTER ANGOR Gogledd Cymru



North Wales ANCHOR CHARTER

Scoring Guide:

Score	Level	Definition
1	Not started	No formal activity; limited awareness or occasional action.
2	Started	Some early activity or pilot projects; not consistent or strategic.
3	Under development	Clear method established; implemented in part but not embedded.
4	Established	Embedded across the organisation; being monitored and delivered regularly.
5	Leading	Showing measurable impact; influencing partners / the region.

Regional Anchor Charter	Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28	Day-to-day Work	Score (1-5)
1. Workforce, employment and skills			
1.1 We will seek to pay the actual living wage and ensure fair terms and conditions, reducing uncertain contracts and supporting staff well-being and financial security.	Create the best possible circumstances for businesses and social enterprises to thrive and Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy - support businesses that pay the actual living wage, create better jobs and strengthen a more inclusive local economy.	Applying the Council's pay arrangements, terms and conditions and employment policies, e.g. HR arrangements, contract management, fair recruitment and supporting the financial stability of staff.	3.5
1.2 We will create opportunities for the people furthest from the labour market to access training, apprenticeships and employment within our organisation, and promote opportunities for progression and training for our staff.	Support the people of Gwynedd into work, Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy and Develop the Council's Culture - strengthen pathways to work, improve skills and enable staff development.	Providing apprenticeships, work experience, in-service training and staff career pathways, e.g. through the Council's graduates and apprenticeships programmes and service workforce development plans. There are specific examples within the care field in the form of the Care Academy and North Wales Together, which support people with learning disabilities and mental health problems to gain better access to employment.	3.5
1.3 We will support staff health and well-being through a strong offer that focuses on prevention, including opportunities to be physically active at work and access healthy food and drink.	Develop the Council's Culture - embed the work culture that enables staff to achieve, with a focus on well-being, empowerment and placing the people of Gwynedd at the centre.	Implementing arrangements for staff well-being, flexible working, health and safety and absence management, e.g. through the support of managers, HR policies and corporate well-being arrangements. New sickness policy and procedures launched to ensure that sickness absences are managed consistently and fairly, keeping in	3

		contact with staff and providing suitable support to help them return to work.	
1.4 We will strengthen the health impacts of our workforce by promoting access to Make Each Contact Count (MECC) training, helping staff and service users make healthier and more sustainable choices.	Support People's Wellbeing - strengthen community support to help residents cope, thrive, be safe and stay healthy.	Using the daily contact of front-line services with residents, e.g. care services, housing, libraries and community support, to share information and refer to suitable support. A question on whether it has embedded and how effectively? An opportunity to add to the skills of individuals to address this if we are to develop community hubs and improve knowledge of the services available. Important to connect with the 'what matters' conversation, to enable people to improve their situation.	3
1.5 We will work with education providers and Anchor Organisations to respond to the workforce skills' future needs and improve accessible employment pathways.	Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy, Support the people of Gwynedd into work and Create the best possible circumstances for businesses and social enterprises to thrive - improve skills, create better jobs and work with employers to respond to future needs.	Identifying skill needs by planning service workforces, e.g. recruitment into care roles, in-house training plans, apprenticeships and developing the digital and managerial skills of staff.	4
1.6 We will promote the Welsh language by supporting staff to learn and use the Welsh language, particularly in public-facing roles, thus contributing to the Cymraeg 2050 ambition.	Promote the use of the Welsh by the residents of Gwynedd - Nôl i Wynedd and Review of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy as well as carrying out an evaluation of the Immersion System - increasing the practical use of Welsh, attract and retain	Implementing the Welsh Language Standards, offer language training to staff and provide bilingual services, e.g. by means of public relations services, education, care and Welsh digital services.	4.5

	Welsh speakers, and strengthen the future linguistic foundation.		
2. Estates			
2.1 We will investigate and review our use of current buildings and lands to identify potential proactive opportunities in the future for community and voluntary use.	Adopt the Property Asset Management Plan, Regenerating communities and town centres and Establish a New Local Development Plan - review the use of assets, support local priorities and land and buildings planning in accordance with the needs of communities.	Managing and reviewing the use of Council property, land and buildings, e.g. offices, community centres, schools, libraries and empty or under-used assets. Not many buildings available for this due to the rationalisation work.	4
2.2 We will include communities early on when planning new developments.	Regenerate communities and town centres, Establish a New Local Development Plan and Adopt a Property Asset Management Plan - engagement with communities, planning local developments and ensuring appropriate use of the estate.	Including residents and community councils through local consultations, Local Regeneration Plans, planning asset use and the Council's development planning processes. Some strong examples (such as the work of Ardal Ni), but it is fragmented.	3
3. Environmental impacts			
3.1 We will commit to sustainable and active travel by adopting the Active Travel Charter and share the learning across north Wales.	Active Travel and Climate and Nature Emergency Plan - improve walking and cycling paths and reduce emissions by promoting everyday sustainable travel.	Providing and maintaining active travel paths, e.g. walking and cycling paths, road safety plans, parking management and promoting sustainable travel to staff and residents.	4
3.2 We will work with regional partners to reduce carbon emissions, reduce waste, improve the green	Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, Waste and Recycling, Act on flood risks, Active Travel and Establish a New Local Development Plan - reduce carbon and	Reducing the environmental impact of Council activities, e.g. managing the energy of buildings, fleet, waste and recycling, biodiversity projects, flooding work and	3

infrastructure and biodiversity, and adapt to climate change.	waste, increase biodiversity, adapting to climate change and planning sustainable development.	climate planning.	
4. Community inclusion and civic action			
4.1 We will address inequalities by adopting the Prevention Mission Actions.	Ensure fairness for all - identifying and acting immediately on work required to ensure fair treatment to all, regardless of their background or needs.	Using equality impact assessments when developing policies, Cabinet decisions, service plans and changes to services in order to promote fairness. (Form to assess the impact on equality, socio-economic disadvantage and the Welsh language)	3
4.2 We will incorporate the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) methods of developing a strategy, planning and providing services.	Regenerate communities and town centres, Support People's Wellbeing and Ensure fairness for all - using engagement and community assets to identify local priorities, strengthen support networks and ensuring an inclusive method.	Using local knowledge and residents' feedback by means of regeneration work, community teams, service consultations and local networks to tailor the Council's services.	3
4.3 We will encourage and enable staff to participate in community and voluntary activity.	Support People's Wellbeing - strengthen community networks that support residents, reinforcing local voluntary and community activity.	Supporting staff to contribute to community activities where appropriate, e.g. through the work of schools, libraries, youth services, local events and community wellbeing enterprises.	1.5
4.4 We will support fair access to opportunities in the arts, heritage and cultural wellbeing for our staff and local communities.	Promote our culture and sustainable visitor economy, Promote the use of Welsh by Gwynedd residents and Ensuring fairness for all - expand fair access to culture, heritage, the Welsh language and activities that contribute to community wellbeing.	Providing library, archives, museums, arts, leisure and culture services, e.g. local programmes, activities for children and young people and access to Gwynedd's heritage. Free tickets for low-income families to attend the Eisteddfod at Boduan.	3

5. Procurement			
5.1 We will procure locally where possible, using social partnerships to support local growth, employment, social value, and environmental benefit.	Keep the Benefit Local, Create the best possible environments for businesses and social enterprises to thrive, Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy and Climate and Nature Emergency Plan - keeping spending local, supporting businesses, creating social value and promoting environmental benefits.	Applying the Council's procurement arrangements, e.g. considering local suppliers, social value, community benefits and carbon reduction when commissioning goods, work and services.	3
5.2 We will work with other public bodies to note opportunities for joint procurement, where this achieves better results.	Keep the Benefits Local, Gwynedd Economic Development Strategy and Create the best possible circumstances for businesses and social enterprises to thrive - collaborate with partners and businesses to ensure better results, local jobs and social value.	Using the Council's procurement frameworks and contracts, e.g., maintenance contracts, professional services, corporate goods and regional contracts where they offer better value. A lot of commissioning work is done jointly with partners, e.g. in the field of youth justice, money from organised crime, collaboration with Mantell Gwynedd on social prescribing and VAWDASV work with partners on Anglesey.	4

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet

Item Title:	Quarterly Report – Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board (July 2026)
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Nia Jeffreys, Leader of the Council
Relevant Officer:	Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. The Decision Sought:

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

2. The reason for the need for a decision:

- 2.1 A Response Plan was adopted by the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council in January 2025 to coordinate all support, reviews, inspections and other workstreams relating to the response to offences committed by the former Headteacher, Neil Foden.
- 2.2 Following the publication of the Child Practice Review report (*Our Courage Brought Justice*) in autumn 2025, a revised version of the Response Plan was adopted in March 2026, in line with the recommendations set out.
- 2.3 There was a commitment to continue to report quarterly to Cabinet Members on the progress of the Response Board's work programme and operation.
- 2.4 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 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.
- 3.2 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).

3.3 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, March 2026).

4. Next Steps

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

5. Comments of Statutory Officers.

5.1 Chief Finance Officer

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

5.2 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 this latest report.

QUARTERLY REPORT TO CABINET: RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD

PROFESSOR SALLY HOLLAND: CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE BOARD

DATE: 7th July 2026

Introduction

Since my last report to Cabinet in March 2026, the Response Plan Programme Board has continued to oversee the Council's response to the recommendations arising from the Child Practice Review, *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, and the wider Response Plan.

This report summarises the key developments and progress made during the last quarter.

Current Position

Work continues across all areas of the Response Plan against the seven key themes:

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

Detailed progress reports are presented to the Board by the theme leads, highlighting achievements, priorities, risks and challenges, dependencies and resource implications. Board members have welcomed the improved reporting arrangements, noting that they provide greater clarity regarding progress, measures and outcomes.

This quarter's developments have included:

Estyn Inspection of Ysgol Friars

The recent Estyn inspection outcome for Ysgol Friars, has been shared with the Board. It was encouraging to note the recognition of the progress made since the appointment of Headteacher Margaret Davies in April 2025. Whilst the report identified areas requiring further attention, improvements were noted in safeguarding arrangements, leadership and school governance. This report provides an important external view to supplement the internal reports about the school's progress that the Board has previously received.

Voice of the Child

The Voice of the Child Strategy has been developed and updated following feedback from Board members. Supporting appendices are currently being finalised, with engagement planned with the Children and Young People's Forum, Education Strategic Groups and the Gwynedd Governors Forum following the GCSE examination period.

I have sought assurance that the voices of children and young people are being captured from a sufficiently broad range of groups and experiences. In particular, I was keen to understand how the Council engages with young carers, disabled children, care-experienced children, homeless young people and other groups whose voices may not always be routinely heard. I was encouraged to learn that Cyngor Gwynedd is recruiting a dedicated Engagement and Participation Officer to help strengthen this work.

This work marks an important step in Gwynedd's ambition to become a Child-friendly County, following a framework set out by UNICEF. This proactive and longer-term approach marks a transition from responding to immediate gaps, following the Our Bravery Brought Justice process, towards a long-term, preventative approach.

Safeguarding Awareness and Training

Further work has been undertaken to strengthen safeguarding awareness across the workforce. A new safeguarding awareness video has been developed to improve accessibility, particularly for staff who do not routinely access Council systems. Whilst the Board welcome these developments, the focus must now be on impact. It is important that these initiatives lead not only to improved completion rates but also to a greater understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and how concerns should be recognised and reported in practice. Additionally, staff must feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously.

Crisis Planning

Progress continues on the development of crisis planning arrangements for schools. I have been encouraged by the engagement with headteachers throughout this process, who have provided appropriate challenge and constructive suggestions for improvements. This has helped to ensure that arrangements are informed by operational experience and are practical for schools to implement. As this work progresses, it will be important to ensure that plans are well understood, tested and embedded.

Public Accountability and Transparency

I welcome the development of a public-facing website, a child and family-friendly summary document, and supporting infographics outlining both the progress made to date and the

areas where further work remains ongoing. These resources should help improve transparency and understanding amongst residents, stakeholders and survivors.

I am also pleased that the Board's Terms of Reference have been revised and that Board papers are now published following each meeting. This is an important step in strengthening openness and public accountability.

Prioritisation of Activity

The Board has reviewed a revised prioritisation framework for the Response Plan. Given the scale of activity underway, the introduction of a clearer approach to prioritisation is welcomed. Whilst all actions remain important, the framework should help ensure that attention, capacity and resources remain focused on those areas presenting the greatest risk and requiring the most urgent action.

In March, a budget of approximately £600k was approved to support the workstreams under the Programme Board. I welcome this allocation, which provides a clear resource commitment to support delivery and help progress the programme at pace. The focus now will be on ensuring that the funding is used effectively to support the priorities across all work areas.

Scrutiny and Assurance

Outcome Measures

Work continues to develop and refine impact measures. The Board has reiterated the importance of focusing on meaningful indicators of progress, including qualitative feedback from children and young people. While a significant amount of work has been undertaken to develop policies, frameworks and procedures, the Board continues to emphasise the need to move beyond a compliance approach. The adoption of policy should be seen as the starting point rather than the end point. The key priority now is to understand the real impact of these changes on workforce practice, organisational culture and, most importantly, the safety and wellbeing of children. Some outcome measures are beginning to be presented to the Board, and the Board members are keen to see more of these in the coming months.

Quality Assurance Framework

The Quality Assurance Framework for children's services has been completed and presented to the Board. I am encouraged to see this important piece of work now in place. It sets out the vision, values and expectations for quality assurance activity across the service, including responsibilities, learning arrangements, supervision requirements and mechanisms for continuous improvement.

The focus now needs to shift to ensuring it is effectively communicated across the workforce and embedded in day-to-day practice, so that the intended improvements are realised in practice rather than remaining at a procedural level.

Welsh Government Assurance Group

As previously noted, the Welsh Government has established a separate Ministerial Assurance Board following the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*. Following the Senedd election, there is currently some uncertainty regarding timelines and future engagement, as new Ministers establish their priorities and working arrangements. At this stage, the longer-term position of this group remains unclear, although further clarity is expected to emerge as the new administration becomes established.

Welsh Government representatives in the Board have provided updates on the ongoing national reviews of safeguarding governance and of school governing bodies. The findings of these are expected to have implications for all local authorities and regional safeguarding boards.

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.
- Continue work on impact measurement, ensuring this is developed in a proportionate and sustainable way.
- Keep under review the Board's ongoing role and lifespan as a separate entity, including how this aligns with wider Council governance and scrutiny arrangements. This was discussed with the Welsh Government Ministerial Assurance Board prior to the election. Future arrangements will now need to be considered with the new Government.

Closing Remarks

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the commitment shown by Board members during what has been a period of continued development and growing maturity in the Board's arrangements. There has been significant work to strengthen reporting, and I would also commend the contribution of theme leads for their ongoing work in developing and delivering the programme areas. External members and elected members have continued to provide constructive scrutiny, challenge and supportive advice throughout.

As the Board moves into its next phase, there will need to be a stronger focus on measuring impact and ensuring that changes are properly embedded in practice. As part of this, it will also be important to continue to consider the Board's longer-term role, ensuring arrangements remain proportionate and aligned with wider governance structures. In addition, the implications of the recent Senedd election will need to be kept under review as future governance and oversight arrangements develop under the new administration.

As a final remark, I wish to acknowledge the recent reporting of child abuse at Canolfan Brynffynnon up to its closure in 2014, together with the prolonged employment issues which followed. The Response Board does not have a role to investigate past events, but instead to focus on current and future safeguarding. Nonetheless, I acknowledge the continued impact of serious past safeguarding failings on the confidence of Gwynedd's children, parents, staff and wider population regarding the Cyngor's ability to safeguard children in education. This makes it even more necessary for the Cyngor to take clear and transparent steps to regain that confidence and to demonstrate not only policy changes but also changes in everyday practice and culture.

Professor Sally Holland

Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board

CYNGOR GWYNEDD'S CABINET



Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet meeting

Meeting date: 15th of September 2026
Cabinet Member: Councillor Nia Jeffreys
Contact Officer: Carys Fon Williams, Head of Housing and Property
Item Title: Lease of the former Ysgol Cwm y Glo site to Menter Fachwen

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To authorise the Assistant Head of Housing and Property to lease the site of the former Ysgol Cwm y Glo directly to Menter Fachwen at nominal rent in accordance with the General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003.

Authorise the Assistant Head of Housing and Property to agree on the terms and conditions of the lease.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 To ensure compliance with the requirements of the General Disposal Consent (Wales) powers 2003 to lease the former Ysgol Cwm y Glo site directly to Menter Fachwen for less than market rent, a Cabinet decision is required.

3 PRESENTATION

- 3.1 Following reports submitted to Gwynedd Council's Cabinet on the 29th of March 2019, Ysgol Cwm y Glo closed on the 31st of August 2019. As a result, Menter Fachwen has shown an interest in taking over a long-term lease of the site in accordance with the School After-Use Policy. Menter Fachwen is a charity that offers education, development and training provision to individuals with learning disabilities. Their intention as a community group (not-for-profit) is to create a space that meets the requirements of the community, in order to create a facility for the benefit of the local community, beneficiaries, and Menter Fachwen as an organisation. This will ensure community use of the site.
- 3.2 An application has been submitted by Menter Fachwen to take a long-term lease from Ysgol Cwm y Glo, for a nominal amount to establish a multi-

purpose Community Hub. The organisation has been successful in securing grant funding to undertake the first phase of the refurbishment and is keen to move forward with the realisation of the scheme, as it grows beyond its current site.

4 RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 4.1 At its meeting on the 15th September 2009 the Council Board adopted the School Buildings After-Use Policy. The Policy recognised that reorganisation plans are likely to result in situations where school sites are disposed of in accordance with the usual principles, disposal policies and statutory requirements.
- 4.2 However, the After-Use Policy also gives the communities affected when a school closes a fair opportunity to consider drawing up a business plan to support the takeover of the property.
- 4.3 Menter Fachwen continues to carry out ongoing consultation by engaging directly with the individuals who use their sites, ensuring that the school's vision is informed by the voices of the local communities. The feedback received so far shows strong support for Menter Fachwen to obtain the lease.
- 4.4 If a lease were awarded, the next step would involve wider community consultation, including individuals who are not currently using their services. This wider engagement will be essential to strengthen the evidence base and to support future funding applications.
- 4.5 In addition, Menter Fachwen is developing a series of case studies demonstrating the positive impact of their services on individuals, providing clear evidence of outcomes that will directly support grant applications. They have also secured funding to provide a weekly community meal, prepared and served by people with learning disabilities who are supported by the charity. These meals are popular and offer important social opportunities, helping to foster stronger community ties and create more opportunities for meaningful engagement with the wider community.
- 4.6 Menter received a business plan in early 2026, along with an application to lease the school site for a period of 25 years for a nominal amount to develop a Multi-purpose Community Hub that would incorporate the following:
 - 4.6.1 A community hall that can be used for events, groups and health and wellbeing sessions for the community and charitable beneficiaries.
 - 4.6.2 A community coffee shop providing employment-based training and skills development to beneficiaries.

- 4.6.3 Cwm Cylchol is a circular economy hub that includes workshops, a clothes exchange bank, an antiques shop which will provide access to equipment and learning opportunities for beneficiaries and the wider community (led by Partneriaeth Padarn Peris with support from Borrow Wales).
- 4.6.4 A treatment and therapy room, a versatile space for mobile hairdressers.
- 4.6.5 A history space –mixed services and a community space for community groups and organisations to hold meetings. Including CAB, serving the Council and as well as continuing its role as a polling station.
- 4.6.6 Site for Radio Menter Fachwen
- 4.6.7 Community garden and accessible play facilities
- 4.7 Although a letter of comfort has been provided to Menter Fachwen in support of their initial funding applications, its use is limited. In order to be able to apply for grant pots of higher amounts, which are needed for the renovation, they will eventually need to hold the lease. Although they are currently unable to apply for these large funding streams, Menter Fachwen has been successful in securing funding to develop their existing sites.
- 4.8 Menter Fachwen has identified several funding streams such as the Cronfa Ynni Glan, Community Assets Fund as well as the Rayne Foundation Fund and the People and Places fund. These opportunities can provide funding of up to £2.3m subject to application and lease.
- 4.9 The demand for their services continues to grow, demonstrating a clear need coupled with a strong level of community engagement. This growing evidence base strengthens the case for expansion into a more suitable and expansive space.
- 4.10 The financial projections indicate that the income generated from the Enterprise Centre will not be sufficient to enable the Partnership to pay rent during the initial years of the venture, as it will face significant development costs. Consequently, the Partnership has submitted a request for a 25-year lease at a nominal rent.
- 4.11 The Council has a legal right under the powers of General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 to dispose of for less than market rent in cases where economic, social or environmental benefits are provided.
- 4.12 It is considered that disposing directly to Menter Fachwen for the development of the school would facilitate the following benefits:
 - 4.12.1 **Economic Benefits**
 - 4.12.1.1 To promote and promote the local economy by supporting entrepreneurs.
 - 4.12.1.2 Creating new permanent and seasonal jobs in the area.

- 4.12.1.3 Potential to attract visitors and income from outside the area.
- 4.12.1.4 Any remaining profits will be invested in further projects creating a positive economic cycle.

4.12.2 **Social Benefits**

- 4.12.2.1 Provide a destination for the community offering opportunities to network and develop new skills through the activities offered.
- 4.12.2.2 Potential to support diverse generations of the community by offering services that will support local people, promote inclusion, and support health and wellbeing.
- 4.12.2.3 To raise awareness of the culture and heritage of the area and to promote the Welsh language.

4.12.3 **Environmental Benefits**

- 4.12.3.1 Contribute to a healthier local environment, protect biodiversity and encourage sustainable food practices by providing a community garden in the centre of the village.
 - 4.12.3.2 Reducing the Carbon footprint by improving the energy efficiency of the building and creating a central location for the community for various activities and services.
- 4.13 Accepting the recommendation and using the powers of General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 to deviate from the General Disposal Policy and Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, would mean waiving the opportunity to sell the property and generate a capital receipt.
 - 4.14 If the property were to be sold on the open market, we estimate the open market value to be around £80,000.
 - 4.15 Cabinet members therefore need to carefully consider the social, environmental and economic benefits against the potential financial loss.
 - 4.16 It should be noted that the intention is to lease the property. Menter Fachwen intends to invest significantly in the property, and should the scheme fail for any reason, the property will remain in the ownership of the Council. The Council would then be able to take a decision to dispose of it on the open market if it wished to do so. In addition, a lease arrangement gives the Council better rights by enforcing it to make it safe for Menter Fachwen to use the building for the agreed purpose.
 - 4.17 It should be noted that any decision to lease the property to Menter Fachwen will be subject to their ability to secure the necessary planning permission for a change of use to provide assurance that the enterprise will be able to realise the environmental, social and economic objectives referred to above.

5 NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1 The Housing and Property Department will instruct the Legal Service to place a lease in place following confirmation that planning permission is in place for the intended use.

LOCAL MEMBER'S COMMENTS – As the Local Member for the Cwm y Glo constituency has disclosed an interest in Menter Fachwen, comments from a Councillor of an adjoining constituency have been sought:

Gwilym Evans – Llanberis Councillor:

"I am very pleased to offer comments regarding the transfer of Ysgol Cwm-y-glo into the capable hands of Menter Fachwen – a development that has strong support from the community. A community space will form part of what is available, and there has been significant demand for this among local residents.

Hwb Dyffryn Peris has been established relatively recently, and excellent work has been taking place there to support local people and to expand community activity. Embedding the Hub within the school will strengthen it and help it to grow and develop further.

I also believe there will be additional benefits for the staff and associates of Menter Fachwen in moving to the school, as it will create further opportunities for social interaction and for learning life skills as a result of this development.

A Food Scheme is already operating from the former school, and this will continue under the new arrangements, as it provides invaluable support to a number of individuals and families in the area.

This new space will also make it much easier for those providing useful services to visit clients – with the intention of offering visits from a chiropodist, a hairdresser, and organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. There will also be opportunities to provide parent/carer and child sessions, offering something for everyone within the community.

There will also be a community café on site, which will attract people and create a lively atmosphere and positive social habits that help to reduce loneliness and isolation and bring the community together.

I believe this is exactly what Cwm and the surrounding area need, and I look forward to seeing all the activity and vibrancy that will result from Menter moving to its new home."

STATUTORY OFFICERS' COMMENTS

Head of Finance:

"I can confirm that the General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 allows the Council to dispose of these properties for less than the open market price if the sale meets certain conditions. If the Cabinet is satisfied that these conditions, as outlined in Part 4 of the report, have been met, I have no objection to the decision sought"

Monitoring Officer – Iwan Evans:

“The General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003 allows the Authority to dispose of property at less than the open market value if the sale meets specific conditions which depart from the principle under the Local Government Act 1972. This Consent can be used for disposing of property below market value where the disposal provides economic, social or environmental benefits to the area or its residents, and where the value condition, as set out in the Consent, has been satisfied.

It is also noted that the intention here is to grant a lease for a period of 25 years rather than to sell. This decision falls within the executive functions of the Cabinet, and the Cabinet must satisfy itself that the above conditions have been met (Constitution Section 16.15.9). I am satisfied that the views of the Head of Finance have been obtained prior to submitting the report, in accordance with Section 16.2.12 of the Constitution. I am therefore satisfied as to the propriety of the decision sought.”

Background Document (excluded)

Ysgol Cwm y Glo Business Plan 2025



Brain

El Sub Sta

Ysgol Gynradd Cwm-y-glo

**Cwm-Y-Glo
Primary School**

Cwm-y-glo

Stryd Newydd

Glan Dwr

~~Sewage Ppg Sta~~

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Lease Plan - Ysgol Cwm Y Glo

Report to the Cabinet

Date of meeting:	15 September 2026
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dewi Jones
Contact officer:	Debbie Anne Jones
Title of Item:	Adoption of an Education Transport Policy to be operational September 2027 onwards.

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 Subject to the consideration of the contents of the Report and the Appendices, together with the outcomes of the consultation and engagement activities, the Cabinet is requested to make a decision on the adoption of a new Education Transport Policy, which will come into effect on 1 September 2027.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Education, in consultation with the Head of Education Department, to keep the Policy under review within the national framework and to make operational and editorial amendments as required, subject to any matter requiring consultation being referred to the Cabinet.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet's decision regarding the adoption of the amended Education Transport Policy. The decision sought is based on the contents of this report that summarises the consultation process undertaken recently, following the Cabinet's permission to conduct a public consultation on the draft Policy.
- 2.2 A review of the Policy is considered timely to ensure that it remains compliant with current statutory requirements and guidance. The need to undertake consultation at least 12 months prior to the implementation of any change to part or all the discretionary elements of the Policy, and to provide clarity regarding those discretionary elements to ensure fairness to children, young people and their families. The Policy contains inconsistencies across several areas and is also inconsistent in certain respects compared with the transport policies of other local authorities. There is a need to ensure that the Policy remains fit for purpose and capable of being delivered reasonably within the resources available. Furthermore,

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the Policy has become outdated, with some provision no longer capable of implementation considering current statutory requirements and guidance.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 (the Measure) sets out the legal framework that specifically applies to travel and transport provisions for learners travelling from home to school in Wales; with 'Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance' (The Guidance) published in 2014.

3.2 The Measure states that local authorities must:

- Assess the travel needs of learners within its authority area;
- Provide free home-to-school transport for learners of compulsory school age attending a primary school who live two miles or more from their nearest suitable school;
- Provide free home-to-school transport for school-age learners attending a secondary school who live three miles or more from their nearest suitable school;
- Assess and meet the needs of 'looked-after' children within its authority area;
- Promote access to Welsh-medium education and faith schools;
- Promote sustainable modes of travel.

3.3 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide transport from home to school in accordance with the requirements of the Measure. At the same time, within the Measure, the Local Authority may make discretionary arrangements under part 6 of the Measure, based on the Authority's choice and discretion.

3.4 In accordance with the Learner Travel Information (Wales) Regulations 2009, Local Authorities are required to publish information about their policies for providing discretionary transport within their Education Transport Policy, and if an Authority makes use of Part 6 powers to provide discretionary transport, the Authority also has the right to remove the provision at a later date. To do this, the 2014 statutory guidelines, requires the Authority to:

- Undertake a consultation exercise prior to the withdrawal or amendment of any discretionary provision in its entirety; and
- Publish the arrangements by 1 October in the preceding academic year.

4. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

4.1 The main changes proposed to the Education Transport Policy (Draft) for the purpose of consultation related to the Authority's discretionary transport provision in the following areas:

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- Vacant Seats Scheme
- Faith Schools
- Dual Residency
- Post 16

Vacant Seats Scheme

- 4.2 In the current policy, up until recently, learners who were not entitled to free transport were offered a vacant seat if there was a seat available on transport and were charged for that seat. This provision was subject to:
- the availability of vacant seats;
 - the vehicle not having to deviate from its usual route;
 - no additional costs being incurred by Cyngor Gwynedd;
 - paying for the current vacant seat.
- 4.3 The scheme was not available on public transport contracts, and there was no assurance that the vacant seat would be available throughout the academic year. At least one week's notice was sought to be provided should the arrangement need to come to an end.
- 4.4 Legislation makes it a requirement for authorities to consult and publish any changes to the Education Transport Policy before 1 October of the previous year. Because of this, the Education Department made an operational decision to freeze the Vacant Seats Scheme while the Education Transport Policy was being reviewed. At the time, the Department understood that it would not be possible to implement the Vacant Seats Scheme without committing to providing a vacant seat throughout the whole academic year. This would have been contrary to the fundamental principle of the Scheme, namely, the provision of a vacant seat when available, without creating any long-term commitment that could give rise to additional costs for Cyngor Gwynedd. On this basis, the Department undertook a consultation on the proposal to remove the Vacant Seats Scheme from the Draft Education Transport Policy.
- 4.5 The purpose of the consultation was to gather the views of stakeholders and consider the comments received, and where appropriate, to amend the content of the Policy to reflect those comments. In the case of the Vacant Seats Scheme, several concerns were raised during and following the consultation by various stakeholders, including the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, regarding the possibility of removing the scheme in its entirety from the Policy. The Education Department shares these concerns and has been exploring practical options that would enable the Vacant Seats Scheme to continue. This included seeking further clarification from the Welsh Government regarding the statutory requirements to consult on discretionary elements of education transport provision, such as the Vacant Seats Scheme.

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4.6 Very recently, some further clarity was received from the Welsh Government in relation to discretionary transport, and specifically the authority's ability to implement schemes such as the Vacant Seats Scheme. The further clarification received from the Welsh Government provides the Authority with a degree of confidence that the Vacant Seats Scheme may continue to be offered as part of the Education Transport Policy. This position is reflected in the Policy presented to the Cabinet for adoption.

4.7 To mitigate the risks associated with continuing to operate the Vacant Seats Scheme, we have updated and clarified the procedure governing the Scheme and included it as an Appendix to the Education Transport Policy. The procedure explains how the Scheme operates and confirms the Authority's right to withdraw the offer of a vacant seat at any time should a seat no longer be available. The procedure will take effect immediately alongside the current Policy, as it represents an update to an existing procedure.

Faith Schools

4.8 There is no reference to faith schools in the current Education Transport Policy although transport is currently provided to learners who choose to attend faith schools in accordance with the statutory requirement. Gwynedd has two faith schools (voluntary aided schools), and the schools themselves are the admission authorities rather than Cyngor Gwynedd.

4.9 The authority is required to promote access to faith schools and, accordingly, provision of transport to faith schools has been included within the Draft Education Transport Policy. The provision sets out the intention to provide free transport for learners in accordance with the statutory requirements, as well as to learners living no more than five miles from the nearest suitable faith school. This reflects the fact that faith schools serve a wider geographical area than a school's normal catchment area and provides greater clarity within the Policy regarding entitlement to transport.

Dual Residency

4.10 Where parental responsibility for a child is shared and the child resides at two separate addresses, namely the homes of both parents, the Authority will provide transport from the main residence, which is the address at which the learner resides most frequently, provided that at least one of those residences is within Gwynedd. This is subject to the school attended being the catchment area school or the nearest suitable school for one of the two residences .

4.11 The Draft Education Transport Policy provides further clarification, namely that transport will be provided in accordance with the statutory requirements, but that

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transport will not be provided from either residence where the distance to the catchment area school or nearest suitable school exceeds 5 miles from one of the two residences.

Post-16 Transport

4.12 At present, the Council provides discretionary transport for full-time post-16 learners to the following educational establishments:

- Secondary schools catering for Years 12 & 13.
- Special schools catering for Years 12, 13 and 14.
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai - Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon sites, Menai site at Parc Menai, Bangor, Llangefni and Caernarfon sites.

4.13 The Draft Education Transport Policy proposes that the Authority will provide discretionary transport beyond compulsory school age for eligible learners residing in Gwynedd who live 3 miles or more from their catchment area school, nearest suitable school, or the nearest suitable post-16 college site that provides the course.

4.14 The proposal to provide post-16 transport to the nearest catchment area/suitable school, as well as to the nearest college site that provides the course:

- is consistent with the rest of the Education Transport Policy for learners of compulsory school age;
- means that the transport provision supports post-16 provision across the county, and contributes to ensuring the viability of the provisions across the county, in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd when transporting learners to the nearest sites that provide the course;
- means that Bangor University students will not be eligible for post-16 transport as the proposal relates to transport to secondary schools or Grŵp Llandrillo Menai sites only;
- means an age restriction of being younger than 19 years old on 1 September in the academic year in which the course was taken. This is consistent with the transport policies of other local authorities.

4.15 It is recognised that learners are entitled to choose any setting for their post-16 education. However, where a learner does not choose to attend catchment area school, nearest suitable school, or the nearest suitable college site offering the chosen course, they will forfeit their entitlement to free transport, in the same manner as set out in the Education Transport Policy for learners of compulsory school age. Consequently, a charge of £1 per journey will apply to learners who choose to travel to an out-of-catchment school or to a college site that is not the nearest location offering the course.

4.16 Further Clarity

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4.17 There are also several other areas within the Education Transport Policy where additional detail and clarity have been provided. However, these additions do not result in any change to the Authority's commitment to provide transport in accordance with the current Education Transport Policy. Those areas include:

- Measuring the Travelling Distance
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Medical Conditions
- Looked-after Children
- Schools Reorganisation
- Expectations on parents/guardians - Transport charges

5. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

5.1 A report was submitted to Cabinet on 20 January 2026 requesting permission to hold a consultation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following the Cabinet's approval, a 6-week consultation was conducted between 9 February and 20 March 2026.

5.2 An on-line consultation pack was published together with a bespoke response form, and a total of 31 written responses to the consultation were received through this method. A copy of the response form can be found in Appendix 5. (This figure does not include the feedback from learners during the consultation sessions that were held).

5.3 The Consultation Report (Appendix 6) contains a full summary of all the issues raised by the consultees via the on-line response form, together with Cyngor Gwynedd's response to those issues. The main themes raised by the consultees are listed below, and a more detailed consideration of each of these issues can be found in Appendix 6:

- Vacant Seats Scheme
- Faith Schools
- Dual Residency
- Post-16 provision
- ALN and Independent Travel
- Active Travel
- General
- Welsh Language Standards

5.4 To ensure the voice of children and young people in this consultation, several specific consultation sessions were held with approximately 104 students in the following settings:

- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Coleg Menai site, Bangor
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Pencraig Site, Llangefni

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- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Meirion-Dwyfor Site, Dolgellau
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Meirion-Dwyfor Site, Pwllheli
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai – Meirion-Dwyfor Site, Glynllifon

In addition, a specific session on the proposals of the Draft Education Transport Policy was held with the Children and Young People County Forum.

5.5 The main themes raised by the young people in the consultation sessions are listed below, and a more detailed consideration of each of these issues can be found in the Consultation Report in Appendix 7:

- Course Location
- Transport costs
- Age restriction
- Learners with ALN
- Public Transport
- Transport Timetables
- Calculating Travel Distance

5.6 All comments received during the consultation on the proposals contained within the Draft Education Transport Policy were carefully considered. As a result of the significant concerns expressed regarding the removal of the Vacant Seats Scheme from the Policy (see Appendix 6, Theme 1), clarification was sought from the Welsh Government regarding the Authority's ability to continue operating the Scheme considering the statutory requirements to consult on discretionary elements of education transport provision. Following the clarification received, and in response to the comments and concerns raised during the consultation regarding the withdrawal of the Scheme, the Vacant Seats Scheme has been reinstated within the Education Transport Policy in order to facilitate transport for some families who are not eligible for free transport under the relevant criteria.

5.7 Comments were received both in support of and in opposition to the proposal to determine eligibility for transport to faith schools based on distance (see Appendix 6, Theme 2). To ensure that the proposal would not have a significant impact on the two faith schools in particular, a meeting was held following the consultation with a representative of the Catholic Church to discuss the proposal. During the discussion, the Diocese was satisfied that providing transport based on distance was unlikely to have a significant impact on the entitlement of current pupils of Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes and Ysgol Santes Helen to transport. Consequently, no changes have been made to the Education Transport Policy in relation to faith schools following the consultation.

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- 5.8 Comments were received both in support of and in opposition to the proposal relating to transport arrangements for learners with dual residence, with views reflecting, on the one hand, the need for flexibility and recognition of the complexities faced by some families, and on the other, the need for fairness and consistency for all (see Appendix 6, Theme 3). It is considered that the proposal reflects Cyngor Gwynedd's desire to facilitate transport for learners who divide their time between households, as it goes beyond the statutory requirements to provide transport for eligible learners living more than two miles from a primary school and more than three miles from a secondary school. On this basis, no changes have been made to the provisions relating to dual residence within the Education Transport Policy following the consultation.
- 5.9 Several comments were received expressing concerns regarding the proposal to only provide free transport for post-16 learners to the nearest educational setting offering the chosen course. Several consultees, together with the young people who were consulted with (see Appendix 7), indicated that the proposal was likely to restrict learners' choices. All comments by consultees were carefully considered, and Cyngor Gwynedd is supportive of learners being able to choose a post-16 course that best meets their needs. However, having considered the comments received, Cyngor Gwynedd's view is that the proposal is consistent with the transport criteria applied to learners of compulsory school age. Accordingly, no changes have been made to the Education Transport Policy in relation to post-16 learners.
- 5.10 Consideration was also given to all other comments received as part of the consultation on the Education Transport Policy. A number of these comments, together with the views of children and young people, have been given further consideration as part of the Equality Impact Assessment (see Section 8 of the Cabinet Report).

6. OBSERVATIONS RECEIVED FROM OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Observations of School Headteachers in Gwynedd Primary and Secondary Schools

- 6.1 Presentations on the content of the new Policy were delivered to Secondary Headteachers on 11 February 2026 and to Primary Headteachers on 25 February 2026. The key proposals of the Draft Education Transport Policy were outlined and headteachers were made aware of the online consultation questionnaire and invited to submit their comments for consideration.
- 6.2 In response to the proposals for the Draft Education Transport Policy, the Headteachers noted the following:
- The need for certainty regarding the type of training presented to education transport employees, and the quality and standard of the training.

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- Whether a transitional period could be introduced for the vacant seats scheme, which would allow learners already participating in the scheme to continue benefiting from it throughout their secondary school education, provided that vacant seats remain available.

Observations of the Gwynedd Governors Forum

- 6.3 A presentation was also given to the Governors Forum on the Draft Education Transport Policy on 26 February 2026, where the main policy proposals were highlighted and the governors' and chairpersons' awareness was raised of the consultation and of the online questionnaire and encouraged to complete it and to submit their observations for consideration as part of the consultation.
- 6.4 In response to the content and changes to the new Policy, the governors noted the following observations:
- If the proposal to discontinue the Vacant Seats Scheme were to be approved, it was suggested that the scheme should be phased out gradually so as not to affect those learners who are currently benefiting from it.
 - Concern was expressed regarding the impact that discontinuing the Vacant Seats Scheme would have on those learners who have become accustomed to the stable daily arrangements provided through the scheme over a considerable period.
 - Comments were made regarding the process for identifying vacant seats on education transport, and questions were raised as to why vacant seats exist at all within the education transport system.
 - Comments were also made regarding the charging arrangements, the income currently generated, and the administrative arrangements associated with the Vacant Seats Scheme.
 - Attention was drawn to the potential impact that discontinuing the Vacant Seats Scheme could have on certain small schools, where the attendance of out-of-catchment learners contributes to the viability of those schools.

7. THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 7.1 An item was presented before the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2026 reporting back following the consultation that was held on the Draft Education Transport Policy, inviting committee members to scrutinise the content of the Draft Education Transport Policy and the consultation undertaken.
- 7.2 Members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee expressed concern regarding the proposal to permanently remove the Vacant Seats Scheme from the Education Transport Policy, as this was considered likely to have an impact on the needs of Gwynedd residents, including families in rural communities and those experiencing economic deprivation. As a result, the Committee requested that the

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Cabinet give specific consideration to the Vacant Seats Scheme when reaching its decision.

- 7.3 The Scrutiny Committee members also noted that consideration should be given to modifying the Draft Education Transport Policy to specify parishes rather than distance in terms of transport to faith schools.
- 7.4 Following the Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Education Department held a meeting with a representative of the Catholic Church to discuss the contents of the Draft Education Transport Policy. As a result of that meeting, during which further clarification was provided regarding the intention to include within the Policy entitlement to statutory transport for learners living no more than five miles from the nearest suitable faith school, (with transport eligibility based on distance rather than historical parish boundaries), the representative of the Catholic Church was satisfied that providing transport on the basis of distance was unlikely to have a significant impact on the entitlement of current learners of Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes and Ysgol Santes Helen to transport.
- 7.5 Members of the Scrutiny Committee also asked the Education Department to look at reducing the number of forms that parents of pupils with Additional Learning Needs had to complete.
- 7.6 With the submission of the above observations, members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee accepted the content of the report.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

8.1 Equality Impact Assessment

An assessment was undertaken of the impact of the proposals contained within the Draft Education Transport Policy on Equality, the Welsh Language, and the Socio-economic Duty, and the Assessment was published as part of the consultation package for the Draft Education Transport Policy. The full Assessment can be found at Appendix 4. The Assessment concludes that the Education Transport Policy is unlikely to have an impact on several equality characteristics, including race, sex, and sexual orientation. However, it identifies that implementation of the Education Transport Policy may have both positive and negative impacts in relation to the protected characteristics of disability and religion or belief. It also identifies positive impacts on the Welsh language, indirect positive impacts in relation to pregnancy and maternity, together with indirect positive and negative impacts on the characteristic of marriage and civil partnership, and predominantly negative impacts in relation to age.

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Based on the above, no issues emerged from the Assessment that would warrant any amendment to, or an alternative outcome in respect of the Education Transport Policy. It is anticipated that proceeding with the Education Transport Policy as proposed will not result in unlawful discrimination or have a significant adverse impact on any protected characteristic. Accordingly, Cyngor Gwynedd will be acting in accordance with its legal obligations in implementing the Policy.

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

In developing the proposals for the Draft Education Transport Policy, due regard was given to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The work reflected the five ways of working set out within the Act. This is detailed in Appendix 4 and was published as part of the consultation package for the Draft Education Transport Policy. The assessment has been kept under continual review throughout the development of the proposed decision.

9. THE STATUTORY OFFICERS' OBSERVATIONS

The Monitoring Officer's comments on the report are set out below:

"This work has received legal support as it progressed. The report details the consultation process and the additional engagement that has taken place. It is noted that the results of the consultation process have also contributed to the creation of the recommendation with specific amendments incorporated in consequence. This accords with the "Gunning" principles in relation to the conduct of consultation processes. I am satisfied that the report sets out an appropriate process and considerations which would allow Cabinet to adopt the Policy."

Head of Finance Department:

The Head of Finance's comments on the report are set out below:

"The change in policy is unlikely to have significant budgetary effect, and I agree with the need for the policy to be current, clear, and fit for purpose. I therefore support the decision sought."

APPENDICES:

- Appendix 1 Education Transport Policy
- Appendix 2 Vacant Seats Scheme Guidance Procedure Response Form
- Appendix 3 Post 16- Transport Guidance

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Public Consultation Report
Appendix 4 Equality, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
Learner Consultation Report
Appendix 5 Consultation Response Form
Appendix 6 Comments Received During the Consultation on the Draft Education
Transport Policy
Appendix 7 Learners' Comments on the Draft Education Transport Policy

EDUCATION TRANSPORT POLICY

CYNGOR GWYNEDD



September 2026



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to provide transport to school in accordance with the *Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008* and *Learner Travel: Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014*. This Learner Transport Policy outlines how the Authority provides transport to school learners and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai learners who reside in Gwynedd, and the eligibility criteria.
- 1.2 To meet this requirement, the Authority will consider the following when making arrangements for learners residing in Gwynedd:
- The learner's age
 - The distance from their home to school
 - The nature of the journey from home to school
 - Requests for faith education
 - The needs of learners with disabilities or additional learning needs
 - The needs of learners who are looked after by the Local Authority
 - The needs of learners with dual residency.
- 1.3 The Measure allows the Local Authority to use discretion in relation to the services provided under some circumstances. These discretionary elements are outlined in Part 3 of this policy.
- 1.4 Transport is provided to post-16 learners under the policy as a discretionary arrangement. See Part 3.3.
- 1.5 It is a requirement for the Authority to provide free transport from home to school under some circumstances. These are outlined in Part 2. The duty to provide that transport is only relevant if the child resides in the Authority area.
- 1.6 The Local Authority will continuously strive to provide safe, affordable, efficient and cost-effective transport to those learners who are eligible under this policy.
- 1.7 Transport is provided from home to school to eligible learners between their home addresses or designated pick-up point and the nearest suitable school where they are registered. Free transport is not provided to or from the addresses of other family members or friends, the parents' work addresses or any type of childcare facilities.
- 1.8 The Policy will come into effect from 1 September 2027 onwards. The transport arrangements assessed and provided under the Local Authority's previous policy will continue but there will be a material change in circumstances requiring making a new application, e.g. moving home or school / post-16 school or college.

2. TRANSPORT FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

2.1 Eligible schools

- 2.1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd will provide free transport to learners who meet the criteria for transport set in this policy. The policy refers to transport to and from eligible schools in the following categories:
- Community, foundation, controlled or voluntary assisted schools

- Non-maintained special schools
- Pupil referral units
- Independent schools named in an Individual Development Plan.

2.2 Distance Criteria

2.2.1 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 stipulates that free transport will only be provided for mandatory school age learners, if the distance from home to their nearest suitable school is at least:

- a) 2 miles for Primary School learners
- b) 3 miles for Secondary School learners

2.3 The nearest suitable/catchment School

2.3.1 A learner's catchment school is defined by specific catchment areas and based on the location of the learner's home. The nearest suitable school for transport purposes would be the school under Cyngor Gwynedd's care that is nearest to the learner's home. Further information about the nearest suitable/catchment school is available by visiting the 'Where I live' link on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: [Search for an address](#)

2.3.2 If the nearest suitable / catchment school is full, the availability of the next available nearest suitable school is assessed to accept the learner. The same distance criteria will be relevant.

2.3.3 Transport is provided from home to school for eligible learners between their home addresses or designated pick-up point and the nearest suitable school where they are registered. Free transport is not provided to or from the addresses of other family members or friends, the parents' work addresses or any type of childcare facilities.

2.4 Measuring the Travelling Distance

2.4.1 For assessments under the distance criteria in Part 2.2, the work of calculating the distance from home to school adheres to the guidance provided in the *Learner Travel: Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014*.

2.4.2 Where learners are reasonably expected to walk to school, the distance is measured according to the shortest route available that the child, whether independently or with a chaperone, could walk, reasonably safe along it; considering the child's needs and age.

2.4.3 The suitability of the travel route is assessed in terms of the safety of the learner when walking along it, and thorough risk assessments are conducted by officers of the Integrated Transport Unit (Cyngor Gwynedd) at the likely time of day where the learner would use it.

2.4.4 Having undertaken a risk assessment of the learner's travel route (whether walking independently or with a responsible adult), if it is deemed that the travel route from home to school is dangerous, the learner cannot be expected to walk to school, although the distance from home to school is shorter than the statutory distance noted in 2.2 above. In these circumstances, the learner has a right to free transport provision.

- 2.4.5 The definition of a dangerous road is where the nature of the road, including public footpaths, means that it is not reasonable to expect learners to walk relatively safely. In assessing the comparable safety of a road, the Authority will assess the dangers that the learners could face; these could include rivers, ditches, traffic speed along the road, the data of past accidents, trees and branches, as well as other features that could impair drivers of vehicles from being able to see pedestrians on the road.
- 2.4.6 For assessments over the distance criteria noted in 2.2, the distance of the route to school is measured from the home's boundary to the nearest entrance available to the school, and it could include public footpaths, bridleways and other paths, as well as adopted roads. It does not have to represent the shortest distance on the road. The distance is measured by a digital mapping system (GIS).

NOTE: Parents/Guardians should also refer to Part 4.5 for information about sustainable modes of transport to school.

2.5 Primary and Secondary School Transport

- 2.5.1 The Authority will provide free transport to the nearest suitable/catchment school in accordance with the criteria of this policy for Primary and Secondary Schools. Discretionary provision could be relevant, by virtue of the criteria shown in Part 3.

2.6 The Parents / Guardians' Choice of School

- 2.6.1 Parents / guardians have a right to choose any school for their child's admission subject to the availability of spaces. Should the request be accepted, the parent / carer will lose their right to free transport if this is not their nearest suitable school / catchment school, or if it is not the designated Secondary school for the feeder primary school that they attended.
- 2.6.2 This is consistent with and meets the requirements outlined in the *Learner Travel: Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance (June 2014)*.

IMPORTANT: Parents / carers are advised to consider the implications of school transport before declaring their choice for space in a school. See Part 2.3 on the nearest suitable/catchment school, as well as Part 4.4 on the impact of transport.

2.7 School Admission

- 2.7.1 If parents / carers are unable to secure a place for their child in their nearest suitable/catchment school, or if their designated Secondary school (from the appropriate feeder primary school) is full, then free transport will be provided to their

next nearest suitable school, on the condition that the distance criteria is met in Part 2.2.

2.8 Pick-up and Drop-off Sites

- 2.8.1 For learners eligible for transport, there will be an expectation that they start from a pre-determined pick-up point, unless noted otherwise when the application is processed. The Authority will strive to locate pick-up points reasonably close to the learners' home and not further than the statutory distances outlined in Part 2.2. Any distance measured will follow the principles outlined in Part 2.4. The assessment will also consider dangerous paths, following the principles noted in Part 2.8.
- 2.8.2 It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to ensure that their child reaches the pick-up point in a timely manner and gets in the vehicle safely. They must also ensure that a responsible adult is there to meet the child on the return journey, if the child's age or needs require a chaperone provision.
- 2.8.3 If there is no responsible adult there to meet the child who requires a chaperone provision in terms of age or needs, then additional costs will be payable by the parent/guardian, as Officers may have to seek guidance from the Children Services and, if required, arrange to take the child to a safe place by Cyngor Gwynedd.
- 2.8.4 Nothing in this Policy creates the expectation that every child should walk to the pick-up points, as this would be unsuitable in some cases. The Authority keeps a register of the known dangerous paths, and this forms part of the consideration given when assessing transport requests. However, if a parent / guardian believes that the use of the pick-up point is unsuitable for their child, they should express their concerns to the Authority, who will look into the circumstances to decide whether additional or alternative transport arrangements are required for that child; to ensure that the requirements of *the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008* are met. However, parents / guardians are expected to make arrangements for the first two miles to meet any transport provided by the Authority.
- 2.8.5 The Authority has the right to review the pick-up points to ensure that a safe path is continuously maintained and subject to ensuring that the most cost-effective provision is in place.
- 2.8.6 Once eligibility for school transport is confirmed, the Integrated Transport Unit will inform the school with a request for the school to share the relevant information with the parents / carers.
- 2.8.7 Where transport is used to take learners to pick-up points, the learners must stay with the taxi until the vehicle to transport them onwards arrives. Drivers are expected to report to the Integrated Transport Unit about any learner who does not comply with this expectation.
- 2.8.8 Contractors who provide these services have been instructed to wait with learners to ensure that they go into the vehicle that provides their onwards transport. Parents / guardians are also encouraged to report to the Integrated Transport Unit about any cases where drivers do not do this.

2.9 Dangerous Paths

- 2.9.1 For learners who live under the statutory eligibility distance shown in Part 2.2, the Authority will provide transport to the school if it is considered that the path is dangerous. Dangerous paths are assessed by the Integrated Transport Unit, following the guidelines provided in the *Learner Travel: Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014*.
- 2.9.2 Where pick-up points are used, the Local Authority will also consider whether there are dangerous paths that could reasonably prevent learners from walking to these locations, accompanied by a chaperone as required. In those cases, the Local Authority, after assessing, will provide free transport from the home to the pick-up point, or refer to the school (whichever is most effective).

NOTE: Where parents / carers have exercised their right to choose a school according to their wishes (see Part 2.6), then it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to arrange transport from home to school.

- 2.9.3 If a parent / guardian believes that a specific path is dangerous, they should express their concerns to the Authority, who will investigate to confirm whether any additional or alternative transport arrangements are required.

2.10 ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

- 2.10.1 The Authority will consider the learner's medical conditions, disability and additional learning needs when assessing the learners' travel needs in the area. If a learner has an Individual Development Plan (IDP), transport for the learner will be provided in accordance with the IDP – this may also include pre-school children. If the IDP is reviewed and the transport element amended, any transport arrangements will reflect the revised IDP.
- 2.10.2 The Authority can provide free transport from home to school for learners of a mandatory school age, if they do not have an IDP, when transport is sought for medical reasons or the learner's additional learning needs (ALN) or disability. This provision will be considered when an application form regarding transport on a medical basis is completed, as well as evidence from an adviser or a person of a similar status (not a GP, Nurse or Practitioner). Transport for learners with medical difficulties/ALN will depend on their individual circumstances and the path that is required for the learner to travel. These transport arrangements are reviewed annually.
- 2.10.3 The Authority is committed to support learners to travel independently where practically possible. The annual review of the travel arrangements will consider the type of transport provided to the learner and, if a personal travel assistant is provided, whether or not there is a need to continue with that arrangement. Cyngor Gwynedd can make changes to transport arrangements following the review.

2.11 Looked After Children

- 2.11.1 Looked-after children is the term used in the Children Act 1989 to describe children under 18 years old who receive care and accommodation from the Children and Supporting Families Department, Cyngor Gwynedd, often with foster carers.
- 2.11.2 Looked-after children (according to the Children Act 1989 definition) have the same right to receive transport as children who are not looked after; however, there are no requirements for them to attend the nearest suitable school to their home or the placement's address.
- 2.11.3 If a looked-after child attends a school that is closer than the required distance shown in Part 2.2, free transport will not be provided. Exceptions by virtue of the criteria shown in Part 3 may also apply.

2.12 Dual Residency

- 2.12.1 Where parental responsibility for a child is shared and the child resides at two separate addresses, namely the homes of both parents, the Authority will provide transport from the main residence, which is the address where the learner resides most frequently, provided that at least one of those residences is within Gwynedd. This is subject to the school attended being the catchment area school or the nearest suitable school for one of the two residences. Transport will not be provided from any of the two residences if they are more than five miles from the nearest catchment/suitable school for one of the two residences.

NOTE: The Local Authority also retains the right to prove the reasonableness of the transport requested under this condition, considering distance, safe and accessible paths, the length of the journey, cost, as well as proximity to suitable education settings.

3. DISCRETIONARY SCHOOL TRANSPORT

- 3.1 Within *the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008*, discretionary arrangements can be made under part 6 of the Measure. In some cases, there can be a charge for the cost of those arrangements to the responsible parent / guardian.
- 3.2 **Vacant Seats Scheme**
- 3.2.1 The Local Authority offers vacant seats to learners who are not eligible for free transport. The offer is conditional on an empty seat being available on transport after meeting the needs of all learners who have a statutory right to transport.
- 3.2.2 Learners will not have an automatic right to a vacant seat, and the Council has no duty to offer, maintain or fill any vacant seat. Taking advantage of the scheme will be subject to the following:
- That vacant seats are available
 - The vehicle does not need to deviate from its normal route
 - No additional costs for Cyngor Gwynedd

- Payment of the current fee for a vacant seat

- 3.2.3 Vacant seats will be allocated per term, one school term at a time, and it will be a requirement to pay the relevant fee for the term before gaining access to the vacant seat.
- 3.2.4 There is no guarantee that vacant seats will be available throughout the term, if the right expires, we aim to give at least one week's notice. If this happens, the parent/guardian will be required to organise their own transport for the learner to get to school.
- 3.2.5 A statutory right to free transport in accordance with the criteria will always take priority over any learners who take advantage of the vacant seat scheme.

3.3 Faith Schools

- 3.3.1 For faith schools, Cyngor Gwynedd will provide free transport to learners who attend their nearest faith school on a discretionary basis if this is the choice of the parents / guardians for learners who live up to 5 miles from the nearest suitable (faith) school. The statutory distance criteria in Part 2.2 are used to check that the learner is eligible, but with faith schools, the application is also reviewed against the faith school's admission criteria. Evidence of proof can include examples such as a christening certificate, a proof certificate of faith or a letter from a faith leader. If the learner does not meet the faith requirements, then the application is reviewed in relation to the requirements of the nearest school or nearest catchment area.

3.4 Post-16 Transport

- 3.4.1 Part 2 of *The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008* requires Local Authorities to assess the travel needs of all learners under the age of 19, (learners must be studying a full-time course and be under the age of 19 on 1 September of the academic year when the course is followed).
- 3.4.2 The Local Authority provides discretionary transport beyond the statutory school age to eligible learners living in Gwynedd. Transport will be provided to the nearest catchment/suitable Secondary school allocated by the Authority to serve the learners' home address only, or in the case of full-time courses at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, to the nearest suitable college site providing the course. Free transport will be available for learners who live 3 miles or more from the nearest catchment/suitable school or the nearest suitable college site. The Authority will use the distance measured by them from home to school or eligible college on the system (GIS) to confirm the actual distance.
- 3.4.3 Learners with additional learning needs will be able to take advantage of the Authority's post-16 transport plan for a period of up to 4 years from the beginning of their first term.
- 3.4.4 The policy applies to travel to the following education settings:
- Secondary Schools maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd with a provision for Years 12 and 13.

- Special schools maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd with a provision for Years 12, 13 and 14.
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai - Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon sites, Parc Menai Site - Bangor, Llangefni and Caernarfon. The courses available at each of these settings can be seen in their prospectuses, that are available directly from the establishments.

3.4.5 If the course location or learner transfers to another education setting during the academic year, the criteria for post-16 transport in Part 3.4.2 will still apply.

3.4.6 Learners have the right to choose any location for their post-16 education, but if a learner does not choose the nearest catchment/suitable school or the nearest suitable college site that provides the course then they would lose their right to free transport. A fee is charged for learners who choose to travel to an out-of-catchment school or college site that is not the nearest site that provides the course.

3.4.7 Transport is provided between learning establishments who work in partnership with each other by those partners.

3.4.8 More information about post-16 transport can be found in Appendix 3.

3.5 School Reorganisation

3.5.1 In cases where schools are reorganised, the Local Authority will consider the most appropriate options for school transport. This could include providing free transport for a specific period of time depending on the circumstances. Such arrangements will be provided on a discretionary basis and documented in the reorganisation process; therefore, relevant schools, governing bodies, parents / guardians and any other stakeholders will be aware of the terms of the arrangement.

3.6 Reviewing Catchment Areas

3.5.1 In cases where the Authority reviews the catchment area boundaries (outside of the schools' reorganisation process), the transport criteria in Part 2.2 will apply.

3.7 Moving Homes

3.7.1 In cases where a learner, who has been receiving free transport, moves home in the middle of the academic year, transport provision will come to an end if they no longer attend their nearest suitable/catchment school.

3.7.2 If a learner is in the middle of a GCSE year (school years 10 and 11), the Authority will continue to provide discretionary transport until the academic years are completed, i.e. until the end of year 11.

3.7.3 This commitment is subject to the learner living in the Local Authority area.

NOTE: The Local Authority also retains the right to prove the reasonableness of the transport requested under this condition, considering distance, journey time, and the proximity to other suitable education settings.

3.7.4 Every other eligibility reassessment will follow the same criteria noted in Part 2. This part will not apply where parents / guardians have previously exercised their choice as detailed in 2.6.

3.8 Controlled School Transfers

3.8.1 Where controlled school transfers are supported by the school Headteacher of the new destination and the Education Department, parents / carers will be aware of this action and will be included in these discussions at a school level. School transport under these circumstances can be supported on a discretionary basis where a part of the action and the agreement of every party is formed to change schools for the benefit of the learner.

3.8.2 It is the parent / carer's responsibility to ensure that they fully engage with the Authority and the school when pursuing a controlled transfer. These matters need to be checked, and evidence will be available. This allows the Education Department to make an informed decision based on the evidence that supports the application for transport.

3.8.3 Where evidence is not available and/or where a parent/guardian refuses to engage with the process with the school and Education Department, the request for transport will be refused. This will be based on the lack of evidence available to make an informed decision.

3.9 Medical Conditions

3.9.1 Consideration is given to the need to provide transport to those learners who need temporary school transport because the nature of their medical condition seriously impacts their mobility (e.g. a broken leg). The Authority will consider every case individually, not only for those eligible for transport based on distance. In every case, transport is only provided to the site that the learner attends.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Nursery Education

The Authority does not provide transport to children attending nursery or nursery classes at 3 or 4 years old. Transport is provided to eligible children from the start of the school where the child reaches the age of 5 and starts full-time education, normally in the reception class.

4.2 Clubs Outside of School

The Authority will not provide transport to or from after-school clubs (i.e. breakfast club, after-school clubs etc.) or extra-curricular activities that fall outside the statutory curriculum. It is the responsibility of the parent / guardian to ensure that appropriate transport arrangements are in place if they take advantage of these provisions.

4.3 Changes to the Policy

Should this policy need to be amended, the Authority must follow the statutory requirements set in the *Learner Travel Information (Wales) Regulations 2009*. This requires the Authority to consult, agree and publish changes to the policy before 1 October in the year that pre-dates the academic year when the changes come into force.

4.4 Transport Impact

Parents / guardians must consider the implications of their chosen school on the use of private cars and the impact that could have on traffic and carbon emissions outside their chosen school. The Authority encourages parents / guardians to consider transport and active and sustainable travel to the school of their choice.

4.5 Sustainable Modes of Transport

Parents / carers must consider choices for active travel to school. Information about Active Travel in Gwynedd is available on the Council website, as well as the *Walk Wheel Cycle Trust* website in terms of cycle paths across the county.

5. TRANSPORT PROVISION

5.1 Cyngor Gwynedd Provision

- 5.1.1 The Authority will try to provide the most appropriate and suitable mode of transport to every eligible learner safely and provide the most cost-effective mode of transport. This could be on a bus, a coach, a minibus, or taxi agreements, or on public transport that already exists. These services and the associated agreements are arranged and managed by the Integrated Transport Unit.

5.2 Transport Payments

- 5.2.1 In order to meet the statutory requirements, in exceptional circumstances, the Council can offer personal budget for parents to take their children to school/college should that be cheaper than providing transport arranged by the Authority, or where there are no transport arrangements in place.
- 5.2.2 Monthly payments are made to a parent's bank account after receiving a C1 payment claim form from the Integrated Transport Unit. The application form is checked with information about the learner's attendance in the school/college that they attend. The payment is calculated based on the parent's travel distance from home to school, using the Council's digital mapping software (GIS). The cost is calculated based on the distance of the journey to and from home to school twice. Parents / guardians are not obliged to accept the offer of a repayment; however, it may be considered that this is the most reasonable mode of transport.

5.3 Inclement Weather Arrangements

- 5.3.1 In circumstances of inclement weather, it is the Headteacher's responsibility to decide whether or not the school should be closed. The Education Department is informed of

any decision to close the school. The decision will depend on an assessment of the relevant factors, including the weather forecast, the situation in the area of the school, the situation for staff members in relation to travel etc.

5.3.2 If the provider is unable to provide a bus or taxi in the morning due to inclement weather, then that transport will not be available in the afternoon. Any parents who have decided to take their children to school under such circumstances must be informed that they need to arrange to take their children home in the afternoon as the usual school transport will not be available.

5.3.3 If transport providers inform the school that they are eager to transport some learners home early, the schools must agree to the request as it is the responsibility of the provider to take the learners home safely. When making such a request, the provider will respond to weather warnings or direct evidence that the situation in terms of weather is worsening. Such a request should not necessarily lead to a decision to send every learner home early.

5.3.4 If it is decided to close the school, the Headteacher will contact the transport providers to inform them. They should also confirm with the providers the arrangements for the following days as soon as any relevant decision is made. If unable to contact the providers, the Integrated Transport Unit must be informed on 01766 771 000. When a decision is made to close a school, the Headteacher must inform the Education Department using the "School Closures" system on the Authority's website: www.gwynedd.gov.uk/cau

5.4 Service Monitoring

5.4.1 The Authority retains the right to randomly inspect Education Transport services to ensure that everyone travelling is eligible.

5.5 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Inspections

5.5.1 The Integrated Transport Unit (Cyngor Gwynedd) manages and arranges all the necessary education transport agreements with the appropriate service providers. This includes receiving evidence and keeping a record of the Disclosure and Barring Service inspections for every driver and travel chaperone by the providers.

NOTE: Travel chaperones are only employed on primary school transport services where it is considered appropriate, or if the child's Additional Learning Needs make this appropriate.

5.6 The Behaviour Code

5.6.1 Cyngor Gwynedd supports the “Travel Behaviour Code” prepared by the Welsh Government. The Code establishes the expectations of individual learners, fellow passengers and transport providers. The Code can be seen on the Council’s website [Behaviour Code](#), and in this Policy’s appendix.

5.6.2 As learners present a request for education transport, they, or their parents/guardians, must state on the application form that they have understood and are committed to adhering to the Behaviour Code and are aware of the possible results of breaching the Code.

5.6.3 An unacceptable action by a learner that is contrary to the Code could lead to:

- recovering the cost of deliberate damage from learners and/or their parents/guardians,
- cancelling the travel arrangements agreed for learners for a specific period or an unspecified period. It will be the learners' responsibility to make their own transport plans to attend school/college under these circumstances,
- disciplinary action by the relevant school or college,
- submitting a report of the incident to the Police.

6. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

6.1 Cyngor Gwynedd is eager to receive feedback and comments from service users that could lead to improving services. Any feedback or comments regarding this Policy must be presented through the Feedback and Complaints Procedure [Formal complaint / Praise](#)

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

7.1 The following is available on the Council website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru

- A. Timetables and maps of the Network to the relevant establishments
- B. The Behaviour Code
- C. Application forms.
- Ch. Complaints and Comments

Empty Seats Scheme Procedure

Definitions

Statutory Entitlement to School Transport

A learner's entitlement to receive free school transport from Cyngor Gwynedd in accordance with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, the relevant statutory guidance, and Cyngor Gwynedd's school transport criteria as amended from time to time. For the purposes of this Policy, Statutory Entitlement to School Transport will always take precedence over any transport provision provided on a discretionary basis.

Vacant Seat

A seat on a school transport vehicle which Cyngor Gwynedd has determined to be surplus to its statutory transport requirements and is available for allocation on a discretionary basis. Seats reserved to meet current or anticipated future statutory transport needs are not considered vacant seats, even if they are unoccupied on some journeys.

Principles of the Vacant Seats Scheme

The purpose of the Vacant Seat Scheme is to maximise the use of surplus capacity on vehicles provided primarily to fulfil Cyngor Gwynedd's statutory school transport duties. The Scheme is discretionary in nature, and its operation shall not compromise Cyngor Gwynedd's ability to carry out its statutory duties.

Cyngor Gwynedd may, at its sole discretion, offer vacant seats to learners who are not eligible for statutory school transport. Any such provision will be subject to surplus capacity remaining after the needs of all learners who have a Statutory Entitlement to School Transport have been met.

No learner is automatically entitled to a vacant seat, and Cyngor Gwynedd is under no duty to offer, maintain or fill any vacant seat.

Use of the scheme will be subject to the following:

- The availability of vacant seats
- The vehicle not having to deviate from its usual route
- No additional costs being incurred by Cyngor Gwynedd
- Paying for the current vacant seat

Cyngor Gwynedd will consider and make decisions regarding the above matters. Cyngor Gwynedd's decision shall be final.

Visible Vacant Seat and Available Vacant Seat

Cyngor Gwynedd recognises that there may be confusion between a seat that appears vacant on a school transport vehicle, and a seat that is available for allocation under the Vacant Seats Scheme.

The fact that a seat is vacant on a particular journey or indeed appears regularly vacant over a period of time does not mean that that seat is available for allocation. Cyngor Gwynedd must ensure that it has sufficient capacity to accommodate all learners with a Statutory Entitlement to School Transport, including learners who may become eligible during the school year.

When planning the service, Cyngor Gwynedd may retain unallocated seats in order to accommodate changes in eligibility, population movements, additional transport demand, safety arrangements or other operational requirements. These seats may appear empty on certain journeys but are not considered available vacant seats. The same principles shall apply where a transport provider chooses, on either an occasional or ongoing basis, to use a vehicle(s) with more seats than the contractual requirement.

A seat will only be considered available for allocation as a vacant seat when Cyngor Gwynedd has determined that it is a surplus seat to its current and reasonably foreseeable statutory transport requirements.

The sight of a vacant seat on a school transport vehicle shall not create any entitlement, expectation or presumption that such seat is available under the Vacant Seat Scheme. The availability of any seat as a vacant seat shall be determined by Cyngor Gwynedd. Cyngor Gwynedd's decision shall be final.

Allocation of Vacant Seats

Vacant seats shall be allocated on a termly basis, one school term at a time.

Where the number of applications for vacant seats exceeds the number of seats available, Cyngor Gwynedd will allocate the seats in accordance with the following operating arrangements:

Arrangements for allocating a Vacant Seat at the start of the academic year:

1. Where additional vacant seats are available:
 - Vacant seats for the term will first be offered to learners who held a vacant seat in the previous term.
 - If additional vacant seats remain available, they will then be offered to new applicants who live furthest from the school.

Where there is more than one applicant from the same address, and only one vacant seat available, the parent/guardian shall choose which applicant from that address receives the seat.

2. Where there is no change in the number of vacant seats available:
 - Vacant seats for the term will be offered to those who held a vacant seat in the previous term.
 - If any offer is declined, then the process described in paragraph 1 (above) shall apply.
3. Where there is a reduction in the number of vacant seats available:
 - Among those who held a vacant seat in the previous academic year, the first to lose entitlement shall be the learner living closest to the school (or school site).
 - If one learner from a particular address must lose their seat and more than one learner from that address held a vacant seat in the previous year, the parent/ guardian shall decide which learner loses the seat.

Arrangements for Allocating a Vacant Seat during the Academic Year:

A waiting list will be maintained and, should vacant seats become available during the year, priority will be given to those living furthest from the school (or school site). If entitlement to vacant seats must be withdrawn during the year, the first to lose entitlement shall be the learner living closest to the school (or school site).

If one learner from a particular address must lose their seat and more than one learner from the same address holds a vacant seat, the parent/guardian shall choose which learner loses the seat.

Cyngor Gwynedd reserves the right not to allocate a vacant seat, even where a seat appears regularly unoccupied, if it considers that such capacity must be retained to ensure it can fulfil its statutory duties efficiently and safely.

Payment for Vacant Seats

The relevant fee must be paid in full for the term before use of the vacant seat commences.

The fee relates to permission to use a vacant seat for a specified period and does not purchase an entitlement to school transport or to a particular seat.

Payment of the fee and allocation of a vacant seat do not create a statutory entitlement to transport nor guarantee that the seat will remain available for the rest of the term, the following term, or the entire academic year.

Withdrawal of Vacant Seats

Statutory Entitlement to School Transport will always take precedence over discretionary use of vacant seats. Cyngor Gwynedd reserves the right to withdraw a vacant seat at any time if the seat is required to meet a Statutory Entitlement to School Transport or if operational, safety, contractual or financial reasons justify doing so.

Where reasonably practicable, Cyngor Gwynedd will provide as much notice as possible to the parent/guardian if a vacant seat must be withdrawn, and at least one week's notice will be provided as a minimum.

If Cyngor Gwynedd withdraws a vacant seat before the end of the term for which payment has been made, the appropriate proportion of the fee shall be refunded for the period during which the vacant seat could not be used.

Allocation of a vacant seat does not guarantee that the seat will remain available for any specified period if that seat is subsequently required to enable Cyngor Gwynedd to carry out its statutory duties.

Review of the Scheme

Cyngor Gwynedd reserves the right to amend, suspend or terminate the Vacant Seat Scheme at any time in accordance with its statutory duties, corporate policies and financial and operational decisions.

The operation of the Vacant Seat Scheme does not limit in any way Cyngor Gwynedd's statutory duties or its ability to make decisions to ensure the appropriate and efficient provision of school transport.

Post-16 Education Transport

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Part 2 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 requires Local Authorities to assess the travel needs of all learners under 19 years of age. (A learner must be studying a full-time course and be under 19 years of age on 1 September of the academic year in which the course is undertaken.)
- 1.2 The Local Authority provides discretionary transport beyond statutory school age for eligible learners living in Gwynedd. Transport will be provided only to the catchment/nearest suitable secondary school designated by the Authority to serve the learner's home address or, in the case of full-time courses with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, to the nearest suitable college campus offering the course. Free transport will be available to learners who live 3 miles or more from the nearest catchment/suitable school or nearest suitable college campus. The Authority will use the distance measured on its Geographic Information System (GIS) from the home address to the eligible school or college to confirm the actual distance.
- 1.3 The following considerations will apply when determining the nearest location that offers the course:
 - Is the course offered at the nearest catchment/suitable school or nearest suitable college campus at the same level as that offered at the learner's preferred school/college?
 - Is the course offered at the nearest catchment/suitable school or nearest suitable college campus delivered through the same language medium as the learner's preferred school/college?
 - Does the course offered at the nearest catchment/suitable school or nearest suitable college campus have the same entry requirements as the learner's preferred school/college?
 - Does the course offered at the nearest catchment/suitable school or nearest suitable college campus lead to the same qualification as the learner's preferred school/college?
- 1.4 Learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) will be eligible to benefit from the Authority's Post-16 Transport Scheme for a period of up to four years from the start of their first term.
- 1.5 This policy applies to travel to the following educational institutions:
 - Secondary schools maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd that provide education for Years 12 and 13.
 - Special schools maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd that provide education for Years 12, 13 and 14.
 - Grŵp Llandrillo Menai campuses at Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon, Parc Menai (Bangor), Llangefni and Caernarfon.

Courses available at each institution can be found in their prospectuses, available directly from the institutions.

- 1.6 If a course location or learner transfers to another educational institution during the academic year, the Post-16 transport criteria will continue to apply.
- 1.7 Learners have the right to choose any location for their Post-16 education. However, if a learner does not choose the nearest school or college campus offering the course, they will forfeit their entitlement to free transport. A charge of £1 per journey will apply to learners who choose to travel to an out-of-catchment school or a college campus that is not the nearest location offering the course.
- 1.8 Transport between learning institutions working in partnership with one another will be provided by those partner organisations.

2. Financial Support for Learners

- 2.1 An Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available to Post-16 learners attending a local school or college. Eligibility is based on household income. The allowance is intended to assist with travel costs, books and equipment while studying at a school or college as a Post-16 learner. Further information is available at:
<https://www.gov.wales/education-maintenance-allowance>

3. The Post-16 Transport Network

- 3.1 Due to the geographical nature of Gwynedd, it is not always possible to arrange transport routes that pass every learner's home address. Transport will be available on designated routes serving the relevant institution(s). The Council will notify learners of their designated pick-up and drop-off point. The Council will not provide additional transport to enable learners to reach a pick-up or drop-off point on the route.

4. Applying for Transport

- 4.1 Information on how to apply for Post-16 transport is available on the Council's website: [16+ Travel Ticket - Cyngor Gwynedd](#)

5. Paying for Seats

- 5.1 Learners have the right to choose any location for their Post-16 education. However, if a learner does not choose the nearest school or college campus offering the course,

they will lose their entitlement to free transport. A charge of £1 per journey will apply to learners who choose to travel to an out-of-catchment school or a college campus that is not the nearest location offering the course.

- 5.2 Post-16 learners will be required to pay the relevant fee in full for the term before being granted access to Post-16 transport. A discretionary period will be allowed at the start of the Autumn Term for payment of the relevant fee and receipt of the Post-16 Travel Pass, to ensure that all appropriate arrangements are in place. Thereafter, Post-16 learners will be expected to pay the relevant fee in advance at the beginning of each term.

6. Travel Times

- 6.1 Transport will be available Monday to Friday during school and college terms only.
- 6.2 Journeys to school or college must be completed before 12:00 noon.
- 6.3 Return journeys from school or college cannot commence before 1:00 pm. All homeward journeys must begin before 6:00 pm.

7. Mode of Transport

- 7.1 The Council will provide transport using the most effective and appropriate method. Primarily, the Council will arrange the use of public bus and rail services.
- 7.2 In addition, the Council may provide transport on buses, minibuses or taxis operating under contract to the Council.

8. Code of Conduct

- 8.1 When applying for Post-16 transport, learners will be required to declare on the application form that they have understood and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct and that they are aware of the potential consequences of breaching the Code.

Assessing the Impact on the People of Gwynedd

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.

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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?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures (which modify service delivery or employment practices)
- Education Transport Policy

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

As a result of the education transport financial position, the field is subject to strategic review, and it is believed that from revisiting the content of the existing Transport Policy, there is an opportunity to contribute somewhat towards rationalising the costs associated with education transport as well as meeting statutory requirements.

It is believed that there is a need to update and amend the existing Transport Policy for the following reasons:

- The existing transport policy was drawn up in 2009 and it has not been updated since, except for the part regarding post-16 education, following the restructuring and abolishment of the fees that existed at the time.
- The ambiguity and lack of clarity in the existing policy in some areas weakens the Education Department's ability to make firm decisions every time on the validity of requests for transport, leading to higher transport costs for the Council.
- Adding clarity to the Education Transport Policy would assist parents and users to know for certain whether they are eligible to education transport or not, and the rationale for that before applying, reducing the demand on the service to respond to invalid applications.

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

The Authority will give specific consideration to the following stakeholders when undertaking the consultation:

- Schools
- Governing Bodies
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
- Parents
- Children and Young People
- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee Cyngor Gwynedd

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?

Yes. A robust and balanced effort was made to comply with the duty to engage, and sufficient relevant information has been collected to allow the Council to proceed.

A questionnaire was conducted on the Draft Transport Policy, shared widely with key stakeholders across the education sector, including children and young people, governing bodies, and strategic planning groups. 31 responses were received, providing a valuable qualitative input by stakeholders.

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

Action	Dates	Information
Complaints and enquiries	September 2024 - September 2025	After detailed scrutiny of enquiries and complaints relating specifically to education transport, it is obvious that our existing transport policy is weak in terms of offering guidance and the relevant detail when dealing with these issues.
Consult with the Primary and Special Catchment Area Consultative Group	February 2026	Introduce a Draft Policy and highlight the main changes as well as raise awareness of the public consultation
Consult with the Secondary Strategic Planning Group	February 2026	Introduce a Draft Policy and highlight the main changes as well as raise awareness of the public consultation
Engagement meeting with Gwynedd Governors' Forum	February 2026	Introduce a Draft Policy and highlight the main changes as well as raise awareness of the public consultation
Engagement meeting with the Children and Young People County Forum	March 2026	Introduce a Draft Policy and highlight the main changes as well as raise awareness of the public consultation
5 x consultation session with students from Grŵp Llandrillo Menai - at the Llangefni, Bangor, Pwllheli, Dolgellau, Glynllifon sites	March 2026	Introduce a Draft Policy and highlight the main changes as well as raise awareness of the public consultation
Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	18 June 2026	Introduction of Draft Policy

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

	Evidence, Information and Relevant Data	Positive and/or Negative Potential Impact
Race	The Education Department, the integrated transport unit and all Gwynedd schools have relevant policies in practice to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-bullying Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd sets out anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race in the school, which extend out to the transport arrangements to school and home for that specific school. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the proposed transport policy would affect this characteristic.	We have not identified the potential impact on this characteristic
Disability	From the consultee's comments, it is concluded that there are some concerns on the impact of the new draft transport policy on disabled or additional learning needs learners, particularly in terms of safety, suitability and fair access to education. Responders noted that not all learners can travel independently, and can place pressure on young people to do so before they are ready. This is particularly relevant to those with complex needs or specific conditions, where travelling without appropriate support can cause direct barriers to access and engagement with education. More broadly, the comments note that the needs of disabled learners are very diverse, and therefore the standard way of providing transport is likely to be	The comments received show some acknowledgement of the potential positive impacts for disabled or additional needs learners, particularly in terms of promoting independence and personal development. Some responders note that independent travel, when implemented appropriately, can build confidence and life skills for young people with Additional Learning Needs. However, these advantages are considered subject to an appropriate provision of training, support and resources, emphasising that independence is not appropriate or possible for all individuals. Nevertheless, some comments draw attention to the negative risks on the grounds of disability. Concern is expressed that the policy may place pressure on ALN

	insufficient and lead to unfair outcomes. Concerns are also raised that changes to the policy or assessment processes could lead to reducing or withdrawing specialist transport services, disproportionately affecting this group compared with other learners. To that end, the impact extends beyond the individual learner, with comments drawing attention to the added pressures on families when seeking to secure suitable transport. In general, the evidence suggests that there is a clear risk of a negative impact on the grounds of disability, unless the provision continues to be flexible, tailored and providing adequate support to ensure that disabled learners are not placed at a disadvantage under the Equality Act.	learners to travel independently before they are ready, creating a direct risk to their safety and well-being. The comments show that any reduction in support or flexibility is likely to have a disproportionate impact on disabled learners, compared with their peers.
Gender	It is not anticipated that the proposed transport policy would affect this characteristic. Implementing the said document would mean that everyone would continue to be treated according to their needs, regardless of their gender.	We have not identified the potential impact on this characteristic
Age	The comments received consistently show that the proposed policy is considered as one that could disproportionately affect different age groups, in line with the "age" protected characteristic in the Equality Act. Specifically, concern is expressed that older learners, particularly those who are post-16 and over 19 years, are more likely to face barriers in terms of access to education, including a smaller choice of courses, reliance on the closest provider only, and	There is a potential negative impact on a small group of learners aged 19 years and over who are currently benefiting from the Post-16 Travel Pass. There is an intention to consult on this change, and we will consider the feedback received from the consultation, adapt and change the draft Policy as we see fit, before the policy is adopted in its final form. The comments suggest a range of potential impacts on the grounds of age, with some positive aspects, but mainly

	longer or more complicated journeys, that may have a negative impact on attendance, engagement and educational progression. At the same time, these comments draw attention to potential weaknesses for younger children, who are considered more reliant on safe and suitable transport arrangements, and who are less able to travel independently, particularly in rural areas where routes are unsafe. This raises concerns about safety and accessibility risks, and suggest that a distance-based method or standard criteria method could be unsuitable for the needs of young children. More broadly, the evidence notes a lack of flexibility in the method, with many comments suggesting that a "one-size fits all" policy cannot identify developmental differences and practical requirements at different stages of education. This can lead to inconsistencies between learners of different ages - including within the same family - and increases the risk of unfair or unintentional outcomes. In general, the comments suggest that a more graduated and flexible method is needed, which reflect the specific needs of every age group in order to avoid disproportionate impact and to be in keeping with equality principles.	concerns about the disproportionate negative impacts on different age groups. In terms of positive impacts, some responders note that existing or flexible (e.g. empty seats) transport arrangements can support the development of young people by fostering independence and responsibility, as well as enabling ongoing access to education and opportunities for families to work. Similarly, a provision that uses existing capacity effectively can help learners who just fall outside the eligibility criteria, expanding access to education to some age groups. Older learners (post-16 and over 19 years) are noted as a group at greater risk of being excluded from educational opportunities due to restrictions on transport, reliance on the closest provider, or removal of support, which may restrict course choice, increase complex journeys and reduce attendance and progression. At the same time, younger children are considered more vulnerable to safety risks and more reliant on orderly transport arrangements, with concerns about the suitability of walking, cycling or using public transport in specific circumstances.
Religion and Belief	Gwynedd schools have relevant policies in place to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-bullying	The comments received reflect a mix of potential positive and negative impacts based on religion and belief. In terms of positive impacts, some responders acknowledge that a

	Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd sets out anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race in the school. All schools have their own anti-bullying policies to safeguard children with certain equality characteristics. In addition, the Equality policy implemented by Gwynedd primary schools states that the schools "... oppose all forms of prejudice and discrimination and recognise that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives." The comments received show that access to faith schools is a key issue in terms of religion and belief, with several responders emphasising the importance of families' ability to choose an education that reflects their religious beliefs. It is clearly noted that a restricted number of faith schools are available locally, and therefore that bigger distances have to be travelled in many cases; as a result, any restrictions on transport or distance criteria may mean that some learners are unable to attend the closest faith school or the most suitable for them. This raises concern that the policy may place religious learners at an unintentional disadvantage, compared to those attending non-faith schools. At the same time, another strong thread of comments emphasises the need for fairness and consistency, with some responders noting that	transport provision that supports travel to faith schools could facilitate the rights of families to choose an education that reflects their religious beliefs, particularly if not many faith schools are available locally. In this sense, arrangements that allow further travel, or offers some flexibility, help sustain access to religious education and support a range of educational choices. However, the comments also draw attention to potential negative risks. Concern is expressed that restrictions on distance or eligibility may prevent some learners from attending an appropriate faith school, placing them under a disadvantage compared with other learners. At the same time, strong viewpoints emphasise that religion should not give an advantage or disadvantage, and that every learner should be treated consistently regardless of their beliefs, raising concern that a special provision for faith schools could cause inequality.
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	religion should not give any cohort of learners an advantage or disadvantage, and that the policy should treat every pupil equally, despite their religious background. This highlights a clear tension between supporting the rights of individuals to choose their education based on beliefs, and sustain equality principles across the whole system. The comments show that there is a need for careful balance to ensure that no religious group is treated more favourably or less favourably, so that access to education remains fair and inclusive for every learner, in line with the principles of the Equality Act.	
Sexual Orientation	Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework and is published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged 3 to 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, at the core of relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships.	We have not identified the potential impact on this characteristic

	It is not anticipated that the new-look policy would impact people based on sexual orientation.	
Gender reassignment	It is noted in the Equality policy being implemented by Gwynedd schools that schools, "... oppose all forms of prejudice and discrimination and recognise that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives." It is not anticipated that the new-look policy would impact people based on gender reassignment.	We have not identified the potential impact on this characteristic
Marriage and civil partnership	The comments received show that an impact on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership was not raised directly, but several broader issues are indirectly relevant through family arrangements and care responsibilities. Specifically, responders draw attention to the impact that transport arrangements can have on parents' ability to coordinate work and childcare, with some comments suggesting that changes to the provision may cause additional pressures on one parent or partner to undertake this responsibility. This can affect arrangements within marriage or civil partnership relationships, particularly where both partners work. In general, although the impact on marriage and civil partnerships is not obvious or specific, the evidence suggests that there is a risk of indirect impacts where changes to the policy can increase pressures on family arrangements or create imbalance in responsibilities	The comments received show that only very indirect references are made to the impact on the grounds of marriage and civil partnerships, and there is no direct evidence discussing this protected characteristic specifically. In terms of the potential positive impacts, the comments suggest that the provision of effective transport can help families to coordinate work and childcare, supporting the stability of daily routines and, possibly, reduce pressures on family relationships. However, the comments also draw attention to potential negative impacts, particularly where transport arrangements are less flexible or are reduced. This can cause added strain on parents. There are also concerns about complex living arrangements, such as sharing care between two homes, which can be made more difficult by strict criteria or a lack of flexibility in the policy.

	between partners, emphasising the need for flexibility in order to avoid unfair outcomes.	In general, the evidence suggests that the impact on the grounds of marriage and civil partnerships is not directly obvious.
Pregnancy and Maternity	The comments received include indirect references to the impacts on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.	The comments received suggest that there are some potential positive impacts on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity, mainly where there is a provision of suitable and flexible transport provision which enables parents - including mothers - to balance work and care responsibilities. It is noted that reliable access to transport enables the reduction of the need for additional care arrangements, support continuity in employment, and facilitate daily family routines, including for young children. In general, the evidence suggests that the impact of the policy on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity is likely to be indirect, with a positive aspect when a provision supports families, but a clear risk of negative impacts where flexibility or provision is reduced.
The Welsh Language	The comments received suggest that the policy's impact on the Welsh language are mixed, but raise some concerns in terms of linguistic equality. Several responders note that transport in itself does not necessarily have a direct influence on language use, suggesting a restricted impact in some cases. However, others draw attention to the possibility that transport arrangements, particularly where the policy restricts access to the closest provider only, can affect the ability of learners to access an	This Policy supports fair access to education throughout Gwynedd, including Welsh-medium education. As all schools in the county, with the exception of three, are Category 3 Welsh-medium schools, the transport arrangements play a key role in ensuring that learners throughout Gwynedd can attend their catchment area school and have access to Welsh-medium education, regardless of their geographical location. As a result, the Policy contributes to the Council's objectives to maintain and promote the Welsh language as the language of education and community.

	appropriate Welsh or bilingual education. This is particularly relevant in areas where a Welsh provision is not available locally, meaning that further distances have to be travelled. More broadly, the comments highlight that a lack of flexibility in the policy can lead to a situation where language choice is not considered in parallel with distance, leading to a possibility of treating the Welsh language less favourably than English in practice. At the same time, some responders suggest that ensuring equal access to all learners, regardless of their language, means that the policy should not differentiate on the grounds of language at all. In general, the evidence shows a differing opinion between a neutral method in terms of language and the need to ensure that transport provision enables, rather than restricts, access to a Welsh education, emphasising the need to avoid any negative impact that could undermine the principle of not treating the Welsh language less favourably.	The comments received suggest that the policy's impact on the Welsh language are seen to be mixed, with some responders noting a restricted or no direct impact, whilst others draw attention to the potential for positive and negative impacts. In terms of the potential positive impacts, some comments suggest that the provision of effective transport which sustains access to a broad range of schools helps maintain educational choice, including access to a Welsh or bilingual provision, where relevant. There are also suggestions that flexibility in the policy, such as considering education choices as well as geographical location, helps ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English. However, several of the comments draw attention to potential negative risks, particularly if the policy restricts access to schools or providers that are not just the closest ones. It is noted that such a method could restrict the ability of learners to attend a specific Welsh provision, particularly in rural areas where the provision is dispersed, leading to a situation where the Welsh language could have an unintentional disadvantage. At the same time, some responders note that transport itself is not a factor affecting language use, suggesting that the impact is not negative in each case. In general, the evidence shows uncertainty and mixed views, but it draws attention to the risk that lack of flexibility in transport arrangements could lead to a disproportionate
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		impact on opportunities to use the Welsh language. This emphasises the need to ensure that the policy supports fair access to a Welsh provision, and that it does not risk treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, in accordance with linguistic equality principles.
Socio-economic Considerations	As an authority and on a very positive note, free transport is provided for further education students to attend various education courses in our sixth form schools and many college campuses - this is non-statutory and is implemented at the council's discretion. In this financial climate, this is expensive for the authority, but on the other hand it promotes access to all learners to be able to study in further education, without being a cost to the learners and their parents/guardians. The comments received clearly show that there is a potential impact on the grounds of socio-economic considerations, with concerns that the policy can disproportionately affect low-income families with some without access to private transport. It is specifically noted that a reduction in transport provision or restricting eligibility could lead to additional costs for parents, creating barriers to accessing education for learners who are not in a position to self-fund their travel. This is particularly relevant in rural areas where public transport options are restricted, meaning that some families are heavily reliant on education transport arrangements. In general, the evidence suggests a risk of disproportionate negative impact on deprived socio-economic groups, unless the policy includes sufficient	The comments received reflect a mix of potential positive and negative impacts based on socio-economic disadvantage. On one hand, some responders acknowledge that accessible transport arrangements and options such as using empty seats can support families by reducing costs and enabling parents to continue in work, improving economic stability and continuous access to education. This, in some cases, can contribute towards better opportunities for learners who do not have resources to arrange independent transport. Concern is expressed that reducing transport provision or restricting eligibility could lead to added costs, creating direct barriers to access to education for some learners. This is obvious in rural areas where the public transport options are limited, and could lead to more complex journeys, less attendance or even removing learners from some educational opportunities. In general, the evidence suggests that there are some risks of negative impacts on families who face socio-economic disadvantage, although there are some potential advantages where the provision is flexible and accessible.

	flexibility and support to mitigate these barriers and ensure fair access to education.	The new draft policy includes mitigation measures and flexibility, to ensure that learners from less privileged backgrounds are placed at a disadvantage, and to maintain fair access to education to all children.
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	It is not anticipated that the proposed policy would have an impact on those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, as well as their families. Children from military or ex-military families will get the same fair play whichever school they attend. The comments received include only very indirect references on the impact on people who currently serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families, and there is no specific or direct evidence naming this group. However, several comments raise broader issues that are relevant to their circumstances, particularly in terms of mobility, complex living arrangements and reliance on flexible transport. For example, there are concerns about families who share addresses or who have inconsistent living patterns, which could lead to difficulties with strict criteria such as "main residence", showing that a less flexible policy can cause barriers to ensure consistent access to education. More broadly, the evidence suggests that any reduction in flexibility or transport provision is likely to have a disproportionate impact on families who have less stable or more complex living circumstances, which could include some military families.	The comments received include only restricted or indirect references on the impact on people who currently serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families, but some broader conclusions can be drawn based on the concerns around family circumstances and mobility. In terms of the potential positive impacts, the comments suggest that the provision of flexible and accessible transport can support families with complex living patterns, including those who move often or who have varied living arrangements, by assisting consistent access to education and reducing the burden of arranging transport. This could be relevant to military families where education stability is an important factor. In general, the comments draw attention to the need to ensure that the policy is flexible enough to avoid creating unintentional barriers for groups with unconventional living patterns, in accordance with equality principles.

Human Rights	The comments received suggest several matters that are relevant to human rights, particularly in relation to fair access to education, safety and the right to family life. Responders emphasise the importance of ensuring that every learner is able to reach education safely and reliably, noting concerns around travelling on public transport, unsafe routes, and the impact on physical and emotional well-being. This connects directly to basic rights to safety and access to education without unnecessary barriers.	The comments received suggest a range of potential positive and negative impacts on the grounds of human rights, particularly in relation to access to education, safety and family life. In terms of the positive impacts, some responders note that the provision of effective and flexible transport can support learners' rights to access education consistently and safely, whilst also enabling families to maintain work and childcare arrangements, reducing practical pressures on parents. This can contribute to ensuring that children and young people can take advantage of education in a stable manner, which is a core aspect of human rights. However, the comments strongly draw attention to the potential negative impacts, particularly if the policy leads to less access to education transport.
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6. Are there any data or information gaps, and if so, what are they and how do you intend to address them?

Following Cabinet guidance, we have held a public consultation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. The Authority has specifically considered the following stakeholders when undertaking the consultation:

- Schools
- Governing Bodies
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
- Parents

- Children and Young People
- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee

The consultation was an opportunity to gather data and further information to be included in the Education Transport Policy, as well as the Impact Assessment.

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

It is not anticipated that there will be a cumulative impact from introducing the Education Transport Policy.

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 has been developed, giving due attention to the Public Sector Equality Duty by assessing the potential impact on individuals who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The proposal will follow the statutory requirements to protect the learner from any discrimination, harassment or persecution. Equal opportunities are promoted within the organisations and equality policies and procedures are followed.

When promoting equal opportunities, the policy seeks to ensure that learners are able to have fair access to education by providing transport arrangements that are consistent, transparent and consider individual needs, including disabled learners and learners with additional learning needs.

In order to help remove discrimination, harassment and illegal persecution, eligibility criteria and operational arrangements have been drawn up in a way that is fair and based on objective needs, without treating any group less favourably in an unjustified way.

The policy is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that it does not lead to unexpected detrimental impacts on any protected group and to note further opportunities to promote equality.

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 proposed new transport policy will ensure that opportunities are given to everyone to attend the nearest catchment/suitable education sites. Learners are given the opportunities to follow an education pathway of their choice, following a course from the range of subjects offered across all the county's education sites, and a site that meets all of the learner's needs. Suitable, orderly transport is provided, with particular connections for this purpose.

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?

Cyngor Gwynedd's existing Language Policy is based on the principle that Welsh is the Council's natural language and that Welsh is the main administrative and public language, with every service, meeting, correspondence and sign being bilingual, with priority given to the Welsh language. It ensures that the public and staff receive a full service in Welsh, that Welsh skills are essential to every post, and bodies who receive assistance from the Council also promote Welsh. In terms of education, the policy emphasises the central role of schools and education providers when transferring the Welsh language to the next generation and reinforce its use as the main community language and language of learning.

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?

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and the Council's well-being objectives, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the following requirements: The Transport Policy makes a direct contribution to the Act in many ways:

- **A prosperous Wales** - Opportunities are provided through access to educational opportunities to foster and develop a skilled and educated population. Reliable access to education helps young people to develop skills and employment opportunities in the future.
- **A resilient Wales** - Through their studies, learners become aware of the values which maintain social, economic and ecological resilience, as well as the ability to adapt to change. Use of more sustainable transport can contribute towards reducing emissions and protecting the environment.

- **A healthier Wales** - Being a part of society which promotes physical well-being and seeks to reflect on a positive identity, which is associated with strengthening mental health. The purpose of this is to ensure that every child and young person in Gwynedd is ready to learn and can fully benefit from the education and training available, and can easily access support to improve their emotional, mental and physical well-being. Regular access to education supports the mental and physical well-being of learners. Safe travel arrangements can also promote health and safety.
- **A more equal Wales** - Providing access to a comprehensive education for every child, regardless of their background, seeks to ensure that every child and young person can access the highest quality education and training, which enables them to thrive and achieve their potential. This is one of the most direct contributions by the policy.
- **A Wales of cohesive communities** - Opportunities are provided to connect people and communities by providing viable and safe transport links. Reliable transport services help connect rural and urban communities and schools.
- **A Wales with a vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh language** - Welsh-medium education is one of the main methods of realising this goal.
- **A globally responsible Wales** - Access to education promotes and improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of our learners, in the hope that this extends to global well-being. Reducing use of individual cars and promoting more sustainable transport can contribute towards addressing climate change.

The new education transport policy supports the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act by planning for the long-term, preventing inequalities, working in partnership and engaging with communities. It contributes to each of the seven well-being goals, with a particularly strong contribution towards a More Equal Wales by ensuring that every learner has fair access to education and the resulting opportunities.

The Five Ways of Working:

1. Long-term

- The policy considers the needs of learners in the future by creating sustainable and efficient transport arrangements.
- It can reduce reliance on private cars and support long-term environmental goals.

2. Prevention

- Providing suitable transport helps prevent problems such as absence, educational exclusion and inequalities on access to education.
- It can also reduce traffic and pollution problems around schools.

3. Integration

- The policy supports several well-being goals at the same time, instead of focusing on one field only.

4. Collaboration

- The policy was developed by working with stakeholders such as schools, parents and learners.
- Collaboration helps ensure that the service meets local needs.

5. Contents

- Engagement with learners, families and communities ensures that various voices are heard.

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)?

Transport for learners will be provided through tender processes and third-party agreements administrated by the Integrated Transport Unit, Cyngor Gwynedd.

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 tender documents will be Cyngor Gwynedd standard documents, which note the expectations in terms of compliance with the General Equality Duty, Human Resources and Welsh language legislation and the Socio-economic Duty.

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:

This is considered when engaging on the proposed draft policy. It is ensured that everyone, including the learner, can voice their opinion on the proposal.

Although it is early days, and the impact assessment is not final, it is anticipated that the policy is likely to have a positive impact on the equality characteristics (see question 5). We will update the Impact Assessment as the direction of the work becomes clearer.

Significant Negative Impact:

Negative impacts may emerge when introducing some changes to the policy, particularly when removing some aspects that are currently offered and at the Council's discretion. These will be considered when engaging on the proposed draft policy, and when drawing up the final policy.

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)

It is possible that some intentional negative impacts will derive from the draft Education Transport Policy, for example:

- There will be stricter guidelines for learners who live in dual residences, in order to better manage costs.
- Further education learners will be expected to follow a course of their choice at the nearest college, to facilitate education transport arrangements.
- More clarity and considerations will be given to faith school catchment areas as there is no reference to them at all in the current policy.

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

No. We will act in accordance with the legal requirements imposed on us.

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?

In order to show more clearly that the education transport policy gives due attention to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, several additional measures can be considered which contribute to the three elements of the General Duty: promoting equal opportunity, removing unlawful discrimination, and fostering good relationships. These steps would strengthen the policy by ensuring not only that access to education transport is fair, but also that the service when operational reduces inequalities, prevents discrimination and builds positive relationships between learners and communities. This would provide stronger evidence that the general duty under the Equality Act 2010 has been considered in full. We will update the Impact Assessment as the direction of the work becomes clearer.

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?

The policy has considered the socio-economic impacts on learners and families. We will update the Impact Assessment as the direction of the work becomes clearer.

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?

It is anticipated that the amended policy will not affect the status of the Welsh language.

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:

Continuing with the policy.

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
Present the Draft Strategy to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	June 2026	June 2026	Head of Education
Present the Education Transport Policy to the Cabinet	September 2026	September 2026	Head of Education

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
Review of the Policy	Annually	Education Transport Manager



Draft Education Transport Policy

Cyngor Gwynedd is engaging with the public on the Draft Education Transport Policy

Background

The Education Transport Policy, which is currently active dates back to 2009, and although there is no change to the statutory requirements associated with providing transport for learners, the policy needs to be reviewed in order to:

Ensure we are meeting the Welsh Government's statutory requirements and guidelines:

The need to consult at least 12 months before introducing a change to some or all the discretionary elements of the policy.

Ensure clarity on the discretionary elements for fairness for children, young people and their families:

There is inconsistency in the content of the current policy across all areas.

Ensure that the policy is fit for purpose and clear and easy to implement within the resources available:

The policy is outdated which means that elements of it can no longer be implemented due to the Welsh Government's statutory requirements and guidelines. The policy is also vague, which makes it difficult for the Authority to make clear and balanced decisions about education transport.

The main changes proposed to the Draft Education Transport Policy are in the following areas:

- Empty Seats Scheme
- Faith Schools
- Dual Residency
- Post-16 Transport

Relevant Documents

- Draft Education Transport Policy
- Impact assessment

Privacy notice

We will only use any personal information provided in responding for the purpose of analysing the questionnaire. The responses will be kept for 5 years after the questionnaire's closing date.

This is done in order to comply with Article 6(e) of the UK GDPR, as we are asking for your opinion about a statutory service.

Closing date: 20 March, 2026

Section A:

A1.

I'm completing this questionnaire as:

Parent / guardian ☐

Governor ☐

Member of school staff ☐

Learner under 16 ☐

Post-16 learner ☐

Member of the public ☐

Elected member ☐

Other ☐

Other

Section B: Empty Seats Scheme

What's in the current policy?

If there is an empty seat for learners on a school bus or taxi, learners can apply to purchase the seat each term. The following criteria must be met:

1. There are empty seats available;
2. There is no need for the vehicle to change the route from its usual journey;
3. There will be no additional costs for Cyngor Gwynedd;
4. Pay the current fee for an empty seat.

These learners will receive first refusal:

- Learners with an Individual Development Plan (IDP);
- Learners who live farthest from the school or school site.

What's different in the new policy?

The Empty Seats Scheme will not exist in the new Education Transport Policy.

B1. What is your opinion on not including the empty seats scheme to ensure that there are enough seats available for children to travel free to school?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree

☐ Neither agree nor disagreeDisagree ☐

Strongly disagree

No opinion	
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B2. Comments

Section C: Faith Schools

What's in the current policy?

There is no reference to faith schools in the current policy, but this is the situation:

Gwynedd has two faith schools; Our Lady's School and St Helen's School. The schools themselves are the admissions authorities rather than the Council, and therefore they do not have specific catchment boundaries, although the areas they serve are likely based on areas of the historic church parishes. At present, transport is provided for learners on the basis of these areas.

What's different in the new policy?

Cyngor Gwynedd will provide free transport for school-aged learners:

- who attend the nearest faith school of the parents' / guardians choice;
- if they live at least 2 miles but no more than 5 miles from the nearest suitable faith school;
- where their parents/guardians provide evidence of proof of faith

C1.

What is your opinion on providing free school transport to learners in faith school catchment areas that live at least 2 miles but no further than 5 miles from the nearest suitable faith school?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

No opinion ☐

C2. Comments

Section D: Dual Residency

What's in the current policy?

Where parents share responsibility for a child and the child resides in two households, which are the homes of both separate parents, the Authority will provide transport from the main address, which is the address at which the learner usually resides, with at least one of those residences being in Gwynedd. This is on the condition that the school the learner attends is the nearest suitable school from the main residence, or it is agreed that it is the most suitable considering the locations of the two residences.

What's different in the new policy?

The Local Authority will provide transport for learners who may reside in more than one home due to their family circumstances, but only from the main address, with at least one of those homes being in Gwynedd. Transport will not be provided from either residence if it is more than 5 miles from the nearest suitable school.

D1. What is your opinion on only providing free transport from the main address?

Strongly agree	☐
Agree	☐
Neither agree nor disagree	☐
Disagree	☐
Strongly disagree	☐
No opinion	☐

D2. What is your opinion on not providing free transport if both homes are further than 5 miles from the closest appropriate school?

Strongly agree	☐
Agree	☐
Neither agree nor disagree	☐
Disagree	☐
Strongly disagree	☐
No opinion	☐

D3. Comments

Section E: Post-16 Transportation

What's in the current policy?

The Council provides transport for full-time post-16 learners to the following educational institutions:

- Secondary schools catering for Years 12 & 13.
- Special schools catering for years 12 & 13 & 14.
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai - Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon, Menai Site Parc Menai - Bangor, Llangefni and Caernarfon

What's different in the new policy?

The Local Authority provides discretionary transport beyond statutory school age where eligible learners living in Gwynedd who:

- live 3 miles or more from the nearest suitable school or post-16 college that provides the course
- are studying full-time and are younger than 19 years of age on 1 September in the academic year in which the course is taken

Transport will be provided to the catchment area / nearest suitable secondary school designated by the Authority to serve the learners' home address only, or in the case of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai full-time courses, to the nearest college site providing the course.

E1.

What is your opinion on continuing to provide free transport to post-16 learners?

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree | ☐ |
| Agree | ☐ |
| Neither agree nor disagree | ☐ |
| Disagree | ☐ |
| Strongly disagree | ☐ |
| No opinion | ☐ |

E2.

What is your opinion on providing free transport only to the catchment / nearest suitable school that offers the course?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree	
----------------------------	--

Disagree ☐Strongly disagree ☐No opinion ☐

E3.

What is your opinion on only providing free transport to the nearest college offering the course?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree ☐

Disagree ☐Strongly disagree ☐

No opinion	
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E4. Comments

[illegible]

Section F: Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Medical Conditions

What's in the current policy?

We will provide free transport to learners who have an Individual Development Plan, and sometimes learners who have a medical condition or disability.

What's different in the new policy?

We will continue to provide free transport to learners with an Individual Development Plan, and sometimes learners who have a medical condition or disability, but will:

- review ALN requests each year and explore the possibility of travelling independently as they grow and develop
- promote and work towards independent travel among all ALN learners

F1.

What is your opinion on reviewing ALN applications each year to see if the learners can travel independently as they grow and develop?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

No opinion ☐

F2.

What is your opinion on promoting and working towards independent travel among all learners?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

No opinion ☐

F3. Comments

Section G: Sustainable Travel Modes

What's in the current policy?

There is no reference to sustainable travel modes in the current policy.

What's in the new policy?

The council will promote active travel to school and college, by walking and cycling and other sustainable ways. This will improve health and fitness and reduce damage to the environment and is a green way to travel.

G1.

What is your opinion on promoting and working towards green and healthy travel practices among all learners?

Strongly agree ☐

Agree ☐

Neither agree nor disagree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

No opinion ☐

G2. Comments

Section H: Further comments

H1.

Do you have any comments on the changes to Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Transport Policy?

Section I: Effect on the Welsh Language

In line with the Welsh Language Standards, the Authority is required to consider the effects of policy decisions on the Welsh language.

I1. In your opinion, what effects would this policy have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

- I2. In your opinion, how could the policy be created or adapted to ensure that it has positive effects, or more positive effects, on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and on ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English?**

- I3. In your opinion, would it be possible to formulate or modify the policy to ensure that it does not have adverse effects, or has less adverse effects on opportunities for people to use Welsh, and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?**

Section J: The effect on people facing socio-economic disadvantage

J1.

What effect would this policy have on people facing socio-economic disadvantage?

Socio-economic disadvantage means poverty of any kind - financial poverty, digital poverty, living far from services and so on.

Section K: About you

Answering the following questions will help us ensure we have collected the views of a variety of people and given everyone from all backgrounds a chance to take part. You do not have to answer them.

Any information you provide is strictly confidential. We will not be able to identify you.

The information will only be used for statistical analysis.

If you do not wish to answer the following questions, this is the end of the questionnaire.

K1.

Sex

Man / Male ☐

Woman / Female ☐

I identify in a different way ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

K2.

Note your age group

15 years old or younger ☐

16 - 24 years old ☐

25 - 34 years old ☐

35 - 44 years old ☐

45 - 54 years old ☐

55 - 64 years old ☐

65 - 74 years old ☐

75 - 84 years old ☐

85 + years old ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

K3.

How would you describe your skills in Welsh?

Speak, read and write fluently ☐

Speak, read and write, but not very confidently ☐

Speak, read and write – I'm learning ☐

Speak, but can't read or write ☐

Can't speak or understand Welsh ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

Other ☐

Other

K4.

Nationality or national identity?

Welsh ☐

English ☐

Scottish ☐

Northern Irish ☐

British ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

Other ☐

Other

K5.

What is your race?

- White ☐
- Black / African / Caribbean ☐
- Asian ☐
- Gypsy / Irish Traveller ☐
- Mixed / several ethnic groups ☐
- I prefer not to say ☐
- Other ☐

Other

K6.

What is your religion?

- No religion ☐
- Christian ☐
- Muslim ☐
- Buddhist ☐
- Hindu ☐
- Jewish ☐
- Sikh ☐
- I prefer not to say ☐
- Other ☐

Other

K7.

Which of these best describes you?

(You do not need to answer this question if you are under 16)

Heterosexual / Straight ☐

Gay man ☐

Gay woman / lesbian ☐

Bisexual ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

Other ☐

Other

K8.

Has your gender identification changed from that assigned to you at birth? (for example are you trans or transgender etc)

(You do not need to answer this question if you are under 16 years old)

Yes ☐

No ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

K9.

Section 6 (1) of the Equality Act 2010 states that a person is disabled if:

a. The person has a physical or mental impairment,

b. and the impairment has a substantial and long-term effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Using this definition, do you consider yourself a disabled person?

Yes ☐

No ☐

I prefer not to say ☐

Thank you for your response

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Theme: Vacant Seats Scheme

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.1	"A waste of money having vacant seats."	The Council notes the comment.
1.2	"Children should only get a seat if they live away from school but it should be cheap."	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. An Equality and Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.3	"Some parents like me, who have become incapable of driving, need to take their children to school when they live further away."	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.

1.4	"Our child benefits enormously from the vacant seats scheme. It teaches responsibility and gives our son independence. As parents, it allows us to continue working and avoid care costs or missing work to drop-off to and pick-up from school. It also reduces the compulsion of relying on grandparents for more than just supervision."	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council.
1.5	"My daughter, for example, goes to a nearby school (to which all children from the village go), and she has to pay for a vacant seat, on a bus that passes the house. It's completely unacceptable and unjust."	
1.6	"If we get rid of it, we'll be supportive of a gradual process of abolishing it so that pupils who are used to receiving the service don't lose it overnight."	
1.7	"As a parent who lives on the border of the County (in Denbighshire) and has been paying for my children to get a taxi to their school, I'm very disappointed with the decision. Although there is a closer primary school in Denbighshire, the school the children attend is the catchment school for the village and our neighbours (who are on the other side of the border). The village school was closed by the Council so the children of the village now go to the nearest school in Gwynedd."	If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. However, the Council recognises that there are some impacts and barriers involved in ending a scheme. An Equality and Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.8	"Many of our children/families have benefited from the vacant seats scheme but have always given up that seat when free travel was necessary for children who are within the allotted distance. So, we don't entirely agree with removing this from the policy."	
1.9	"Very confusing and I don't understand what is demanded by this; children living outside the area should receive the free taxi due to different aspects that met the criteria."	

1.10	"We're paying for the vacant seats scheme. Our home is 2.7 miles from the nearest secondary school, but the road is not suitable for walking every morning and night."	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. The Education Department could be contacted to discuss unique circumstances, or to obtain clarity on eligibility for transport. The Council recognises that there are some impacts and barriers involved in ending a scheme. An Equality and Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.11	"Lack of clarity over the change and consideration of how it will affect pupils and families. If a seat is available, then isn't it odd that it can't be used?"	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.
1.12	"It doesn't make sense not to try to fill the vacant seats in the taxi and reduce the need for parents to use vehicles unnecessarily in terms of the impact on the environment."	

1.13	"Why not fill the vacant seats? This is a stupid change or has something been missed?"	The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. The Council recognises that abolishing the Vacant Seats Scheme as a result of the requirements to consult and publish any change to the provision of education transport before 1 October in the year preceding the change comes into force may result in the possibility of vacant seats on education transport, but the Council will not be able to offer them for a fee to learners who are not eligible for free transport in accordance with the relevant criteria. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. However, the Council recognises that there are some impacts and barriers involved in ending a scheme. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.14	"Why unnecessarily promote more use of cars on the road?"	
1.15	"I don't agree with paying for vacant seats, if the bus passes by half empty then it should be filled - I pay for 3 vacant seats here and the bus passes by anyway - it doesn't make sense."	
1.16	"This can affect rural school numbers especially where parents don't have a car to bring nursery pupils to school."	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about potential impacts on the county's rural school numbers. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.

		The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.17	"The Education Authority is losing revenue by not letting parents 'buy' vacant seats in buses/taxis. The vacant seats offer can help those without cars who live near the border to avoid paying."	The Council notes the comments. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. In addition, the Council recognises that the end of the Vacant Seats Scheme will result in a slight reduction in revenue income.

		If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.18	"Didn't know that this was possible anyway."	The Council notes the comment.
1.19	"Why unnecessarily promote more use of cars on the road?"	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. The Council recognises that abolishing the Vacant Seats Scheme could lead to an increase in the number of vehicles transporting learners to school. However, the numbers taking advantage of the Vacant Seats Scheme are not high, so a significant impact on the number of vehicles travelling to school is not foreseen. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy.

		Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.20	"I don't agree with paying for vacant seats, if the bus passes by half empty then it should be filled - I pay for 3 vacant seats here and the bus passes by anyway - it doesn't make sense."	The Council notes the comment. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. The Council recognises that abolishing the Vacant Seats Scheme as a result of the requirements to consult and publish any change to the provision of education transport before 1 October in the year preceding the change comes into force may result in the possibility of vacant seats on education transport, but the Council will not be able to offer them for a fee to learners who are not eligible for free transport in accordance with the relevant criteria. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. This means families would get 11 months' notice to enable families to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.21	"I see no reason to scrap the Vacant Seats Scheme as this is always an ongoing decision and there is no cost to the Council and it does not benefit children who are eligible to travel on a	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about potential impacts on the county's rural school numbers.

	free school bus (as they are always given priority in any way). It supports children who may be outside the selection area (in the case of my family, we are 1.5 km outside the selection area). Of course, it's important to set rules for who can use this and to avoid any misuse – ensuring there is no extra vehicle travel to get to and from near buses for example. But there are families who use this to avoid unnecessary travel into the busy area around the schools in Bangor, and that is the case with my family. At the moment I'm able to drop my daughter off at the bus stop while I drop my son off at his primary school which is right in front of the school and it's a similar arrangement for picking him up - so there is no extra vehicle use and I avoid excessive use of the car within Bangor City. In fact, sometimes we are able to cycle to my child's primary school, weather permitting. I'm also happy to pay the £190 a year for this. I have always understood that this is voluntary – but if there are vacant seats on the bus, the use of these seats is certainly less wasteful and more compatible with the Council's environmental and green transport policies. This reduction in car use is also in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which Cyngor Gwynedd must comply with – it reduces unnecessary car travel, boosts the use of public transport, improves air quality around Bangor's schools. It makes no sense losing this extra income to the Council or reducing green travel options while also worsening air quality, road safety and congestion in Bangor if vacant seats are available, it's important to use them."	Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Vacant Seats Scheme cannot be implemented in its current form, as any change to education transport provision is required to be consulted and published before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force. This means that the Council commits to providing a vacant seat for an extended period, without the flexibility to terminate the arrangement if a situation arises where a vacant seat would no longer be available, resulting in higher costs for the Council. The Council recognises that abolishing the Vacant Seats Scheme as a result of the requirements to consult and publish any change to the provision of education transport before 1 October in the year preceding the change comes into force may result in the possibility of vacant seats on education transport, but the Council will not be able to offer them for a fee to learners who are not eligible for free transport in accordance with the relevant criteria. However, the need to consult and publish any change to the provision of education transport before 1 October in the year before the change comes into force means that there will be a possibility of vacant seats on education transport, but the Council will not be able to offer them for a fee to learners who are not eligible for free transport in accordance with the relevant criteria. If the decision to abolish the Vacant Seats Scheme was implemented, families would be required to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school from 1 September 2027. This means families would get 11 months' notice to enable families to make alternative arrangements to transport their children to school.
1.22	"The inclusion of a vacant seats scheme is not a concern, as it could further limit learners' access to education, particularly in rural areas. Many learners in Gwynedd are highly dependent on organised transport due to limited public options. Eliminating flexibility in risky transport arrangements, minimal access to favourable or suitable hubs, more complex and	

	longer journeys, can negatively impact attendance, well-being, and consultation. A vacant seats scheme can help to: - Use existing capacity effectively - Provide practical access for learners who would otherwise have been excluded - Support equitable access to education regardless of location Not including such a scheme can unexpectedly limit opportunities, particularly for rural learners and those who need flexibility to access the most suitable provision. The lack of a vacant seats scheme risks reducing accessibility and increasing inequality in access to further education, and should be seen again as part of a more flexible mode of transport."
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An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

2. FAITH SCHOOLS

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
2.1	"No further than 5 miles makes it very challenging I suppose?"	The Council notes the comment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. It is recognised that faith schools serve a wider area than the usual catchment area of a school, and the provision of transport of up to 5 miles for learners attending faith schools reflects this, compared to the statutory requirements to provide transport of up to 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools in general.
2.2	"...Only if it's consistent with all the other schools. Faith should not give advantage or disadvantage."	
2.3	"I don't agree with faith schools in our secular times. Therefore, Catholics should not be treated differently to any other religion or atheist."	
2.4	"If the new policy changes to a minimum of 2 miles and a maximum of 5 miles, then we potentially have 4 children (maybe more) who live in Bethesda and they may not be eligible for this free transport that they currently have. I think we're the closest Catholic School to Bethesda."	

2.5	"I agree that children should be given free transport to go to a religious school. There are few schools available in Gwynedd that provide a religious school and it is important to keep that alive as what will happen otherwise is that children will lose their faith and religious values. Now, what I don't agree with is that all children should have the right whether they are more than 5 miles away from the religious school closest to them, and maybe the distance to travel for children who live closer should be increased as 2 miles, as people who live in Bangor, for example, they can be seen going to Our Lady's School without the Council providing free buses, but people living in Bethesda, for example, should be allowed to travel further by bus as well."	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
2.6	"As a Catholic school, Governors and the Diocese would be very concerned about the 5 mile rule as we and Caernarfon are the closest Catholic faith schools in Gwynedd. The next Catholic school is in Llandudno. The 2 mile rule is fair and it currently works. I know that if the taxi was taken away from my child he could not carry on attending his current school as it's too far from me and my work so I could not drop him off and collect him in time resulting in a loss of his faith during the week and the enrichment of my child's faith. I would have to make the choice of moving him to another school or reducing my working hours as a lone parent, relying more on benefits that I don't want to do as I'm currently working full-time to provide for my children; this would put a strain on us financially and put us further in poverty and cause more people to claim more benefits, so ultimately there would be no savings for the government; yes, they will save the taxi payment that is spent but more benefits will need to be claimed."	
2.7	"Learners, especially in rural areas, are very dependent on organised transport; restrictive traffic policies can restrict access to suitable provision, increase the complexity of journeys and	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about the eligibility of travel to school.

	negatively impact participation. The provision of free transport during defined distances (2-5 miles) for religious schools is reasonable in principle, as it supports parental and learner choice and helps to ensure equitable access to selected education settings, however, it should be consistently applied alongside wider traffic policies and other learners (e.g. IT learners or those in rural areas who get access to specialist provision) should not be affected. The principle supports equitable access and choice, but it must be balanced to ensure equity across all groups and learner settings."	Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. It is recognised that faith schools serve a wider area than the usual catchment area of a school, and the provision of transport of up to 5 miles for learners attending faith schools reflects this, compared to the statutory requirements to provide transport of up to 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools in general. Eligibility for transport is considered through a panel for learners accessing specialist provision such as a Special School, ALN Unit, or Referral Unit. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
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3. DUAL RESIDENCES

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
3.1	"There are so many secondary schools further than 5 miles from the school. Also, some learners divide their time quite equally between parents - choosing a main address is unfair."	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about learner patterns and the division of their time between two households. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.
	In addition, the policy would benefit from greater clarity in terms of flexibility and discretionary arrangements and consideration of complex family circumstances (e.g. dual residence). Ensure that initiatives such as independent travel and green travel are appropriately and realistically funded.	It is recognised that the proposal to provide transport of up to 5 miles in dual residence situations reflects the Council's desire to facilitate transport for learners who divide their time between households as the proposal goes beyond the statutory requirements to provide transport for eligible learners of up to 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools in general.

		An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
3.2	"Again, no excessive advantage should be given to those children/parents over others."	The Council notes the comment.
3.3	"While providing transport from a primary address offers administrative clarity, it does not fully reflect the reality of modern family arrangements. Many families have complex, abnormal living situations, where young people regularly live across two households. This is particularly common in blended parenting arrangements, and both households are an important and prominent part of the learner's life. It can restrict transport to the main address only: Creates practical barriers to attendance on days when the learner is staying at their second home Leads to longer or more complex journeys, especially in rural areas Increases negative impact on attendance, punctuality and well-being Given the importance of ensuring equitable access to education, it is essential that the policy recognises and adapts to these diverse family circumstances. In general, while the approach simplifies administration, greater flexibility should be considered to support learners with two residences and to avoid unintended disadvantage."	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about learner patterns and the division of their time between two households. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. It is recognised that the proposal to provide transport of up to 5 miles in dual residence situations reflects the Council's desire to facilitate transport for learners who divide their time between households as the proposal goes beyond the statutory requirements to provide transport for eligible learners of up to 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools in general. While transport provision can facilitate learners' attendance at school, it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their children's attendance at school. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

4. POST-16 PROVISION

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
4.1	"Freedom of choice is important for everyone."	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners choosing a post-16 course that is suitable for them. Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy note that free transport will be provided to the nearest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which was part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
4.2	"As not all schools and sites are able to offer courses or subjects it is important to enable pupils to access that course/subject. We need to ensure that these pupils have the same opportunities as everyone else in Wales and beyond."	
4.3	"Distance should not be a barrier to pursuing the student's course of choice."	
4.4	"While the intention to simplify and target transport provision is understood, these suggestions risk creating unexpected barriers for learners. Access to post-16 education should be based not only on proximity, but also on the suitability of the course, the quality of provision, and the individual needs of the learner. A strict approach of "only the nearest provider" does not reflect the reality of travel in rural areas, where journeys can be longer, less direct, and more complex. It can also limit learner choice, limit opportunities for progress, and affect attendance and well-being. To ensure equitable and inclusive access to education, transport policy should retain some flexibility, enabling learners to attend the most suitable provision rather than just being limited to distance."	
4.5	One key concern is the impact on learners aged 19 and over, who would no longer be eligible for supported transport. For many, especially those in rural areas, access to reliable transport is essential to participate in further education. Removing this support risks excluding learners from education, increasing lack	

	of commitment, and negatively impacting future employment opportunities. More broadly, restricting transport to the nearest provider alone does not reflect the reality of travel in Gwynedd. In practice, the nearest provider is not always more accessible or appropriate, and can lead to: Longer and more complex journeys. An increase in trust on a number of transport links. Negative impact on attendance and mental health. There is also a risk that the policy may limit learner choice and access to the most appropriate provision, especially where courses, support, or specialities vary across campuses. Learners in rural communities are likely to be disproportionately affected, as they rely more on organised transport and have fewer alternatives.	
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5. ALN AND INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
5.1	"Promoting independence is great but not at the expense of well-being and safety and the new policy should not put undue pressure on young people to travel alone when they are unable to do so safely."	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about safe and independent travel. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which was part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
5.2	"I don't want anyone to use 're-assessment' as an opportunity to end a service for children. I think very strongly that the voices of parents and children should be listened to here."	The Council notes the comment about the importance of listening to the voice of the parent and child.

		Parents were given the opportunity to respond to the Draft Education Transport Policy by means of an online questionnaire, and a number of consultation sessions were held with children and young people to encourage the child's voice. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which was part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
5.3	"I hope saving money is not at the heart of this. While I would like to see encouragement to travel independently, there should be no enforcement of this – it's a very big step for anyone with ALN."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee. Appropriate training and support will be provided to facilitate and enable suitable learners to travel independently. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which was part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
5.4	"Depending on the child's condition and the risks involved and who will be expected to do this, it's likely to be parents who need to work will have additional pressure on working-class families."	The Council notes the comments.
5.5	"Both approaches are strongly supported as they promote independence, personal development, and better longer-term outcomes for learners. However, this must be supported by proper funding, planning, and specialist support to ensure that it is safe and achievable for all individuals. Independent travel should be offered with support, not an expectation set too quickly. Learners with ALN in particular may need tailored programmes, travel training, and ongoing support to build confidence and ability over time.	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about the costs of safe and independent travel. Appropriate training and support will be provided to facilitate and enable suitable learners to travel independently. Parents were given the opportunity to respond to the Draft Education Transport Policy by means of an online questionnaire, and a number of consultation sessions were held with children and young people to encourage the child's voice.

	Without adequate investment, there is a risk that learners can be expected to travel independently before they are ready, which could affect their safety, well-being, and ability to participate in education. Therefore, a balanced approach is essential, one that promotes independence while ensuring learners are fully supported through the process."	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which was part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
5.6	"Too many of them get a CPD – do all of these need this extra care from the Council?"	The Council notes the comment.

6. ACTIVE TRAVEL

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
6.1	"Very often, it's necessary to transport large equipment and files back and forth, also the North Wales area is very broad and it's not practical in terms of weather and distance to expect people to use a bike/walk. Another point is that public transport is not always reliable."	The Council notes the consultee's comments about the reliability of public transport and concerns about the geographical nature and weather of the rural area. Should the proposal be implemented, an assessment of the education transport and public transport provision would have to be carried out to ensure that transport timetables are suitable to enable learners to arrive at the location in the morning, and return in the afternoon.
6.2	"A blanket policy should not be adopted. Some roads are unsafe to walk/cycle on."	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee about the safety of some roads in relation to walking and cycling.
6.3	"There is a need to ensure that the roads are safe to enable this; very often, in rural Gwynedd hardly a single car can travel safely, let alone encourage pedestrians and cyclists."	The Council assesses the safety and suitability of travel routes, and if a route is deemed unsuitable for walking to school, then transport will be provided.
6.4	"If you're asking children to walk or cycle a lot of miles in the winter and on unsound sections of the roads, that's not right. Children can get healthy in a lot of other ways and it depends on parents."	
6.5	"Vague"	The Council notes the comment.
6.6	"totally agree with this plan. Too many children are too dependent on cars to come to school instead of walking."	The Council notes the comment.
6.7	"I'm much more interested in transport that is cost-efficient and I've got no interest in sustainable (unless it's the cheapest). The Council is not made of money and should focus on the cheapest way possible rather than meeting fantasy green ideas."	The Council notes the comment. An Equality and Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the draft Education

		Transport Policy. Following consideration of the consultee's comments, the assessment has been updated.
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6. GENERAL COMMENTS

REF.	COMMENTS	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
6.1	"No child should travel on public transport for travel to school and home at the end of the day. All children should be able to travel safely without having to stand. No child should have to wait for public transport that does not transport them to/from school. What about having to carry cooking utensils or PE equipment? No family should have to ensure safe transport for their children - what about the impact of this (how many cars have to travel to school instead of one bus - what is the impact of this on our environment) What about families without cars?"	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee about learners travelling by public transport to their educational setting, and on the impacts of this on the environment. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. Transport is provided either in the form of a public bus, a designated school bus, a taxi or in some cases a travel allowance is offered to parents/guardians to provide the transport. However, the Council recognises that there are some challenges and barriers associated with learners travelling by public transport to access education.
6.2	"Every child should have the right to travel safely to and from school on transport dedicated to school children – no members of the public."	An Equality and Well-being Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.3	"In rural areas of Gwynedd, public transport is unreliable or not within reasonable distance. Safe transport is paramount to ensure the attendance and punctuality of children and young people in education. The result of children and young people not being able to reach education settings easily is a lack of skills, low levels of	The Council notes the consultee's comments, and notes the concerns about the reliability of public transport in rural areas. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.

	education, less chance of success in jobs and getting good jobs in the future. One must be aware that some parents, especially in underprivileged areas, are unable to drive themselves and immediately put their children at a disadvantage, if the travel arrangements are not available."	Every effort is made to try to provide suitable education transport, with dedicated links to access a variety of sites. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.4	"All learners should have free transport to the educational facility of their choice. If Cyngor Gwynedd wants young people to continue in education then they need to support those learners to get to the facilities considering that many learners live in rural communities and cannot fund transport themselves."	The Council notes the consultee's comments and notes the concerns about the reliability of public transport in rural areas. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.
6.5	"The government wants parents to work and provide for their family while trying to raise a family; parents cannot work and take children back and forth as some jobs do not include these family hours and the lack of public transport in rural areas makes it impossible for children to complete these courses or attend school. If their services were removed, that would increase the number of parents on benefits as they want to put their children first and would affect single parents who want to work and contribute to the world's income. As a single parent, I couldn't continue to work as much without the taxi, which would result in me reducing my working hours and relying further on benefits, which is not something I wish but I would have no choice."	Every effort is made to try to provide suitable education transport, with dedicated links to access a variety of sites. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.6	"Transporting children to schools is expensive. Could school catchments be re-examined every 5 years and see if it is possible to change funding by changing catchment boundaries e.g. if there was a new housing estate - this would make this beneficial."	The Council notes the consultee's concerns about transport costs and reviewing school catchment boundaries. The Council notes the comment about the link between school catchment arrangements and the School Admissions Code, suggesting that a more dynamic approach to planning education provision is

		needed. Specifically, the response notes that reviewing catchment area boundaries regularly (e.g. every 5 years) in response to demographic changes such as new housing developments could help to ensure that school capacity and transport costs are managed more effectively. In terms of the School Admissions Code, this raises considerations about fairness and reasonable access to local schools, as catchment boundaries can influence who has priority access to school places An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.7	"Such schools should be provided no matter how far the distance is over 5 miles if a child has to travel more due to the lack of these schools. If not, children will miss out or they should provide these types of schools in each area to prevent children from failing to get the right support, so more schools should be provided then."	The Council notes the comment.
6.8	"Make sure the Council is in line with the Well-being and Future Generations Act at all times."	The Council notes the comment. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.9	"We recognise that Cyngor Gwynedd will need to review its Education Transport Policy to ensure that it remains efficient and sustainable. However, the proposed changes raise a	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee about some of the changes in question in the Draft Education Transport Policy.

	number of significant concerns about access, average, and learner participation.	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
6.10	To summarise, while the intention to create a more efficient and targeted transport system is understood, the proposals risk creating barriers to education, reducing choice, and putting rural and vulnerable learners at a disadvantage. A more flexible and inclusive approach is needed to ensure that everyone can have realistic access to appropriate post-16 education."	

THE WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

7. In your opinion, what effects would this policy have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

Comments	The Council's Response
"Schools in Wales should by all means encourage children to speak Welsh it is only natural, but I would also encourage children to learn how to read and write in English as well."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee.
"It's unlikely to make much of a difference."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee.
"Transport has no effect on language."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee.
"You would be taking away transport facilities of both English speaking and Welsh speaking students. Neither would be discriminated against in this new policy as ALL learners would be discriminated against."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

"The Welsh language should not be an issue in that regard if every school implements a robust language policy."	
"No significant impact either way."	
"It would have a massive impact."	
"I am sick to death of Welsh language bully ideas. Schools should be about giving the students the best preparation possible for the modern world and that is education in English. English is a world language. Welsh is a ghetto language that restricts involvement in the real world."	
"While the policy is not intended to disadvantage the Welsh language, it may do so in practice unless sufficient flexibility is built in. It is important that transport arrangements continue to support equal access to Welsh-medium education and do not unintentionally treat the Welsh language less favourably than."	

8. In your opinion, how would it be possible to draw up or adapt the policy to ensure that it has positive impacts, or more positive impacts on opportunities for people to use Welsh, and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Comments	The Council's Response
"Use a method that helps schools to understand that all pupils may not be able to speak Welsh depending on the pupils' background attending the schools."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
"It can't...."	

"Transporting students to an educational facility is going to have zero impact on the Welsh language."	
"Where parents want to choose a faith school, this will be of more significance to them rather than the language."	
"By making sure the Welsh Government keep up to date with the English."	
"I am sick to death of Welsh language bully ideas. Schools should be about giving the students the best preparation possible for the modern world and that is education in English. English is a world language. Welsh is a ghetto language that restricts involvement in the real world."	
"A more flexible approach that takes account of language preference as well as proximity will help ensure that learners can access Welsh-medium education and that the Welsh language is actively supported rather than inadvertently disadvantaged."	

9. In your opinion, would it be possible to draw up or adapt the policy to ensure that it does not have detrimental impacts, or have less detrimental impacts on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English?

Comments	The Council's Response
"No comment - I don't see what impact ensuring safe and suitable transport for pupils in education in Gwynedd has on the Welsh language."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee.

"It would have a massive detrimental effect on ALL students having access to further education putting an already poorly funded education system decades behind it's fellow contemporaries in other UK countries."	
"Ensure that all taxi drivers speak Welsh with the passengers."	The Council notes the consultee's comments regarding the language skills of education transport drivers.
"I am sick to death of Welsh language bully ideas. Schools should be about giving the students the best preparation possible for the modern world and that is education in English. English is a world language. Welsh is a ghetto language that restricts involvement in the real world."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
"Yes, it would be possible to formulate or adapt the policy to reduce or avoid adverse effects on the Welsh language. This could be achieved by introducing greater flexibility within the policy, ensuring that language preference is considered alongside distance when determining transport eligibility. In particular, learners should be able to access Welsh-medium or bilingual provision, even where this is not available at the nearest provider. The policy could also: - Include clear discretionary arrangements to support access to Welsh-medium education - Recognise the importance of continuity in Welsh-language learning and peer groups - Take into account the realities of rural travel, where accessing Welsh-medium provision may require travelling further	

Without these considerations, there is a risk that a strict “nearest provider only” approach could unintentionally disadvantage Welsh compared to English.”	
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10. What do you think would be the impact of this policy on people facing socio-economic disadvantage? Socio-economic disadvantage means poverty of all kinds – financial poverty, digital poverty, living far from services etc.

Comments	The Council's Response
“Updating policies and providing help needs to be acknowledged to help everyone understand if anyone is struggling.”	The Council notes the comments of the consultee. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
"Reducing transport for pupils who are in education in Gwynedd definitely puts a financial strain on our society regardless of their backgrounds."	
"Not providing transport would affect the learners who do not have access to a car at home, putting them at a disadvantage taking their education into account."	
"Those who would not be able to self-fund would not be able to attend educational facilities meaning less opportunities for those individuals. This would be very discriminatory to poorer students."	
"Some families would not be able to afford to send pupils to school and therefore this would affect the education of the pupils."	
"It depends on the ability of these families to afford to pay – and, is there support available for those who are really unable to pay?"	
"Those children attending from Bethesda would be at a disadvantage and cause financial challenges for families."	
"It would definitely impact me as a single parent working full-time, I would have to decrease my working hours and rely on	

benefits more, causing more poverty to myself and the government.”	
“The proposed policy is likely to have a disproportionate negative impact on people facing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly those living in rural communities. Learners experiencing financial hardship are more reliant on free or supported transport to access education. Restricting transport to the nearest provider, or removing eligibility (e.g. for those aged 19+), may: Increase out-of-pocket travel costs. Limit access to suitable courses or campuses. Create additional barriers for those already facing financial pressure. For learners in rural areas, where public transport is limited, the impact is greater. They may face: Longer, more complex journeys. Increased travel costs where free transport is not available. Reduced ability to participate fully in education. This could lead to: Lower attendance and engagement. Reduced progression opportunities. Increased risk of learners becoming disengaged from education or training. Overall, the policy risks widening existing inequalities, particularly for those experiencing financial hardship or geographic disadvantage. Without sufficient flexibility and support, it may create additional barriers to accessing education for the most vulnerable learners.”	

"Not much."	The Council notes the comments of the consultee.
"No big impact."	
"No idea and I doubt many would. Try and focus on the main issue which is how this policy will work for the vast majority."	

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES FOLLOWING THE LEARNER CONSULTATION SESSIONS ON THE DRAFT EDUCATION TRANSPORT POLICY

Post-16 Education - Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

a) Comments of Learners at Parc Menai, Bangor Site

1. Theme: Course Location

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.1a	"Although the site closest to me provides the subject, it does not provide level 1 in that subject - how will the college deal with this as every course has admission requirements and will it be possible to study the course that suits the level of my qualifications?"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them.
1.2a	"Students from Dolgellau are happy to travel to Bangor for up to 2 hours a day because they genuinely want to study the course there because of the facilities and resources available, and they have committed and are committed to completing the course - it is very important to be able to complete the course of your choice, in terms of subject and location. "	Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy note that free transport will be provided to the nearest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college.

2. Theme: Transportation costs

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
2.1a	"For students over 19 years old, many ESOL students at college are over 19 years old, and they will find it difficult to pay for college transport, if they will need to do so"	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding transport costs. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.
2.2a	"The cost-of-living has increased and makes things more difficult for students aged over 19 years old, and it is also more difficult to find work to help pay for transport costs."	

2.3a	"...for some students who travel here, it would take more time and several years for them to achieve their Level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications. This is unfair on those who will possibly take more time to reach their potential."	However, the Council recognises that the lack of transport for learners aged over 19 years old is likely to affect some learners.
2.4a	"The cost of public transport can be expensive if there is a need to pay for return journeys every day, travel can be £7 each way; this would make it difficult for some students to be able to attend."	The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day.
2.5a	"How much will the costs be afterwards? Will they be the same as public bus service costs?"	An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. After considering the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
2.6a	"EMA can help towards travelling costs but it does not leave much money left towards other costs."	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding travelling costs in the context of learners who benefit from the Education Maintenance Allowance as a source of support. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. After considering the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

3. Theme: Age

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
3.1a	"For students over 19 years of age, many ESOL students at college are over 19 years old, and they will find it difficult to pay for college transport, if they would need to do so"	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding a lack of transport for learners over 19 years old in the Draft Education Transport Policy.

3.2a	"The cost-of-living has increased and makes things more difficult for students aged over 19 years, and it is also more difficult to find work to help pay for transport costs."	Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria.
3.3a	"...for some students who travel here, it would take more time and several years for them to achieve their Level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications. This is unfair on those who will possibly take more time to reach their potential."	However, the Council recognises that the lack of transport for learners aged over 19 years is likely to affect some learners. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. After considering the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
3.4a	"College students are getting older and therefore, a higher percentage of students would not be eligible for transport."	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding a lack of transport for learners over 19 years old in the Draft Education Transport Policy. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. However, the Council recognises that the lack of transport for learners aged over 19 years old is likely to affect some learners. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. After considering the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

b) Comments from Learners at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Dolgellau Site

1. Theme: Course Location

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.1b	"...currently studying construction and living in the Ffestiniog area and enjoying the course. The same course is offered at the Rhos-on-Sea site, which is closer to my home...but I would like to stay in Dolgellau to study."	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and to continue with his studies in Dolgellau. The Council is supportive of learners choosing a post-16 course that is suitable for them. The criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy notes that free transport is provided for learners to the closest school or college in Gwynedd and Anglesey that provides the course.
1.2b	"left the local secondary school because of a lack of relationship with staff and no friends and attending the college instead, and so as the bus is running anyway, we should not be looking to pay for the transport as the college suits me now..."	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them. Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy note that free transport will be provided to the nearest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age.
1.3b	"I had to study A level in the college instead of the nearest school as at least two of the courses offered in school are presented in English only, so they aren't suitable for my linguistic needs."	The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.4b	"The provision or choice of subjects and columns at the local school are not always suitable...and the timetable and choices at the college seem to be more suitable, and so how will this affect the transport provision?"	
1.5b	"is it possible to consider the radius around the address in order to convey option 1, 2 and 3 for course options?"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and in the form of options in the context of transport eligibility. The Council is supportive of learners choosing a post-16 course that is suitable for them.

		Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy note that free transport will be provided to the nearest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. The Education Department could be contacted to discuss individual situations, if the transport provision is likely to facilitate the learners' choices.
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2. Theme: Learners with ALN

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
2.1b	"Learners who have come to us from Ysgol Hafod Lon Special School feel secure when continuing into Further Education with their fellow learners, it is a major and difficult step."	The Council notes the positive comments and accepts that processes are in place to facilitate the process of supporting learners with ALN as they transfer from a Special School to a further education college.
2.2b	"Some students from Penrhyn Llŷn will have to travel to the Glynllifon site, and the course choices don't always favour special education."	The Council notes the consultees comments on the suitability of every course at the Glynllifon site for learners with ALN.

3. Theme: Change of Address

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
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3.1b	"I've moved home address during the year - how will this disrupt my studies?"	The new policy would consider the change of address circumstances in order to facilitate the ability of learners who have already commenced a course who move house during the current academic year to continue to receive transport until the end of that year.
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c) Comments from Learners at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Glynllifon Site

1. Theme: Course Location

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.1c	"Because of personal reasons as a result of bullying at school, I had to attend a further education college further away, not the closest, as the same crew who bullied me also attended the closest college and as a result, I applied for a further education course at another site. How will you deal with such considerations with the new transport policy?"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them. Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy note that free transport will be provided to the nearest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. The Education Department could be contacted to discuss individual situations.
1.2c	"the quality of the facilities and the experiences offered in this college are very valuable to me, although it is further away than the similar one, and possibly gives me better work opportunities after I complete the course; do you take this into account?"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them. Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy notes that free transport is provided for learners to the closest school or college (in Gwynedd and

		Anglesey) that provides the course. This is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.3c	"at what time of year would decisions about whether learners are eligible or not, be made? - it could guide students' choice of a suitable course and college."	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and in the context of transport eligibility. The Council is supportive of learners choosing a post-16 course that is suitable for them. The criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy notes that free transport is provided for learners to the closest school or college providing the course, and this is consistent with the criteria for learners of a statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. The Education Department could be contacted to discuss individual situations, if the transport provision is likely to facilitate or confirm the learners' choices.

2. Theme: Transportation costs

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
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2.1c	"if a termly payment for a pass would be introduced, then I would not be able to attend the college course, as I cannot afford any payment, and this could possibly mean that several learners would not be able to attend college and miss out on further education."	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding transport costs. Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day. The Education Maintenance Allowance provides financial support for learners with costs such as transport to post-16 education. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. After considering the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
2.2c	"if learners had to pay, and wanted to catch a college bus, how would they pay as it is not possible to pay every day on a college bus, like you do on a public bus?"	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding paying for a college bus. If the Cabinet decides to charge a fee for some elements of post-16 education transport, the Council will put appropriate arrangements in place to respond to that with the transport operators.

3. Theme: Age

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
3.1c	"learners today maybe go to college later, and older than 19 years of age, and so any age cap would result in fewer students in the future, and for the college."	The Council notes the concerns of the consultee regarding a lack of transport for learners over 19 years old in the Draft Education Transport Policy.

		Where learners are eligible for free transport, transport will be provided in accordance with the relevant criteria. However, the Council recognises that the lack of transport for learners aged over 19 years old is likely to affect some learners. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
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4. Theme: Public Transport

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
4.1c	"...if the transport has to be paid for, will this mean that buses run more often and at times that better suit the course timetable?"	The Council notes the consultee's comment regarding additional transport provision if there would be a need to pay for education transport. Should the proposal be implemented, an assessment of the education transport and public transport provision would have to be carried out to ensure that transport timetables were suitable to enable learners to arrive at the location in the morning and return in the afternoon.
4.2c	"the public bus I use to attend college only accepts my pass at specific times and there is no flexibility when there is a need to go home early or if I'm ill or have an appointment. Would this change with the new policy?"	
4.3c	"the public bus we currently use is full and we often have to stand for long periods. Will you re-visit the arrangements after the introduction of the new policy so that Glynllifon students are able to use the college bus only?"	

d) **Comments from Learners at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Pwllheli Site**

1. Theme: Course Location

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.1d	"The choices and options are not available in every college site and so whilst some sites are convenient, it does not always offer every suitable subject"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them.
1.2d	"circles of friends will be separated if they have to go to different college sites...what about well-being because of this?"	Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy notes that free transport is provided for learners to the closest school or college (in Gwynedd and Anglesey) that provides the course. This is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.

2. Theme: Transport Timetables

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
2.2d	"some students have to set-off for college very early and arrive very late...could the timetables be adjusted to address better connections?"	The Council notes the comments of the consultee about the timetables of college buses and public transport. Should the proposal be implemented, an assessment of the education transport and public transport provision would have to be carried out to ensure that

		transport timetables were suitable to enable learners to arrive at the location in the morning and return in the afternoon.
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e) Comments of Learners at the Llangefni Site

1. Theme: Course Location

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
1.2e	"It is not fair to force learners, as restricting choices can mean that they are not able to study the course/location and disrupts their future."	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose a post-16 course based on subject and location, and the Council is supportive of learners who choose a post-16 course that is suitable for them. Nevertheless, the criteria of the Draft Education Transport Policy notes that free transport is provided for learners to the closest school or college (in Gwynedd and Anglesey) that provides the course. This is consistent with the criteria for learners of statutory education age. The Welsh Government has the My Travel Pass scheme which facilitates and enables young people aged 16-21 years to travel on several journeys for £1 per day, which could apply to learners who choose an out-of-catchment school or college. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken, which formed part of the consultation documentation on the Draft Education Transport Policy. Following consideration of the comments received, the assessment has been updated.
1.3e	"This will force us to study A Levels in a closer location and affect our subject choices that could affect our career choice in the future."	

2. Theme: Calculating distance

REF.	COMMENT	THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
2.1e	"How would you differentiate if I live exactly 50% of the time with Mum, which is closer to one site, and 50% with Dad, which is closer to another site; what would happen in this situation?"	The Council notes the consultee's wishes to be able to choose to travel between the addresses of both parents. The Draft Education Transportation Policy makes specific proposals in the context of dual residence and offers clarity in this area.

		The Education Department could be contacted to discuss individual situations, if the transport provision is likely to facilitate or confirm the learners' choices.
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CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of meeting: 15 September 2026
Cabinet Member: Councillor Dewi Jones
Contact Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart – Head of Education
Title of Item: Ysgol Nebo – Objection Report

A Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting

1 DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked to consider the Objection Report, the summary of statutory objections received during the objection period, and the responses given to those objections, and after doing so, confirm finally the proposal issued through a statutory notice to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet a report on the statutory objection period held following the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards.
- 2.2 The statutory notice was issued on 3 June 2026, commencing a statutory objection period. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026. 20 objections were received during this period. A petition was also presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, objecting to the proposal, with 358 signatures supporting the petition.
- 2.3 Following the receipt of statutory objections, an Objection Report was prepared in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Cabinet is requested to consider the Objection Report, the summary of the objections received, the Council's response to those objections, and all other relevant information, prior to deciding whether the proposal should be confirmed or not.

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was presented to Cabinet on 11 February 2025, and a decision was made to allow the Education Department to commence formal discussions with the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo and other relevant stakeholders about possible options for the future of Ysgol Nebo, in the context of the low numbers of learners attending the school, and the concerns surrounding its long-term sustainability.
- 3.2 Following these discussions and the evaluation work carried out, a further report was presented to the Cabinet on 14 October 2025 where the decision to commence a period of statutory consultation was approved, in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards.

3.3 This report outlined the main challenges facing the school. These included low learner numbers over an extended period, a high percentage of surplus places, and the challenge of ensuring the educational and financial sustainability of the provision in the long term. It was also noted that the local demographic situation and the projections for future learner numbers had been considered as part of the evaluation of options for the school's future.

3.4 As previously noted, low learner numbers mean that Ysgol Nebo is in a vulnerable position and faces a number of increasing challenges, including:

- **Low learner numbers** – January 2026 data indicated that there were 11 learners from Reception – Year 6 and 1 nursery learner attending Ysgol Nebo. Since the January 2026 PLASC, those numbers have further decreased, and by now (September 2026), there are only 6 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 Nursery learner on the school register. It is noted that this report uses the January 2026 PLASC data as a basis for the analysis and comparisons, to ensure consistency throughout the document.
- **High percentage of surplus places** - With 11 learners from Reception to Year 6 on the school's register, and a capacity of 51, there are 40 surplus places at the school, which is the equivalent of 78% of the school's capacity. The school has capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery class also, therefore, with 1 Nursery learner on the register, there are a further 6 surplus places in the Nursery.
- **Small class sizes and a broad age range** –There are two classes in Ysgol Nebo with 5 learners (Reception – Year 3) and 1 Nursery learner in one class. There are 6 learners (Year 4 - Year 6) in the second class. Therefore, there is an age range of up to 5 years in one class and up to 3 years in the second class.
- **Number projections** - The September 2025 projections suggest that the numbers of learners will continue to be low over the next three years, with a projection of 10 Reception to Year 6 learners and 2 Nursery learners on the register by September 2028.
- **Catchment area learners** - January 2026 data shows that 9 children live in the catchment area of Ysgol Nebo. Of these, 22% (2 children) choose to attend Ysgol Nebo, whilst 78% (7 children) choose to attend schools outside the catchment area.
- **Ysgol Nebo receives an additional sum to the core financial allocation** – Ysgol Nebo receives an additional amount to the usual allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time learners). The total additional funding for the 2026-27 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2025) is £64,046.
- **Average cost per learner** - The average cost per learner at Ysgol Nebo in the 2026-27 financial year is £16,066 compared with the county average of £5,998.

4. THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION

4.1 Following the Cabinet's decision on 14 October 2025, a statutory consultation was held on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, in compliance with the requirements of the School Organisation code (011/2018).

4.2 A statutory consultation document, an impact assessment pack (including impact assessments on the Welsh language, the community, equality, various transport arrangements, quality and standards of education and the Well-being of Future Generations Act), a background pack, response forms and a consultation document and questionnaires for children and young people were published on the Council's website. The documentation was distributed to all relevant consultees via e-mail which included a link to a dedicated page on the Council's website [Statutory Consultation: Ysgol Nebo](#), and hard copies were provided upon request.

4.3 Consultees were invited to submit comments by completing an on-line response form, a paper or electronic copy (PDF) or by e-mail/letter.

4.4 A drop-in session was held during the consultation period for the staff, parents and governors of Ysgol Nebo. The purpose of the session was to share information about the proposal and the consultation process, and to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions about the proposal or the process. Twelve people attended the drop-in session.

4.5 Separate consultation sessions were held for representatives of learners from Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, with an independent facilitator holding the sessions. The purpose of these sessions was to gather the views of the learners about the proposal. A child and young people-friendly version of the consultation document was available on the Council's website to ensure that all learners had the opportunity to contribute, even if they had not attended the session at their school. The main points raised during the consultation with children and young people are summarised in section 3 of the Consultation Report, published on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation.

4.6 Responses to the Consultation

4.7 A total of 70 written responses were received to the statutory consultation, including a response from Estyn. The responses received raised the following matters:

- Objections to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo.
- Comments about Ysgol Nebo
- Educational value of a small rural school
- Comments in favour of the proposal
- Impact on learners' well-being and educational experience
- Impact on the community
- Impact on the Welsh language
- Transport and travel
- The statutory process
- Comments about Ysgol Llanllyfni
- Impact on staff
- Home Education
- Additional Learning Needs
- Cross-subject comments
- Alternative options

4.8 Consultation Report

4.9 Following the end of the consultation period, a Consultation Report was prepared summarising the responses received and the Council's response to them.

4.10 The Consultation Report was presented to Cabinet on 19 May 2026, and the Cabinet considered the comments and alternative options received during the statutory consultation period. The Consultation Report is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

4.11 Following consideration of the relevant information, the Cabinet decided to approve the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, commencing a statutory objection period where any individual can object to the proposal within 28 days of the issue date of the notice.

4.12 Other alternative options suggested during the statutory consultation

4.13 The School Organisation Code 011/2018 notes that consultees can suggest other alternative options as well as comments on the proposal in question during the statutory consultation.

4.14 A number of alternative options were proposed during the consultation. A number of the responses suggested adopting the proposal of the Governing Body to develop Ysgol Nebo as a provision to support and nurture children

with social and emotional needs, for whom mainstream education is challenging, including learners with an Individual Development Plan for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.

- 4.15 The Governing Body's proposal was considered, along with the other alternative options put forward during the consultation, as part of the options appraisal undertaken by the Council. However, after evaluating these options, it was concluded that neither this option nor the other alternative options, including federation, responded to the challenges faced by the school, as noted in paragraph 3.4 above. As a result, these options were not considered to provide a sustainable solution to the educational provision in the long term.
- 4.16 It was therefore concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide places for the learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards was still the most appropriate option to respond to the challenges noted. Further details regarding the options considered and the reasons for these conclusions can be found in Section 6 and Section 7 of the Consultation Report, along with the options appraisal published as part of the statutory process. The Consultation Report is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

5. STATUTORY OBJECTION PERIOD

- 5.1 In accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet decision on 19 May 2026, a statutory notice was published in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 011/2018, commencing 28-day objection period in respect of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards.
- 5.2 The statutory notice was issued on 3 June 2026 and posted by the main entrance of Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, in accordance with the School Organisation Code 011/2018. The notice was also issued on the Council's website, and electronic copies were distributed to the consultees and relevant stakeholders, as required under the Code. The relevant parties received notice of the objection period and procedure, and the notice made clear that anybody could object to the proposal and explained how to do so. A copy of the statutory notice and the associated documents are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation
- 5.3 The objection period ended on 30 June 2026. 20 objections were received during the statutory objection period.
- 5.4 A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, objecting to the proposal, with 358 signatures. The petition called on the Council to reconsider the proposal to close the school and to give full consideration to the Governing Body's alternative proposal, to keep the school open as a mainstream school and develop a provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs and learners who find mainstream education challenging. Reference was also made to the role of the school as an important part of the local community, its contribution towards supporting the Welsh language, and concerns about the impact of closing the school on the community and its future.
- 5.5 In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, the Cabinet must consider an Objection Report summarising the objections received and the Council's response to those objections, prior to reaching a final decision on the proposal. This Objection Report, attached as Appendix 1, summarises the objections received and sets out the Council's response to the issues raised.
- 5.6 **Overview of the Objections Received**
- 5.7 A high-level overview is provided below of the main themes raised by the objectors.
- 5.8 The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. Among the main themes raised were the current provision of Ysgol Nebo and its role in meeting the needs of learners in need of additional support; calls for full consideration of Ysgol Nebo Governing Body's alternative proposal; the impact of the proposal on

learner well-being and experience; the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and the community; the impact of the proposal on the local community; challenges to the statutory and decision-making process; financial and strategic planning matters; wider strategic and policy considerations; the post use of Ysgol Nebo's building and site; and objections to the proposal and calls to reconsider the decision.

- 5.9 A number of the objections expressed concern about the potential impact of the proposal on learners' well-being and experience, provision for children needing additional support, the Welsh language as a living community language, and the role of Ysgol Nebo in the social and community life of the area. Matters were also raised relating to the future of rural schools, admission arrangements, strategic planning, financial issues and the future of the school building and site.
- 5.10 A number of objectors also called on the Council to reconsider the proposal and to give further consideration to the alternative proposal put forward by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, namely *"Ysgol Nebo to offer a site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, who find mainstream education challenging, including learners with IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity."*
- 5.11 In order to present the objections in a structured manner, the matters raised have been grouped in the Objection Report under ten themes and a range of sub-themes. These themes have been listed below. The Objection Report includes a summary of the statutory objections received together with the Council's response to those objections.
- 5.12 The Objection Report organises the matters raised under the following themes and sub-themes:

Theme 1: Ysgol Nebo's current provision and its role in meeting the needs of learners who require additional support

- 1.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting children who find larger mainstream schools challenging
- 1.2 The potential for Ysgol Nebo to provide a personalised and nurturing learning environment for learners who require additional support
- 1.3 Concerns about making a decision before obtaining a full picture of learners' needs, pressures on ALN provision and the contents of the ALN Report due to be published in September 2026
- 1.4 The benefits of smaller classes and individual support for learners with ALN or those who require additional assistance
- 1.5 Strategic planning and the long-term capacity of ALN provision in Gwynedd

Theme 2: Calls for full consideration of the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo

- 2.1 A call to reconsider the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo in an open and comprehensive manner: *"Ysgol Nebo to offer its site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including learners with an IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs, and other young people with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence."*
- 2.2 Support for the option of developing Ysgol Nebo as nurturing and specialist provision to support learners with additional learning needs
- 2.3 Ysgol Nebo as an innovative pilot project to support learners and facilitate a return to Welsh-medium mainstream education
- 2.4 Potential benefits of the alternative option in attracting learners and supporting the Welsh language within the community
- 2.5 Concerns regarding the consideration of alternative options and a call to defer the decision until the ALN report is published

Theme 3: Impact on learners' wellbeing, educational experience and travel arrangements

- 3.1 The impact of closing the school on learners' wellbeing and experience
- 3.2 The benefits of a small school and individual support
- 3.3 The impact of travel and transition to an alternative school on learners' wellbeing and support
- 3.4 Concerns regarding the capacity of neighbouring schools and the potential impact on learners' wellbeing and development

Theme 4: Impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and its sustainability within the community

- 4.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in sustaining Welsh as a living language within the community
- 4.2 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on Welsh as a living language within the community
- 4.3 Concerns that the proposal conflicts with the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and the Council's commitments to protect the Welsh language
- 4.4 The potential impact of closing the school on young families and the Welsh language

Theme 5: Impact of the proposal on the local community

- 5.1 Concerns regarding the loss of Ysgol Nebo as the heart of the community and the social, cultural and linguistic impact of its closure
- 5.2 Concerns regarding the loss of the school as a space for activities, volunteering and community services
- 5.3 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on the village's long-term viability and the future of the rural community
- 5.4 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on wellbeing, social inclusion and community sustainability
- 5.5 Concerns regarding reliance on facilities in Llanllyfni as a mitigation measure and the impact on local residents
- 5.6 Concerns regarding the impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the Welsh language and the sustainability of the rural community

Theme 6: Concerns regarding the consultation process, consideration of evidence and decision-making

- 6.1 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process, consideration of the community's comments and the quality of the Consultation Report
- 6.2 Concerns that children's voices were not given sufficient consideration during the process
- 6.3 Concerns regarding the consideration of the Governing Body's alternative option and information about ALN provision in the decision-making process
- 6.4 Concerns regarding compliance with the presumption against the closure of rural schools and the consideration of alternative options
- 6.5 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process and the allegation that a decision to close the school had been made in advance
- 6.6 Concerns regarding the impact of the timetable and discussions about closure on learner numbers and parental choice
- 6.7 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on current learners, parents and continuity in formal education

Theme 7: Financial matters and strategic planning

- 7.1 Concerns regarding the emphasis placed on cost per learner when assessing the educational and community value of Ysgol Nebo
- 7.2 A call to review school funding arrangements and consider long-term community benefits
- 7.3 Concerns regarding the consistency of financial decisions and the long-term strategy for education provision
- 7.4 Concerns regarding the absence of detailed analysis and a professional survey to substantiate the school's maintenance costs
- 7.5 Concerns regarding the lack of consideration given to the long-term financial benefits of an ALN pilot scheme at Ysgol Nebo

Theme 8: Wider strategic, political and policy considerations

- 8.1 A call to consider the impact of catchment area, admissions, housing and demographic policies on the sustainability of rural schools and communities
- 8.2 References to Plaid Cymru policy and the commitment to protect small rural schools and community services
- 8.3 A call to review catchment area and admission arrangements to increase numbers in local schools and support the Welsh language
- 8.4 Concerns regarding the impact of empty homes, second homes and planning policies on rural communities and learner numbers
- 8.5 Concerns regarding spending priorities, modernising education and the continuing value of small rural schools
- 8.6 Comments regarding political responsibility for previous decisions

Theme 9: The future of the Ysgol Nebo building, its community use and the war memorial

- 9.1 Concerns regarding the building's future use and its importance as a community asset
- 9.2 Concerns regarding the future of the building and the loss of a community resource
- 9.3 Concerns regarding the future, stewardship and protection of the war memorial

Theme 10: Opposition to the proposal and calls for reconsideration

- 10.1 Formal objections to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo
- 10.2 A request to reconsider or halt the process in order to assess the impacts and consider the future of rural schools
- 10.3 A call to consider alternative solutions to safeguard and strengthen the future of Ysgol Nebo and the local community
- 10.4 A request to defer the decision, undertake full impact assessments and give appropriate consideration to stakeholders' views
- 10.5 A request to defer the decision until further work on ALN provision is completed and Ysgol Nebo's potential role is considered

6. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE 'DECISION SOUGHT'

- 6.1 In accordance with the 'Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd' strategy, a number of factors were considered when evaluating the options for the future of Ysgol Nebo.
- 6.2 These factors were considered in detail in the report presented to Cabinet on 14 October 2025, and in the statutory consultation document thereafter. A summary of the impact of the proposal on these factors has been included in Appendix 2, using the latest official data available.
- 6.3 During the statutory objection period, objections were received to the proposal which were analysed and considered in full by the Council. The summary of the objections received together with the Council's response to the matters raised have been included in the Objection Report (Appendix 1).
- 6.4 Having considered the 20 objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the petition including 358 signatures presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, and all the relevant information, evidence and assessments, the Authority is still of the opinion that implementing the proposal is the most appropriate response to the reasons for developing the proposal, namely the challenges outlined in section 3.4 of this report. It is considered that the other alternative options considered during the process, including federation, would not adequately address the main challenges facing the school. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the following factors were considered when reaching this conclusion:

6.4.1 Quality and Standards of Education

According to the most recent Estyn reports, the alternative school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, would offer education of a minimally equivalent quality and standard to that currently provided at Ysgol Nebo.

The alternative school offers education of at least equal quality, and provides learners with more opportunities for collaborating and socialising with their peers and enables the learners to gain a range of curricular and extracurricular experiences.

Although learners at Ysgol Nebo make good progress in small classroom environments, the Council is of the opinion that realising this proposal would give learners an opportunity to be taught in peer groups with much less of an age range and an opportunity to improve the educational and social experience of the learners, on a daily basis.

The needs of any vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, would be assessed and implemented in line with the Authority's policy and procedures.

6.4.2 The need for places and the impact on school accessibility

Learners would be taught in classrooms of a more suitable size than the current situation. Implementing the proposal would lead to better consistency in class sizes and reduce the age range within primary school classes in the area.

With 45 surplus places (and 1 surplus nursery place), Ysgol Llanllyfni has sufficient capacity to accommodate the current number of learners from Ysgol Nebo, as well as the projected numbers for the next three years.

Ysgol Llanllyfni is a Welsh-medium Category 3 school, like Ysgol Nebo.

6.4.3 Education Resources and other financial implications

Implementing the proposal would rationalise the cost per learner and reduce the variation in costs per learner across Gwynedd primary schools. Based on the 2026-27 budget, it is estimated that implementing the proposal would result in a cost per learner of £6,121 at Ysgol Llanllyfni, compared to the current cost of £16,066 per learner at Ysgol Nebo. The county average for the same period is £5,998 per learner.

It is estimated that implementing the proposal would generate annual revenue savings of approximately £112,000, after taking account of additional transport costs of up to £30,000 per annum. The estimated transport costs are based on the assumption that all children residing within the Ysgol Nebo catchment area who would be eligible for transport under the Authority's current transport policy would attend Ysgol Llanllyfni.

The proposal would also remove the need for the additional £64,046 currently allocated to Ysgol Nebo through the Minimum Staffing Protection Policy. Learners would be educated in a school where learner numbers and projections are more robust and sustainable for the future, enabling more effective use of the Authority's educational and financial resources.

6.4.4 Specific factors when considering school closures

During the engagement process and local discussions with the school's relevant stakeholders, a number of possible options for the future of Ysgol Nebo were considered, including federation. These options were assessed and weighed up against the factors in the "Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd" Strategy. During the statutory consultation period, additional options were put forward by stakeholders, which were considered as part of the process of producing the Consultation Report. Consequently, the options appraisal was updated to reflect the additional options presented. This options appraisal was included in the Consultation Report and the supporting documentation (see Appendix 5).

Having held the objection period, the Authority is still of the opinion that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate response to the reasons noted for the proposal, namely the challenges outlined in Section 5 of the Statutory Consultation Document (Appendix 6). The evaluation concluded that none of the other options considered during the process, including federation, would provide a sustainable answer to those challenges. In producing and evaluating the options, consideration was given to the specific factors when considering a school closure, as noted in the School Organisation Code. The consideration given to these factors is summarised below:

a. Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option.

Specific consideration was given to the possibility of establishing a multi-site school as part of the evaluation of options process. The evaluation concluded that the multi-site school would not sufficiently respond to the fundamental challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. There is no evidence that the arrangement would lead to a meaningful increase in the number of learners nor to a change in the current pattern of high surplus places at the Ysgol Nebo site. As a result, the organisation of small classes, the low projected numbers and the associated financial challenges would continue, without ensuring the long-term sustainability of the provision. Based on the evaluation, it was concluded that this option would not address the challenges facing the school, as noted in section 3.4 above.

b. Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative.

A wide range of alternative options were considered as part of the process, including federalisation with a nearby school, federalisation along with establishing a specialist unit, establishing an additional learning needs unit, establishing a language centre, and developing other specialist educational provisions on the site. The evaluation concluded that there was no clear evidence that these options would increase the numbers of learners or address the challenges associated with small classrooms, a broad age range, substantial surplus places and the financial sustainability of the school. Based on the evaluation, it was concluded that this option would not address the challenges facing the school, as noted in section 3.4 above.

c. Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored.

Consideration was given to using the school as a community centre and for opportunities to co-locate other services, such as a language centre or unit on the site. The evaluation concluded that none of these options would provide a sustainable solution as there was no evidence that they would lead to an increase in the number of learners or address the challenges associated with substantial surplus places, small classrooms, a broad age range and the financial sustainability of the school. Options that would

include providing specialist services or provision at the site were also considered, however it was not concluded that these would address the main challenges noted.

d. The overall effect of closing the school on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community).

A Community Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposal, in accordance with the School Organisation Code. The assessment was updated following the end of the statutory consultation period and was reviewed and further updated following the statutory objection period to consider the information and additional comments received during the process. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

Respondents noted during the consultation and the objection period that the school building and community room were regularly used for a range of community activities, including a knitting club, social evenings, a gardening club, Welsh lessons, social meet-ups over a cuppa, the monthly meetings of the Area Committee and use as a polling station. Concerns were also expressed about the potential impact of losing the school as a community focal point for community cohesion, vitality and sustainability.

The impact assessment shows that there will be some negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is implemented, as this would lead to losing a school within the community of Nebo as a community focal point. The concerns raised during the consultation and the objection period are acknowledged regarding the implications of this on the vitality of the community; however, a considerable percentage of children in the catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), suggesting that community and educational links already exist with nearby communities, including the community of Llanllyfni. Should the Cabinet decide to press ahead with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the communities of Nebo and the alternative school, promote community collaboration where appropriate, and ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities of the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that if a decision to close the school were to be made, the Authority's Post use Policy would act as a framework to undertake further discussions about appropriate options for the post use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

e. How parents' and learners' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported.

If the proposal were to be implemented, the Council would work with parents, carers and Ysgol Llanllyfni to ensure appropriate transition arrangements for the learners. The options appraisal identified that Ysgol Llanllyfni offered classes of a more suitable size and a wider range of social and educational opportunities for the learners. If the proposal were implemented, appropriate support would be provided to ensure that the transition takes place as smoothly as possible and that learners can take full advantage of the opportunities available at the alternative school.

7. THE PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE CLOSURE OF RURAL SCHOOLS

- 7.1 The School Organisation Code 011/2018 establishes a procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school cannot be closed, but that the case for the closure must be strong and that all other viable alternatives to closure must have been conscientiously considered, including federation. Ysgol Nebo has been designated as a rural school for the purpose of the Code therefore these additional requirements apply to the proposal.
- 7.2 In addition to the factors that are relevant when developing any proposal, under the Code, the Authority must undertake specific assessments in relation to proposals to close rural schools. A number of impact assessments have been undertaken and reviewed in relation to this proposal, including an:

- Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travelling Arrangements
- Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community
- Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education

- 7.3 In accordance with the requirements of the Code, a further impact assessment was conducted of the proposal, the other alternative reasonable options noted in the Consultation Document, along with the additional options presented during the statutory consultation period and considered as part of the Consultation Report. In carrying out these assessments, consideration was given to any additional relevant information received during the consultation, and the assessments were updated where appropriate to reflect this information. The additional information received did not lead to a change in the conclusions of the impact assessments. A summary of the main findings is provided below.
- 7.4 The conclusions of the assessment of the likely impact on the quality and standards of education indicate that the educational provision offered at Ysgol Llanllyfni is of at least an equivalent standard to that currently provided at Ysgol Nebo. The assessment states that implementing the proposal would provide more opportunities for learners to be taught in relevant age groups with their peers and to benefit from a wider range of educational and social experiences. As a result, the assessment concludes that the likely impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of education would be neutral or partially positive.
- 7.5 The assessment of the likely impact on travel arrangements concluded that the proposal would have a negative impact on the existing travel arrangements of some Ysgol Nebo learners, as they would need to travel further to school. Ysgol Llanllyfni is located 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo. However, the assessment does not envisage that any learner from the Nebo catchment area would have to travel an unreasonable distance to school or use routes deemed dangerous, and school transport would be provided in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Transport Policy where applicable. The assessment also notes that the proposal would result in additional transport costs for the Authority of up to £17,000 per annum based on the current numbers, and up to £30,000 per annum if there were an increase in the number of learners eligible for school transport.
- 7.6 The assessment of the likely impact on the community concluded that implementing the proposal would have a negative impact on the community of Nebo, as it would lead to losing the school as a local community resource and focal point. The concerns expressed during the consultation and the objection period regarding the potential impact on the future vitality and sustainability of the community are acknowledged. However, the assessment also notes that a substantial percentage of children in the catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, and therefore educational and community links with the nearby area have already been established. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by supporting continued links between the community of Nebo and the alternative school and consider appropriate post use options for the school site in line with the Authority's policies.
- 7.7 The Education Department remains of the view, after holding the objection period and considering all the relevant information presented during the statutory period, that none of the alternative options considered, including federalisation and the other options presented by stakeholders, would adequately address the main challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. These challenges include low learner numbers over an extended period, a high percentage of surplus places, the high cost per learner compared to the county's average, and projections that show that learner numbers will remain low in future. Also, the alternative options considered would neither increase the number of learners nor provide a sustainable answer to the demographic and operational challenges facing the school in the medium and long term.

8. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 In addition to the assessments undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code in relation to the presumption against the closure of a rural school, a number of other impact assessments were carried out as part of the statutory process. The Community Impact Assessment, Welsh Language Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and Well-being of Future Generations Act Impact Assessment were updated following the statutory consultation and reviewed further following the statutory objection period in

order to consider any additional information and issues raised during the process. Where appropriate, these assessments were updated to reflect the additional information received. The findings of these assessments are considered to remain current and relevant, as no additional information received during the objection period altered the conclusions reached. These assessments are included in Appendix 3 (Impact Assessments), and a summary of their key findings is provided below.

8.2 The Welsh Language Impact Assessment

- 8.3 An impact assessment was held on the Welsh Language and was reviewed following the statutory consultation. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.
- 8.4 During the consultation concerns were expressed about the possible impact of the closure of Ysgol Nebo on the community use of the Welsh language within the village. Numerous respondents emphasised the role of the school as a social and cultural focal point that supports the natural, daily use of the Welsh language, not only among learners but also among families and wider residents, including new speakers and people who are not fluent speakers. The opinion was expressed that the loss of the school could lead to fewer informal opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community, weakening the inter-generational transmission of the language, and reducing the appeal of the village for Welsh-speaking families in the future.
- 8.5 The Council acknowledges that these concerns were reiterated and reinforced during the statutory objection period, particularly in relation to the role of Ysgol Nebo in maintaining Welsh as a living community language, and the view expressed by some objectors that the proposal could run counter to the aims of Cymraeg 2050 to increase the daily and community use of the Welsh language.
- 8.6 The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village and accepts that the comments highlight the possible detrimental impact on local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision.
- 8.7 However, based on the available information, the Council's view is that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on the provision of Welsh-medium education or on learners' linguistic opportunities, for the following reasons:
- The January 2026 PLASC data show that 56% of learners at Ysgol Nebo, and 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni, speak Welsh fluently at home.
 - The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners in the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
 - It is anticipated that the learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen the opportunities for the learners to socialise in Welsh with more of their peers.
- 8.8 Within the education context, based on the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of vitality of the Welsh language and informal use of the language would be stronger.
- 8.9 At the same time, given the comments from the consultation and the objection period, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context; however, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh by involving the community of Nebo in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering appropriate options for the post use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities that are currently held there.
- 8.10 In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within Nebo, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not demonstrate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium educational provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop their Welsh language skills within the educational setting.

8.11 Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.12 An equality impact assessment was held on the proposal, and the assessment was reviewed following the statutory consultation, and again following the statutory objection period. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.
- 8.13 The assessment focuses on different equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. The assessment notes the current situation and shows that policies and procedures are in place which will ensure that the proposal considers and is in accordance with equal rights.
- 8.14 As noted in the latest assessment, during the statutory consultation and the objection period, some specific equality concerns were identified, particularly in relation to vulnerable children, learners with additional learning needs, and families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Concern was expressed that moving some learners to a larger school could reduce the level of individual support available to them, and that some families could be disproportionately affected by travel distance, transport costs or lack of access to private transport. A potential impact on older people and community cohesion was also raised, noting that the school provides an accessible setting for socialising and supporting well-being.
- 8.15 The assessment notes that the Council acknowledges the issues raised and emphasises that equality and inclusion policies are in place in the existing provision and at Ysgol Llanllyfni. Furthermore, it is noted that the Council is committed to prioritising individual needs, including for vulnerable children and learners with additional learning needs if the school were to close. In relation to the concerns about community use of the Welsh language, it is noted that mitigation measures would be considered, including promoting continued links between the community of Nebo and the alternative school through community activities, and by considering appropriate options for the post use of the school building in order to support continued use of the Welsh language in the local community, should the proposal be implemented.
- 8.16 Having weighed up the relevant factors, including the responses to the statutory consultation, and the objection period, the Council acknowledges that some respondents have noted the potential negative impact on some protected groups, including vulnerable learners, learners with additional learning needs, families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, and community cohesion. Specific concerns were also noted regarding the potential impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its informal use outside the educational context. However, based on the overall equality assessment, the evidence set out in the related impact assessments and the mitigation measures described, the Council remains of the view that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on equality characteristics. It is noted that there are already policies and procedures in place to ensure that there will be no unlawful discrimination or harassment, and that individual needs are given appropriate consideration.
- 8.17 While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact in terms of socio-economic disadvantage if implemented, the Council remains of the view that implementation of the proposal would reduce inequality associated with socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have access to a broader range of experiences, services and activities at the receiving school, a wider educational provision, additional social and educational opportunities, and access to extended expertise and support.
- 8.18 By implementing the proposal, Ysgol Nebo learners would have a better learning environment, and learners would benefit from having more age-related peers at a school with more learners, leading to suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, it is noted that Ysgol Nebo learners would continue to receive Welsh-medium education at an alternative school where Welsh is strong, with more opportunities to use the language informally with peers, strengthening the vitality and natural use of Welsh among learners.
- 8.19 The Council would follow the usual procedures by supporting and monitoring, to ensure the compliance of every school with the equality characteristics, should the proposal be implemented.

8.20 The Well-being of Future Generations Act

8.21 An assessment was undertaken on the proposal against the Well-being Act, and the assessment was updated following the end of the consultation period. It was reviewed again following the statutory objection period. The 7 goals of the Well-being Act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it was concluded that the proposal met the requirements. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

8.22 The latest assessment notes that the responses to the consultation and the objection period expressed specific concerns in relation to the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children and learners with additional learning needs, on the well-being of families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, and on the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

8.23 It is acknowledged that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, it would result in losing a school in the community of Nebo. However, a vast proportion of the children who live in the school's catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), therefore, it is concluded that a link already exists with nearby communities, including the community of Llanllyfni. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Llanllyfni, if the proposal were to be implemented. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Llanllyfni's community activity involves the community of Nebo where appropriate.

8.24 In addition, as noted in the assessment, should Ysgol Nebo close, the local authority and the receiving school would work closely with the closing school, pupils and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners in settling into their new school. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with Additional Learning Needs, should the school close.

8.25 It is anticipated that the proposal will ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing opportunities to socialise and work with others, and giving them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

8.26 Compliance with Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011)

8.27 Building on the findings of the Impact Assessment on the Welsh Language and the Equality Impact Assessment outlined above, the Council confirms that the entire statutory process in relation to reviewing the future of Ysgol Nebo has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards 88-93 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. In accordance with Standards 88, 89 and 90, conscientious consideration was given to the potential effects that the policy decision could have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, including consideration of the potential positive and adverse effects, how the proposal could be formulated or modified to ensure more positive effects, and how any potential adverse effects could be minimised. In addition, in accordance with Standards 91, 92, and 93, views were sought and considered throughout the statutory consultation process regarding these linguistic effects, including views on how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to increase positive effects or reduce adverse effects on the Welsh language. These requirements have been supported by undertaking an Impact Assessment on the Welsh language, along with related impact assessments, including the Equality Impact Assessment, and it is noted that these assessments have been reviewed and updated following consideration of the responses received during the statutory consultation and were further reviewed in light of the objections submitted during the statutory objection period. These objections did not result in any change to the conclusions reached.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Having carefully considered the 20 objections, the petition containing 358 signatures, and all comments received during the statutory objection period, the Council remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo represents the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school.

9.2 The Council acknowledges the concerns expressed by objectors, particularly in relation to the school's role within the local community, the community use of the Welsh language, and the potential impact on the future sustainability of the community. However, the evidence gathered through the statutory process demonstrates

that Ysgol Nebo faces significant challenges that are unlikely to be resolved without fundamental change to the provision.

9.3 In reaching this conclusion, consideration has been given to the information gathered during the consultation process and the statutory objection period, the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' Strategy, the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools, the alternative options considered, together with the findings of the relevant impact assessments.

9.4 The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is considered to address these challenges by:

- Responding to the challenge of low numbers of learners in Ysgol Nebo, as well as projections that remain low, and the high percentage of surplus places;
- Offering classes of a more suitable size and age range;
- Improving opportunities for learners to socialise and work daily with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age;
- Reducing the cost per learner for all learners in the County.

9.5 Based on all relevant information considered, including the comments received during the statutory consultation period, the objections received during the statutory objection period, the evaluation of the proposal and alternative options, together with the Council's strategic direction, the Council confirms that it remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school (as set out in section 3.4) and therefore continues to recommend it as the most suitable means of addressing those challenges. Consequently, it is recommended that the Cabinet confirm the proposal.

10. RECOMMENDATION

10.1 Following consideration of the statutory objections received during the statutory objection period, together with all other relevant information, it is recommended that the Cabinet formally approve the proposal published through the statutory notice, namely to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

11. NEXT STEPS AND TIMESCALE

11.1 Should the Cabinet decide to confirm the proposal, and if the proposal is not referred, the next steps and timescale are outlined below:

November - December 2026	The Council will work with the schools, the learners, the parents/carers and staff to plan and implement the necessary transitional arrangements. These arrangements would include supporting learners through the transition period to the alternative school, as well as addressing employment issues that may arise as a result of implementing the proposal, in line with the Council's relevant policies and procedures.
31 December 2026	Implement the proposal: Ysgol Nebo officially closes, subject to the Cabinet's decision.

11.2 Subject to the Cabinet's decision, in accordance with section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the following bodies can refer the proposal to Welsh Ministers for a decision:

- i. Another Local Authority affected by the proposals;
- ii. The appropriate religious body for any school affected;
- iii. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school subject to proposals;
- iv. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or established school subject to proposals;
- v. A further education establishment affected by the proposals.

11.3 The body making the referral will have to note why they believe that the decision made by the local authority is wrong. Welsh Ministers will decide whether the proposal affect the bodies and whether they need to consider the proposal.

12.APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Objection Report

Appendix 2: Comparison of the impact of the proposal on the factors of the Strategy

Appendix 3: Impact Assessments

Appendix 4: [Statutory Notice](#)

Appendix 5: Consultation Report - [Agenda for The Cabinet 19/5/26 \(Item 6\)](#)

Appendix 6: [Statutory Consultation Document](#)

Appendix 7: Comments from the Local Member

13. Views of the statutory officers

The Monitoring Officer:

“This report has been the subject of advice from Legal Services. No observations to add in relation to propriety.”

Head of Finance Department:

“It has been noted in previous reports that the situation at Ysgol Nebo is not financially sustainable, given the empty places in the school. While respecting the views of the respondents, the situation has not changed from a fundamental long-term sustainability perspective. I support the decision sought.”

Objection Report - September 2026

Proposal to close Ysgol Nebo

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1. BACKGROUND

On 11 February 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet resolved to authorise the Education Department to hold formal discussions with the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo and other relevant stakeholders regarding the future of the school, in light of concerns about learner numbers at the school. A School Review Panel was subsequently established to consider the school's position and a range of possible options for its future.

On 14 October 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet resolved to support a recommendation to hold a statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards.

The statutory consultation period was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026. During this period, stakeholders and members of the public were given an opportunity to submit their views on the proposal. A Consultation Report was subsequently prepared, summarising the issues raised and providing the Council's responses to those issues.

The Consultation Report was presented to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on [19 May 2026](#). Having considered the contents of the report, the Cabinet resolved to approve the publication of a Statutory Notice on the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026. The proposal published by means of the Statutory Notice was to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards.

A copy of the Statutory Notice and the related documents is available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, any person was given an opportunity to object to the proposal during the statutory objection period. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. It summarises the objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the Council's response to the main issues raised.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIONS AND MAIN THEMES

A total of 20 objections were received during the statutory objection period.

In addition, a petition opposing the proposal was received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, containing 358 signatures. The petition called on the Council to reconsider the proposal to close the school and to give full consideration to the Governing Body's alternative option, namely to retain the school as a mainstream school and develop provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs and learners who find mainstream education challenging. Reference was also made to the school's role as an important part of the local community, its contribution to sustaining the Welsh language, and concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on the community and its future. The issues raised in the petition have been incorporated within the relevant themes in Section 3 of this report, together with the Council's response to those issues.

The objections received raised a number of issues in relation to the proposal. The most common themes were:

- Ysgol Nebo's current provision and its role in meeting the needs of learners who require additional support;
- calls for full consideration of the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo;
- the impact of the proposal on learners' wellbeing, educational experience and travel arrangements;
- the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and its sustainability within the community;
- the impact of the proposal on the local community;
- concerns regarding the consultation process, the consideration of evidence and decision-making;
- financial considerations, costs and education funding;
- wider strategic, political and policy considerations;
- the future of the Ysgol Nebo building, its community use and the war memorial; and
- opposition to the proposal and calls for it to be reconsidered.

A number of the objections expressed concern regarding the impact of the proposal on learners' wellbeing, provision for children who require additional support, Welsh as a living community language, and the role of Ysgol Nebo in the social and community life of the area. Views were also presented regarding the future of rural schools, admission arrangements, strategic planning, the costs associated with the proposal, and the future of the school building and site.

A number of objectors also called on the Council to reconsider the proposal and give further consideration to the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, namely to use the school as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs and learners who find mainstream education challenging.

To present the objections clearly and systematically, the issues raised have been grouped under themes and sub-themes. The thematic contents list below sets out the structure of Section 3, where a summary of the statutory objections is presented under each theme and sub-theme, together with the Council's response.

Theme 1: Ysgol Nebo's current provision and its role in meeting the needs of learners who require additional support

- 1.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting children who find larger mainstream schools challenging
- 1.2 The potential for Ysgol Nebo to provide a personalised and nurturing learning environment for learners who require additional support
- 1.3 Concerns about making a decision before obtaining a full picture of learners' needs, pressures on ALN provision and the contents of the ALN Report due to be published in September 2026
- 1.4 The benefits of smaller classes and individual support for learners with ALN or those who require additional assistance
- 1.5 Strategic planning and the long-term capacity of ALN provision in Gwynedd

Theme 2: Calls for full consideration of the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo

- 2.1 A call to reconsider the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo in an open and comprehensive manner: "Ysgol Nebo to offer its site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including pupils with an IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs, and other young people with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence."
- 2.2 Support for the option of developing Ysgol Nebo as nurturing and specialist provision to support learners with additional learning needs
- 2.3 Ysgol Nebo as an innovative pilot project to support learners and facilitate a return to Welsh-medium mainstream education
- 2.4 Potential benefits of the alternative option in attracting learners and supporting the Welsh language within the community
- 2.5 Concerns regarding the consideration of alternative options and a call to defer the decision until the ALN Report is published

Theme 3: Impact on learners' wellbeing, educational experience and travel arrangements

- 3.1 The impact of closing the school on learners' wellbeing and experience
- 3.2 The benefits of a small school and individual support
- 3.3 The impact of travel and transition to an alternative school on learners' wellbeing and support
- 3.4 Concerns regarding the capacity of neighbouring schools and the potential impact on learners' wellbeing and development

Theme 4: Impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and its sustainability within the community

- 4.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in sustaining Welsh as a living language within the community
- 4.2 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on Welsh as a living language within the community
- 4.3 Concerns that the proposal conflicts with the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and the Council's commitments to protect the Welsh language
- 4.4 The potential impact of closing the school on young families and the Welsh language

Theme 5: Impact of the proposal on the local community

- 5.1 Concerns regarding the loss of Ysgol Nebo as the heart of the community and the social, cultural and linguistic impact of its closure
- 5.2 Concerns regarding the loss of the school as a space for activities, volunteering and community services
- 5.3 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on the village's long-term viability and the future of the rural community
- 5.4 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on wellbeing, social inclusion and community sustainability
- 5.5 Concerns regarding reliance on facilities in Llanllyfni as a mitigation measure and the impact on local residents
- 5.6 Concerns regarding the impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the Welsh language and the sustainability of the rural community

Theme 6: Concerns regarding the consultation process, consideration of evidence and decision-making

- 6.1 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process, consideration of the community's comments and the quality of the Consultation Report
- 6.2 Concerns that children's voices were not given sufficient consideration during the process
- 6.3 Concerns regarding the consideration of the Governing Body's alternative option and information about ALN provision in the decision-making process
- 6.4 Concerns regarding compliance with the presumption against the closure of rural schools and the consideration of alternative options
- 6.5 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process and the allegation that a decision to close the school had been made in advance
- 6.6 Concerns regarding the impact of the timetable and discussions about closure on learner numbers and parental choice
- 6.7 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on current learners, parents and continuity in formal education

Theme 7: Financial matters and strategic planning

- 7.1 Concerns regarding the emphasis placed on cost per learner when assessing the educational and community value of Ysgol Nebo
- 7.2 A call to review school funding arrangements and consider long-term community benefits
- 7.3 Concerns regarding the consistency of financial decisions and the long-term strategy for education provision
- 7.4 Concerns regarding the absence of detailed analysis and a professional survey to substantiate the school's maintenance costs
- 7.5 Concerns regarding the lack of consideration given to the long-term financial benefits of an ALN pilot scheme at Ysgol Nebo

Theme 8: Wider strategic, political and policy considerations

- 8.1 A call to consider the impact of catchment area, admissions, housing and demographic policies on the sustainability of rural schools and communities
- 8.2 References to Plaid Cymru policy and the commitment to protect small rural schools and community services
- 8.3 A call to review catchment area and admission arrangements to increase numbers in local schools and support the Welsh language
- 8.4 Concerns regarding the impact of empty homes, second homes and planning policies on rural communities and learner numbers
- 8.5 Concerns regarding spending priorities, modernising education and the continuing value of small rural schools
- 8.6 Comments regarding political responsibility for previous decisions

Theme 9: The future of the Ysgol Nebo building, its community use and the war memorial

9.1 Concerns regarding the building's future use and its importance as a community asset

9.2 Concerns regarding the future of the building and the loss of a community resource

9.3 Concerns regarding the future, stewardship and protection of the war memorial

Theme 10: Opposition to the proposal and calls for reconsideration

10.1 Formal objections to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo

10.2 A request to reconsider or halt the process in order to assess the impacts and consider the future of rural schools

10.3 A call to consider alternative solutions to safeguard and strengthen the future of Ysgol Nebo and the local community

10.4 A request to defer the decision, undertake full impact assessments and give appropriate consideration to stakeholders' views

10.5 A request to defer the decision until further work on ALN provision is completed and Ysgol Nebo's potential role is considered

3. SUMMARY OF THE STATUTORY OBJECTIONS AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

In accordance with the requirements of section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, this section presents a summary of the statutory objections received during the objection period, together with the Council's response to those objections. To facilitate the presentation of the objections, they have been grouped under a number of themes and sub-themes.

Theme 1: Ysgol Nebo's current provision and its role in meeting the needs of learners who require additional support

1.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting children who find larger mainstream schools challenging

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Objections relating to additional learning needs (ALN) were received, expressing strong and continuing concerns that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could result in the loss of a small, safe, Welsh-medium and nurturing environment for children who require a higher level of support. Specific reference was made to children experiencing anxiety, low confidence, difficulties concentrating, neurodivergence, learning challenges or difficulties in mainstream schools. Some respondents noted that these children do not always meet the formal threshold for ALN but nevertheless require additional support. It was also emphasised that a medical diagnosis is not required for a child to be identified as requiring additional learning support, and it was argued that the focus should be on the child's needs rather than their formal status within the ALN system. It was argued that, in practice, Ysgol Nebo already provides a form of support or nurturing provision for some children, and that closing the school could force children to leave this supportive environment. Reference was made to cases where, according to respondents, children had been able to cope or remain in primary education because of the school's small, personalised and supportive nature.	The Council notes the comments. In developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Well-being Act Impact Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. These assessments are available on the Council's website (www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation) as part of the documentation published during the statutory process. The Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education note that, should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the provision at Ysgol Llanllyfni would include access to a wider range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. Should the proposal be implemented, the needs of each learner would be considered individually when planning the transition arrangements to Ysgol Llanllyfni. This would include consideration of learners' emotional wellbeing, any additional support they may require, and the appropriate steps to help them become familiar with the new school and learning environment.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	As noted in the Well-being Act Impact Assessment, concerns were expressed during the consultation and objection periods regarding the potential impact that implementing the proposal could have on vulnerable children, including learners with ALN, learners experiencing emotional difficulties, and other learners who require additional support. Should the proposal be implemented, these needs would be considered when planning transition arrangements and appropriate support for the learners concerned. In accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021, the additional learning provision specified in an Individual Development Plan must be secured for a learner with ALN. Should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would be carefully planned, in consultation with the learners, their families, Ysgol Nebo, Ysgol Llanllyfni and the relevant support services, where appropriate. This would include ensuring the continuity of any provision specified in an Individual Development Plan, as well as considering appropriate support for other learners who require additional support but do not have an Individual Development Plan.

1.2 The potential for Ysgol Nebo to provide a personalised and nurturing learning environment for learners who require additional support

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Objections were received expressing the view that Ysgol Nebo is ideally placed to provide additional support for children who require a more personalised and nurturing learning environment. The view was also expressed that very little specific provision is available to support these children, and that teachers with the skills, experience and understanding required to create a nurturing learning environment are in short supply. It was argued that Ysgol Nebo is ideally placed to provide such support and that the school could be organised to accommodate approximately 25 children at a relatively low additional cost. Some respondents argued that, in practice, Ysgol Nebo already serves a significant number of pupils who require additional support, many of whom attend from outside the catchment area. The view was expressed that promoting this provision more formally could provide support for families from other areas of Gwynedd. The view was expressed that the Council had not given sufficient consideration to the impact of losing this provision or to the potential benefits of promoting and developing it further.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the duty to identify and support learners' needs applies to all mainstream schools. In this respect, Ysgol Nebo, like every other mainstream school, is responsible for providing appropriate support for its learners, with access to relevant services and expertise as required. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education note that, due to the size of the school (its higher number of learners), Ysgol Llanllyfni is expected to be able to provide learners with a wider range of resources, learning experiences, activities and social opportunities, together with access to appropriate assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs. In relation to the suggestion that Ysgol Nebo should be more formally promoted or developed as specific provision, it is noted that the school is a mainstream school and is not designated specialist provision. It would not be appropriate for the Authority to promote Ysgol Nebo as specialist provision in the absence of a formal decision to establish or designate such provision. The admission arrangements applicable to mainstream schools are based on parental preference and the relevant admissions policy, rather than on any specific specialism or designation. During the local discussions, an alternative option was presented for Ysgol Nebo to offer a specialist unit to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, including learners who find larger mainstream schools or settings challenging. This option was given specific consideration as part of the statutory process and was evaluated against a number of factors, including learner numbers and surplus places, class sizes and age range, leadership and staffing, financial resources, the community, the Welsh language, geographical factors, and the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	Having considered the advantages and disadvantages of the option, it was concluded that it would not adequately address the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. The option was not expected to increase learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo. Consequently, it was anticipated that low numbers, small classes and a broad age range would continue, together with the associated financial challenges. In developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education, the Well-being Act Impact Assessment and the Equality Impact Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. Following the statutory consultation period, these assessments were reviewed and updated to take account of the comments and issues raised during the consultation. The assessments and relevant documents are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . As part of the preparation of the Objection Report, the relevant assessments were reviewed and updated further to take account of the objections received during the statutory objection period. These assessments are available in Appendix 3.

1.3 Concerns about making a decision before obtaining a full picture of learners' needs, the pressures on ALN provision and the contents of the ALN Report due to be published in September 2026

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents expressed concern that the Cabinet could make a decision regarding the future of Ysgol Nebo without fully understanding the current circumstances of children who experience difficulties in mainstream schools, or the further decisions due to be made in September 2026 regarding support for those children. It was suggested that Ysgol Nebo could be well placed to continue providing high-quality support for such pupils, and that the school should not be closed before the full picture had been considered. Concerns were raised regarding the wider context of ALN provision in Gwynedd. Reference was made to an ALN report due to be published in September 2026, which was described as a report that would consider children with ALN, as well as children who do not meet the formal threshold but experience other difficulties at school. The view was expressed that the current excess demand for formal ALN provision, and the implications of the forthcoming ALN report, had not been given sufficient consideration. Some respondents referred to the possibility that a decision could be made before the full picture was available. It was argued that the needs of some children who do not meet the formal threshold for ALN are not always adequately recognised, even though they continue to experience difficulties at school. The view was expressed that this could affect the children themselves, their fellow pupils and teachers seeking to provide high-quality education for all.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the expectation to identify and support learners' needs applies to all mainstream schools. In this respect, Ysgol Nebo, like every other mainstream school, is responsible for providing appropriate support for its learners, with access to relevant services and expertise as required. In addition, larger schools can provide learners with a wider range of resources, learning experiences, activities and social opportunities, together with access to appropriate assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the provision at Ysgol Llanllyfni would include access to a wider range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo has been developed and assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. The Council has considered all relevant factors required under the Code, including the impact on learners, the quality and standards of education, ALN arrangements, the community, the Welsh language and the comments received during the statutory process. In developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment, the Equality Impact Assessment and other relevant assessments. Following the statutory consultation period, these assessments were reviewed and updated to take account of the comments and issues raised

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	during the consultation. These assessments are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . As part of the preparation of the Objection Report, the relevant assessments were reviewed and updated further to take account of the objections received during the statutory objection period. These assessments are available in Appendix 3. In response to the comments relating to the proposed report on Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, it is noted that the wider consideration of ALN provision is an ongoing matter for the Local Authority, and that the needs of individual learners are considered continuously through the existing statutory arrangements. The statutory process regarding the future of Ysgol Nebo has been conducted on the basis of the information and evidence available at the time. Should a decision be made to implement the proposal, appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support for every learner, including those with ALN, would be planned and considered in accordance with their individual needs.

1.4 The benefits of smaller classes and individual support for learners with ALN or those who require additional support

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was made to research which, according to some respondents, demonstrates that smaller classes work better for children experiencing anxiety, low confidence and learning difficulties. Reference was made to pupils with ALN or pupils who require additional support, with some respondents noting that a school with fewer pupils can be significantly better for these children. Statements were made to the effect that an 'expensive computer' cannot replace a dedicated member of staff.	The Council notes the comments. However, the Council does not consider that effective support for learners who require additional assistance is limited to small schools. Every school has a responsibility to identify and respond to the needs of its learners, with access to relevant services and expertise in accordance with each learner's individual needs. In addition, larger schools, due to their size and higher number of learners, can provide learners with a wider range of resources, learning experiences, activities

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	and social opportunities, together with access to appropriate assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education note that the provision at Ysgol Llanllyfni is expected to offer access to a wider range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience

1.5 Strategic planning and the long-term capacity of ALN provision in Gwynedd

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was made to the fact that Ysgol Hafod Lon, which was designed for 80 pupils with additional learning needs, now educates approximately 135 pupils, meaning that existing spaces and resources have been repurposed to create additional capacity. It was argued that this demonstrates increasing pressure on ALN provision and was used to question the long-term strategic planning for placing and supporting learners with additional needs in the county. Reference was made to the former Ysgol Felinwnda site, which has been refurbished, and it was noted that only two learners attend the provision. It was argued that this represents a cost to the public purse and raises questions regarding the consistency of the approach to the use of educational resources and education funding. In this context, concern was expressed regarding the financial rationale for the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo, noting that similar expenditure had been permitted in other circumstances, and that the plans and strategies in place for long-term education provision in Gwynedd should be explained more fully. The view was expressed that it does not make sense to close a school which, in the respondents' opinion, already has a proven record of providing a nurturing learning environment, an experienced teaching team and strong support from the	The Council notes the comments. Although some respondents referred to other educational provisions and sites within the county, it is noted that each provision serves different purposes, needs and contexts. This proposal has therefore been assessed on the basis of the particular circumstances and needs of Ysgol Nebo. However, it is noted that the future of Ysgol Nebo is the focus of this statutory process, which is being conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The current review is based on the challenges facing the school, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low. During the consultation period, a number of comments were received regarding ALN provision, the demand for additional support for learners, the strategic planning of that provision across the county, and the potential to develop alternative uses for Ysgol Nebo, including ALN provision.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
local community, and which could accommodate more children in the future. Reference was made to expectations that the number of children requiring additional support will increase significantly in the future, and it was argued that this strengthens the case for retaining and using such provision. Concern was also expressed that, once a school has closed, it cannot easily be reopened, and that experienced teachers lost to the Authority would not be easily replaced. It was argued that closing a school which is already in a position to admit and support children with additional needs could be regarded as a mistake in the future.	These matters were considered as part of the evaluation of the proposal and the other reasonable options presented. Following the statutory consultation, the Council gave full consideration to the issues raised, including the comments relating to ALN provision and the possible alternative use of the school site. Further evaluation and impact assessments were undertaken in relation to the proposal, together with the alternative options presented in the Consultation Document and during the consultation period. On the basis of the evidence considered, it was concluded that none of the alternative options presented, including developing the school as ALN provision, would address the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. The alternative option relating to the potential development of Ysgol Nebo as ALN provision is considered in greater detail under Theme 2 below. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county

Theme 2: Calls for Full Consideration of the Alternative Option Presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo

2.1 A call to reconsider the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo in an open and comprehensive manner: “Ysgol Nebo to offer its site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including pupils with an IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs, and other young people with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence.”

Summary of issues	The Council’s response
Some respondents, including the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, called on the Cabinet to reconsider, in a genuinely open manner, the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo and to give it full consideration before making a final decision. A number of respondents were highly critical of what they described as a failure to give full consideration to the proposal presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo. They presented the proposal as a specific option to retain the school as a mainstream school and to develop specialist or nurturing provision on the site as a pilot project to support children with social and emotional needs, or children who find mainstream education challenging. A number of respondents expressed the view that the Governors’ response had not been given full consideration before the Statutory Notice was published. Support was expressed for the proposal: “For Ysgol Nebo to offer its site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including pupils with an IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs, and other young people with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence.” Some respondents called on the Cabinet to give full consideration to this proposal as an alternative to the proposal to close the school.	The Council notes the comments. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was submitted during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments, additional evidence and other reasonable alternative options presented through the process. Details of the alternative option, together with the evaluation of the alternative options considered, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd’s website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . Following the evaluation of the option, the Council concluded that it did not provide an adequate or sustainable response to the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, it was anticipated that the admission arrangements and criteria would remain in accordance with the current arrangements, with no change to the admission arrangements or the school’s status. Given that the current admission arrangements would remain unchanged, it was not anticipated that this option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or a substantial reduction in the high level of surplus places. Consequently, it was anticipated that the existing challenges relating to small classes with a broad age range, low projected learner numbers in the future and the associated financial challenges, including high costs per learner, would remain unresolved.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
It was noted that the Cabinet needed to reconsider the proposal in a genuinely open manner and provide a specific response to it, rather than considering it solely as a general point.	Throughout the statutory process, the Council acted in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. Consideration was given to the relevant information and evidence, the impact assessments, the alternative options presented, including the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, together with the comments and responses received during the statutory consultation. Following this process, it was concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was the option that provided the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

2.2 Support for the option of developing Ysgol Nebo as nurturing and specialist provision to support learners with additional learning needs

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Support was expressed for the proposal: "For Ysgol Nebo to offer its site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including pupils with an IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs, and other young people with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence." It was argued that Ysgol Nebo already has extensive experience and expertise in supporting children who experience anxiety, or who are achieving below expectations, neurodivergence or difficulties in larger settings, and that its homely atmosphere, smaller classes and experienced, caring staff are particularly well suited to meeting the needs of such pupils. The view was expressed that the proposal could provide support for children who find it difficult to thrive in mainstream education, help some home-educated pupils return to the education system, and offer a new model of primary provision to meet the diverse needs of learners in Gwynedd. It was also argued that the proposal offered an opportunity to address two issues simultaneously, namely low numbers within the catchment area and the growing needs of children who require more support in smaller, more nurturing environments.	The Council notes the comments. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was submitted during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments, additional evidence and other reasonable alternative options presented through the process. Details of the alternative option, together with the evaluation of the alternative options considered, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . Following the evaluation of the option, the Council concluded that the alternative option did not provide an adequate or sustainable response to the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, it was anticipated that the admission arrangements and criteria would remain in accordance with the current arrangements, with no change to the admission arrangements or the school's status. Given that the current admission arrangements would remain unchanged, it was not anticipated that this option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or a substantial reduction in the high level of surplus places. Consequently, it was anticipated that the existing challenges relating to small classes with a broad age range, low projected learner numbers in the future and the associated financial challenges, including high costs per learner, would remain unresolved. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

2.3 Ysgol Nebo as an innovative pilot project to support learners and facilitate their return to Welsh-medium mainstream education

Summary of issues	The Council's response
It was suggested that the school could operate as an innovative pilot project to assess how this model could better serve some primary pupils, providing educational, wellbeing and financial benefits in both the short and long term. Reference was also made to the possibility of supporting home-educated children to return to Welsh-medium mainstream education, and to the suggestion that Ysgol Nebo could be an innovative and cost-effective pilot project for developing a new approach to supporting primary-aged children in Gwynedd.	As above (see response 2.2 above).

2.4 Potential benefits of the alternative option in terms of attracting learners and supporting the Welsh language within the community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
It was suggested that the alternative option could also attract some pupils who are currently home educated into mainstream Welsh-medium education and contribute to sustaining Welsh as a living, everyday language within the community.	As above (see response 2.2 above).

2.5 Concerns regarding the consideration of alternative options and a call to defer the decision until the ALN Strategy is published

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was also made to the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools in the School Organisation Code, and the view was expressed that the Council had not demonstrated that the Governing Body's proposal or the other alternative options had been conscientiously considered before proceeding with the proposal to close the school. There were also calls for any final decision to be deferred until Cyngor Gwynedd's ALN Strategy Report had been published and considered. It was noted that more than 200 children are home educated and that many others find large classes challenging, and it was suggested that Ysgol Nebo could form part of a wider solution to these challenges.	The Council notes these comments. The School Organisation Code (011/2018) introduces special arrangements in relation to rural schools by establishing a procedural presumption against closure. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but rather that the case for closure must be strong and that all other viable options must have been conscientiously considered. Ysgol Nebo has been designated as a rural school for the purposes of the Code and, consequently, an additional set of procedures and criteria must be followed when considering any proposal to close it. The Council confirms that the proposal has been specifically assessed against the statutory factors applicable to rural schools, including the presumption against the closure of rural schools. The Council is satisfied that all the additional processes, assessments and requirements specified in the Code for rural schools have been followed in full. It was only after undertaking the relevant impact assessments, conscientiously considering every reasonable alternative option, and concluding that none of them adequately addressed the challenges facing the school that it was considered appropriate to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was considered as part of this process. Details of the option, together with the assessment of the alternative options before and after the statutory consultation, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents, which are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . Following the evaluation of the Governing Body's option, it was concluded that the option would not address the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, Ysgol Nebo would continue to operate as a mainstream primary school with the same admission arrangements and criteria. Consequently, it was not anticipated

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	that the option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or reduce the high number of surplus places. The existing challenges relating to very low learner numbers, small classes with a broad age range, low projected learner numbers in the future, an established pattern of parental preference, and a cost per learner significantly higher than the county average would be likely to continue. Having considered all the relevant evidence, the Council concluded that none of the alternative options provided an appropriate or sustainable response to the challenges facing the school. In relation to the comments regarding Cyngor Gwynedd's ALN Strategy Report, it is noted that strategic planning for ALN provision is a separate matter from this statutory process. The process regarding the future of Ysgol Nebo was conducted on the basis of the relevant information and evidence and in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

Theme 3: Impact on Learners' Wellbeing, Educational Experience and Travel Arrangements

3.1 The impact of closing the school on learners' wellbeing and experience

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Comments were received regarding pupils' wellbeing and experience, expressing strong concern that closing the school could have an adverse impact on the wellbeing of children and families. Reference was made to the loss of a familiar and stable environment and the potential effect this could have on children's confidence, happiness and sense of belonging. Some comments referred to a 'devastating' impact on pupils and the community. Some respondents stated that Ysgol Nebo provides a safe, caring and supportive environment where every child receives individual attention. Some respondents argued that the proposal to close the school would force children to leave a supportive learning environment and compel parents to make the difficult decision to withdraw their children from the school. It was argued that the close relationships between staff, pupils and parents in a small school contribute significantly to children's emotional wellbeing and educational success.	The Council notes the comments. Impact assessments of the proposal were undertaken as part of the statutory process. The Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education concludes that the educational provision at the proposed alternative school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, is expected to be at least equivalent to the current provision at Ysgol Nebo in terms of the quality and standards of education. It also notes that schools with higher numbers of learners can offer a wider range of provision, more formal support structures and greater capacity to coordinate ALN support and specific interventions, which may mitigate some of the risks identified by respondents. The Well-being of Future Generations Act Impact Assessment notes that the Council acknowledges that, should Ysgol Nebo close, there may be some negative impact on learners' wellbeing during the transition period. Should Ysgol Nebo close, the Authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, the learners and their families to ensure a smooth transition and support learners as they settle into their new school. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, together with appropriate support, would mitigate negative impacts and support the continuation of educational progress.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The Council remains of the view that the proposal would enable children in the area to gain experience by socialising with a wider range of peers of a similar age, while receiving a high-quality education at a school capable of providing a learning environment and experiences for a wider range of learners.

3.2 The Benefits of a Small School and Individual Support

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents directly challenged the view that a larger school necessarily provides a better education. Reference was made to the benefits of a small school, smaller classes, close relationships between staff, parents and pupils, and the ability to provide individual attention. In particular, it was noted that smaller classes can be more beneficial for children who experience anxiety, low confidence or learning difficulties.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the Likely Impact of the Proposal on the Quality and Standards of Education was undertaken and subsequently updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The revised assessment acknowledges that Ysgol Nebo's current performance was judged to be 'Good' by Estyn and that the existing provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school. In the same context, the Council is of the view that the provision offered at Ysgol Llanllyfni, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a more appropriate size and with a narrower age range, which may offer benefits to some learners. These may include greater opportunities to learn and socialise with peers of the same age. However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Nebo was undertaken because the school faces increasing challenges, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. In addition, patterns of parental preference within the

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	catchment area show that the majority of learners choose to attend other schools. Based on a comparison of Estyn reports and an assessment of the options against the relevant criteria, the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and transfer learners to Ysgol Llanllyfni would be likely to have a neutral or partially positive impact on the quality and standards of education. It is noted that the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision and would enable learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age.

3.3 The impact of travel and transition to an alternative school on learners' wellbeing and support

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Clear concerns were also raised regarding travel, including longer distances, longer days, more time spent travelling and less time with families or within the community. Concern was expressed that transferring pupils to other schools could reduce the individual support currently available to them.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the statutory process, a Travel Arrangements Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal and was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation period. The impact assessment notes that, should the option to close Ysgol Nebo and provide education for the learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni be implemented, there would be an anticipated impact on the children's travel arrangements. However, no learner from the Nebo catchment area is expected to have to travel an unreasonable distance to school. It is noted that school transport would be provided in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Transport Policy, where applicable, and that no learner from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area is expected to have to travel an unreasonable distance to school or use routes to school that are considered unsafe.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The assessment of the likely impact on travel arrangements is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . In relation to the comments regarding individual support for learners, it is noted that the Council does not anticipate that transferring learners to Ysgol Llanllyfni would result in a reduction in the assistance and support available to them. Every school has a responsibility to identify and respond to the needs of its learners, with access to relevant support and expertise in accordance with their individual needs. In addition, the Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education notes that the educational provision at the proposed alternative school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, is expected to be at least equivalent to the current provision at Ysgol Nebo in terms of the quality and standards of education. It also notes that schools with higher numbers of learners can offer a wider range of provision, more formal support structures and greater capacity to coordinate ALN support and specific interventions, which may mitigate some of the risks identified by respondents.

3.4 Concerns regarding the capacity of neighbouring schools and the potential impact on learners' wellbeing and development

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Concern was expressed that neighbouring schools could become overcrowded as a result, and that this could have a negative impact on pupils' wellbeing and development.	The Council notes the comments. At present, as of January 2026, 59 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 13 Nursery pupils attend Ysgol Llanllyfni. The school's projections indicate that 72 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 11 Nursery pupils will attend the school in September 2028.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	Ysgol Llanllyfni has capacity for 103 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 14 Nursery pupils. This means that there are currently 44 surplus places at the school, together with one surplus place in the Nursery class. Consequently, Ysgol Llanllyfni has sufficient capacity to accommodate learners from Ysgol Nebo, including within the pupil projections for the coming years. The Council is therefore satisfied that the school has sufficient capacity to meet both current and projected future demand, and that the proposal is unlikely to result in overcrowding or place unacceptable pressure on the school's capacity.

Theme 4: Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language and the Community

4.1 The role of Ysgol Nebo in sustaining Welsh as a living language within the community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A number of comments were received regarding the impact on the Welsh language. Ysgol Nebo was described as an integral part of the community and as an institution that plays a key role in sustaining and promoting the Welsh language. Some respondents specifically noted that closing the school would pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the area and would be a step against the future of Welsh-medium primary education in the area. Concern was also expressed that the Welsh language is already vulnerable in parts of the communities of Nebo and Nasareth, and that closing the school could accelerate that decline. Concern was expressed that this was not solely a matter of the language medium of education. It was argued that the school contributes to Welsh as a living, everyday language by creating opportunities for children, parents and residents to hear and use Welsh in community life. Some respondents warned that removing	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory consultation process, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment was undertaken, and the original assessment was published as part of the consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received during the consultation, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated, with the issues raised by consultees taken into account in preparing the revised assessment. Following the statutory objection period, the assessment was reviewed again and updated where necessary in light of the objections and comments received. The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment acknowledges the concerns expressed by respondents regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the use of the Welsh language within the community.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
the school from the community could result in Welsh being regarded solely as a medium of education rather than as a living community language. Some respondents expressed concern that closing the school would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as the school is the only community resource in the village. It was noted that, in addition to education being provided through the medium of Welsh, it is equally important that pupils develop Welsh as a language they use in their day-to-day lives within their community. It was argued that removing the school from the community could result in Welsh being regarded solely as a medium of education.	The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment concludes that, should the proposal be implemented, learners from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area are expected to have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and its informal use would be strengthened. At the same time, the Council acknowledges that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly its use as a community language outside the educational context. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered by promoting the use of Welsh through the involvement of the Nebo community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as by considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.

4.2 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on Welsh as a living language within the community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents referred to Plaid Cymru's policies and commitments in relation to the Welsh language, noting that the party states: "Alongside developing the Welsh language through our education system, we will protect and promote it as a living, everyday language, strengthening its foundations in communities throughout Wales." It was argued that, for the Welsh language to thrive, it must be used in all aspects of life, including in the home and the community as well as at school. Concern was expressed that closing Ysgol Nebo would have an adverse impact on the Welsh language and the local community, as the school was described as the only community resource in the village and, for some residents, the only opportunity to hear and socialise through the medium of Welsh. Ysgol Nebo was described as a cornerstone of the rural community, as more than an educational establishment, and as a focal point for community and social life that contributes directly to sustaining Welsh as a living, everyday language. Reference was made to the fact that the school or community room provides one of the few opportunities, or the only opportunity for some residents, to hear and socialise through the medium of Welsh. Examples included Welsh classes held in the community room and community activities where Welsh is used naturally. Examples were also provided of children from non-Welsh-speaking homes who had developed their Welsh-language skills through their education at Ysgol Nebo.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory consultation process, a Welsh Language Impact Assessment was undertaken, and the original assessment was published as part of the consultation documentation. Following consideration of the comments received during the consultation, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated, with the issues raised by consultees taken into account in preparing the revised assessment. Following the statutory objection period, the assessment was reviewed again and updated where necessary in light of the objections and comments received. The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment acknowledges the concerns expressed by respondents regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the use of the Welsh language within the community. The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment concludes that, should the proposal be implemented, learners from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area are expected to have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and its informal use would be strengthened. At the same time, the Council acknowledges that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly its use as a community language outside the educational context. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered by promoting the use of Welsh through the involvement of the Nebo community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as by considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.

4.3 Concerns that the proposal conflicts with the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and the Council's commitments to protect the Welsh language

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents referred to Cymraeg 2050 and its aims of increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions for the language to thrive. Some respondents were of the view that closing a Welsh-medium school in a rural community would conflict with these principles and with the aims of protecting and promoting the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities. It was also argued that closing Ysgol Nebo would conflict with each of the main principles of Cymraeg 2050, namely increasing the number of Welsh speakers, increasing the use of Welsh and creating favourable conditions for the Welsh language to thrive. Reference was also made to Cyngor Gwynedd's corporate commitment to protect and promote the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities, and there were calls for the proposal to be reconsidered in order to safeguard the future of Ysgol Nebo and the local community.	As above (see response 4.2). In addition, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment notes the following: Through the consultation responses, concern was expressed that closing a Welsh-medium rural school could be contrary to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050, particularly in terms of increasing the community and natural use of Welsh. Attention was drawn to the importance of ensuring that Welsh is heard, used and transmitted informally on a daily basis, rather than solely being taught in the classroom. The view was expressed that small schools play a key role in creating new Welsh speakers in rural communities. It is noted that any discussions relating to reorganisation must take account of the Welsh Government's efforts to achieve the target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council acknowledges that, should the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, it is anticipated that some aspects of community events would be affected. To mitigate any negative impacts, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni could consider ways of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Nebo community in the school's community activities. In addition, should the proposal be implemented, the Authority would need to consider options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held at the school. In terms of educational provision, it is noted that Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni are both Category 3 Welsh-medium primary schools. Consequently, should the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and transfer learners to Ysgol Llanllyfni be implemented, learners would continue to be educated at a Category 3 Welsh-medium school. The proposal is not expected to have a negative impact on the Welsh language, primarily because:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	- January 2026 PLASC statistics show that 56% of learners at Ysgol Nebo speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni; - the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and provide learners with a place at a neighbouring school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, would mean that learners from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated at a Category 3 Welsh-medium school; and - as learners would be educated in larger classes with more children from the same age group, it is anticipated that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a greater number of their peers. On the basis of the above, should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area would have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and its informal use would be strengthened. The full impact assessments are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation .

4.4 The potential impact of closing the school on young families and the Welsh language

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents noted that the loss of the school would reduce the incentive for families with school-aged children to move to the area and that, over time, this could lead to less use of Welsh within the community.	As above (see response 4.2 above). In addition, the Council's Community Impact Assessment notes that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would have a significant impact on the sustainability of the community or on population patterns within the catchment

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	area. A high proportion of children from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (78%), with 44% of primary-aged children from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area already attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that young families and children would leave the community should the school close. Furthermore, given that the alternative school is located 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo, the Council does not anticipate that the option would encourage families with school-aged children to leave the community or make young families less likely to move to the community. However, the assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is likely should the option to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community focal point. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

Theme 5: Impact of the Proposal on the Local Community

5.1 Concerns regarding the loss of Ysgol Nebo as the heart of the community and the social, cultural and linguistic impact of its closure

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A number of objections were received regarding the impact of the proposal on the community. Ysgol Nebo was described as the 'heart' or 'anchor' of the community, as one of the most important institutions in the village and, in some responses, as the only community resource or one of the few community resources remaining. Some respondents noted that the school forms part of the community's identity, connects generations and fosters a sense of pride and belonging. The view was expressed that its closure would represent an immense social and cultural loss that would not be easily replaced. Some respondents stated that closing the school could have a damaging and devastating impact on the local community. Some respondents noted that Ysgol Nebo has been central to the community for more than a century and a half, providing high-quality education and a safe and supportive environment for local children. The school was also described as a cornerstone of the rural community, important to the village's social life and to sustaining the Welsh language. The view was expressed that the school is at the heart of a vibrant community and that its closure would be a serious mistake. Some respondents referred to the school as the only community resource in the village, expressing concern that its closure would have a negative impact on the local community.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking full account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. The assessment was also reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to take account of the objections and comments received at that stage of the process. The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is likely should the option to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community focal point. It notes the concerns raised regarding the possibility that some community activities currently held at the school or in the community room could be affected as a result of the proposal. It also acknowledges the concerns raised during the consultation and objection periods regarding Ysgol Nebo's role as a community focal point and the implications of losing the school for the vitality, identity and cohesion of the community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area, 78%, already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, which is attended by 44%. This suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting opportunities to maintain and develop community links, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.2 Concerns regarding the loss of the school as a space for activities, volunteering and community services

Summary of issues	The Council's response
It was noted that the community had already lost other important resources and services over the years, and that the school is one of the few community assets remaining in the area. Specific examples were provided of activities held at the school and in the community room, including a knitting club, social evenings, a gardening club, caring for planters and an orchard, social gatherings over a cup of tea, Welsh classes for 11 residents, a polling station, monthly Area Committee meetings, and the annual Eryri Harriers race, which raises funds for the school. It was also noted that local volunteers undertake a range of activities for the benefit of the community, including environmental work and the maintenance of community assets. It was argued that some of these activities contribute to reducing the burden on public services. It was argued that these activities would cease without a local community space.	As above (see response 5.1 above).

5.3 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on the long-term viability of the village and the future of the rural community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents argued that the future of the village was at stake and that the school was one of the most important institutions in the community. It was noted that the school attracts young families to live in the area and contributes to sustaining local social and community life. The view was expressed that closing a village school could send a message that there is no future for young families in the community, leading to a further decline in the population and the gradual deterioration of the village's viability. It was argued that this could result in a community with an increasingly isolated older population, fewer local families, and a rise in the proportion of holiday homes and seasonal accommodation. Reference was made to the fact that rural communities in Wales, and the Welsh language within those communities, are already 'under strain', and that closing a small rural school was viewed as a further step in that decline. Some respondents argued that decisions concerning rural schools are decisions concerning the future of rural communities. The view was expressed that closing the school would mean permanently losing an important part of the heart of the village.	As above (see response 5.1). In addition, the Community Impact Assessment notes that, during the consultation period, some respondents expressed concern that closing the school, should the proposal be implemented, could influence young families' decisions about whether to remain in or move to the community, given the school's importance as a local asset. The Council notes this concern. However, there is no clear evidence to suggest that implementing the proposal would directly lead to a significant decline in the community's population or a substantial reduction in the number of young families choosing to live in the area. Based on the available evidence, it is noted that a high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (78%), with 44% of primary-aged children from the Ysgol Nebo catchment area already attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that young families and children would leave the community should the school close. Furthermore, given that the alternative school is located 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo, the Council does not anticipate that the option would encourage families with school-aged children to leave the community or make young families less likely to move to the community.

5.4 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on wellbeing, social inclusion and community sustainability

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some comments warned of wider consequences, including increased social isolation, a reduction in voluntary activities, the loss of a space for young families, a decline in the village's viability, and the permanent loss of part of the heart of the community. It was also argued that increased social isolation and a decline in the health and wellbeing of some residents could place additional pressure and costs on Council services in the future. Some respondents stated that the school provides stability and essential resources for local families, and concern was raised about the loss of this support in an area where public services are already under pressure. Some respondents were of the view that the Council was placing greater emphasis on savings within the education budget than on the wider consequences of the proposal.	The Council notes these comments. It should be noted that these matters have been considered through the Community Impact Assessment and the Future Generations Well-being Act Impact Assessment. It is acknowledged that implementing the proposal would result in the loss of a school within the community and that this could have an impact on certain aspects of local community life. However, when assessing these impacts, it was noted that 78% of children living within the Ysgol Nebo catchment area already attend other schools, with 44% attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. This suggests that connections with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Consideration was also given to potential mitigation measures, including encouraging links between the Nebo community and Ysgol Llanllyfni, exploring appropriate opportunities for the Nebo community to be included in the school's community activities, and considering opportunities for community use of the school site in the future should the school close, in accordance with Gwynedd Council's Post-use Policy. Furthermore, the assessment concluded that the proposal would ensure that local children are educated on a suitable site and within a natural Welsh-speaking social environment, increasing opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and providing them with a fair opportunity to thrive amongst their peers. It should also be noted that financial considerations alone did not lead to the review of Ysgol Nebo. The review was undertaken because of the range of challenges facing the school, including low learner numbers, a high level of surplus places, and long-term sustainability challenges. In developing the proposal, consideration was given to a wide range of factors, including the

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	potential impacts on the community, the Welsh language and well-being, alongside the financial implications.

5.5 Concerns regarding reliance on facilities in Llanllyfni as a mitigation measure and the impact on local residents

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents referred to a response in the Consultation Report which suggested that residents could use facilities in Llanllyfni because of existing links with that community. This was challenged by some respondents, who noted that it did not reflect the reality for most residents, that the communities are distinct, and that travelling is not easy for some residents, particularly older people or those without access to a car.	The Council notes the comments. The Community Impact Assessment notes that, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. The Council acknowledges the comments received regarding the differences between the communities of Nebo and Llanllyfni, and the fact that not all residents would be in a position to take advantage of activities or facilities outside the local community. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.6 Concerns regarding the impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the Welsh language and the sustainability of the rural community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A small rural school was described by some respondents as an anchor for its community, both linguistically and socially. It was argued that schools form the foundation of many rural communities and that, if Cyngor Gwynedd and the Welsh Government are committed to building strong and resilient communities, schools that form an integral part of those communities should not be closed. Reference was also made to Cyngor Gwynedd's corporate commitment to protect and promote the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities. It was argued that the proposal should be reconsidered further in order to safeguard the future of Ysgol Nebo and the community it serves.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. The assessment was also reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to take account of the objections and comments received at that stage of the process. The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is likely should the option to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, as this would result in the loss of the school as a community focal point within the Nebo community. The comments received regarding Ysgol Nebo's role as an anchor for the community and as an institution that contributes to the social, cultural and linguistic life of the area are acknowledged. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection periods regarding the implications for the vitality of the community are also acknowledged. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area, 78%, already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, which is attended by 44%. This suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

Theme 6: Challenges to the Statutory and Decision-Making Processes

6.1 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process, the consideration given to the community's comments and the quality of the Consultation Report

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents stated that the community's views and comments had been disregarded throughout the decision-making process, and that this demonstrated a lack of impartiality. Concerns were raised that the consultation, the Consultation Report and the decision-making process had not given sufficient consideration to the points raised by parents, teachers, governors, pupils and residents. It was argued that the statutory consultation had not been satisfactory and that the information presented to the Cabinet prior to the decision had been neither adequate nor impartial. Specific reference was made to the 145-page Consultation Report. Some respondents were highly critical of the report, stating that it repeated content from the Consultation Document, appeared to be a 'cut and paste' exercise, was difficult to follow, and did not adequately address most of the concerns,	The Council notes the comments. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process and all documentation prepared as part of that process have complied with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Council is also satisfied that the responses and views submitted during the consultation and objection periods have been summarised and considered in accordance with the relevant statutory arrangements and requirements. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Consultation Report was prepared following the statutory consultation period. The report summarised the responses and issues raised during the consultation and included the Council's response to those issues, in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The Consultation Report was presented to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet for consideration. Having considered the contents of

Summary of issues	The Council's response
challenges and suggestions presented. The view was expressed that the report should have listed the concerns and suggestions submitted by respondents and provided a clear, point-by-point response to each of them. Some respondents stated that the community's views and comments had been disregarded or had not been adequately reflected. The general view was also expressed that the Council had not acted to the expected standard during the process and that the decision to close Ysgol Nebo reflected this.	the report and all other relevant information, the Cabinet decided to publish a statutory notice on the proposal and hold a statutory objection period. The current Objection Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code. It includes a summary of the objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the Council's response to the issues raised. The report will be considered by Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet alongside all other relevant information before a final decision is made on the proposal.

6.2 Concerns that children's voices had not been given sufficient consideration during the process

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents expressed concern that the children's own comments had not been given sufficient consideration during the process, despite specific calls for their voices to be heard when considering the future of the school.	The Council notes the comments. The statutory process relating to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). In accordance with the requirements of the Code, specific arrangements were made to consult children and young people as part of the statutory process. These included dedicated sessions with learners from Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, as well as the provision of purpose-designed documents and questionnaires. A summary of the views expressed by the learners was included in the Consultation Report. The learners' views, together with a summary of the other responses received during the statutory consultation period, were presented to the Council's Cabinet as part of the Consultation Report.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	Having considered the contents of that report and all other relevant information, the Cabinet decided to publish a statutory notice on the proposal and hold a statutory objection period. Learners were therefore given a specific opportunity to express their views, which were recorded and presented to the Cabinet as part of the statutory decision-making process.

6.3 Insufficient consideration of the Governing Body's alternative option and ALN provision

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some objectors expressed specific concern that the Governors' proposal to retain the school and develop nurturing or specialist provision had not been properly considered. Some respondents expressed concern that the Cabinet could make a decision without fully understanding the current circumstances of children who experience difficulties in mainstream schools, or the decisions due to be made in September 2026 regarding ALN support. It was argued that the proposal for Ysgol Nebo to continue providing high-quality support for these pupils had not been properly considered in the Consultation Report, and the view was expressed that this suggested a lack of strategic thinking within the Education Department. Some respondents expressed concern that the Cabinet's decision to publish the Statutory Notice had been made on the basis of insufficient facts and incomplete information. It was argued that there was evidence of a shortage of ALN places and increasing demand for them, but that this information had not been given appropriate consideration during the decision-making process. The view was also expressed that Cyngor Gwynedd was short-sighted in relation to its ALN policy and its future strategy for Gwynedd's schools, children and	The Council notes the comments. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was submitted during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments, additional evidence and other reasonable alternative options presented through the process. Details of the alternative option, together with the evaluation of the alternative options considered, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation. Following the evaluation of the option, the Council concluded that the option did not provide an adequate or sustainable response to the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, it was anticipated that the admission arrangements and criteria would remain in accordance with the current arrangements, with no change to the admission arrangements or the school's status. Given that the current admission arrangements would remain unchanged, it was not anticipated that this option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or a

Summary of issues	The Council's response
parents, and that elected members and senior education officers had not made decisions based on all the relevant information. It was argued that these matters should have formed a fundamental part of the Cabinet's decision-making process.	substantial reduction in the high level of surplus places. Consequently, it was anticipated that the existing challenges relating to small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers and the associated financial challenges, including the high cost per learner, would remain unresolved. The statutory process was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. Consideration was given to the relevant information and evidence, the impact assessments, the alternative options presented, including the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, together with the comments and responses received during the statutory consultation. Following this process, it was concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was the option that would provide the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	In response to the comments relating to the proposed report on Additional Learning Needs (ALN) provision, it is noted that the wider consideration of ALN provision is an ongoing matter for the Local Authority, and that the needs of individual learners are considered continuously through the existing statutory arrangements. The statutory process regarding the future of Ysgol Nebo has been conducted on the basis of the information and evidence available at the time. Should a decision be made to implement the proposal, appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support for every learner, including those with ALN, would be planned and considered in accordance with each learner's individual needs.

6.4 Concerns regarding compliance with the presumption against the closure of rural schools and the consideration of alternative options

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was made to the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools in the School Organisation Code, and the view was expressed that the Council had not demonstrated that it had conscientiously considered the Governing Body's proposal or the other alternative options before proceeding with the proposal to close the school.	The Council notes the comments. The School Organisation Code (011/2018) introduces special arrangements in relation to rural schools by establishing a procedural presumption against closure. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but rather that the case for closure must be strong and that all other viable options must have been conscientiously considered. Ysgol Nebo has been designated as a rural school for the purposes of the Code and, consequently, an additional set of procedures and criteria must be followed when considering any proposal to close it. The Council confirms that the proposal has been specifically assessed against the statutory factors applicable to rural schools, including the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools. The Council is satisfied that all the additional processes, assessments and requirements specified in the Code for rural schools have been followed in full.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	Before the proposal was submitted for statutory consultation, the relevant impact assessments were undertaken and the reasonable alternative options identified at that time were conscientiously considered. Following the consultation period, full consideration was also given to the additional alternative options, including the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, and to the additional information and evidence received. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was submitted during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments and additional evidence presented through the process. Details of the alternative option, together with the evaluation of the other options considered, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents, which are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation Following the evaluation of the Governing Body's alternative option, it was concluded that the option would not address the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, Ysgol Nebo would continue to operate as a mainstream primary school with the same admission arrangements and criteria. Consequently, it was not anticipated that the option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or reduce the high number of surplus places. The existing challenges relating to very low learner numbers, small classes with a broad age range, low projected learner numbers in the future, an established pattern of parental preference, and a cost per learner significantly higher than the county average would be likely to continue. Having considered all the relevant evidence, the Council concluded that none of the alternative options provided an appropriate or sustainable response to the challenges facing the school.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

6.5 Concerns regarding the impartiality of the process and the allegation that a decision to close the school had been made in advance

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Allegations were also made regarding bias, a lack of impartiality and predetermination. Reference was made to costs, pupil numbers, maintenance estimates, incomplete information regarding ALN, and suggestions that the decision had been formulated or justified before the process was completed.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the Council has followed the statutory process set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018). A statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026. Following the consultation, the responses and additional information submitted were considered, and a Consultation Report was prepared in accordance with the

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents argued that a decision to close the school had been made before the consultation took place and before the Cabinet formally considered the matter. The view was also expressed that the Education Department had not acted impartially during the process and that a decision to close the school had already been made before the relevant evidence was considered.	requirements of the Code. The report summarised the comments received, set out the Council's response to them, and recorded the further consideration given to the proposal and the alternative options. The report was presented to the Cabinet, which decided to authorise the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal. Following the publication of the statutory notice, a statutory objection period was held to provide an opportunity for any person to submit an objection to the proposal. This Objection Report summarises the objections received during that period and sets out the Council's response to them in order to assist the Cabinet in its consideration of the matter. Neither the decision to hold a statutory consultation nor the subsequent decision to publish a statutory notice constituted a final decision to implement the proposal. These were stages within the statutory process, enabling the Council to gather and consider comments, evidence, alternative options and objections before the Cabinet makes a final decision. The Council is satisfied that the process has been conducted impartially and that no final decision has been made in advance. Relevant information, evidence and comments were considered at each stage of the process. The Cabinet will make the final decision on whether or not to implement the proposal after considering the Objection Report and all the relevant information before it.

6.6 Concerns regarding the impact of the timetable and discussions about closure on learner numbers and parental choice

Summary of issues	The Council's response
The view was also expressed that the proposed timetable for closing the school had been set in a way that could contribute to a decline in pupil numbers, thereby strengthening the case for closure. The view was expressed that discussions and threats regarding the school's closure had contributed to a decline in pupil numbers and had influenced some parents' decisions to choose other schools.	The Council notes the comments. The Council acknowledges that stability and certainty are important factors for parents when making decisions about their children's education, and that periods of uncertainty may cause concern for families. In this context, it is noted that the Council is reviewing the future of Ysgol Nebo because the school faces increasing challenges, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, catchment area patterns, and projected learner numbers in the medium and long term. It is acknowledged that a range of factors and considerations influence parents' educational choices.

6.7 Concerns regarding the impact of closing the school on current learners, parents and continuity in formal education

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents argued that the impact of the proposal on current learners and parents had not been adequately assessed, and that some learners could leave the formal education system should the school close.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory process, a statutory consultation was held on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The consultation included the publication of a detailed Consultation Document and a package of impact assessments, together with a specified statutory period during which stakeholders could submit their views. In accordance with the requirements of the Code, specific arrangements were made to consult children and young people as part of the statutory process. These included dedicated sessions with learners at Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, as well as the provision of purpose-designed documents and questionnaires.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The learners' views were considered alongside all other responses received during the statutory consultation period and were presented to the Cabinet as part of the Consultation Report before it decided to publish the Statutory Notice. All statutory documents relating to the proposal are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation .

Theme 7: Financial Considerations, Costs and Education Funding

7.1 Concerns regarding the emphasis placed on cost per learner when assessing the educational and community value of Ysgol Nebo

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A number of comments were critical of the emphasis placed on costs and the cost per pupil. It was argued that education should not be treated as a business and that comparing the cost of a child attending a small school with the cost of a child attending a larger school was not sufficient to assess the value of a local school. Education was referred to as a child's right to be educated at their local primary school alongside their local peers. Some respondents argued that comparisons of the cost per pupil between Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni did not take account of the fact that some pupils require higher levels of support, and that those costs would continue regardless of which school they attended.	The Council notes the comments. The review of the future of Ysgol Nebo was based on a combination of factors, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. The Council remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and provide places for the learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

7.2 A call to review school funding arrangements and consider long-term community benefits

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents placed the matter within the wider context of school funding. Some called on the current Government to review the way in which schools are funded. It was noted that headteachers are not accountants but are qualified to teach, and it was argued that the funding arrangements should be changed to reduce the pressure on school staff who are already under strain. Some respondents expressed the view that decisions should take account of the long-term benefits for the community as a whole, rather than solely the direct financial costs.	The Council notes the comments. The review of the future of Ysgol Nebo was based on a combination of factors, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. The Council remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

7.3 Concerns regarding the consistency of financial decisions and the long-term strategy for education provision

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was also made to questions regarding the consistency of expenditure and strategic planning. Some respondents noted that the cost per pupil was presented as the main reason for the proposal to close the school, while similar expenditure had been permitted elsewhere. Reference was made to the former Ysgol Felinwnda site, which has been refurbished, and it was noted that only two learners attend the provision. It was argued that this represents a cost to the public purse and raises questions regarding the consistency of the approach to the use of educational resources and education funding. In this context, concern was expressed regarding the financial rationale for the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo, noting that similar expenditure had been permitted in other circumstances and that the plans and strategies in place for long-term education provision in Gwynedd should be explained more fully.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the future of Ysgol Nebo is the focus of this statutory process, and that the process has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The current review is based on the challenges facing the school, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low. The Council remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

7.4 Concerns regarding the lack of detailed analysis and a professional survey to substantiate the school's maintenance costs

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents challenged the maintenance figures published by the Council, noting that the costs relating to roofs, toilets, external walls, windows and doors were not supported by a detailed analysis or professional survey. Some respondents also argued that the costs of maintaining and repairing the school had been overestimated and were not supported by an assessment undertaken by a qualified surveyor. Some respondents noted that they had requested a detailed breakdown of the estimated costs of repairing the school, but that the figures presented did not include details showing how the costs had been calculated. Reference was made to estimates relating to roofs, boys' and girls' toilets, external walls, windows and doors.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the building maintenance costs have not been identified as a key challenge facing the school or, in themselves, as a reason for bringing forward the proposal. The estimated cost of £95,000 has been included to provide contextual information about the condition of the building as part of the wider picture of the provision. It is noted that this estimate is based on a condition survey undertaken by the Council as part of the regular condition surveys carried out across the county's school estate. These surveys contribute to the Council's Asset Management Plan and support the prioritisation of the school maintenance programme. In the case of Ysgol Nebo, the building has been assessed as condition category 'B' (satisfactory, with minor deterioration), with areas of deterioration requiring maintenance. The condition survey identifies the need for the following work:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
It was argued that these figures did not amount to a detailed assessment based on a professional survey and should not be used as a reason for closing the school.	• Roof and gutter repairs: £35,000 • Toilet upgrades: £25,000 • Re-rendering of external walls: £30,000 • Replacement of some windows: £5,000 • Total estimated cost: £95,000 The table in the Consultation Document summarises the condition of the buildings at Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, together with the estimated maintenance work required. The work identified reflects likely maintenance requirements over a period of time, and not every element is urgent or necessarily work that would need to be undertaken immediately. The proposal is not based on these maintenance costs. The review of the future of Ysgol Nebo was undertaken in response to the wider challenges facing the school, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term.

7.5 Concerns regarding the lack of consideration given to the long-term financial benefits of an ALN pilot scheme at Ysgol Nebo

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents noted that limited consideration had been given to the potential financial benefits of developing Ysgol Nebo as a pilot scheme to meet the future needs of primary-aged children in Gwynedd. Some respondents argued that the Council had not considered the potential longer-term savings that could result from providing appropriate ALN support during the primary phase.	The Council notes the comments. The alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo was submitted during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments, additional evidence and other reasonable alternative options presented through the process.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	Details of the alternative option, together with the evaluation of the alternative options considered, are recorded in the Consultation Report and the associated supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation . Following the evaluation of the option, the Council concluded that the alternative option would not address the challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. Under this option, it was anticipated that the admission arrangements and criteria would remain in accordance with the current arrangements, with no change to the admission arrangements or the school's status. Given that the current admission arrangements would remain unchanged, it was not anticipated that this option would lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or a substantial reduction in the high level of surplus places. Consequently, it was anticipated that the existing challenges relating to small classes with a broad age range, low projected learner numbers in the future and the associated financial challenges, including high costs per learner, would remain unresolved. The Council therefore remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the most appropriate proposal for addressing the challenges facing the school, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range;

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	- improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and - reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

Theme 8: Wider Strategic, Political and Policy Considerations

8.1 A call to consider the impact of catchment area, admissions, housing and demographic policies on the sustainability of rural schools and communities

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents placed the proposal within a wider strategic context and argued that it was insufficient to consider Ysgol Nebo in isolation from catchment area policies, admission arrangements, housing, demographic trends and the future of rural communities. These comments were often critical of the way in which wider decisions affect pupil numbers in small schools.	The Council notes the comments. However, it is noted that the focus of this statutory process is the future of Ysgol Nebo, and that the process is being conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The current review is based on the challenges facing the school, including persistently low learner numbers, a high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and projections indicating that learner numbers are likely to remain low. Consideration was also given to catchment area patterns and the fact that the majority of learners living within the Ysgol Nebo catchment area attend other schools. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo addresses these challenges by: - responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; - providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range;

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

8.2 References to Plaid Cymru policy and the commitment to protect small rural schools and community services

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents referred to Plaid Cymru's policy on small rural schools, noting that the party's 2026 Senedd Election Manifesto supports the presumption against the closure of rural schools through the School Organisation Code. It was argued that the aim of this policy is to protect small schools from closure, recognising their importance as focal points for rural communities and in safeguarding local education. It was also noted that the commitment to protect small schools forms part of a wider policy to ensure that rural communities thrive and do not lose essential services.	The Council notes the comments. The School Organisation Code (011/2018) introduces specific arrangements in relation to rural schools by establishing a procedural presumption against their closure. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but rather that the case for closure must be strong and that all other viable options must have been conscientiously considered. Ysgol Nebo has been designated as a rural school for the purposes of the Code and, consequently, an additional set of procedures and criteria must be followed when considering any proposal to close it. The Council confirms that the proposal has been specifically assessed against the statutory factors applicable to rural schools, including the procedural presumption against the closure of rural schools. The Council is satisfied that all the additional processes, assessments and requirements specified in the Code for rural schools have been followed in full. Before the proposal was submitted for statutory consultation, the relevant impact assessments were undertaken and the reasonable alternative options identified at that time were conscientiously considered. Following the consultation period, full consideration was also given to the alternative option presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo and to the additional information and evidence received.

8.3 A call to review catchment area and admission arrangements to increase numbers in local schools and support the Welsh language

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Catchment area and admission arrangements were raised by some respondents. It was argued that Cyngor Gwynedd should take a more proactive approach to encouraging children to attend their local schools, and questions were raised as to why a number of children choose to attend other schools. It was suggested that reviewing the admissions policy could help sustain small rural schools and support the future of the Welsh language. Reference was made to an example of 11 children from the same village attending other schools rather than their local school.	The Council notes the comments. School admission arrangements are administered in accordance with the Council's School Admissions Policy and the relevant national statutory framework. Within these arrangements, parents and carers have the right to express a preference regarding the school they wish their child to attend, subject to the capacity of the schools and the admission criteria set out in the policy. These arrangements are applied consistently across the county.

8.4 Concerns regarding the impact of empty homes, second homes and planning policies on rural communities and learner numbers

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents referred to empty homes and new local housing developments in the context of declining pupil numbers. Some respondents questioned why these homes were not being made available to local people, arguing that this was having an impact on local communities and pupil numbers in rural schools. Holiday homes, second homes and planning policies were also cited as factors contributing to the decline of rural Welsh-speaking communities.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory process, consideration was given to a range of factors, including the latest data on learner numbers and future projections. Although some respondents suggested that population growth or changes to housing policies could increase learner numbers in the future, the information available to the Council indicates that learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo are currently very low and are projected to remain low over the coming years. This reflects a broader demographic trend, including the depopulation affecting rural communities. Between 2011 and 2021, Gwynedd's population decreased by 3.7%, representing a reduction of 4,477 people. This decline is not confined to

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	rural communities. During the same period, the number of children aged 0–15 decreased by 7.3%, while the number of young people aged 16–24 decreased by 14.7%. In particular, the challenges identified include low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projections indicating that this fragile position is likely to continue over the medium and long term, and a broad age range within small classes, which presents educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term under the current arrangements. The Council considers that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo would address these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate daily with their peers in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

8.5 Concerns regarding spending priorities, modernising education and the continuing value of small rural schools

Summary of issues	The Council's response
In addition, some respondents raised concern about what they described as an excessive emphasis on modernising education and new approaches to learning.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. In particular, low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projections indicating that this vulnerable position is

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Reference was also made to the increase in the number of politicians in Cardiff Bay, questioning how such costs could be justified while arguing that small schools are too expensive. Examples from the past were cited to argue that small rural schools provide a sound education and that this model continues to have value today.	likely to continue in the medium and long term, and a broad age range within small classes, which presents educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term under the current arrangements. The comments regarding political expenditure and wider national arrangements fall outside the scope of this statutory process. The current proposal has been assessed on the basis of Ysgol Nebo's specific circumstances and the relevant information relating to its provision. The Council is of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo would address these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

8.6 Comments regarding political responsibility for previous decisions

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents noted that, in the past, Cyngor Gwynedd had attributed decisions that placed the future of schools at risk to pressures and regulations imposed by the Welsh Government and the Labour Party.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018), it is for the proposer to determine whether a school organisation proposal should be approved following completion of the statutory process, having considered all

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Given that Plaid Cymru is now in government, questions were raised as to whether decisions such as the current proposal could be reversed or avoided.	relevant information, including the responses and objections received. In the case of this proposal, Cyngor Gwynedd is the proposer and, therefore, the Cabinet will make the final decision on the proposal. However, the Code also provides a statutory mechanism that enables specified bodies to refer a local authority's decision to the Welsh Ministers for consideration. The decision-making process, including any right to refer the decision, is governed by the relevant statutory framework, regardless of which political party is in power at local or national level. The Council confirms that the proposal has been developed and considered in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Theme 9: The future of the Ysgol Nebo building, its community use and the war memorial

9.1 Concerns regarding the future use of the building and its importance as a community asset

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Concerns were raised regarding the future use of the school building should the school close. It was also noted that the building is an important community asset, rather than solely a school building. The building was described as a space that hosts social, linguistic, voluntary and public activities, and as part of the community infrastructure of Nebo and Nasareth.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. The assessment was also reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to take account of the objections and comments received at that stage of the process.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is likely should the option to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community focal point. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection periods regarding the implications for the vitality of the community are acknowledged. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area, 78%, already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, which is attended by 44%. This suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

9.2 Concerns regarding the future of the building and the loss of a community resource

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents noted that losing access to the building would mean that the community would lose its ability to hold local activities, including meetings, Welsh-language classes, social events and voluntary activities.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely

Summary of issues	The Council's response
This was viewed as a wider loss to the community, rather than solely as an estates matter. Concern was expressed that the future of the building and site was not merely an administrative matter, but one relating to identity, collective memory, community use and the village's ability to continue supporting local activities.	impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. The assessment was also reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to take account of the objections and comments received at that stage of the process. The assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is likely should the option to close Ysgol Nebo be implemented, as this would result in the loss of the school as a community focal point within the Nebo community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection periods regarding the implications for the vitality of the community are acknowledged. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area, 78%, already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, which is attended by 44%. This suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Llanllyfni community, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

9.3 Concerns regarding the future, stewardship and protection of the war memorial

Summary of issues	The Council's response
One respondent objected to what they described as plans to sell the war memorial to private interests. They also objected to any intention to transfer or relinquish the Authority's responsibilities for the stewardship and protection of the memorial. Further concern was raised regarding what was described as the inclusion of the sale of the memorial within the school closure proposal, without a separate notice or specific public consultation.	The Council notes the comments. Should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would provide a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building and site, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. In this context, any considerations relating to the war memorial would also form part of the post-use process and would be considered as part of those discussions. The current statutory proposal does not include a decision to sell the war memorial, change its ownership, or transfer responsibility for its stewardship and protection. Any further decisions regarding the future of the memorial would be considered separately and in accordance with the relevant requirements and arrangements as part of the post-use process, should the proposal to close the school be approved.

Theme 10: Objections to the proposal and calls for reconsideration

10.1 Formal objections to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A number of clear formal objections were received to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo. Some were direct statements of opposition, while others used stronger language, describing the proposal to close the school as disappointing, cruel or likely to have a devastating impact on the community, the pupils or the school.	The Council notes the objections.

10.2 A request to reconsider or halt the process in order to assess the impacts and consider the future of rural schools

Summary of issues	The Council's response
A number of respondents asked the Council to reconsider, halt the closure process or refrain from confirming the decision at this stage. This was often linked to the view that all the issues had not been fully considered, including the financial, educational, linguistic and community impacts of the proposal. Some respondents stated that a cautious approach should be taken and that alternative ways of sustaining small rural schools should be considered rather than proceeding with their closure.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal has been developed and considered in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018). This has included undertaking a statutory consultation, publishing a Consultation Report, publishing a Statutory Notice, providing an objection period and preparing an Objection Report. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process has been followed in full and that all relevant information submitted through the process has been considered. This includes consideration of the educational, financial, community and linguistic impacts, together with the reasonable alternative options and the comments and objections received during the consultation and objection periods. Although some respondents called for the process to be halted or deferred, or for the proposal to be reconsidered, the Council's view is that the proposal has been assessed in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. In particular, these include low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projections indicating that this vulnerable position is likely to continue in the medium and long term, and a broad age range within small classes, which presents educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term under the current arrangements. The Council is of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo would address these challenges by: • responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places;

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

10.3 A call to consider alternative solutions to safeguard and strengthen the future of Ysgol Nebo and the local community

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Some respondents expressed the view that alternative solutions could be found to safeguard the future of the school, referring to options such as investing in resources, reviewing admission arrangements and exploring collaborative models between local schools. Some respondents noted that, if Cyngor Gwynedd is committed to sustaining viable rural communities and securing the best opportunities for local children, schools such as Ysgol Nebo should be protected and strengthened rather than closed, so that they may continue to serve children, families and the local community in the long term.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the review of the future of Ysgol Nebo, a range of alternative options was considered before a conclusion was reached on the current proposal. These options were evaluated before the statutory consultation commenced, and this work was outlined in the Consultation Document and the Proposal Paper. The options assessed included, among others, taking no action, federating Ysgol Nebo with a neighbouring school, federation alongside the establishment of specialist provision for learners with additional learning needs, establishing a multi-site school, and developing other specialist educational uses for the school site. During the statutory consultation period, additional proposals and options were received from consultees. These were also given full consideration, and the alternative options were evaluated further alongside those originally assessed. Details of the options considered, together with the outcomes of that evaluation, are included in the Consultation Report and the relevant supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website at www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation. Following this evaluation, it was concluded that the alternative options considered did not provide an adequate or sustainable response to the challenges facing the school. For example, options such as federation or establishing a multi-

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	site school were not, in themselves, expected to lead to a meaningful increase in learner numbers or address the underlying issues relating to the high level of surplus places, persistently low projected learner numbers and the associated costs. Throughout the statutory process, the Council followed the requirements set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code. Consideration was given to the relevant information and evidence, including the impact assessments, the alternative options considered, and the comments and responses received during the statutory consultation and objection periods. Consequently, it was concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo is the option that would provide the most appropriate response to the challenges identified, namely low learner numbers, a very high proportion of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, persistently low projected learner numbers, a catchment area pattern whereby the majority of learners choose to attend other schools, and a cost per learner that is significantly higher than the county average.

10.4 A request to defer the decision, undertake full impact assessments and give appropriate consideration to stakeholders' views

Summary of issues	The Council's response
There were calls for any final decision to be deferred until further work on learners' needs had been completed and for a full assessment of the proposal's financial, educational, community and linguistic impacts to be undertaken. The need to give appropriate consideration to the views of children, parents, staff, governors and the local community was also emphasised.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal has been developed and considered in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018). This has included undertaking a statutory consultation, publishing a Consultation Report, publishing a statutory notice, providing an objection period and preparing an Objection Report.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	The Council is satisfied that the statutory process has been followed in full and that all relevant information submitted through the process has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the Code. In addition to considering the comments and objections received during the consultation and objection periods, specific assessments were undertaken of the proposal's impact on the Welsh language and the community. The relevant assessments were reviewed and updated following the consultation and objection periods to ensure that all relevant information was taken into account as part of the decision-making process. In accordance with the requirements of the Code, a dedicated consultation was also undertaken with learners to gather and understand their views on the proposal. The views expressed by learners were recorded and summarised as part of the Consultation Report and were considered alongside all other responses received. Although some respondents called for the process to be deferred or the proposal to be reconsidered, the Council's view is that the proposal has been assessed comprehensively against the relevant statutory requirements. This included consideration of the educational, community and linguistic impacts, together with the alternative options presented during the process. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. In particular, these include low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projections indicating that this vulnerable position is likely to continue in the medium and long term, and a broad age range within small classes, which presents educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term under the current arrangements. The Council is of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo would address these challenges by:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county.

10.5 A request to defer the decision until further work on ALN provision has been completed and Ysgol Nebo's potential role has been considered

Summary of issues	The Council's response
Specific requests were also made to defer a final decision until further work on ALN had been published and considered, particularly the report due in September 2026. Some respondents argued that it would not make sense to close Ysgol Nebo before considering whether the school could form part of a wider solution to meet the needs of children who experience difficulties in mainstream education or require a smaller and more supportive environment.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo was developed in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), having regard to the relevant statutory factors, the evidence gathered and the comments received through the statutory process. The school faces low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projections indicating that this vulnerable position is likely to continue in the medium and long term, and a broad age range within small classes, which presents educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term under the current arrangements. The Council is of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo would address these challenges by:

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	• responding to the low learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo, together with projections that remain low and the high percentage of surplus places; • providing classes of a more appropriate size and age range; • improving opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate with their peers on a daily basis in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; and • reducing the cost per learner for all learners across the county. In relation to the requests to defer a final decision until the ALN Report is published and considered in September 2026, it is noted that an alternative option was presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo during the statutory consultation period. Following the end of that period, the option was given full consideration alongside the comments and additional evidence submitted through the process. The option proposed using the school site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs who find mainstream education challenging, including learners with social, emotional and behavioural needs, as well as learners with mental health needs, including anxiety and neurodivergence. This alternative option was evaluated against a number of factors, namely learner numbers and surplus places, class sizes and age range, leadership and staffing, financial resources, the community, the Welsh language and geographical factors. Consideration was also given to the likely impact on the quality and standards of education, travel arrangements and the community. It was concluded that the option would not adequately address the main challenges facing Ysgol Nebo. The option was not expected to increase learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo. Consequently, it was anticipated that low learner numbers, small classes and a broad age range would continue, together with the associated financial challenges.

Summary of issues	The Council's response
	On the basis of this evaluation, it was not concluded that the alternative option provided sufficient grounds to amend the proposal or defer a final decision until the report on ALN provision is published in September 2026. The Council is satisfied that the alternative option presented by the Governing Body was given full consideration as part of the statutory process, which was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018). Should a decision be made to implement the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo, appropriate transition arrangements and suitable support would be considered and planned for every learner, including those with ALN, in accordance with their individual needs.

Appendix 2 - Comparison of the current situation with the situation if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and places offered to learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni were implemented

Factor	Current situation	Situation if the proposal were implemented
Class sizes	There are two classes at Ysgol Nebo (January 2026), with five learners (Reception to Year 3) and one Nursery learner in one class. There are six learners (Year 4 to Year 6) in the second class. According to projections, no increase in pupil numbers is anticipated. Class sizes at Ysgol Nebo are therefore likely to remain small. The age range within classes spans up to five years in one class and three years in the other.	Learners would be taught in classes of a more appropriate size. Learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni are taught in classes of a more appropriate size, with between 13 and 21 learners in each class (January 2026). There are three mixed-age classes at Ysgol Llanllyfni, together with a Nursery class.
Learner numbers	Learner numbers would remain low at Ysgol Nebo (January 2026 numbers: 11 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 Nursery learner). The number of surplus places would remain high (40 surplus places (78%) for Reception to Year 6; 46 surplus places (79%) for Nursery to Year 6). The school's projections suggest that learner numbers will remain low over the coming years.	Learners would be offered places at Ysgol Llanllyfni, which had 58 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 13 Nursery learners in January 2026. Learner numbers at the alternative school are more robust and sustainable. Implementing the proposal would reduce the overall number of surplus places across the Nebo and Llanllyfni catchment areas from approximately 55% to 32% (Reception to Year 6).
Leadership and staffing	Ysgol Nebo received a reduced budget allocation for 2025/26 as learner numbers in September 2024 were below 15 full-time learners. This will also apply for 2026/27, as learner numbers in September 2025 were also below 15 full-time learners. The allocation is intended to ensure the school can employ a headteacher and a teaching assistant. As a result of the school's staffing structure, the Headteacher is required to spend the majority of their time teaching. Pupil number projections suggest that this situation is likely to continue.	Ysgol Llanllyfni has a permanent headteacher, with a 50% teaching commitment and 2.5 non-contact days allocated for leadership and management responsibilities. The staffing structure at Ysgol Llanllyfni ensures that there is a teacher in every class and allows the Headteacher more non-contact time compared with Ysgol Nebo.
The Community	There is no community centre in the village of Nebo. Residents of Nebo and Nasareth use the school's community room for meetings, local clubs, Welsh language lessons, social events, voluntary activities, and a variety of other community activities. The school therefore serves as a community hub.	Nebo would lose its school and community hub, and therefore some negative impact on the community is anticipated. The Council would seek to mitigate this impact by encouraging links and collaboration between the Nebo community and Ysgol Llanllyfni. The Council's Post-use Policy would be followed when considering the future of the school building, with due regard given to the current community activities that take place there.

Factor	Current situation	Situation if the proposal were implemented
Financial Resources	According to the 2026-27 budget, Ysgol Nebo's budget is projected to be £183,793. The average cost per learner is projected to be £16,066, compared with a county average of £5,998, and the school will receive £64,046 through the minimum staffing protection policy.	According to the 2026-27 financial budget, the estimated cost per learner at Ysgol Llanllyfni will be £6,250. If the proposal were implemented, and if all learners from Ysgol Nebo transferred to Ysgol Llanllyfni, an annual saving of £142,000 is projected, less additional transport costs of up to £30,000, resulting in a net saving of approximately £112,000 per year. It is also projected that the cost per learner at Ysgol Llanllyfni would decrease to £6,121.
The Welsh language	Ysgol Nebo is a Welsh-medium primary school, Category 3. The school contributes to the educational, social, and community use of the Welsh language in Nebo and Nasareth.	Learners would continue to be educated in a Category 3 Welsh-medium primary school at Ysgol Llanllyfni. No negative impact on the language of education is anticipated, and learners are expected to have greater opportunities to use Welsh informally with a larger group of peers. At the same time, it is anticipated that the loss of the school's presence in Nebo could have a negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. As a result, mitigation measures would be considered, including promoting the use of Welsh through the involvement of the Nebo community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.
Geographical Factors	Current learners receive their education at Ysgol Nebo, within their local community.	Ysgol Llanllyfni is 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo, with an estimated journey time of approximately 5 minutes each way by car or bus. No learner is expected to travel an unreasonable distance. Transport would be provided in accordance with the County's School Transport Policy where eligible, and the current catchment area of Ysgol Nebo would become part of the catchment area of Ysgol Llanllyfni.

Appendix 3

Impact Assessment Ysgol Nebo

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ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY –

YSGOL NEBO

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

When developing proposals for the organisation of schools, the Authority is required to assess the likely impact on the community, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Background

Ysgol Nebo is a community school located in the village of Nebo, which is about three miles from Penygroes, and which provides education for learners between the ages of 3-11. There has been a reduction in the numbers of learners at Ysgol Nebo over the past few years. By now, January 2026, only 11 Reception to Year 6 learners and 1 Nursery learner attend the school.

At their meeting on 11 February 2025, the Cabinet supported a recommendation to begin formal discussions with Ysgol Nebo stakeholders to consider options for the future. Between March and July 2025, 3 local meetings were held with Ysgol Nebo's stakeholders where several options were proposed and discussed.

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, and 70 responses were received during the consultation period.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and resolved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026, and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026, and 20 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo objecting to the proposal, containing 358 signatures.

2. THE OPTIONS

The Authority considered and discussed several options for the future of Ysgol Nebo, including:

- *Do nothing - continue with the school's current structure*
- *Federate with a neighbouring school*

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nebo through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a headteacher or headteachers and one governing body. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

The possibility of federating with neighbouring schools was considered, specifically Ysgol Llanllyfni and Ysgol Bro Lleu.

- *Federating with another school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning at Ysgol Nebo.*

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nebo through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a headteacher or headteachers and one governing body. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

The possibility of federating with neighbouring schools was considered, specifically Ysgol Llanllyfni and Ysgol Bro Lleu.

In addition to federating, this option would also include adding a location for a ALN unit on the school site.

- *Close Ysgol Nebo and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni)*

This option would mean that Ysgol Nebo would close, and that learners from the current catchment area of Ysgol Nebo would be offered a place at Ysgol Llanllyfni (the alternative school).

- *Ysgol Nebo to develop into a specialist location for some individual subjects (unique opportunities to carry out fieldwork)*

This option would mean that Ysgol Nebo would continue and develop into a specialist location for some individual subjects.

- *Ysgol Nebo to offer a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them.*

This option would mean adding an area for an ALN unit on the school site to offer provision for children with ALN.

- *Ysgol Nebo to offer a language unit for the Dyffryn Nantlle catchment area*

This option would mean adding a language immersion unit on the school site in order to offer an immersion service in Welsh to new speakers

- *Establishing a school on more than one site - Multi-site School*

This option would mean merging a number of local schools, by closing the schools and establishing one multi-site school which would include the Ysgol Nebo site. The option would enable the possibility of sharing resources, buildings, and expertise.

This model would ensure continuity in the presence of a school site in the village of Nebo by establishing a multi-site school, led by a headteacher and one governing body.

Reasonable alternative options considered following the statutory consultation:

- *"Ysgol Nebo to offer a site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity."*

This option would mean retaining Ysgol Nebo and developing it as a site offering specialist provision for children and young people for whom mainstream education is challenging. The provision would support pupils with Additional Learning Needs, including social, emotional and behavioural needs, as well as young people with mental health needs such as anxiety and neurodiversity.

- *Develop Ysgol Nebo as a Transition Unit to Support the Integration of ALN Pupils into Mainstream Education*

This option would mean retaining Ysgol Nebo and developing it as a Transition Unit to provide temporary support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs before or during their integration into mainstream education. The provision would focus on structured support to facilitate an effective transition.

- *Federalisation of Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Baladeulyn*

This option would ensure the continued presence of Ysgol Nebo through a federation arrangement with Ysgol Baladeulyn. The schools would operate under the leadership of a single headteacher or leadership team and a single federal governing body. The identity of each school—including name, ethos and uniform—would remain, with the possibility of sharing staff, resources and expertise.

- *Federal Governing Body across Catchment Area Schools*

This option would involve establishing a federal governing body across the schools in the catchment to strengthen collaboration and strategic oversight. The arrangement would enable the sharing of expertise and a common strategic direction while maintaining the presence and identity of individual schools.

3. SUMMARY OF THE CATCHMENT AREA

3.1 The Area

Ysgol Nebo is located in the rural village of Nebo, which is about three miles from Penygroes in Gwynedd within Clynnog Ward. According to the 2021 census, 1,300 people live in Clynnog ward. The catchment area of Ysgol Nebo includes part of the Clynnog ward as well as part of the Llanllyfni ward.

3.2 The Economy

According to the 2021 census, there are 55.1% of people aged between 16 and 74 within the Clynnog ward are economically active, and 1.1% of these are unemployed. There are 43.4% of people in the same age group are economically inactive with 3.4% of these ill or disabled for a long period.

According to the 2021 census, there are 52.8% of people aged between 16 and 74 within the Llanllyfni ward are economically active, and 3.8% of these are unemployed. There are 43.4% of people in the same age group are economically inactive with 3.4% of these ill or disabled for a long period.

The type of industry in which the population is active is varied in the area, with the highest rate (16.5%) working in the health and social work field. (2021 Census)

According to data from the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation Wales (2025)' the employment rate of Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward compared to other wards in Wales gives a rank of 1152 out of 1917 wards. Therefore, Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is within the 50% least deprived in Wales.

3.3 Deprivation

Llanllyfni and Chlynnog Ward is ranked within the most deprived 20%-30% in Wales (rank 546 out of 1917 wards).

A number of areas make up this overall index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment, and housing.

It is noted that Llanllyfni and Chlynnog ward is within the 10% most deprived areas in Wales in the 'Housing' field. The indicators in this area are the proportion of people living in overcrowded homes (use of bedrooms), and the proportion of people living in homes without central heating.

In addition, the ward of Llanllyfni and Chlynnog is within the 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales in the area of 'access to services', i.e. deprivation because people are unable to access a variety of services that are considered essential for day-to-day living. The indicators include average public and private travel times to a number of services such as food shops, doctor's surgery, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.

Below is a summary of how the Llanllyfni and Clynnog area is situated in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2025):

Area	Rank in Wales, out of 1909 areas. (1 = most deprived and 1909 = least deprived)	Most deprived % in Wales
Employment	1152	
Income	778	
Health	1247	
Education	835	

Housing	47	Within the most deprived 10%
Physical environment	448	
Access to services	86	Within the most deprived 10%
Community safety	767	

3.4 The Community

There is no community center in the village of Nebo. The residents of Nebo and Nasareth regularly make use of the 'community room' located at Ysgol Nebo to hold community events and occasions. Here are some of the social events and occasions held in the community room at Ysgol Nebo:

- Monthly meetings of the Nebo and Nasareth Area Committee
- Local Clubs (Monday Club, Knitting and Crochet Club, Social Evenings, Gardening Club)
- First Aid with St John Ambulance: Training on CPR and the use of defibrillators at the School and Nasareth Chapel
- Welsh lessons for learners
- Refreshments after local trips and the Craig Goch Mountain Race
- Remembrance Sunday service
- Protecting the environment: Organising litter-picking sessions and taking action to prevent dog fouling

4. YSGOL NEBO AND NEARBY SCHOOLS

4.1 The context of the schools according to the Estyn Inspection Reports

As part of Estyn's reports, the schools are placed in context, and their community relations are detailed. This is the context given to Ysgol Nebo, Ysgol Llanllyfni and Ysgol Bro Lleu by Estyn inspectors.

Ysgol Nebo

"Ysgol Nebo is about three miles from Penygroes in Gwynedd. Welsh is the main medium and life of the school."

Source: Estyn Report, November 2017

Ysgol Llanllyfni

"The school is an inclusive learning community that fosters the values of Welshness, courtesy and respect successfully, by supporting pupils to achieve well. Staff use the Welsh language purposefully which has a positive effect on the development of pupils' oral skills from an early age."

Source: Estyn Report, October 2025

Ysgol Bro Lleu

"Ysgol Bro Lleu is a happy, friendly and inclusive school that places a strong emphasis on respecting every member of the community. Its vision of giving every pupil the best opportunity permeates all the school's activities. As a result, the pupils' attitudes to their learning are firm and their behaviour is excellent."

Source: Estyn Report, April 2023

4.2 Statistical information

The table below shows the numbers of Ysgol Nebo and the other schools within the catchment area of Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle. This table also shows the school's capacity and number on the roll in January 2026. All schools teach through the medium of Welsh.

School	Full Capacity (N – Bl6)	Number on the register January 2026 (N – Bl6)	Legal Category	Language Category
Baladeulyn	62	8	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Talysarn	104	98	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Bro Lleu	207	189	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Llanllyfni	117	71	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Nebo	58	12	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Brynaerau	81	54	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Bro Llifon	196	149	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3

Source: PLASC January 2026 Census

4.3 Catchment information and learners' choice of schools

Each school has a specific catchment area which it serves, and which is important in terms of the Council's access and transport policy. Learners do not have to attend their catchment area school; the choice is up to parents (in accordance with the admission policy).

The latest data (January 2026 data) shows that 78% of children who live in Ysgol Nebo's catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area. The table below indicates the proportion of learners (Nursery – Yr. 6) who live in the catchment area and attend the catchment area school, and the proportion of learners from outside the catchment area who attend the school.

School	Proportion of catchment area learners who attend the catchment area school	Proportion of the school's learners who live within the school catchment area	Proportion of learners from outside the catchment area who attend the school
Nebo	22%	17%	83%
Llanllyfni	55%	73%	27%

Source: January 2026 GIS Data

4.4 Summary of the various facilities in the community of Nebo and Llanllyfni (September 2025)

	Nebo	Llanllyfni
Village Hall / Community Centre		
Chapel/Church		✓
Public Transport	✓	✓
Shop		
Café/Pub		
Post Office		
Pharmacy		
Library		
Children's Playing Field	✓	
Bank		
Residential Home for the Elderly		

Leisure Centre		
Garage		
Tourism Attraction	✓	
Cylch Ti a Fi + Cylch Meithrin		✓

*Added as a result of the responses received to the consultation

4.5 A summary of the schools' use outside the school's core hours:

A summary of community or extra-curricular use of the local school buildings is provided below:

	Nebo	Llanllyfni	Baladeulyn	Bro Lleu	Bro Llifon	Brynaerau	Talysarn
Playgroups (School Holidays)							
Aelwyd yr Urdd		✓					
Plays							
Voluntary Groups	✓	✓					
Morning/Evening Coffee	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Community Auction							
Choir Practice							
Welsh for Adults							
Town/Community Council Meeting							
Nursery School		✓					
Club/Sports Activity		✓			✓		
After School Club		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Local Interest Club	✓						

As there is no community center in the village of Nebo, the residents of Nebo and Nasareth make regular use of Ysgol Nebo's 'community room' for community occasions and events (as noted in 3.4 above).

A Cylch Meithrin is located on the site of Ysgol Llanllyfni, providing early years care and education through the medium of Welsh for pre-school children. The collaboration with Ysgol Llanllyfni ensures a smooth transition for children from the Cylch to the nursery class. The Cylch provides places for children aged 2 to 4, and offers 'Dechrau'n Deg' provisions, the 10-hour Early Years Education (Foundation Learning) program, along with wraparound care for nursery-aged children of Ysgol Llanllyfni and nearby schools. The Cylch Meithrin is also part of the Childcare Scheme, a program offering up to 30 hours per week of free early years childcare. Children can take advantage of the Childcare Offer from the start of the term following their third birthday until September after they turn 4.

There are no early years provisions at Ysgol Nebo, except for the school's nursery class.

4.6 Summary of activities or groups that the schools are regularly involved with:

	Nebo	Llanllyfni
Cylch Meithrin/Ti a Fi		✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/County/National)	✓	✓
Urdd	✓	

Other activities (sports/clubs)		✓
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4.7 If buildings, rooms, facilities or services are provided by a school on behalf of the community, where would they be provided if the school is closed?

School	Where will facilities be provided if it closes
Nebo	A number of community events are held in the Ysgol Nebo building. If the Cabinet decided to proceed with the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo, options for the post-use of the school building would have to be considered, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held at the school.

4.8 Information about distance and travel time to other schools in the catchment area

The table below indicates the distance and travel time between schools in the area. We see that Ysgol Llanllyfni is the closest to Ysgol Nebo. The journey times below consider the nature of the lanes and the effect this can have on journey times in a rural area.

Ysgol		Nebo
Llanllyfni	Miles	1.6
	Minutes	5
Bro Lleu	Miles	2.6
	Minutes	9
Talysarn	Miles	3.8
	Minutes	11
Baladeulyn	Miles	5.8
	Minutes	14
Brynaerau	Miles	5.3
	Minutes	14
Bro Llifon	Miles	5.5
	Minutes	11

Source: Google Maps 2025

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

In order to assess the community impact of the possible models, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community assessment considerations of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

OPTION 1: NO CHANGE – CONTINUE WITH THE CURRENT STRUCTURE

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	There would be no change to the current provision – as a result no impact is anticipated on health and well-being.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As there would be no change to the current provision no impact on public transport provision is anticipated. Any transport required to Ysgol Nebo for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	There would be no change to the provision, therefore no impact on the current use of the school is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	There would be no change to the provision, therefore no impact is anticipated on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	There would be no change to the provision. As a result, it is not expected that the option would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	There would be no change to what is currently provided, therefore no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	There would be no change to what is currently being provided therefore no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	There would be no change to what is currently provided therefore no impact on the local community is anticipated.	Neutral

OPTION 2: FEDERATING WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open there would be no change to the current provision, as a result, no impact on health and well-being is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact on the provision of public transport is anticipated. Any transport required to Ysgol Nebo for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no change to the current use of the school is foreseen.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open no change is anticipated to impact on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is foreseen on how parents choose a school for their children or affect the choice of living in the catchment area or not. A high proportion of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (78%). As a result, it is not expected that the option would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is foreseen to what is currently being provided, therefore no impact on other local services is foreseen.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is foreseen on what is currently being provided, therefore no adverse effect on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is foreseen to what is currently being provided, as a result no impact on the local community is anticipated. However, opportunities are identified for the community of Nebo and the communities of the schools that would be part of the federation to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 3: FEDERATING WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL ADDING A SPECIALIST UNIT FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AT YSGOL NEBO

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being, as Ysgol Nebo School would continue, but as part of a federation with a neighbouring school, with an additional learning needs unit also being located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	This option is not expected to effect public transport provision as Ysgol Nebo would continue, but as part of a federation with a neighbouring school, with a unit for additional learning needs also located on the site. Any transport required to Ysgol Nebo for eligible catchment area learners will continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federating would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, there would be no change to the current provision, therefore no impact on this criterion is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with provision for an additional learning needs unit also being located on the site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with an ALN unit also located on site. A high proportion of catchment area children already attend out-of-catchment schools (78%).	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider community economy, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also being located on the site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not expected that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also being located on site. However, opportunities are noted for the Nebo community and the communities of the schools that would be part of the federation to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 4: CLOSE YSGOL NEBO AND OFFER THE LEARNERS A PLACE IN A NEARBY SCHOOL (YSGOL LLANLYFNI)

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As the alternative school is located about a mile and a half from Ysgol Nebo, and further from the homes of learners in the catchment area, we do not anticipate that Ysgol Nebo learners would be likely to walk to the alternative school. It is anticipated that being in a larger school such as Ysgol Llanllyfni would offer more opportunities to play and participate in team sports and therefore contribute positively towards the health and well-being of learners.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that there will be any impact on public transport provision as any transport to an alternative school as a result of any change will be arranged specifically for learners in the catchment area who are eligible in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	The community makes regular use of the Ysgol Nebo building in order to host community events. If the school were to close, these provisions would need to be considered when discussing the future use of the school building, should the proposal be implemented. <i>During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period attention was drawn to the regular and significant use made of Ysgol Nebo's building by the local community as a venue for meetings, activities and community events. Concerns were raised that losing this use, if the proposal were implemented and the school were to close, could affect opportunities for the community to meet and hold local activities. The Council notes these concerns and acknowledges that community use would need to be considered when discussing any options for the future use of the school building, should the proposal be implemented.</i>	Negative
Impact on wider community safety	No impact is anticipated to impact on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	<i>During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, some respondents expressed concern that closing the school, if the proposal were implemented, could influence the decisions of young families about whether to remain in the community or move into it, given the importance of the school as a local asset. The Council notes this concern; however, considering the current patterns of school choice, including the fact that a substantial proportion of children in the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools, there is no clear evidence that the proposal, if implemented, would directly lead to families leaving or to a significant reduction in families moving into the community.</i> Based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that a high proportion of children in the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools (78%), with 44% of primary-aged children from the Ysgol Nebo catchment already attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. As a result, the Council does not anticipate that families and young children would leave the community if the school were to close. In addition, given that the alternative school is located 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo, the Council does not foresee that the option would encourage school-aged children and families to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	<i>During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, some respondents expressed concern that closing the school, given its role as a community asset and focal point, could have a wider impact on local activities and services, particularly in a rural village with very limited alternative facilities.</i>	Neutral

	Based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that a high proportion of children in the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools. As a result, the Council cannot conclude that closing the school would have a direct impact on other services provided locally.	
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As the majority of children in the catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area, it is not anticipated that the closure of Ysgol Nebo would have an impact on the wider economy of the community.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	During the local discussions, stakeholders highlighted the importance of the school to the community in the village of Nebo, noting the regular use made of the school building by the community. <i>During the statutory consultation, and the statutory objection period further concerns were expressed regarding the community implications should the school close, with several responses emphasising that Ysgol Nebo is currently the only place in the village where members of the community can meet and hold social activities. It was noted that losing the school as a community focal point could weaken community cohesion, reduce opportunities for social interaction, and have a negative impact on the long-term vitality and sustainability of the rural community.</i> The Council acknowledges that there would likely be some negative impact on the community if the option to close Ysgol Nebo were implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community hub. The concerns raised during the consultation regarding the implications for community vitality are recognised. In addition, if Ysgol Nebo were to close, it is acknowledged that the nearest local school would be further from homes within the current Ysgol Nebo catchment, and from a deprivation perspective, this would mean that one of the 'access to services' indicators would move further away from residents in the area. As a result, it is anticipated that there would be some negative impact on the local community if the school were to close. However, it should be noted that a high percentage of children from the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools (78%). Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that if a decision were made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.	Negative

OPTION 5: YSGOL NEBO TO DEVELOP INTO A SPECIALIST LOCATION FOR SOME INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS (UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES TO CARRY OUT FIELD WORK)

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, it is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on health and well-being.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, no impact on public transport provision is anticipated if this option were to be implemented. Any transport required to Ysgol Nebo for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, it is not anticipated that this option would affect this criteria.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Nebo would continue.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school aged children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would continue.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue.	Neutral

OPTION 6: YSGOL NEBO TO OFFER A SPECIALIST UNIT FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS, WHERE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION IS CHALLENGING

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on public transport provision as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on site.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criteria as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school aged children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs also located on the site.	Neutral

OPTION 7: YSGOL NEBO TO OFFER A LANGUAGE UNIT FOR DYFFRYN NANTLLE CATCHMENT AREA

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criterion as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school aged children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral

OPTION 8: ESTABLISH A SCHOOL ON MORE THAN ONE SITE – A MULTI-SITE SCHOOL

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, it is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on health and well-being.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, no impact on public transport provision is anticipated if this option were to be implemented. Any transport required to the Ysgol Nebo school site for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As the Ysgol Nebo site would continue as part of the multi-site school, it is not anticipated that the implementation of this option would have an impact on other facilities/services provided at the school.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	No impact on wider community safety is anticipated, as education provision would continue on the Ysgol Nebo site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	No impact is foreseen on these criteria, as education provision would continue on the Ysgol Nebo site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As the Ysgol Nebo site would continue as part of the multi-site school, no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would affect what is currently provided so no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, it is anticipated that the general impact on the local community would be neutral if this option were to be implemented.	Neutral

OPTION 15.1: "Ysgol Nebo to offer a site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity."

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and wellbeing, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criterion, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, nor that young families would be less likely to move into the area, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider community economy, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider community economy, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral

General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
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OPTION 15.2: Develop Ysgol Nebo as a Transition Unit to Support the Integration of ALN Pupils into Mainstream Education

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and wellbeing, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criterion, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, nor that young families would be less likely to move into the area, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider community economy, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural	Neutral

	needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Nebo would remain open, providing provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with ALN for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.	Neutral

OPTION 15.5: *Federalisation of Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Baladeulyn*

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, with no change to the current provision, no impact on health and wellbeing is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact on the provision of public transport is anticipated. Any transport required for eligible learners within Ysgol Nebo's catchment area would continue in accordance with the Council's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no change to the school's current use is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact on wider community safety is anticipated.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is anticipated on how parents choose a school for their children, nor on decisions about whether to live within the catchment area. A high proportion of children from the catchment already attend out-of-catchment schools (78%). As a result, it is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, nor make young families less likely to move into the area.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently provided, and therefore no impact is expected on other local services.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently provided, and therefore no adverse impact on the wider community economy is expected.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As federation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would remain open, no impact is anticipated on what is currently provided, and therefore no impact is expected on the local community. However, opportunities are identified for the Nebo community and the Baladeulyn school community to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 15.6: Federal Governing Body across Catchment Area Schools

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, no negative impact on health and wellbeing is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As the provision on the Ysgol Nebo site would continue, no impact on the provision of public transport is anticipated if this option were implemented. Any transport required to the Ysgol Nebo site for eligible learners within the catchment area would continue in accordance with the Council's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As the Ysgol Nebo site would continue as part of the multi-site school, it is not anticipated that implementing this option would have any impact on other facilities or services currently provided at the school.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	No impact on wider community safety is anticipated, as educational provision would continue on the Ysgol Nebo site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	No impact is anticipated on these criteria, as educational provision would continue on the Ysgol Nebo site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As the Ysgol Nebo site would continue as part of the multi-site school, no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would affect what is currently provided, and therefore no adverse impact on the wider community economy is expected.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As the Ysgol Nebo site would remain in use, the overall impact on the local community is anticipated to be neutral if this option were implemented.	Neutral

6. CONCLUSION

This Community Impact Assessment has been prepared as a further assessment following the statutory consultation, and it has fully considered all the original options set out in the consultation document, together with all reasonable alternative options proposed by consultees as part of the statutory consultation. The assessment was further updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections received.

The assessment indicates that the likely impact on the local community would be neutral if those options that involve maintaining an operational school presence on the Ysgol Nebo site were implemented. This includes developing the school as a specialist provision to support children and young people with social and emotional needs or mental health needs, developing it as a Transition Unit for learners with Additional Learning Needs, or implementing federated or joint governance arrangements. In these cases, an operational school presence would be retained in the village, with the potential to maintain or strengthen the school's role as a community resource and asset.

The assessment indicates that there would likely be some negative impact on the community if the option to close Ysgol Nebo were implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community focal point. The concerns raised during the consultation regarding the implications for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), suggesting that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including Llanllyfni community already exist.

If the Cabinet were to decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that if a decision to close the school were made, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT – YSGOL NEBO

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Supporting and developing Gwynedd's children's ability to learn and use their language skills is essentially important to the education strategies of the County.

Ysgol Nebo is a community school, Welsh-medium, Category 3, located in the village of Nebo, about three miles from Penygroes, and provides education for learners aged 3-11. There has been a decline in learner numbers at Ysgol Nebo over the past few years. By January 2026, there were only 11 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 Nursery learner attending the school.

At their meeting on 11 February 2025, the Cabinet supported a recommendation to start formal discussions with Ysgol Nebo School stakeholders to consider options for the future. Between March and July 2025, three local meetings were held with Ysgol Nebo stakeholders where several options were proposed and discussed.

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, and 70 responses were received during the consultation period.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and resolved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026, and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026, and 20 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo objecting to the proposal, containing 358 signatures.

1.1 The situation in Gwynedd

Figures in the 2021 Census indicate that 66% of people over the age of three can speak, read or write in Welsh. The 2021 census also states that 64% speak Welsh which is a decrease since the previous census, when the figure was 65%.

In Gwynedd, as in many other Local Authorities in Wales, there is a considerable variation in the percentage of Welsh speakers across different wards. In wards where Welsh is less commonly spoken, such as Aberdyfi, Tywyn, and central Bangor, between 26% and 44% of the population speak Welsh, while as many as 86% speak Welsh in the most Welsh-speaking areas e.g Hendre and Llanrug.

1.2 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is the Local Authority's statutory document and accompanies the Welsh Government's priorities for the development of Welsh-medium education (in line with the targets of *Cymraeg 2050*).

There are 7 outcomes that local authorities are expected to implement to achieve the vision, namely:

1. More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
2. More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh
3. More children continue to improve their Welsh-language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

4. More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh
5. More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school
6. An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
7. Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

1.3 Language Policy

Primary

The aim of the language policy across all primary schools in the county is the same, which is to develop the ability of all pupils to be proficient in both languages by the end of KS2. Welsh is the official language of assessment at the school at the end of a foundation phase. In Key Stage 2, efforts continue to develop pupils' grasp of Welsh while focusing on enhancing their skills in both languages.

Secondary

In the secondary, it is expected for all pupils who have reached the required level, Level 3+ at the end of the KS2, to follow Welsh first language in KS3 to ensure appropriate progression and continuity. The hope is that these pupils can study Welsh and English as subjects up to the end of year 11.

The secondary schools build on the foundation established in the primary by ensuring that all pupils continue to develop skills in both English and Welsh.

1.4 One million speakers by 2050

Cymraeg 2050 is the latest Welsh Government strategy for the Welsh language and covers the next three decades. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the numbers that speak the language as well as the Welsh use.

The aims of *Cymraeg 2050* include:

	Aim	Target
1.	Increase the number of Welsh speakers	1 million speakers by 2050
2.	Increase the use of the Welsh language	Daily users of Welsh increasing from 10% to 20%

The *Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh Speakers* document emphasises the importance of increasing the numbers of Welsh speakers but it is also emphasised that increasing the daily use of the Welsh language is just as important.

‘Moving towards the position where we have a million speakers is one aspect of our vision for a thriving Welsh language. However, a thriving Welsh language is a language that is used. We want the use of Welsh to be a routine part of everyday life, so that speakers at all levels feel confident in its use in formal and informal situations.....The Welsh Language Use Survey 2013–15 (Welsh Government and Welsh Language Commissioner 2015) shows that there is a clear link between fluency and frequency of Welsh language use – 84 per cent of fluent Welsh speakers speak Welsh daily’.

Source: Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers (2017)

1.5 Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2032

The Welsh Language Standards imposed on Cyngor Gwynedd by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 impose an expectation on the Council to produce a 5 year strategy which will demonstrate how it is intended to promote the Welsh language and facilitate the use of Welsh across the county. Cyngor Gwynedd's latest strategy for the Welsh language is the Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023-2033. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the numbers speaking the language:

	How will we increase the number of speakers?	How will we measure at a local level, and during the strategy period?
1.	Provide opportunities for children and young people who are not yet Welsh speakers (e.g newcomers, children who do not receive mainstream education), to learn and become confident Welsh speakers.	The number of children receiving Welsh medium education. The number of children who are supported through the Education Department's immersion regime.
2.	Providing opportunities for adults to become new speakers through the authority's learners support schemes and partners community provision.	The number of council workers receiving Welsh learning lessons. Provision of community Welsh learning courses.

The strategy also contains a commitment to increase the use of Welsh in the following areas of work:

- Language of the early years
- Language of learning
- Language of Work and Service
- Language of the Community
- Technology and Research

2. LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE NEBO CATCHMENT AREA

2.1 Gwynedd Language Profile Background

64.4% of the county's population aged over three are Welsh speakers — significantly higher than the figure for Wales as a whole, which is 17.8%. In Gwynedd, the ability to speak Welsh is highest in the Hendre ward (86% speak Welsh), and lowest in the Bangor Central area (25.6%).

2.2 Wards

Ysgol Nebo is located in the Clynog ward, and the school's catchment area includes part of the Clynog ward and part of the Llanllyfni ward. Ysgol Llanllyfni is located in the Llanllyfni ward, and the school's catchment area includes part of the Llanllyfni ward and part of the Clynog ward. The linguistic profile of the wards of these schools is summarised in the table below:

	Clynog	Llanllyfni	Gwynedd	Cymru
Welsh identity only	783 (60.2%)	1,316 (67.1%)	69,560 (59.3%)	1,715,975 (55.2%)
No Welsh identity	36%	28.2%	36.3%	36.7%
3+ year old population	1,275	1,876	114,308 (100%)	3,018,172 (100%)
Can speak Welsh	864	1,373	73,560	538,296

	(67.8%)	(73.2%)	(64.4%)	(17.8%)
No Welsh skills	307 (24.1%)	315 (16.8%)	29,977 (26.2%)	2,259,017 (74.8%)
Able to understand only verbal Welsh	71 (5.6%)	137 (7.3%)	8,166 (7.1%)	156,762 (5.2%)
Able to speak Welsh but can't read or write Welsh	47 (3.7%)	124 (6.6%)	6,142 (5.4%)	68,391 (2.3%)
Able to speak and read Welsh but can't write Welsh	37 (2.9%)	56 (3%)	3,170 (2.8%)	33,971 (1.1%)
Able to speak, read and write Welsh	774 (60.7%)	1,157 (61.7%)	63,256 (55.3%)	429,313 (14.2%)
Able to write Welsh but can't speak or read Welsh	7 (0.5%)	8 (0.4%)	387 (0.3%)	4,970 (0.2%)
Able to read and write Welsh but can't speak Welsh	9 (0.7%)	14 (0.7%)	1004 (0.9%)	17,560 (0.6%)
Another combination of Welsh language skills	6 (0.5)	36 (1.9%)	993 (0.9%)	6,621 (0.2%)

Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

2.3 Ysgol Nebo

Ysgol Nebo is a Category 3, Welsh medium school.

The table below shows that most Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently.

School	Speaks Welsh fluently at home	Speaks Welsh at home but not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home but fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home and not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at all
Nebo	56%	0%	22%	11%	11%

Source: Percentage of the number of respondents January 2026

2.4 Nearby schools

Llanllyfni, Baladeulyn, Brynaerau, Bro Llew, Talysarn and Bro Llifon schools are Category 3, Welsh medium schools.

Linguistic data for the nearby schools can be found below:

School	Speaks Welsh fluently at home	Speaks Welsh at home but not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home but fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at home and not fluent	Doesn't speak Welsh at all
Baladeulyn	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%
Brynaerau	64%	11%	2	11%	12%

Llanllyfni	68%	8%	2%	11%	11%
Bro Lleu	69%	4%	1%	9%	17%
Talysarn	37%	15.5%	3%	19%	25.5%
Bro Llifon	85%	2%	2%	3%	8%

Source: Percentage of the number of respondents January 2026

2.5 After school activities

Here is a summary of what Ysgol Nebo and the other schools in Dyffryn Nantlle's secondary catchment area offer on the school sites.

	Baladeulyn	Talysarn	Bro Lleu	Llanllyfni	Brynaerau	Bro Llifon	Nebo
Playgroups (school holidays)			✓				
Aelwyd yr Urdd				✓		✓	✓
Morning/Evening Coffee	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Cylch/Nursery			✓	✓		✓	
Club/After school club/Sports Activity		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

It can be seen in the table above that a number of schools in the area, including Ysgol Nebo offer clubs with the Urdd after school. This means that the pupils could continue to take advantage of these activities as an additional opportunity to use and develop the Welsh language.

2.6 Community Activities

As there is no community centre/building in Nebo, residents of Nebo and Nasareth make regular use of the school's 'community room' for community occasions and events. These are some of the occasions and social events that take place in the School's Community Room:

- Monthly meetings of the Nebo and Nasareth Area Committee
- Local Clubs (Monday Club, Knitting and Crochet Club, Social Evenings, Gardening Club)
- First Aid with St John Ambulance: Training on CPR and the use of defibrillators at the School and Nasareth Chapel
- Welsh lessons for learners
- Refreshments after local trips and the Craig Goch Mountain Race
- Remembrance Sunday service
- Protecting the environment: Organising litter-picking sessions and taking action to prevent dog fouling

2.7 Additional Evidence

Ysgol Nebo

Estyn's 2017 report says:

“Welsh is the main medium of the school’s life and work. Approximately 58% of pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes and there are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.”

[Ysgol Nebo Estyn inspection report October 2017](#)

Ysgol Llanllyfni

Estyn's 2025 report says:

“Leaders and staff place a clear emphasis on developing the Welsh language. Staff are effective language models who encourage and support pupils to develop and use the language in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils respond positively and are extremely proud of their ability to communicate in Welsh and English confidently with their peers and adults by the time they reach the top of the school.”

[Ysgol Llanllyfni Estyn inspection report 2025](#)

2.8 Statutory Consultation and Statutory Objection Period – Summary of Issues Relating to the Impact on the Welsh Language

The main issues raised through the responses to the statutory consultation, specifically regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language, are outlined below.

In this context, respondents expressed strong concerns about the role of Ysgol Nebo in maintaining Welsh as a living language within the community. It was noted that the school provides a natural environment where Welsh is used formally and informally by children, families and local residents, and that it is the main social space where Welsh is heard daily in the village. As a result, concerns were raised that closing the school could lead to a significant reduction in community use of Welsh, particularly outside the classroom.

It was also noted that the environment of a small Welsh-medium school supports linguistic immersion, confidence and fluency, especially for children from non-Welsh-speaking homes, with Welsh strengthened as the language of the classroom and the playground. Consequently, concerns were expressed that transferring learners to larger schools could increase the risk of turning to English in social contexts, weakening the natural use of Welsh. At the same time, some respondents acknowledged positive elements of the proposal from an educational perspective, including the continuation of Welsh-medium education and the potential to maintain informal use of Welsh among learners.

In addition, attention was drawn to the wider role of the school in promoting Welsh beyond formal education, including through community activities, social events, Welsh-for-adults classes, and intergenerational interaction. Concerns were raised that closing the school could result in the complete loss of these opportunities, affecting the long-term sustainability of Welsh in Nebo and the surrounding areas.

During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated, and further concerns were raised regarding the possibility that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could undermine the role of Welsh as a living community language. Some objectors argued that the proposal was contrary to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and Cyngor Gwynedd’s commitments to protect and promote the Welsh language and Welsh-speaking communities. It was also suggested that the loss of the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh naturally within the community, increasing the risk of Welsh being seen primarily as a language of education rather than as a living everyday community language.

The Council acknowledges these concerns and notes that the Welsh Language Impact Assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period.

3. Assessment of the impact on the Welsh language

3.1 The Options

- *Do nothing – continue with the current situation*

Continuing with the current situation would mean that Ysgol Nebo continues in the same way, with the same staffing structure.

Although the case for change has been established, the Do nothing model has been included in the assessment for comparison purposes.

- *Federate with a nearby school*

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nebo through a collaborative arrangement with a school, or nearby schools, led by a head or heads, and one governing body. These schools would share one governing body, but at the same time retain their legal status as separate entities, their financial allocation, name and school uniform, and continue to have their own Estyn inspection.

It is not anticipated that forming a federation would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with opportunities for the school to strengthen the leadership position, and collaborate.

- *Federalise with a nearby school adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Nebo*

This option would mean federalising with a nearby school and adding a ALN unit on the Ysgol Nebo school site in order to offer provision for children who would need additional support. There would be no change to the school element.

It is not anticipated this option would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Nebo would continue, with opportunities for the school to strengthen the leadership position, and collaborate.

- *Close Ysgol Nebo and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni)*

This option would mean that Ysgol Nebo would close, and that learners from the current catchment area of Ysgol Nebo would be offered a place at Ysgol Llanllyfni (the alternative school).

The table in section 3.2 contains an assessment of the impact of closing Ysgol Nebo and teaching the learner at Ysgol Llanllyfni, on the Welsh language compared to the current situation. The table also outlines the additional opportunities for strengthening the Welsh language, and methods of mitigating any negative impact that may arise from the proposal.

- *Ysgol Nebo to develop into a specialist location for some individual subjects (unique opportunities to carry out fieldwork)*

Continuing the current situation would mean that Ysgol Nebo would continue in the same way, with the same staffing structure.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Nebo would continue.

- *Ysgol Nebo to offer a specialist unit for supporting children with additional learning needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them.*

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Nebo and adding an ALN Unit on the school site to offer provision for children with additional learning needs.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Nebo would continue.

- *Ysgol Nebo to offer a language unit for the Dyffryn Nantlle catchment area*

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Nebo and locating a language unit on the school site.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language in the school as there would be no change to the education provision provided by Ysgol Nebo. However, it is likely that it would have a positive effect on the Welsh language of the learners who would attend the language unit.

- *Establishing a School on more than one site*

This option would mean closing local schools, including Ysgol Nebo, and establishing a new school across several sites, including the current site of Ysgol Nebo.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language. Depending on the structure of the multi-site school, there may be opportunities for learners to have access to a wider range of suitable resources, a higher supply in terms of staffing, and they could be part of a larger group of peers.

3.2 Reasonable Alternative Options Proposed by Consultees in Response to the Consultation

- ***“Ysgol Nebo to offer a site as provision to support and nurture children with social and emotional needs, where mainstream education is challenging for them, including pupils with IDP for social, emotional and behavioural needs and other young people with mental health needs including anxiety and neurodiversity.”***

This option would involve retaining Ysgol Nebo and developing it as a site offering specialist provision for children and young people for whom mainstream education is challenging. The provision would support learners with Additional Learning Needs, including social, emotional and behavioural needs, as well as young people with mental health needs such as anxiety and neurodiversity.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Nebo would continue as a Welsh-medium school.

- **Develop Ysgol Nebo as a Transition Unit to Support the Integration of ALN Pupils into Mainstream Education**

This option would involve retaining Ysgol Nebo and developing it as a Transition Unit to provide temporary support for learners with Additional Learning Needs before or during their integration into mainstream education. The provision would focus on structured support to facilitate an effective transition.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Nebo would continue as a Welsh-medium school.

- **Federalisation of Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Baladeulyn**

This option would ensure the continued presence of Ysgol Nebo through a federation arrangement with Ysgol Baladeulyn. The schools would operate under the leadership of a single headteacher or leadership team and a single federated governing body. Each school's identity—including name, ethos and uniform—would remain, with the potential to share staff, resources and expertise.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Nebo would continue as a Welsh-medium school. There is also potential to strengthen leadership and linguistic collaboration between the two schools.

- **Federal Governing Body across Catchment Area Schools**

This option would involve establishing a federated governing body across schools in the catchment area to strengthen collaboration and strategic oversight. The arrangement would enable the sharing of expertise and a common strategic direction while maintaining the presence and identity of individual schools.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as there would be no change to the provision or linguistic status of Ysgol Nebo. The arrangement could strengthen Welsh-language planning and strategy across the catchment.

3.2 Assessment of the impact on the Welsh Language

Assessment of the impact on the Welsh language – Proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni)

Part 1				
Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and work	Have any measures been identified to mitigate any negative impact or to create more positive opportunities	Final impact (following mitigation measures)
School language (formal)	<i>In the consultation responses, the importance of maintaining Welsh-medium education as the primary language of instruction for local learners was highlighted. Respondents to the consultation emphasised the role of Ysgol Nebo in fostering a natural use of the Welsh language.</i> Ysgol Nebo is a Welsh-medium school. As Ysgol Llanllyfni is also a Welsh-medium school, it is concluded that the proposal would not have an impact on the children's language of education.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
School language (informal)	<i>Respondents to the consultation emphasised the role of Ysgol Nebo in fostering the natural use of Welsh as the language of the playground and social interaction between pupils. It was noted that small class sizes, staff supervision and clear linguistic expectations encourage consistent use of Welsh in informal contexts. Concerns were expressed that education in larger settings could lead to increased use of English in social situations.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated by some objectors, who expressed the view that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could reduce opportunities to use Welsh naturally within the community and weaken its role as a living community language. The importance of small schools in fostering the everyday use of Welsh among learners was also emphasised.</i> PLASC January 2026 statistics show that 56% of Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently at home and 68% of Ysgol Llanllyfni learners. As the learners would be taught in larger classes with more children of the same age group, the proposal could strengthen the opportunity for learners to socialise in Welsh with their peers. On that basis, if the proposal is realised, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for	Positive	Irrelevant	Irrelevant

	learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger.			
Access to Welsh medium education	Ysgol Llanllyfni is a Welsh-medium school, like Ysgol Nebo. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would affect this criterion.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
Non-statutory provision	Learners would have access to a higher supply in terms of staffing and would be part of a larger group of peers of the same age.	Positive	The local authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni could discuss methods to ensure that pupils can participate in extracurricular activities.	Positive
Activities before/after school	Ysgol Llanllyfni is a larger school in terms of numbers of learners, and therefore the peer groups are larger. The school also offers a range of clubs and activities before and after school which provide opportunities to use the Welsh language outside of school hours. As stated in Section 2.5 of the Impact Assessment, these include Aelwyd yr Urdd, coffee mornings and evenings, Cylch Meithrin, and play/after school club activities.	Positive	The Local Authority and Ysgol Llanllyfni Governing Body could consider any additional opportunities for arranging activities after school, ensuring that arrangements are in place to include learners in the Nebo catchment area.	Positive
Use of the Welsh Language in the community	<i>From the point of view of the responses to the consultation, it was strongly noted that Ysgol Nebo is the main social place where the Welsh language is used on a daily basis by many residents of the village. Attention was drawn to the school's role in holding community events, Welsh lessons for adults and international opportunities that support regular use of the Welsh language. Concern was expressed that closing the school could lead to a significant reduction in opportunities to use Welsh as a living community language.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these views were reiterated and further concerns were expressed by some objectors that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could undermine Welsh as a living community language and that this would be contrary to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 to increase the daily and community use of Welsh. It was also argued that the school's role in supporting the natural use of Welsh within the community extends beyond the formal educational provision.</i> If the proposal to close Nebo School were to come true, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected. It is anticipated that there may be some negative impact arising from the realisation of the proposal, e.g. as parents/guardians/families will not meet daily in the Nebo community when dropping off/collecting children from school.	Negative	The Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni can consider methods of promoting the use of the Welsh language by including the Nebo community in the school's community activities. To mitigate the impact on the Welsh language within the community, opportunities are identified to ensure that the Nebo community is aware of the alternative school's activity, and community collaboration between Ysgol Llanllyfni and the Nebo community is encouraged, where appropriate. In addition, if the proposal were implemented, the Authority will have to consider options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held at the school. It is noted that there is no alternative community space in the village of Nebo and therefore preserving or facilitating appropriate community use of the building would be an important consideration, especially in order to mitigate	Negative

	However, it is also noted that a significant percentage of children in the catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), which suggests that the level of daily involvement with the school as a social or linguistic space varies among families in the Nebo community. As there is no other building/community centre in the village of Nebo, the residents of Nebo and Nasareth make regular use of the school's 'community room' for community occasions and events including Welsh lessons for learners. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo were to be realised, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected, and that this could lead to a negative impact on the use of the Welsh language in the community. Impact on the local economy: Although it is not anticipated that the proposal would have a significant negative impact on the local economy in Nebo, it is recognised that if Ysgol Nebo were to close, it could lead to a reduction in Welsh-medium employment opportunities in the village of Nebo.		any possible negative impact on the use and vitality of the Welsh language within the community.	
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Part 2 - How will the proposal affect/contribute towards/comply with the Welsh Language Standards, language policies, strategies and other relevant guidelines regarding the Welsh language

Gwynedd Welsh Language Strategy 2023	Below is a summary of the anticipated impact on the Language Strategy's areas of action: Early years language: As the Cylch Meithrin is located on the site of Ysgol Llanllyfni (the alternative school), it is anticipated that the proposal would have a positive effect on early years language. Learning Language: Ysgol Nebo is a Welsh-medium school, Category 3. As Ysgol Llanllyfni is also a Welsh-medium school (Category 3), it is concluded that the proposal would not have an effect on the language of the children's education. Work and Service Language: Respondents to the consultation raised that Ysgol Nebo provides a prominent local Welsh service in the village, including Welsh-medium employment opportunities. Concern was expressed that closing the school could lead to the loss of the presence of a daily Welsh language service within the local community, and to a reduction in the number of jobs that operate
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through the medium of Welsh. Reference was also made to the role of the school staff as Welsh language models, who contribute to strengthening the use of the Welsh language in the everyday life of the community.

During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated and some objectors expressed the view that the loss of the school would mean the loss of a visible Welsh-medium presence within the community. It was also argued that the school contributes to creating opportunities for children, families and local residents to hear and use Welsh in everyday community life, and that the loss of the school could reduce those opportunities.

It is acknowledged that, if the proposal is implemented, there would be some negative impact on the language due to the loss of the presence of a Welsh-medium school, category 3 in the village of Nebo which services the area, and as it would lead to the dismissal of the school's staff/workforce.

However, it is noted that the alternative school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) which would serve the Nebo area if the proposal were implemented, is also a Category 3 Welsh medium school. It is not anticipated that the proposal would affect the language of work and service provided in the alternative school.

Community Language:

Strong opinions were expressed through the responses to the consultation that the proposal would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Nebo is the main Welsh-speaking social place in the village, and in some cases the only place where Welsh is used naturally by residents. Attention was drawn to the school's role in holding Welsh community events, Welsh lessons for adults, and international opportunities to use the Welsh language. Concern was expressed that closing the school could lead to a significant reduction in the everyday use of Welsh as a living community language. It was also noted that there is no alternative community centre in Nebo/Nasareth that could replace this Welsh and social function.

During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated and some objectors expressed the view that the loss of the school would mean the loss of a visible Welsh-language presence within the community. It was also argued that the school contributes to creating opportunities for children, families and local residents to hear and use Welsh in everyday community life, and that the loss of the school could reduce those opportunities.

The Council acknowledges that if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo were to be realised, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected. It is anticipated that there may be some negative impact on the language within the community resulting from the realisation of the proposal, e.g. as parents/guardians/families will not meet daily in the Nebo community when dropping off/collecting children from school.

	As there is no building/community centre in the village of Nebo, the residents of Nebo and Nasareth make regular use of the school's 'community room' for community occasions and events including Welsh lessons for learners. If the proposal to close Nebo School were to come true, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected. In order to mitigate any negative effects, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni can consider methods of promoting the use of the Welsh language by including the Nebo community in the school's community activities. In addition, if the proposal is implemented, the Authority will have to consider options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held at the school.
Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Government	<i>Through the responses to the consultation, a concern was expressed that closing a rural Welsh-medium school could work against the objectives of Welsh 2050, especially from the point of view of increasing community and natural use of the Welsh language. Attention was drawn to the importance of ensuring that the Welsh language is heard, used and transmitted informally from day to day, not just taught within the classroom. The opinion was expressed that small schools play a key role in creating new speakers in rural communities.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these views were reiterated and further concerns were expressed by some objectors that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could undermine Welsh as a living community language and that this would be contrary to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 to increase the daily and community use of Welsh. It was also argued that the school's role in supporting the natural use of Welsh within the community extends beyond the formal educational provision..</i> It is noted that any discussions relating to organisation need to note the Welsh Government's effort to reach the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council acknowledges that if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo were to be realised, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected. In order to mitigate any negative effects, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni can consider methods of promoting the use of the Welsh language by including the Nebo community in the school's community activities. In addition, if the proposal is implemented, the Authority will have to consider options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held at the school. In terms of the educational provision, it is noted that Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni are Welsh-medium primary schools, Category 3. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and transfer learners to Ysgol Llanllyfni is implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, Category 3. It is not anticipated that the proposal would have a negative impact on the Welsh language, mainly because:

	- that the January 2026 CYLD statistics show that 56% of Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently at home and 68% of Ysgol Llanllyfni learners - that the proposal to close Nebo School and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) would mean that learners in the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, category 3. - that the learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children of the same age group, it is anticipated that the proposal will strengthen the opportunity for learners to socialise in Welsh with more of their peers. Based on the above, if the proposal is implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger.
To what extent the proposal would support the targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan approved (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-2032))	Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni are Welsh-medium primary schools, Category 3. Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni implement the objectives of the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 of Cyngor Gwynedd. This includes: • That all pupils in the county have appropriate linguistic skills in Welsh and English, and that this expectation is consistent across all of the schools. • That there is suitable provision to enable all pupils to develop proficiently bilingually. In this context, schools are expected to continue to nurture the skills of those pupils who are Welsh speakers, and to introduce the Welsh language to those who are learners. • That all the county's education institutions reflect and reinforce the Language Policy in their administration, their social life and their pastoral order, as well as in their curricular provision. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and transfer learners to Ysgol Llanllyfni is implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, Category 3, which implements the objectives and supports the targets of the CSGA. Based on the above, it is not anticipated that the implementation of the proposal would have a negative impact on the achievement of Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the Welsh Language in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032, Gwynedd Council, namely: Outcome 1: More nursery/3-year-olds receiving a Welsh-medium education. Outcome 2: More reception class/5-year-old children receiving a Welsh-medium education. Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh skills when transferring from one education phase of their statutory education to another. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts at school.

	Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs ("ALN") (in accordance with the duties set out by the Additional Learning Needs Act and the Education Tribunal (Wales) 2018) As a result, it is concluded that the implementation of the proposal would be in line with the objectives of the Strategic Plan for the Welsh Language in Education 2022-32, and the targets approved in the Strategic Plan for the Welsh Language.
How the proposal would expand or reduce Welsh-language provision, and in cases where it would reduce provision, explain why the provision would be reduced	The proposal would mean that a Welsh-medium school, Category 3 (Ysgol Nebo), would close. However, if the proposal is implemented, learners would be offered a place in an alternative school, which is also a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school, namely Ysgol Llanllyfni. Ysgol Llanllyfni has enough capacity for learners from both schools.
<u>Compliance with Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011)</u>	The Council confirms that the entire statutory process in relation to reviewing the future of Ysgol Nebo has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards 88-93 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. In accordance with Standards 88, 89 and 90, conscientious consideration was given to the possible effects that the policy decision could have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, including consideration of the positive and adverse effects possible, how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to ensure more positive effects, and how any potential adverse effects could be reduced. In addition, in accordance with Standards 91, 92 and 93, an opinion was considered and sought through the statutory consultation process regarding these linguistic effects, including an opinion on how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to increase positive effects or reduce adverse effects on the Welsh language. These requirements were supported by carrying out this Linguistic Impact Assessment, together with related impact assessments, including the Equality Impact Assessment, and it is noted that these assessments have been reviewed and updated following consideration of the responses received during the statutory consultation, in addition to the objections received during the statutory objection period.

5. CONCLUSION

Our expectations are that all learners in the County have a balanced, age-relevant bilingualism so that they can be complete members of the bilingual society they are part of. The proposals for reorganisation will need to take full account of all the linguistic effects. Maintaining and improving the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among children will be a key consideration when drawing up proposals within the area.

Responses to the statutory consultation have drawn attention to a wide range of views regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. Strong concerns were expressed, especially from the point of view of Ysgol Nebo's role as a linguistic and community hub, with many respondents emphasising the school as the main social place where the Welsh language is used on a daily basis by children, families and local residents. It was noted that the school makes an important contribution to the natural use of the Welsh language outside the classroom, including through community events, social activities, Welsh lessons for adults and inter-national interaction. Concern was expressed that closing the school could lead to a significant reduction in the daily use of Welsh as a living community language, especially in a village where there is no alternative community centre available.

The Council acknowledges that these concerns were reiterated and reinforced during the statutory objection period, particularly in relation to the role of Ysgol Nebo in sustaining Welsh as a living community language and the view expressed by some objectors that the proposal could run counter to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 to increase the daily and community use of Welsh.

The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting community use of the Welsh language within the village and accepts that the comments draw attention to a possible adverse effect on local linguistic vitality outside of the formal educational provision.

However, based on the information available, the Council's opinion is that the proposed proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on the provision of Welsh language education or pupils' linguistic opportunities, for the following reasons:

- PLASC January 2026 data shows that 56% of Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently at home and 68% of Ysgol Llanllyfni learners.
- The proposal to close Nebo School and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners in the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, Category 3.
- It is anticipated that the learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children of the same age group, it is anticipated that the proposed proposal will strengthen the opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with more of their peers.

In the educational context, based on the above, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners in the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger.

At the same time, taking into account the comments of the consultation, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Nebo could lead to a possible negative impact on the use of the Welsh language within the local community, especially from the point of view of its use as a community language outside the educational context; however, it is noted that mitigating measures could be considered by promoting the use of the Welsh language by including the Nebo community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held there.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council has taken into account the comments received during the statutory consultation period and the statutory objection period. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potentially negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of Welsh within Nebo, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not indicate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop their Welsh language skills within the educational setting.

**WELL-BEING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT
IMPACT ASSESSMENT -
YSGOL NEBO**

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

We as a Council are committed to the principles within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Gwynedd's communities.

The Council's vision is:

Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to flourish and to live a complete life in their community in a county that is one of the best counties to live in.

The Council has adopted well-being objectives which complement the national well-being goals ensuring that the residents of Gwynedd are:

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

The table below outlines the link between our well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive Communities	A vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Globally responsible
TOMORROW'S GWYNEDD Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life							
A PROSPEROUS GWYNEDD Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary							
A HOMELY GWYNEDD Supporting Gwynedd residents to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities							
A CARING GWYNEDD Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities							
A WELSH GWYNEDD Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community							
A GREEN GWYNEDD Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis							
AN EFFICIENT GWYNEDD Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently							

The Education Department has a role to promote the well-being goals of the Act among learners through their activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being. As part of the duty the Council has published well-being objectives which outline how it will improve in the "Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028"

2. HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET CYNGOR GWYNEDD'S WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES?

The proposal:

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and resolved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and to offer places for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026 and a 28-day statutory objection period was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026 and 20 objections were received during that period. A petition opposing the proposal was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, containing 358 signatures.

Objectives	Details:
Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life	In the consultation responses, and the objections received during the objection period, concerns were expressed about the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children, particularly those with additional learning needs or emotional difficulties. It was noted that Ysgol Nebo is seen as an inclusive environment offering small classes, personal support, and close relationships between staff and learners, and that this support is essential for the development, confidence and wellbeing of some learners. Concerns were raised that moving to a larger school would reduce opportunities for individual attention, targeted support and wellbeing, leading to a risk of educational disengagement or a return to home education. The Council recognises that there may be some negative impact on learners' wellbeing during the transition period. Should Ysgol Nebo close, the authority and the receiving school would work closely with the closing school, with the learners and their families, to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, with appropriate support, can mitigate negative effects and support the continuity of educational progress. As noted in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook, learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) have the right to continue receiving the provision specified in their Individual Development Plan, and the Authority has a duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change. The Council is committed to prioritising individual needs, including vulnerable children and/or those with ALN, and to continuously monitoring the impact of the change on protected groups should the school close. The Council remains of the view that the proposal would ensure that children in the area develop experiences through socialising with a wider range of peers of a similar age, while receiving quality education in a school that can offer a learning environment and experiences suitable for a broader range of learners.
Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary	It is anticipated that implementing this proposal would be likely to have a negative impact on this objective, as it could lead to staff redundancies. A detailed staffing policy was developed by Cyngor Gwynedd in collaboration with Trade Unions and head teachers. The policy will form the basis of any change to staff employment resulting from any proposal. Clear and open communication will be central to the successful implementation of any proposals.
Supporting Gwynedd residents to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities	During the statutory objection period, concerns were reiterated that the loss of Ysgol Nebo as a community focal point could influence decisions by young families about settling in the area in the future, with wider implications for the sustainability of the community. Some respondents stated that the presence of a local school is an important factor in attracting and retaining young families in rural communities, and expressed

	concern that the loss of the school could reduce the area's attractiveness as a place to live. Reference was also made to wider factors affecting the sustainability of rural communities, including demographics, housing and second homes, and the view was expressed that the closure of the school could contribute to a gradual decline in the long term viability of rural communities over time. of children within Ysgol Nebo's catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, namely 78%, with 44% of primary-aged children in the catchment area already attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that families and young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the alternative school is located 1.6 miles from Ysgol Nebo, the Council does not envisage that the proposal would encourage families to leave the community or make young families less likely to move into the area. As a result, although concerns have been expressed regarding the future attractiveness of the area to young families, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would have a significant impact on people's ability to live within their communities. Therefore, no significant impact is anticipated on this wellbeing objective.
Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities	Ensuring that the learners receive a first class education will be at the core of the proposal, ensuring that they will receive an education of the same quality and standard in the alternative school. During the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the loss of the school as a community space could reduce opportunities for residents to socialise, volunteer, and participate in local activities, raising concerns about the possibility of increased social isolation for some residents. It was noted that not all residents, particularly older people or those without access to a car, would necessarily be able to take advantage of activities or facilities outside the community. It is therefore acknowledged that the proposal could have some negative impact on this objective. Mitigation measures would include considering opportunities to maintain community links and activities, together with considering options for community use of the school building should the school close, through the Authority's Post-Use Policy, where appropriate.
Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, respondents expressed strong concerns, particularly regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo as a linguistic and community hub. Many respondents emphasised the school as the main social space where Welsh is used daily by children, families, and local residents. It was noted that the school makes an important contribution to the natural use of Welsh outside the classroom, including through community events, social activities, Welsh-language lessons for adults, and intergenerational interaction. Concern was expressed that closing the school could lead to a significant reduction in the day-to-day use of Welsh as a living community language, especially in a village where no alternative community centre is available. During the statutory objection period, specific reference was made to Welsh-medium activities held at the school and community room, including Welsh language classes, and to the importance of the school in creating opportunities for children, families and local residents to hear and use Welsh naturally in community life outside the formal educational context. As part of the statutory process, the Authority carried out an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. This assessment was updated after considering the comments received during the statutory consultation. In its conclusion, it notes that the Council recognises the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting community use of Welsh within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight a possible adverse impact on local linguistic vitality outside formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council's view is that the proposed scheme is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or pupils' language opportunities, for the following reasons:

	- January 2026 PLASC data shows that 56% of Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni. - The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer places for the learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners from the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school. - It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children of the same age group. The proposed changes are expected to strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a greater number of their peers. On this basis, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Nebo catchment area would have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of linguistic vitality and informal use of the language would be stronger. At the same time, having considered consultation responses, the Council acknowledges that the option of closing Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nebo community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.
Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis	No effect.
Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently	No effect.

3. DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET THE WELL-BEING AIMS OF THE ACT?

Aim	Does the proposal contribute to this aim?	Measures to mitigate negative effects on this aim:
A prosperous Wales An innovative society that uses resources prudently, educated people, that create wealth and work.	The implementation of the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and teach the children in a nearby alternative school would mean that the learners build experiences by socialising with a wider range of peers, age-related and receiving a quality education in a school that can offer a learning environment and experiences to a wider range of learners. Introducing this proposal could lead to staff losing their jobs.	Staff and Union representatives will be consulted specifically as part of the statutory consultation period. Cyngor Gwynedd has developed a detailed staffing policy, jointly with Trade Unions and headteachers. Any redundancies as a result of this proposal will have to be in line with that policy. Clear and open communication will play a key role in implementing any proposals.
A resilient Wales A nation that maintains and enhances biodiversity and healthy ecosystems that support resilience and adaptability to change (for example climate change).	It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.	No effect
A healthier Wales A society where people's physical and mental well-being is as good as possible, and people understand what affects their health.	It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim. Concerns were raised during the objection period about the potential impact of the loss of a community space on social isolation and the wellbeing of some residents. It is therefore acknowledged that there could be some negative impacts as a result of the loss of the school as a community focal point.	If the proposal were to be implemented, the needs of every learner would be considered on an individual basis when planning transition arrangements, including their emotional wellbeing and any additional support required. The Council would also consider measures to support community connections and activities, together with appropriate options for the future use of the school building, in accordance with the Authority's Post-Use Policy.
A more equal Wales A society that enables people to achieve their potential regardless of their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).	In the consultation responses and the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed about the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children, including learners with additional learning needs or emotional difficulties. It was noted that Ysgol Nebo is seen as an inclusive environment offering small classes, personal support, and close relationships between staff and learners, and that this support is essential for the development, confidence and wellbeing of some learners. Concerns were raised that moving to a larger school would reduce opportunities for individual attention, targeted support and wellbeing, leading to a risk of educational disengagement or a return to home education.	Although concerns have been expressed regarding the potential impact on vulnerable children, including learners with additional learning needs and emotional difficulties, specific mitigation measures are in place to ensure that the proposal would not lead to exclusion or disproportionate discrimination. In accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the ALN Code for Wales, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that every learner with additional learning needs continues to receive the provision set out in their Individual Development Plan, regardless of any change in school arrangements. If the proposal were to be implemented, transition arrangements would be carefully planned, with appropriate support for learners and families, including early

	In addition, respondents expressed concern that closing Ysgol Nebo could have a disproportionate impact on families facing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly in terms of transport costs and accessibility, thereby increasing the risk of social exclusion. The school's central role within the community was also emphasised, including its contribution to community cohesion, reducing loneliness, and creating opportunities to engage with the Welsh language across different age groups. The Council remains of the view that the proposal would improve the Authority's ability to "offer the highest possible quality of education that will give the experiences, skills and confidence to the children of the County and enable them to develop into successful, bilingual and fulfilled citizens," in line with the vision of the Best Quality Primary Education Strategy for the Children of Gwynedd	engagement with the receiving school, relevant support staff, and support services. If the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that provision at Ysgol Llanllyfni would include access to a wider range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. In relation to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy, ensuring that the cost or accessibility of transport is not a barrier to equal access to education. Potential impacts on individual families would be considered where relevant. Following consideration of the comments submitted during the statutory consultation, the equality impact assessment has been updated to reflect the concerns raised and their potential impact on protected characteristics and broader equality. This assessment states that the proposal could give rise to potential partially negative impacts on some groups, including in relation to Disability, Age, the Welsh Language and Socio-economic Considerations. However, the further assessment also identifies potential positive impacts if the proposal were implemented, including in relation to access to broader educational provision, additional social and educational opportunities, and access to extended expertise and support. To mitigate any potential negative impacts, it is noted that robust policies and procedures are already in place within the Authority, applicable to all schools in the county, to ensure compliance with equality duties, prevent unlawful discrimination, and promote equal opportunities for all learners. In addition, it is noted that strong policies and arrangements are in place to ensure that the proposal takes account of and aligns with equal rights. It is also stated that measures are already in place to ensure that unlawful discrimination or harassment will not occur.
A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable and safe communities that are well connected.	During the local discussions (Summer Term 2025), stakeholders highlighted the importance of the school to the community in the village of Nebo, noting the regular use made of the school building by the community.	As part of the statutory process, the Authority carried out an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the community. This assessment was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation. In the latest assessment, it is noted that the

	During the statutory consultation period, further concerns were expressed regarding the community implications should the school close, with a number of responses emphasising that Ysgol Nebo is currently the only place in the village where community members can meet and hold social activities. It was noted that the loss of the school as a community hub could lead to a weakening of community cohesion, reduce opportunities for social interaction, and have a negative impact on the vitality and long-term sustainability of the rural community. During the statutory objection period, concerns were raised that the closure of Ysgol Nebo would result in the loss of an important community focal point and would affect the social, linguistic, voluntary, and public activities held at the school and the community hall. Concerns were also expressed regarding the potential impact on the community's identity, cohesion, social inclusion, and long-term viability. It is acknowledged that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could have some negative impact on the community as a result of the loss of the school as a community focal point.	Council acknowledges that there would likely be some negative impact on the community if the option to close Ysgol Nebo were implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community as a community hub. The concerns raised during the consultation regarding the implications of this for the vitality of the community are recognised. In addition, if Ysgol Nebo were to close, it is acknowledged that the local school would be further from homes within the current Ysgol Nebo catchment area, and from a deprivation perspective this means that one of the indicators of "access to services" would be reduced for residents of the area. As a result, it is anticipated that there would be some negative impact on the local community if the school were to close. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (78%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni (44%), suggesting that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including Llanllyfni, already exist. If the Cabinet were to decide to proceed with closing Ysgol Nebo, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nebo community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that if a decision were made to close the school, the Authority's After-use Policy would provide a framework for undertaking further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.
Wales and a vibrant culture where the Welsh language flourishes An association that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language and encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and leisure activities.	Through the responses to the statutory consultation and the statutory consultation period, concerns were raised that closing the school could reduce the regular use of the Welsh language, as well as opportunities for children from non-Welsh-speaking homes to develop fluency. The need to ensure that Welsh-medium education remains central to any future arrangements was emphasised, along with the importance of actively promoting opportunities to use the Welsh language. The school was described as an important linguistic and cultural focal point, and concern was expressed that losing the school could weaken the community's local identity.	As part of the statutory process, the Authority carried out an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. This assessment was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation. In the latest assessment, it is noted that the Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting community use of Welsh within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight a possible adverse impact on local linguistic vitality outside formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council's view is that the proposed scheme is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-

	Concerns were expressed regarding the potential impact of the closure of Ysgol Nebo on Welsh as a living community language. The school was described by a number of respondents as an important linguistic and cultural focal point that contributes to creating opportunities for children, families, and residents to use Welsh naturally in their day-to-day lives. Concern was also expressed that the loss of the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh outside the formal educational context and weaken the role of the Welsh language in the community life of the village. The Council acknowledges the concerns regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Nebo on the linguistic vitality of the local community. However, if the proposal were to be implemented, based on the latest data and the fact that learners from the Nebo catchment would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school with broader opportunities to socialise in Welsh, it is anticipated that the proposal would maintain or even strengthen informal use of the Welsh language among learners. Nevertheless, the Council recognises that, should a decision be made to close the school, the change could lead to a negative impact on the use of Welsh as a community language outside the school, and is considering mitigation measures such as involving the Nebo community in activities at the alternative school and exploring options for the future use of the building.	medium education provision or pupils' language opportunities, for the following reasons: - January 2026 PLASC data shows that 56% of learners at Ysgol Nebo speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni. - The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer places for the learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners from the Nebo catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school. - It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children of the same age group. The proposed changes are expected to strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a greater number of their peers. On this basis, if the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that learners from the Nebo catchment area would have more opportunities to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the level of linguistic vitality and informal use of the language would be stronger. At the same time, having considered the consultation responses, the Council acknowledges that the option of closing Ysgol Nebo could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nebo community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there, if the proposal were to be implemented.
Wales responsible at a global level A nation that, as it does anything to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, considers whether doing such a thing could contribute positively to global well-being.	It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.	No effect.

4. PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Sustainable Development	Does the proposal consider the principle?
Long Term Balancing short-term needs with long-term ones and planning for the future.	The pattern of decreasing learner numbers has been consistent for a number of years, with projections showing that Ysgol Nebo learner numbers will continue to be vulnerable over the next few years and therefore shows that the current challenges facing the school will be long-term ones, and therefore the case for change is clear.
Prevent Allocate resources for preventing problems from occurring or getting worse. We will address problems by preventing and intervening early rather than by reacting.	Should the Cabinet decide to take further action, the needs of the learners will be a priority during every stage of any process.
Integration Have a positive impact on people, the economy, the environment, and culture.	The authority decided to start the process of looking at the future of Ysgol Nebo due to a critical situation facing the school.
Cooperation Work with other partners to provide services.	Collaboration with other relevant departments and the alternative school will be an important part of achieving the objectives for the benefit of the school and the children of the catchment area.
Content (Communication and Engagement) Involve the people of Gwynedd in trying to complete our plan and ensure that those people reflect the diversity of the area.	This proposal has been the subject of a public consultation, as well as a consultation for children, as well as a statutory objection period. The process has also included local review meetings to engage with relevant school stakeholders. These meetings included the Governing Body, staff and parents of Ysgol Nebo.

5. CONCLUSION

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the 7 aims of the well-being act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

In the consultation responses and the statutory objection period, specific concerns were raised about the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children and learners with additional learning needs, on the wellbeing of families facing socio-economic disadvantage, and on the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

It is recognised that, this proposal would lead to the loss of a school in the Nebo community, however many of the children who live within the school's catchment area already attend the nearby alternative schools, and therefore there is already a link between the school and the Nebo community. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will be held to discuss the possibility that the alternative school community activity includes the Nebo community where appropriate.

It is also acknowledged that there may be some negative impact on learners' wellbeing during the transition period should the school close. If Ysgol Nebo were to close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, its learners, and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), should the school close.

It is anticipated that the proposal would ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a natural Welsh language society, increasing opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and give them a fair chance to flourish among their peers.

Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd

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

- **Equality Act 2010.** It places a duty on public organisations to give due attention to the impact of any new policy, procedure or plan, etc. (or as they are adapted) on persons with protected characteristics. We are required to
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
 - advance 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 any 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 any 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.

Ysgol Nebo

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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?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures (which modify service delivery or employment practices)

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

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, and 70 responses to the consultation were received.

Gwynedd Council's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and resolved to publish a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo on 31 December 2026 and to offer places to learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni from 1 January 2027 onwards. The statutory notice was published on 3 June 2026, and a 28-day statutory objection period was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026, and 20 objections were received during that period. A petition opposing the proposal was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, containing 358 signatures.

Ysgol Nebo has been prioritised for a review of the educational provision as the school is facing a number of challenges. Pupil numbers at the school have fallen consistently in recent years and have been fragile for some time. Consequently, it is likely that the school is facing increasing challenges, including:

- **Number of learners** – Census PLASC data from January 2026 shows that only 11 pupils from Reception to Year 6 were attending the school, and 1 child was in the Nursery Class. The school has capacity for 51 learners from Reception to Year 6 (+7 in the Nursery Class).
- **Learners in the catchment area**– Data from January 2026 shows that only 22% of learners in the Ysgol Nebo catchment area choose to attend the school. A total of 78% of learners in the catchment choose to attend out-of-catchment schools.
- **Projected numbers** - Projected numbers suggest that numbers will continue to be fragile for the future: September 2026 = 12; September 2027 = 11; September 2028 = 10
- **High percentage of surplus places** - Based on January 2026 figures, approximately 79% of places at the school are vacant (46 in number).

- **Small class sizes** - There are 2 classes at Ysgol Nebo (January 2026) with 5 learners (Reception - Year 3) and 1 nursery learner in one class, and 6 learners (year 4 to year 6) are in the second class.
- **Broad age ranges within classes** - An age range of up to 5 years is in one class and 3 years in the second class.
- **Additional funding to the usual allocation** – Ysgol Nebo receives an additional amount to the usual allocation through the Staffing Minimum Policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and a teacher in each school, and a headteacher and assistant in schools with less than 15 full -time learners). The total additional amount during the financial year 2026-27 (based on September 2025) will be £ 64,046.
- **Cost per learner** - An average cost per learner at Ysgol Nebo in 2026-27 is £ 16,066 compared to the county average of £ 5,998.

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

- Staff, Governors and Parents/Guardians of Ysgol Nebo
- A statutory consultation was held on the proposal, consulting with all consultees specified in the School Organization Code.
- Education Department and Officers from other Cyngor Gwynedd departments.

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Assessing the Impact

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

Yes

The engagement details. Note any consultation or engagement you have conducted or intend to conduct.

Action	Dates	Information
Ysgol Nebo Review Panel 1	18 March 2025	The Ysgol Nebo School Review Panel (SRP) was established in March 2025 and a series of meetings were held between March and July 2025, with the last of these held on 14 July 2025. The SRP members included the school's headteacher and staff, governors, the Local Member, parents and guardians.
Ysgol Nebo Review Panel 2	12 May 2025	
Ysgol Nebo Review Panel 3	14 July 2025	During the meetings, a number of options were considered for primary education in the Ysgol Nebo catchment area to ensure a sustainable provision for the future and respond specifically to the small numbers of learners.

Statutory Consultation	December 2025 – January 2026	A statutory consultation was held on the proposal, in accordance with the School Organisation Code. The consultation was held between 5 December 2025 and 23 January 2026, and 70 responses to the consultation were received.
Statutory Objection Period	3 June – 30 June 2026	A statutory notice regarding the proposal was published on 3 June 2026, and a 28-day statutory objection period was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026, and 20 objections were received during that period. A petition opposing the proposal was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Nebo, containing 358 signatures.

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	Gwynedd schools have relevant policies in place to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-bullying Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd states anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race in the school. Also, it is states in the Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd primary schools that schools <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i> Therefore, it is not anticipated that this proposal would have a negative impact on this characteristic.	None
Disability	During the consultation, several respondents expressed concern that the proposal could have a negative impact on vulnerable children, including those with ALN, due to the loss of the benefits associated with small class environments, personalised support, and the sense of inclusion identified at Ysgol Nebo. Specific concerns were raised regarding wellbeing, mental health, and the risk that some learners may find it difficult to transition to a larger school, with potential implications for their educational experience. The Council notes these concerns and notes that equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination policies are in place within the current provision and at the alternative school. Should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would place emphasis on individual needs, ensuring that the child's voice is taken into account.	As a result of the comments received during the consultation, a potential negative impact was identified for some learners due to concerns that moving to a larger school could reduce individual attention and targeted support, increasing the risk of transition difficulties or educational disengagement. However, the Council's assessment is that the impact on this characteristic would be neutral or positive were the proposal to be implemented, as the alternative school would be

	During the statutory objection period, a number of the concerns previously raised during the statutory consultation were reiterated regarding the potential impact of the proposal on vulnerable learners, including learners with ALN. Further emphasis was placed on the needs of learners experiencing anxiety, neurodiversity, or social and emotional needs, as well as learners requiring additional support who do not have an IDP. Concerns were also expressed about the loss of a nurturing learning environment and the potential impact this could have on the wellbeing and transition experience of these learners.	able to offer classes with more age-appropriate peers. No impact on this characteristic is anticipated as a result of the change. An accessibility assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be undertaken, and we would ensure that any transport provided (in accordance with the Education Department's transport policy) is suitable for the individual's needs. The needs of any disabled child would be considered in accordance with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies. An assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be undertaken on the basis of accessibility, and we would ensure that any transport provided (in accordance with the Education Department's transport policy) is suitable for the individual's needs. The needs of any disabled child would be considered in line with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies.
Sex	Implementing the proposal would not have an impact on this characteristic. Implementing the proposal will mean that everyone will be treated according to their need, whatever their gender. Every school implements an Equality Policy stating that the school: <i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	None
Age	During the consultation, several respondents expressed concern that the proposal could have a negative impact on vulnerable children, including those with ALN, due to the loss of the benefits associated with small class environments, personalised support, and the sense of inclusion identified at Ysgol Nebo. Specific concerns were raised regarding wellbeing, mental health, and the risk that some learners may find it difficult to transition to a larger school, with potential implications for their educational experience. The Council notes these concerns and notes that equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination policies are in place within the current provision and at the alternative school. Should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would place emphasis on individual needs.	As a result of the comments received during the consultation and the statutory objection period, a potential negative impact was identified for some learners due to concerns that moving to a larger school could reduce individual attention and targeted support, increasing the risk of transition difficulties or educational disengagement. However, the Council's assessment is that the impact on this characteristic would be neutral or positive were

	During the statutory objection period, concerns raised during the consultation regarding the impact of the closure of the school on the wellbeing and experiences of some learners were reiterated. Additional emphasis was placed on the potential impact that the loss of a familiar and stable environment could have on the wellbeing, sense of belonging, confidence and happiness of some children, together with concerns regarding the effects of longer travel distances, increased time spent travelling, and reduced time with families or within the community. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the children of Ysgol Nebo would benefit from having more age-related peers in their class as there are more learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni, which will be a way to ensure age-appropriate educational and extra-curricular experiences, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities. We believe that learners will receive more age-appropriate experiences at the nearby alternative school since the learners will have learning experiences in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question. It is anticipated that implementing the proposal would mean that people of any age would be treated fairly and according to their need. Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni implement an equality policy stating that the schools: <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	the proposal to be implemented, as the alternative school would be able to offer classes with more age-appropriate peers. An assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be carried out on the basis of accessibility, and we would ensure that any transport provided (in accordance with the Education Department's transport policy) is suitable for the individual's needs. The needs of any disabled child would be considered in line with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies.
Religion and Belief	Ysgol Nebo and the alternative school noted in the proposal (Ysgol Llanllyfni) are community schools. Every school has an Inclusion Policy that would deal with any discriminatory incident that may occur at the school, which is associated with religion or belief. Therefore, it is not anticipated that this proposal would have an impact on this characteristic.	None
Sexual Orientation	Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework that was published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged between 3 and 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, that are all based on respect and trust on both sides, which is core to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships. We believe that learners will receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class in an alternative school.	None

	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of sexual orientation. Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni, the proposed alternative school, implement an equality policy stating that the school: <i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	
Gender reassignment	It is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of gender reassignment. It is stated in the Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd primary schools including Ysgol Nebo and Ysgol Llanllyfni that the schools <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	None
Marriage and Civil Partnership	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on anyone who is married or in a civil partnership, as both schools who are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	None
Pregnancy and Maternity	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on anyone who is pregnant, whether staff or parents, as both schools which are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	None
The Welsh Language	Through responses to the statutory consultation, concerns were expressed that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could lead to a reduction in community use of the Welsh language, even though Welsh-medium educational provision would continue. Respondents emphasised that the school contributes to the natural, everyday social use of Welsh, and that losing the school could reduce such opportunities within the local community. It was also noted that Ysgol Nebo plays an important role in promoting the use of Welsh beyond the classroom, through community and intergenerational activities, and that closing the school could weaken the status of Welsh as a living community language, particularly as there is no alternative community centre in the village. In addition, concerns were raised that closing the school could affect the sustainability of the local community, including community cohesion, community use of Welsh, and the attractiveness of the village to young families, highlighting the school's role as a social and linguistic focal point in an area without an alternative community facility. During the statutory objection period, a number of the concerns raised during the statutory consultation regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting Welsh as a living community language were reiterated. The view was reinforced that the school contributes to the natural and social use of Welsh beyond the classroom through community activities, local events, and opportunities for residents to use and hear the Welsh language on a regular basis. Reference was also made to concerns that closing the school could run counter to the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and could affect the long-term linguistic sustainability of the community.	Negative (Welsh within the community) / Positive (Educational) The Council notes the concerns expressed regarding the potential impact of closing the school on the linguistic vitality of the local community outside formal educational provision. However, based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' language opportunities. The aim of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the county. This means that, if the proposal were to be implemented, learners from Ysgol Nebo would be able to continue to receive their education in Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Education Language Policy at Ysgol Llanllyfni. If the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that it would have a positive impact on the Welsh language from an educational perspective, as learners from Ysgol Nebo would

	The Council acknowledges the concerns expressed regarding the potential impact of the school's closure on the linguistic vitality of the local community outside formal educational provision. However, based on the evidence available, the Council's view is that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' linguistic opportunities. Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the county. This means that, if the proposal were implemented, learners from Ysgol Nebo would continue to receive their education in Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Language Policy at Ysgol Llanllyfni. If the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that it would have a positive impact on the Welsh language from an educational perspective, as Ysgol Nebo learners would benefit from more opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of age-appropriate peers, both in class and socially. The alternative school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, serves areas that are strongholds of the Welsh language.	benefit from increased opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of peers in the classroom and socially. The alternative school, Ysgol Llanllyfni, serves areas that are strongholds of the Welsh language. At the same time, the Council acknowledges that there is a risk of a possible negative impact on the use of Welsh from a community perspective, and it is anticipated that some elements of community events may be affected, and consequently the use of Welsh within the community. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact arising from implementing the proposal, as parents/guardians/families would no longer meet daily within the Nebo community when dropping off/collecting children from school. It is therefore noted that mitigation measures could be considered, including promoting links between the Nebo community and activities at the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account its current community use.
Socio-economic Considerations	During the consultation, respondents expressed concern that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could have a disproportionate impact on families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly in relation to transport costs and accessibility, potentially increasing the risk of social exclusion. Respondents also emphasised the central role of the school within the community, contributing to community cohesion, reducing loneliness, and creating opportunities to engage with the Welsh language across age groups. During the statutory objection period, concerns expressed during the consultation regarding the potential loss of Ysgol Nebo as a community focal point were reiterated. Further concerns were raised about the potential impact on social inclusion, access to local community opportunities, and the ability of some residents to participate in activities or access facilities outside the local community.	Partially negative / Positive The Council's assessment is that there would be some negative impact, together with potential positive impacts, on this characteristic if the proposal were to be implemented. It is acknowledged that a negative impact could arise as a result of the loss of a school within the Nebo community and the challenges that this could present for some families and for the local community. However, the proposal is also anticipated to lead to positive outcomes by securing access to a broader educational provision,

	The Community Impact Assessment indicates that there would likely be some negative impact on the community if the proposal were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community and, from a deprivation perspective, would mean that one of the indicators, namely “access to services,” would become less accessible to local residents. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children within Ysgol Nebo’s catchment area already attend other schools, with many attending Ysgol Llanllyfni, which suggests that educational and community links with neighbouring communities are already well established. It is envisaged that the proposal would reduce social disadvantage by ensuring more experiences and diversity of learning, more resources and access to more services and activities.	additional social and educational opportunities in classes with age-appropriate peers, together with access to extended expertise and support. It is also noted that 78% of children within Ysgol Nebo’s catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, with 44% attending Ysgol Llanllyfni. This suggests that educational and community links between the catchment area and neighbouring communities already exist.
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, as well as their families. Children from military or ex-military families will get the same fair play whichever school they attend.	None
Human Rights	It is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have an impact on human rights.	None
Other	-	-

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

The assessment was updated following consideration of the responses to the statutory consultation. Following the statutory objection period, the assessment was reviewed further in order to consider the objections received and to assess whether they presented any additional relevant information in relation to equality.

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

We are not aware of any proposed policies that would impact on the children and young people of the area.

8. What does the proposal include to demonstrate you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equality of 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?

It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on the school's statutory duty to protect learners from any discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The aim is to promote equal opportunities and encourage the alternative school to continue to follow equality policies and procedures. Should the proposal be realised, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities when placed in Ysgol Llanllyfni since the learners would have learning experiences that are based on

national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

As 78% of children within Ysgol Nebo's catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, with 44% attending Ysgol Llanllyfni, educational and community links between the catchment area and Ysgol Llanllyfni already exist.

Nevertheless, should the proposal be implemented, opportunities for the school to build on its existing links with the catchment area of Ysgol Nebo will be promoted.

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework that was published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged between 3 and 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, that are all based on respect and trust on both sides, which is core to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships. By implementing the proposal, it is anticipated that learners would receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class.

During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, consultees raised concerns about the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children, particularly those with additional learning needs, emotional or social difficulties, or those who have experienced bullying or challenges in larger schools. It was noted that Ysgol Nebo provides an inclusive environment, small class sizes, and personalised support that are essential to the wellbeing and development of some learners. Concerns were expressed that moving to a larger school could reduce opportunities for individual attention, targeted support and wellbeing, increasing the risk of educational disengagement or a return to home education. It was also raised that longer travel distances, transport costs, and lack of access to private transport were likely to disproportionately affect poorer families or those without a car, increasing social exclusion.

In terms of community cohesion, respondents emphasised that the school is a focal point for the community, providing opportunities for the whole community—including older residents—to socialise, reduce loneliness and engage with the Welsh language. The Council acknowledges the concerns that have been expressed regarding travel costs and arrangements. Should the proposal be implemented, eligibility for free school transport would be assessed in accordance with Gwynedd Council's Education Transport Policy.

In relation to families from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, transport arrangements would be administered in line with the relevant policy to ensure that the cost or accessibility of transport does not act as a barrier to accessing education.

A number of responses called for ensuring that the voice of the child is taken into account, and that specific consideration is given to the impact on the wellbeing, mental health, and educational experience of vulnerable children.

The Council notes these issues and emphasises that equality, inclusion, and anti-discrimination policies are in place within both the current provision and at Ysgol Llanllyfni. As set out in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook, learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) are entitled to continue receiving the support specified in their Individual Development Plan (IDP), and the Authority has a duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements give priority to individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with ALN, should the school close.

The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding travel costs and arrangements. Should the proposal be implemented, eligibility for free school transport would be assessed in accordance with Gwynedd Council's Education Transport Policy. In relation to families from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, transport arrangements would be administered in line with the relevant policy to ensure that the cost or accessibility of transport does not act as a barrier to accessing education.

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.)

It is envisaged that implementing the proposal would reduce socio-economic inequality by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities in the alternative school. It is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities since the learners would have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

In the consultation responses, concerns were raised that the closure of Ysgol Nebo would have a disproportionate impact on families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly in relation to transport costs and accessibility, and the risk of increasing social exclusion for children from poorer households or those without access to a car. It was also noted that longer travel distances, lack of access to extracurricular activities, and the need for parents to accompany young children on public transport could create additional barriers for families already facing disadvantage.

During the statutory objection period, concerns were reiterated regarding the potential impact of the loss of Ysgol Nebo as a community resource and focal point. Additional emphasis was placed on the impact that the loss of local community activities and facilities could have on some residents, together with concerns that travelling to facilities outside the community may not be easy for everyone.

The Council notes these issues and notes that, should the school close, free transport would be provided for eligible learners in accordance with the county's school transport policy, which ensures that all primary learners living two miles or more from the catchment school or the nearest school are entitled to free transport. The policy also includes consideration of safe walking routes and individual needs where relevant.

The Community Impact Assessment indicates that there would likely be some negative impact on the community if the proposal were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community and, from a deprivation perspective, would mean that one of the indicators, namely "access to services," would become less accessible to local residents. However, it is noted that 78% of children within Ysgol Nebo's catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, with 44% attending Ysgol Llanllyfni, suggesting that educational and community links between the catchment area and neighbouring communities already exist.

In relation to families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's Education Transport Policy, ensuring that the cost or accessibility of transport does not act as a barrier to accessing education. Any potential impact on individual families would be considered where relevant. It is also noted that the School Essentials Grant is available to eligible families to assist with the costs of school uniform and other educational items.

By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Nebo would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education. It is anticipated that learners would benefit from having more age-related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

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?

Our expectation is that all learners in the county will develop balanced bilingualism and the relevant skills to enable them to be full members of the bilingual society of which they are a part. Any proposals to change local arrangements must therefore give full consideration to all linguistic impacts. Maintaining and increasing the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among learners will be a key consideration in developing the proposal.

Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the county, and all primary schools (with the exception of one) fall into Category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's school categorisation guidance for Welsh-medium provision. This means that, if the proposal were implemented, learners from Ysgol Nebo would continue to receive their education in Welsh and bilingually in line with the Language Policy at Ysgol Llanllyfni.

Through the consultation responses and the statutory objection period, strong concerns were expressed that closing Ysgol Nebo could lead to Welsh being treated less favourably than English, even though Welsh-medium educational provision would continue. Respondents emphasised that Ysgol Nebo provides an environment where Welsh is used naturally and socially on a daily basis, not only as a language of instruction, and that losing the school could significantly reduce such opportunities within the local community.

It was also noted that the school plays a key role in ensuring active opportunities to use Welsh, including through community events, social activities, Welsh-for-adults classes, and interaction between Welsh speakers and non-Welsh-speaking or newly arrived residents. Concerns were raised that closing the school could lead to the loss of these opportunities, weakening the status of Welsh as a living community language and potentially undermining the principle of not treating Welsh less favourably.

Attention was drawn to the risk that losing the school would reduce this type of active promotion of Welsh in the community, particularly as there is no alternative community centre in the area.

The Council notes the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Nebo in supporting community use of Welsh within the village and accepts that the comments highlight a potential adverse impact on local linguistic vitality outside formal educational provision.

However, based on the information available, the Council's view is that the proposed option is unlikely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' linguistic opportunities, for the following reasons:

- CYBLD data from January 2026 shows that 56% of Ysgol Nebo learners speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer places to learners at a nearby school (Ysgol Llanllyfni) means that learners from the Nebo catchment would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.

In the educational context, based on the above, it is anticipated that implementation of the proposed change would provide greater opportunities for learners from the Nebo catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger. At the same time, taking into account the consultation comments, the Council acknowledges that the option to close Ysgol Nebo could lead to a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered, including promoting the use of Welsh by involving the Nebo community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held there.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during both the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within the Nebo area, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not demonstrate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop their Welsh language skills within the educational setting.

The community impact assessment indicates that some negative impact on the community is anticipated if the option to close Ysgol Nebo were implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Nebo would result in the loss of a school within the Nebo community; however, the assessment notes that a significant proportion of children living within the school's catchment already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, and therefore a link between Ysgol Llanllyfni and the Ysgol Nebo community already exists.

If the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo were implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Llanllyfni. To mitigate the impact on the community, opportunities would be identified to ensure that the Nebo community is aware of activities at the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Llanllyfni and the Nebo community would be encouraged where appropriate. In addition, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Ysgol Llanllyfni could consider ways of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Nebo community in the school's community activities, as well as considering appropriate options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently taking place there, should the proposal be implemented.

The aim of Gwynedd's Education Language Policy is the same for all the county's primary schools, and all primary schools (with the exception of one school) fall within Category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's guidance on categorising schools according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that pupils of Ysgol Nebo would be able to continue receiving their education through the medium of Welsh and bilingually, in accordance with the Education Language Policy, at Ysgol Llanllyfni.

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?

Through the responses to the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the closure of Ysgol Nebo could have a long-term impact on the sustainability of the local community, particularly in terms of community cohesion, the use of Welsh within the community, and the attractiveness of the village to young families. Respondents emphasised the school's role as a social and linguistic focal point that supports social wellbeing, prevents loneliness, and facilitates collaboration and inclusion across the community, especially in an area without an alternative community centre. Attention was also drawn to the way in which the school contributes to several wellbeing goals by providing local access to education, community activities, and the natural, everyday use of Welsh for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the 7 well-being act goals and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

It is acknowledged that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, it may result in the closure of a school in the community, however a large number of the children living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Llanllyfni, and therefore there is already a link between the schools and the community of that school. Every effort will be made to mitigate any negative impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Llanllyfni. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Llanllyfni community activity includes the community, where appropriate.

The proposal would ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

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)?

No

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:

Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities when placed in an alternative school since the learners will have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Nebo would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education and allow access to more activities that are appropriate for their ability level. The learners would benefit from having more age-

related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

Significant Negative Impact:

It is recognised that the options proposed may have an impact on organisations within the community and on community cohesion, and it is anticipated that this will need to be mitigated by fostering links between the school and the community.

As a result of the comments submitted during the consultation, a potential negative impact was also identified for some vulnerable learners, including learners with ALN or emotional/social needs, due to concerns about losing the benefits of small class environments and personalised support, as well as the challenges of transitioning to a larger school if the proposal were implemented. In response to these concerns, the Council notes that, should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would focus on individual needs and the child's voice, with inclusion and equality policies in place at the alternative school, if the proposal were to be implemented.

The school (and its Governing Body) is responsible for implementing its equality policy, and the Authority, through its routine support and monitoring procedures, will ensure compliance.

During the statutory objection period, concerns previously raised during the statutory consultation were reiterated regarding the potential impact of the closure of the school on some vulnerable learners, including learners with ALN, learners with emotional or social needs, and learners who require a higher level of personal support. Further emphasis was placed on the impact that the loss of a small, safe and nurturing learning environment could have on the wellbeing and experiences of some of these learners. The assessment was reviewed in light of these comments, and it is not considered that they alter the conclusions set out in the assessment, although they do reinforce the importance of appropriate transition arrangements and individual support.

I4. Explain any intentional negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for operating in this way (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

I5. Will any of the negative impacts identified count as unlawful discrimination but they are unavoidable (e.g. budget cuts)?

Not applicable.

Note the reason for stating this and the justification for proceeding

Not applicable.

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?

Following the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, the Council has considered the comments received and has updated the Equality Impact Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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?

It is envisaged that the proposal would reduce socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities in the alternative school. Learners would receive more equal opportunities since the learners would have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Nebo would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education. The learners would benefit from having more age-related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

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?

It is anticipated that the proposal would have a positive impact on the Welsh language, as learners from Ysgol Nebo would benefit from increased opportunities to use Welsh with a wider range of peers both in class and socially.

The proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and offer places to learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni would ensure the continuation of Welsh-medium education in a school where the Welsh language is strong, with CYBLD data from January 2026 showing that 68% of learners at Ysgol Llanllyfni (compared with 56% at Ysgol Nebo) speak Welsh fluently at home. While the Council acknowledges concerns about the potential impact on community use of Welsh in Nebo, mitigation measures could be considered by strengthening community links with the alternative school and by exploring appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, should the proposal be implemented, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held there.

If the school were to close, the Local Authority and the Governing Bodies of the alternative schools could consider ways of promoting the social use of the Welsh language through extracurricular and community activities.

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 EqlA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqlA 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
-	-	-	-	-

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
Should the proposal be realised, we will monitor the impact of the closure of the school and endeavour to assist with any negative impact that may derive from the policy.	Continuous	Education Department	No

Appendix 7 – Comments from the Local Member

“As the Local Member, I have noted the content of the report and the objections submitted, and I continue to object to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo.

I acknowledge the challenges facing the school in relation to pupil numbers, surplus places and costs. However, it is important to note that the proposal to close the school has not arisen as a result of any shortcomings in the quality of education provided, and that the report itself acknowledges that learners at Ysgol Nebo make good progress within a small-class environment.

I continue to support the Governing Body’s alternative proposal to retain Ysgol Nebo as a mainstream school and to develop its role in providing nurturing provision for children requiring additional support. I believe that this presents an opportunity to build on the strengths of Ysgol Nebo and to develop provision that could deliver wider benefits for children across Gwynedd.

I am also concerned about the potential impact of closing the school on the Nebo community and on the Welsh language. The closure of a rural school is not a decision that can easily be reversed, and its implications extend beyond pupil numbers and the cost per learner alone.

For these reasons, I continue to object to the proposal to close Ysgol Nebo and ask the Cabinet to give further consideration to the alternative proposal before reaching its final decision.”

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Meeting Date: 15 September 2026
Cabinet Member: Cllr. Dewi Jones
Relevant Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart – Pennaeth Addysg
Item Title: Ysgol Baladeulyn – Objection Report

Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet Meeting

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked to consider the Objection Report, the summary of the statutory objections received during the objection period, and the responses provided to those objections, and after doing so, confirm finally the proposal issued through a statutory notice to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026, and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the requirements of the Welsh Government School Organisation Code (011/2018).

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet a report on the statutory objection period held following the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards.
- 2.2 The Statutory Notice was issued on 3 June 2026, commencing a statutory objection period. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026. 25 objections were received during this period. A petition was also presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn, objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures supporting the petition.
- 2.3 Following the receipt of statutory objections, an Objection Report was prepared in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Cabinet is requested to consider the Objection Report, the summary of the objections received, the Council's response to those objections, and all other relevant information, prior to deciding whether the proposal should be confirmed or not.

3. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was presented to the Cabinet on 11 February 2025, and a decision was made to allow the Education Department to commence formal discussions with the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn and other relevant stakeholders regarding possible options for the future of the school, in the context of the low numbers of learners attending the school and the concerns regarding its long-term sustainability.

- 3.2 Following these discussions and the evaluation work undertaken, a further report was presented to the Cabinet on 14 October 2025, where the decision to commence a statutory consultation period was approved, in accordance with Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards.
- 3.3 This report outlined the main challenges facing the school. These included low learner numbers over an extended period, a high percentage of surplus places, and the challenge of ensuring the educational and financial sustainability of the provision in the longer term. It was also noted that the local demographic situation and projections for future learner numbers had been considered as part of the process of appraising options for the school's future.
- 3.4 As previously noted, low learner numbers mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn is in a vulnerable position and faces a number of increasing challenges, including:
- **Low number of learners** – January 2026 PLASC data showed that there were 6 full-time learners and 2 Nursery learners attending Ysgol Baladeulyn. Since the January 2026 PLASC, those numbers have fallen further, and currently (September 2026) there are only 7 Reception to Year 6 learners and 0 Nursery learners on the school register. Note that this report uses January 2026 census data as the basis for analysis and comparisons, to ensure consistency throughout the document.
 - **High percentage of surplus places** – With 6 learners (Reception to Year 6) on the school's register, and a capacity for 55, there are 49 surplus places at the school, which is equivalent of 89% of the school's capacity. The school also has capacity for 7 learners in the Nursery class, therefore, with 2 Nursery class learners on the register, there are also a further 5 surplus places in the Nursery class. As a result, when including Nursery - Year 6 capacity and numbers together, Ysgol Baladeulyn has 54 (87%) surplus places.
 - **Small class sizes and a broad age range** – In Ysgol Baladeulyn (September 2025), there is one single class that includes every learner at the school – namely 6 learners from Reception to Year 6 (Reception, Yr.1 and 2, and Yr. 4 and 5) together with 2 Nursery class learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at various times of the day, with teaching assistants leading activities for the youngest learners. Therefore, this means there is an age range of up to 8 years within the whole class.
 - **Projected numbers** – The September 2025 projections suggest that the number of learners will remain low over the next three years, with a projection of 7 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 1 Nursery learner on the register by September 2028.
 - **Catchment area learners** – January 2026 data shows that 8 children live in the Baladeulyn catchment area. Of these, 25% (2 children) choose to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn, while 75% (6 children) choose to attend schools outside the catchment area.
 - **Ysgol Baladeulyn receives an additional sum to the core financial allocation** – Ysgol Baladeulyn receives an additional amount to the usual allocation via the minimum staffing protection policy (which ensures at least a headteacher and a teacher at each school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with fewer than 15 full-time learners). The total additional funding for the 2026–27 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2025) is £74,446.
 - **Average cost per learner** – The average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn in 2026–27 financial year is £25,123 compared with the county average of £5,998.

4. THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Following the Cabinet's decision on 14 October 2025, a statutory consultation was held on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027

onwards. The consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026, ensuring compliance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

- 4.2 A statutory consultation document, an impact assessment pack (including impact assessments on the Welsh language, the community, equality, various travel arrangements, quality and standards of education, and the Well-being of Future Generations Act), a background pack, response forms, and a consultation document and questionnaires for children and young people were published on the Council's website. The documentation was distributed to all relevant consultees via email which included a link to a dedicated page on the Council's website [Statutory Consultation: Ysgol Baladeulyn](#), and hard copies were provided upon request.
- 4.3 Consultees were invited to submit comments by completing an online response form, a paper or electronic copy (PDF), or by email/letter.
- 4.4 A drop-in session was held during the consultation period for staff, parents and governors of Ysgol Baladeulyn. The purpose of the session was to share information about the proposal and the consultation process, and to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions about the proposal or the process. 12 people attended the drop-in session.
- 4.5 Separate consultation sessions were arranged for representatives of learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn, with an independent facilitator hosting the sessions. The purpose of these sessions was to gather learners' views on the proposal. A child and young people-friendly version of the consultation document was available on the Council's website to ensure that every learner had an opportunity to contribute, even if they had not attended the session at their school. A summary of the matters raised during the consultation with children and young people is included in Section 3 of the Consultation Report, which was published on the Council's website www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

4.6 Responses to the Consultation

- 4.7 A total of 30 written responses were received to the statutory consultation, including a response from Estyn. The comments received referred to the following matters

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Comments about the school | • Capacity, local demography and catchment arrangement |
| • Comments on the proposal | • Financial implications |
| • Impact on learners | • Comments on the consultation documentation and the statutory process |
| • The Welsh language | • Alternative options |
| • Additional Learning Needs | |
| • Transport, travel and safety implications | |
| • The local community and families | |

4.8 Consultation Report

- 4.9 Following the end of the consultation period, a Consultation Report was prepared summarising the responses received and the Council's response to them.
- 4.10 The Consultation Report was presented to the Cabinet on 19 May 2026, and the Cabinet considered the comments and alternative options received during the consultation period. The Consultation Report is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation
- 4.11 Following consideration of the relevant information, the Cabinet decided to approve the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol

Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, thereby commencing the statutory objection period during which any individual could object to the proposal within 28 days of the publication date of the notice.

4.12 Other alternative options suggested during the statutory consultation

4.13 The School Organisation Code 011/2018 states that consultees may suggest other alternative options as well as comments on the specific proposal during the statutory consultation process.

4.14 A number of alternative options were suggested during the consultation. Some of the respondents suggested re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream and ALN “hybrid” primary school to provide a hybrid education model whereby primary learners in the local area could attend Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream school and/or access to specialist ALN education provision.

4.15 This proposal, together with the other alternative options presented during the consultation, was considered as part of the options appraisal undertaken by the Council. However, following the appraisal of these options, it was concluded that neither this option, nor the other alternatives, would address the challenges facing the school identified in paragraph 3.4 above. As a result, these options were not considered to provide a sustainable long-term solution for educational provision.

4.16 It was therefore concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards remained the most appropriate option to address the challenges noted. Further details regarding the options considered and the reasons for these conclusions can be found in Sections 6 and 7 of the Consultation Report, together with the options appraisal published as part of the statutory process. The Consultation Report is available on the Council’s website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

5. STATUTORY OBJECTION PERIOD

5.1 In accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd’s Cabinet decision on 19 May 2026, a statutory notice was published in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and School Organisation Code 011/2018, commencing a statutory 28-day objection period on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards.

5.2 The statutory notice was published on 3 June 2026 and posted by the main entrance of Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn, in accordance with the School Organisation Code 011/2018. The notice was also issued on the Council’s website and electronic copies were distributed to the consultees and relevant stakeholders, as required by the Code. The relevant parties received notice of the objection period and procedure, and the notice made clear that anybody could object to the proposal and explained how to do so. A copy of the statutory notice and the related documents are available on the Council’s website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

5.3 The objection period ended on 30 June 2026. 25 objections were received during the statutory objection period.

5.4 A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn, objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures. The petition called on the Council to reconsider the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn, giving full consideration to the long-term impacts of the proposal on learner wellbeing, the sustainability of the local

community and the Welsh language. It questioned whether all other realistic options, such as federation or collaboration with other schools, had been fully explored before a final decision is made.

- 5.5 Reference was also made to the school's role as an important part of the local community, its contribution to sustaining the Welsh language, and concerns about the impact that closing the school would have on the community and its future.
- 5.6 In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code, the Cabinet must consider an Objection Report summarising the objections received and the Council's response to those objections, prior to making a final decision on the proposal. The Objection Report, attached as Appendix 1, summarises the objections received and sets out the Council's response to the matters raised.
- 5.7 Overview of the Objections Received**
- 5.8 A high-level overview is provided below of the main themes raised by the objectors.
- 5.9 The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. Among the main themes raised were the quality of education and learners' experiences currently provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the potential impact of the proposal on this; the emotional impact of the proposal on learners, staff and local families; the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language; the impact of the proposal on transport and travel arrangements; the impact on the local community and its future; objections to the proposal and calls for it to be reconsidered; alternative options; and challenges to the statutory process and the basis of the proposal.
- 5.10 Many of the objections expressed concern about the potential impact of the proposal on the welfare, education and experiences of learners in a larger school, the future of the Welsh language as a living language in the Nantlle area, the sustainability of the local community and travel arrangements to the alternative school. Concerns were also noted regarding implications of the proposal on families alongside the risk of losing families in the community, and the value of the school as an educational and community centre. Matters relating to admission arrangements, the future of rural communities and schools, and comments regarding the statutory process were also raised.
- 5.11 A significant number of objectors also called on the Council to reconsider the proposal, stop or postpone the process in order to allow more time to find a solution or a sustainable plan for the school's future, questioning if all options have been fully considered before making a final decision.
- 5.12 In order to present the objections in a structured manner, the matters raised have been grouped in the Objection Report under eight themes and a range of sub-themes. These themes have been listed below. The Objection Report includes a summary of the statutory objections received together with the Council's response to those objections.
- 5.13 The Objection Report organises the matters raised under the following themes and sub-themes:

Theme 1: Education and Learner Experiences at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and the Impact of the Proposal on the Current Provision

- 1.1 The high quality of the education provided
- 1.2 An inclusive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging
- 1.3 Educational experiences and personal development beyond the classroom
- 1.4 Moving to an education provision in a larger school (Ysgol Talysarn), and how that compares with the existing provision

Theme 2: The Emotional Impact of the Proposal on Learners, Staff and Local Families

- 2.1 The emotional impact of the proposal on learners
- 2.2 The emotional impact of the proposal on school staff and families

Theme 3: The Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language

- 3.1 The school's role in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area
- 3.2 The impact of the proposal on progress towards county and national aims
- 3.3 The impact of the proposal on the future of the Welsh language in the community

Theme 4: The Impact of the Proposal on Transport and Travel Arrangements

- 4.1 Eligibility for free transport to the alternative school
- 4.2 The impact of new travel arrangements on the well-being of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners

Theme 5: The Local Community and the Impact of the Proposal on its Future

- 5.1 The school as a community focal point
- 5.2 The school's contribution to the identity and well-being of the community
- 5.3 The role of the school when supporting families in a rural area with limited services
- 5.4 The impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of the community
- 5.5 The demography of the local area
- 5.6 The impact of the proposal on families and attractiveness of the local area

Theme 6: Objections to the Proposal and Calls to Reconsider

- 6.1 Objections to the proposal
- 6.2 A call to keep the school open, prevent or reconsider the proposal

Theme 7: Alternative Options

- 7.1 To ask to give full consideration to alternative options
- 7.2 A restoration plan for small schools
- 7.3 The sustainability and the funding policy of small schools

Theme 8: Challenges to the Statutory Process and the Basis of the Proposal

- 8.1 Criticism on the basis of the proposal
- 8.2 The impact of the proposal on the alternative school and nearby schools
- 8.3 The Council's implementation of the statutory process
- 8.4 Challenging the lawfulness of the proposal and the post use of the site
- 8.5 The adequacy of the consultation documents
- 8.6 The adequacy of the impact assessments
- 8.7 Direction of wider education policies and direction of Modernising Education in Gwynedd
- 8.8 Challenge the admission policy that allows parents to choose their child's school

6. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RECOMMENDING THE 'DECISION SOUGHT'

- 6.1 In accordance with the 'Primary Education of the Best Quality for the Children of Gwynedd' strategy, a number of factors were considered when evaluating the options for the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn.
- 6.2 These factors were considered in detail in the report presented to the Cabinet on 14 October 2025, and in the statutory consultation document thereafter. A summary of the impact of the proposal on these factors has been included in Appendix 2, using the latest official data available.
- 6.3 Objections were received during the statutory objection period, and they were analysed and considered in full by the Council. The summary of the objections received, together with the Council's response to the matters raised, have been included in the Objection Report (Appendix 1).
- 6.4 Having considered the 25 objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the petition including 500 signatures presented by the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn, and all the relevant information, evidence and relevant assessments, the Authority is still of the opinion that implementing the proposal is the most appropriate response to the reasons for developing the proposal, namely the challenges outlined in section 3.4 of this report. It is considered that the other options considered during the process, including federation, would not adequately address the main challenges facing the school. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the following factors were considered when reaching this conclusion:

6.4.1 Quality and Standards of Education

According to the most recent Estyn reports, the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, offers an education of a minimally equivalent quality and standard to that currently provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

The alternative school offers education of at least equal quality, providing learners with more opportunities for collaborating and socialising with their peers, and enables the learners to take advantage of a broader range of curricular and extracurricular experiences.

Although learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn make good progress in small classroom environments, the Council is of the opinion that implementing this proposal would give learners an opportunity to be taught in peer groups with much less of an age range and an opportunity to improve the educational and social experience of the learners, on a daily basis.

The needs of any vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, would be assessed and implemented in line with the Authority's policy and procedures.

6.4.2 The need for places and the impact on school accessibility

Learners would be taught in classrooms of a more suitable size than the current situation. Implementing the proposal would lead to better consistency in class sizes and reduce the age range within primary school classes in the area.

Based on the January 2026 PLASC figures, it is predicted that in September 2026 there will be 4 surplus places (and 3 surplus places for the Nursery) at Ysgol Talysarn. Based on this information, it is anticipated that Ysgol Talysarn will have sufficient capacity for the current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live in the Baladeulyn catchment area. It is acknowledged that, if all Ysgol Baladeulyn learners were to decide to transfer to Ysgol

Talysarn, it is possible that the number of learners would exceed the capacity. Should this happen, the Local Authority would deal with admission applications in accordance with its School Admissions Policy and would comply with the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code.

Ysgol Talysarn is a Welsh-medium Category 3 school, like Ysgol Baladeulyn.

6.4.3 Education Resources and other financial implications

Implementing the proposal would rationalise the cost per learner in schools and reduce the range in cost per learner across Gwynedd's primary schools. It is estimated, based on the 2026-27 budget, that realising the proposal would result in a cost per learner of £5,883 at Ysgol Talysarn compared to the £25,123 per learner present at Ysgol Baladeulyn. The county average for the same period is £5,998 per learner.

It is estimated that the implementation of the proposal would lead to an annual saving of approximately £120,000 in revenue costs, having considered additional transport costs of up to £30,000 per year. The estimate of the transport costs is based on the assumption that all the children in Ysgol Baladeulyn's catchment area who would be eligible for transport under the Authority's current transport policy would attend Ysgol Talysarn.

The proposal would also remove the need for additional funding of £74,446 which is currently allocated to Ysgol Baladeulyn through the Minimum Staffing Protection Policy. Learners would be taught in a school where the number of learners and the projections are more robust and sustainable for the future, making more effective use of the Authority's educational and financial resources.

6.4.4 Specific factors when considering school closures

During the engagement process and holding local discussions with the school's relevant stakeholders, several possible options for the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn, including federation, were considered. These options were assessed and weighed up against the factors in the "Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd" Strategy. During the statutory consultation period, additional options were put forward by stakeholders, which were considered as part of the process of producing the Consultation Report. As a result, this options appraisal was updated from the Consultation Report and the supporting documentation (See Appendix 5).

Having held the objection period, the Authority is still of the opinion that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is the most appropriate response to the reasons noted for the proposal, namely the challenges outlined in Section 5 of the Statutory Consultation Document (Appendix 6). The evaluation concluded that none of the other options considered during the process, including federation, provide a sustainable answer to those challenges. In producing and appraising the options, consideration was given to the specific factors when considering a school closure, as noted in the School Organisation Code. The consideration given to these factors is summarised below:

a. Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option.

Specific consideration was given to the possibility of establishing a multi-site school as part of the options appraisal process. The evaluation concluded that the multi-site school would not sufficiently respond to the fundamental challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. There is no evidence that the arrangement would lead to a meaningful increase in the number of learners nor to a change in the current pattern of high surplus places at the Ysgol Baladeulyn site. As a result, the organisation of small classes, the low projected numbers and the associated financial challenges would continue, without

ensuring the long-term sustainability of the provision. Based on the appraisal, it was concluded that this option would not address the challenges facing the school noted in section 3.4 above.

b. Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative.

A broad range of alternative options were considered as part of the process, including federating with a nearby school, federating along with establishing a specialist unit, establishing an additional learning needs unit, establishing a language centre, and developing other specialist educational materials on the site. The appraisal concluded that there was no clear evidence that these options would increase the numbers of learners or address the challenges associated with small classrooms, a broad age range, significant surplus places and the financial sustainability of the school. Based on the evaluation, it was concluded that this option would not address the challenges facing the school, as noted in section 3.4 above.

c. Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored.

Consideration was given to using the school as a community centre and for opportunities to co-locate other services, such as a language centre or unit on the site. It was concluded that none of these options would provide a sustainable solution as there was no evidence that they would lead to an increase in the number of learners nor address the challenges associated with significant surplus places, small classes, a broad age range and the financial sustainability of the school. Options that would include providing specialist services or provision at the site were also considered, however it was not concluded that these would address the main challenges noted.

d. The overall effect of closing the school on the local community (including the loss of school-based facilities which are used by the local community).

A Community Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposal, in accordance with the School Organisation Code. The assessment was updated following the end of the statutory consultation period and was reviewed and further updated following the statutory objection period to consider the information and additional comments received during the process. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

During the statutory consultation and objection period, it was noted that the school invites the community to the school for activities within and outside of school hours such as coffee evenings, presentations by the children and assemblies. Concerns were expressed in regard to the potential impact of losing the school as a community focal point on community cohesion, vitality and sustainability.

The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is implemented, as this would lead to losing a school within the community of Nantlle as a community focal point. The concerns raised during the consultation and statutory objection period regarding the implications of this on the vitality of the community are acknowledged, such as the activities that are held at the school, and the opportunities for families and local residents to interact. The comments received regarding Ysgol Baladeulyn as the focal point of the community and the emotional impact of the proposal on the wider community, as well as concerns about the long-term negative impact on the sustainability of the community if the school were to close were also noted. However, it is noted that a significant percentage of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Talysarn community, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to move forward with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would try

to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities of the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that should a decision to close the school be made, the Authority's Post-use Policy would act as a framework to undertake further discussions regarding appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to try to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area as well as Plas Trigonos Baladeulyn.

e. How parents' and learners' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported.

If the proposal were to be implemented, the Council would work with parents, carers and Ysgol Talysarn to ensure appropriate transition arrangements for the learners. The options appraisal noted that Ysgol Talysarn offers classes of a more suitable size and a broader range of social and educational opportunities for the learners. If the proposal were implemented, appropriate support would be provided to ensure that the transition takes place as smoothly as possible and that learners can take full advantage of the opportunities available at the alternative school.

7. THE PRESUMPTION AGAINST THE CLOSURE OF RURAL SCHOOLS

- 7.1 The School Organisation Code 011/2018 establishes a procedural presumption against closing rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school cannot be closed, but that the case to close it must be strong and that all other viable alternatives have been considered conscientiously, including federation. Ysgol Baladeulyn has been designated as a rural school for the purpose of the Code and therefore these additional requirements apply to the proposal.
- 7.2 In addition to the factors that are relevant when developing any proposal, the Code makes it mandatory that the Authority must undertake specific assessments in relation to proposals to close rural schools. Several impact assessments have been undertaken and reviewed in relation to this proposal, including an:
- Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travelling Arrangements
 - Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community
 - Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education
- 7.3 In accordance with the requirements of the Code, further impact assessments were conducted of the proposal, the other reasonable options noted in the Consultation Document, along with the additional options presented during the statutory consultation period and considered as part of the Consultation Report. When carrying out those assessments, consideration was given to any relevant additional information received during the consultation, and the assessments were updated where appropriate in order to reflect this information. This additional information did not lead to a change to the conclusions of the impact assessments. A summary of the main findings is provided below.
- 7.4 The conclusion of the assessment of the likely impact on the quality and standards of education indicate that the educational provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn is of a minimally equivalent standard to that currently provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn. The assessment states that implementing the proposal would provide more opportunities for learners to be taught in relevant age groups with their peers and to benefit from a wider range

of educational and social experiences. As a result, the assessment concludes that the likely impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of education would be neutral or partially positive.

- 7.5 The assessment of the likely impact on travel arrangements concluded that the proposal would have a negative impact on the existing travel arrangements of some Ysgol Baladeulyn learners, as they would need to travel further to school. Ysgol Talysarn is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn. However, the assessment does not envisage that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would have to travel an unreasonable distance to school or use routes deemed dangerous, and school transport would be provided in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Education Transport Policy where applicable. The assessment also notes that the proposal would result in additional transport costs for the Authority of up to £17,000 per annum based on the current numbers, and up to £30,000 per annum if there were an increase in the number of learners eligible for school transport.
- 7.6 The assessment of the likely impact on the community concluded that implementing the proposal would have a negative impact on the Nantlle community, as it would lead to the loss of the school as a local community resource and focal point. The concerns raised during the consultation and the statutory objection period regarding the implications of this on the vitality of the community, such as the activities that will be held at the school and the opportunities for families and local residents to interact, are acknowledged. The comments received regarding Ysgol Baladeulyn as the centre of the community and the emotional impact of the proposal on the wider community, as well as concerns about the long-term negative impact on the sustainability of the community if the school were to close, were also noted. However, the assessment notes that a significant percentage of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), and therefore that educational and community links with the surrounding area have already been established. If the proposal were to be implemented, the Council would try to mitigate the impact on the community by supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the community of the alternative school, and consider appropriate post-use options for the school site in accordance with the Authority's policies. It is also noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.
- 7.7 The Education Department is still of the opinion, that after holding the objection period and considering all the relevant information presented during the statutory period, that none of the alternative options considered, including federation and the other options presented by stakeholders, would adequately address the main challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn. These challenges include low learner numbers over an extended period, a high percentage of surplus places, a high cost per learner compared to the county's average, and projections that show that learner numbers will remain low in future. In addition, the alternative options considered would neither increase the number of learners nor provide a sustainable answer to the demographic and operational challenges facing the school in the medium and long term.

8. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 In addition to the assessments undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code in relation to the presumption against the closure of a rural school, a number of other impact assessments were carried out as part of the statutory process. The Community Impact Assessment, Welsh Language Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and Well-being of Future Generations Act Impact Assessment were updated following the statutory consultation and reviewed further following the statutory objection period in order to consider any additional information and issues raised during the process. Where appropriate, these assessments were updated to reflect the additional information received. The findings of these assessments are considered to remain current and relevant, as no additional information received during the objection period altered the conclusions reached. These assessments are included in Appendix 3 (Impact Assessments), and a summary of their key findings is provided below.

8.2 The Welsh Language Impact Assessment

- 8.3 An impact assessment was held on the Welsh Language, and was reviewed following the statutory consultation. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.
- 8.4 During the statutory consultation, it was noted that the school provides excellent Welsh-medium education and creates an environment where children speak Welsh confidently and naturally, strengthening the language as the main social as well as educational medium. It was expressed that the school plays an important role in integrating new families, including some from English-speaking backgrounds, into the Welsh-speaking life of the village. It was emphasised that the school contributes significantly to the use of the Welsh language in informal contexts, through social meetings, play after school and interaction between parents and local residents.
- 8.5 The Council acknowledges that these concerns have been reiterated and strengthened during the statutory objection period, particularly in relation to Ysgol Baladeulyn's role in sustaining and promoting the Welsh language as a living language within the local community of Nantlle. It was also noted the concern raised by some objectors that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use the Welsh language on a daily basis and weaken the process of inter-generational transmission, and this would pose a significant potential risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle area, which goes against the objectives of Cymraeg 2050.
- 8.6 The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight a possible detrimental impact on local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision.
- 8.7 However, based on the information available, the Council's view is that the proposed option is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons:
- The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn.
 - The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
 - It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers.
- 8.8 In the educational context, based on the above, if the proposed option were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger.
- 8.9 At the same time, taking into account the comments of the consultation and the statutory objection period, the Council recognises that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to a possible negative impact on the use of the Welsh language within the local community, especially from the point of view of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there may be some negative impact arising from the implementation of the proposal, as parents/guardians/families and local residents would not meet daily in the Nantlle community when dropping off/collecting children from school or during school activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities within school hours and outside school hours such as concerts, presentations and assemblies. However, it is noted that mitigating measures could be considered by promoting

the use of the Welsh language by including the Baladeulyn community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the subsequent use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held there.

8.10 In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and objection period. Although it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a possible negative effect on some aspects of community use of the Welsh language within the Nantlle area, the Council is of the opinion that the evidence available does not demonstrate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision, or on the opportunities for learners to use and develop their Welsh within the educational provision.

8.11 Equality Impact Assessment

8.12 An equality impact assessment was held on the proposal, and the assessment was reviewed following the statutory consultation, and again following the statutory objection period. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

8.13 The assessment focuses on different equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. The assessment notes the current situation and shows that policies and procedures are in place which will ensure that the proposal considers and is in accordance with equal rights.

8.14 As stated in the latest assessment, during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, some specific concerns were identified from an equality perspective; especially regarding vulnerable children, learners with Additional Learning Needs; families who experience a socio-economic disadvantage or the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. Concern was expressed that moving some learners to a larger school could reduce the level of personal support currently available to them and reference was made to a possible negative impact on learners' well-being when transferring to the alternative school, also referring concern to the effect of longer journeys on learners' well-being. Comments referred to other possible effects such as additional fuel costs or lack of access to private transport and some families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage may be disproportionately affected. Concern was raised that the loss of the school could undermine the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language naturally in the community, posing a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle area.

8.15 It is stated in the assessment that the Council recognises the issues raised and emphasises that equality and inclusion policies are active in the current provision and at Ysgol Talysarn. Furthermore, it is noted that the Council undertakes to give priority to individual needs, including vulnerable children and learners with Additional Learning Needs, should the school close. With regard to the concerns regarding community use of the Welsh language, it is noted that mitigation measures would be considered, including promoting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school through community activities, and by considering appropriate options for the subsequent use of the school building in order to support continued use of the Welsh language in the local community, if the proposal were to be implemented.

8.16 Having weighed up the relevant factors, including the responses to the statutory consultation and the objection period, the Council acknowledges that some respondents have identified a possible negative impact on certain protected groups, including vulnerable learners, learners with Additional Learning Needs, and families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Specific concerns were also noted regarding a possible impact on the use of the Welsh language within the local community, especially from the point of view of its informal use outside the educational context. However, based on the general equality assessment, the evidence set out in the related

impact assessments, and the mitigation measures described, the Council remains of the opinion that the proposal is not likely to lead to a significant negative impact on equality features. It is noted that policies and procedures are already in place to ensure that there will be no illegal discrimination or harassment, and that individual needs are properly considered.

8.17 While it is acknowledged that there could be a potential negative impact in relation to socio-economic disadvantage should the proposal be implemented, the Council remains of the view that implementing the proposal would reduce inequality associated with socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have access to a broader range of experiences and to more services and activities in the alternative school, broader educational provision, additional social and educational opportunities, and access to extended expertise and support.

8.18 By implementing the proposal, Ysgol Baladeulyn's learners would have a better learning environment and the learners would benefit from having more age-related peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities. In addition, it is noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would continue to receive education in an alternative Welsh-medium Category 3 school, with more opportunities to use the language informally with peers, strengthening the vitality and natural use of the Welsh language among learners.

8.19 The Council would follow the usual procedures by supporting and monitoring, to ensure the compliance of every school with the equality characteristics, should the proposal be implemented.

8.20 The Well-being of Future Generations Act

8.21 An assessment was undertaken on the proposal against the Well-being Act, and the assessment was updated after the consultation period ended and reviewed once again following the statutory objection period. The 7 goals of the Well-being Act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it was concluded that the proposal met the requirements. The full assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

8.22 In the latest assessment, it is noted that the responses to the consultation and the objection period express specific concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on the well-being of learners, especially vulnerable learners and learners with Additional Learning Needs, as well as the well-being of families facing socio-economic disadvantage, and on the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

8.23 It is acknowledged that, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, the proposal would lead to the loss of a school in the Nantlle community. However, it is noted that a significant percentage of children who live within the school's catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that links with neighbouring communities, including the Talysarn community, already exist. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn, should the proposal be implemented. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will be held in order to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Talysarn's community activity includes the Nantlle community where appropriate.

8.24 It is also noted in the assessment, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, with the learners and their families, to ensure a smooth transition and to support the learners as they settle into their new schools. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with Additional Learning Needs, should the school close.

8.25 It is anticipated that the proposal will ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing opportunities to socialise and work with others, and giving them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

8.26 Compliance with Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011)

8.27 Building on the findings of the Impact Assessment on the Welsh Language and the Equality Impact Assessment outlined above, the Council confirms that the entire statutory process in relation to reviewing the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards 88-93 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. In accordance with Standards 88, 89 and 90, conscientious consideration was given to the potential effects that the policy decision could have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, including consideration of the potential positive and adverse effects, how the proposal could be formulated or modified to ensure more positive effects, and how any potential adverse effects could be minimised. In addition, in accordance with Standards 91, 92, and 93, views were sought and considered throughout the statutory consultation process regarding these linguistic effects, including views on how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to increase positive effects or reduce adverse effects on the Welsh language. These requirements have been supported by undertaking an Impact Assessment on the Welsh language, along with related impact assessments, including the Equality Impact Assessment, and it is noted that these assessments have been reviewed and updated following consideration of the responses received during the statutory consultation and were further reviewed in light of the objections submitted during the statutory objection period. These objections did not result in any change to the conclusions reached.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Having carefully considered the 25 objections, the petition containing 500 signatures, and all comments received during the statutory objection period, the Council remains of the view that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn represents the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school.

9.2 The Council acknowledges the concerns expressed by objectors, particularly in relation to the school's role within the local community, the community use of the Welsh language, and the potential impact on the future sustainability of the community. However, the evidence gathered through the statutory process demonstrates that Ysgol Baladeulyn faces significant challenges that are unlikely to be resolved without fundamental change to the provision.

9.3 In reaching this conclusion, consideration has been given to the information gathered during the consultation process and the statutory objection period, the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' Strategy, the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018, the procedural assumption against closing rural schools, the alternative options considered, together with the findings of the relevant impact assessments.

9.4 The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn addresses these challenges by:

- Responding to the challenge of low numbers of learners in Ysgol Baladeulyn, as well as projections that remain low, and the high percentage of surplus places;
- Offering classes of a more suitable size and age range;
- Improving opportunities for learners to socialise and work daily with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age;
- Reducing the cost per learner for all learners in the County.

9.5 On the basis of all the relevant information considered, including the comments received during the statutory consultation, and the objections received during the statutory objection period, the evaluation of the proposal and the alternative options, together with the Council's strategic direction, the Council confirms that it continues to be of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is the most appropriate response to the challenges facing the school (as stated in section 3.4), and therefore continues to be recommended as the most suitable way of tackling the challenges facing the school. Consequently, it is recommended that the Cabinet confirms the proposal.

10. RECOMMENDATION

10.1 Following consideration of the 25 objections and the petition with 500 signatures, it is recommended for the Cabinet to finally confirm the proposal issued through a statutory notice, which is to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for the learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027, in accordance with Section 53 of the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the requirements of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

11. NEXT STEPS AND TIMESCALE

11.1 Should the Cabinet decide to confirm the proposal, and if the proposal is not referred, the next steps and timescale are outlined below:

November – December 2026	The Council will work with the schools, the learners, the parents/carers and staff to plan and implement the necessary transitional arrangements. These arrangements would include supporting learners through the transition period to the alternative school, as well as addressing employment issues that may arise as a result of implementing the proposal, in line with the Council's relevant policies and procedures.
31 December 2026	Implement the proposal: Ysgol Baladeulyn officially closes, subject to the Cabinet's decision.

11.2 Subject to the Cabinet's decision, in accordance with section 54 of the 2013 Act, within 28 days of the Cabinet's decision, the following bodies can refer the proposal to Welsh Ministers for a decision:

- i. Another Local Authority affected by the proposals;
- ii. The appropriate religious body for any school affected;
- iii. The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school subject to proposals;
- iv. A trust holding property on behalf of a voluntary or established school subject to proposals;
- v. A further education establishment affected by the proposals.

11.3 The body making the referral will have to note why they believe that the decision made by the local authority is wrong. Welsh Ministers will decide whether the proposals affect the bodies and whether they need to consider the proposals.

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Objection Report

Appendix 2: Comparison of the impact of the proposal on the factors of the Strategy

Appendix 3: Impact Assessments

Appendix 4: [Statutory Notice](#)

Appendix 5: Consultation Report – [Agenda for The Cabinet 19/5/26 \(Item 7\)](#)

Appendix 6: [Statutory Consultation Document](#)

Appendix 7: Comments from the Local Member

13. Views of the statutory officers

The Monitoring Office:

“This report has been the subject of advice from Legal Services. No observations to add in relation to propriety.”

Head of Finance Department:

“It has been noted in previous reports that the situation at Ysgol Baladeulyn is not financially sustainable, given the empty places in the school. While respecting the views of the respondents, the situation has not changed from a fundamental long-term sustainability perspective. I support the decision sought.”

APPENDIX 1

Objection Report - September 2026

Proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn

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1. BACKGROUND

On 11 February 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet decided to allow the Education Department to hold formal discussions with the Ysgol Baladeulyn Governing Body and other relevant stakeholders regarding the future of the school, as a result of concerns regarding the number of learners at the school. Following this, a School Review Panel was established to consider the school's situation and a range of potential options for its future.

On 14 October 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet decided to support a recommendation to conduct a statutory consultation on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards.

The statutory consultation period was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026. During this period, stakeholders and the public had an opportunity to submit their views on the proposal. Following this, a Consultation Report was prepared to summarise the matters raised and provide the Council's responses to those matters.

The Consultation Report was submitted to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet on **19 May 2026**. After considering the contents of the report, the Cabinet decided to approve the issue of a statutory notice on the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The Statutory Notice was issued on 3 June 2026. The proposal issued through the statutory notice was a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn on 1 January 2027 onwards.

A copy of the statutory notice and the associated documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Schools Organisation Code, any individuals had an opportunity to object to the proposal during the statutory objection period. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026.

This report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's Schools Organisation Code and it summarises the objections received during the statutory objection period, as well as the Council's response to the main matters raised.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIONS AND THE MAIN THEMES

25 objections were received during the statutory objection period.

In addition, a petition was received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures. The petition called on the Council to reconsider the proposal to close Ysgol Gynradd Baladeulyn, giving full consideration to the long-term effects of the proposal on the well-being of pupils, the sustainability of the local community and the Welsh language. It was asked whether every other realistic option, such as federalisation or collaboration with other schools, have been fully explored before making a final decision. The issues raised in the petition are included within the relevant themes in Section 3 of the report, together with the Council's response to those issues.

The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. The most common themes were:

- the strengths of the existing educational provision and the advantages of a small school;
- the supportive, caring environment and the individual support provided to learners;
- the emotional and well-being impact of the proposal on learners, staff and families;
- the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and its sustainability in the community;
- the school's central role in the life and sustainability of the local community;
- calls to consider alternative options before closing the school; and
- an objection to the proposal and calls for it to be reconsidered.

The objections received raised several matters in relation to the proposal. The most common matters were the strengths of the existing provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn and the advantages of a small, rural school, the potential impact of the proposal on the well-being and experiences of learners, the impact of the proposal on the Welsh Language and its role within the local community, and the role of the school as a community focal point that contributes to the sustainability of the area. Reference was also often made to the emotional impact of the proposal on learners, staff and families, as well as concerns regarding travel arrangements and transferring to an alternative school. A significant number of objectors also called on the Council to reconsider the proposal and to give further consideration to alternative options that could enable the school to continue to serve the local community.

To present the objections clearly and systematically, the issues raised have been grouped under themes and sub-themes. The thematic contents list below sets out the structure of Section 3, where a summary of the statutory objections is presented under each theme and sub-theme, together with the Council's response to them.

Theme 1: Education and Learner Experiences at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and the Impact of the Proposal on the Current Provision

- 1.1 The high quality of the education provided
- 1.2 An inclusive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging
- 1.3 Educational experiences and personal development beyond the classroom
- 1.4 Moving to an education provision in a larger school (Ysgol Talysarn), and how that compares with the existing provision

Theme 2: The Emotional Impact of the Proposal on Learners, Staff and Local Families

- 2.1 The emotional impact of the proposal on learners
- 2.2 The emotional impact of the proposal on school staff and families

Theme 3: The Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language

- 3.1 The school's role in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area
- 3.2 The impact of the proposal on progress towards county and national aims
- 3.3 The impact of the proposal on the future of the Welsh language in the community

Theme 4: The Impact of the Proposal on Transport and Travel Arrangements

- 4.1 Eligibility for free transport to the alternative school
- 4.2 The impact of new travel arrangements on the well-being of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners

Theme 5: The Local Community and the Impact of the Proposal on its Future

- 5.1 The school as a community focal point
- 5.2 The school's contribution to the identity and well-being of the community
- 5.3 The role of the school when supporting families in a rural area with limited services
- 5.4 The impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of the community
- 5.5 The demography of the local area
- 5.6 The impact of the proposal on families and the attractiveness of the local area

Theme 6: Objections to the Proposal and Calls to Reconsider

6.1 Objections to the proposal

6.2 A call to keep the school open, prevent or reconsider the proposal

Theme 7: Alternative Options

7.1 To ask to give full consideration to alternative options

7.2 A restoration plan for small schools

7.3 The Sustainability and the Funding Policy of Small Schools

Theme 8: Challenges to the Statutory Process and the Basis of the Proposal

8.1 Criticism on the basis of the proposal

8.2 The impact of the proposal on the alternative school and nearby schools

8.3 The Council's implementation of the statutory process

8.4 Challenging the lawfulness of the proposal and the post-use of the site

8.5 The adequacy of the consultation documents

8.6 The adequacy of the impact assessments

8.7 Direction of wider education policies and direction of Modernising Education in Gwynedd

8.8 Challenge the admission policy that allows parents to choose their child's school

3. SUMMARY OF THE STATUTORY OBJECTIONS AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

In accordance with the requirements of Section 49 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, this section introduces a summary of the statutory objections received during the objection period and the Council's response to those objections. To facilitate the process of presenting the objections, they have been grouped under many themes and sub-themes.

Theme 1: Education and Learner Experiences at Ysgol Baladeulyn, and the Impact of the Proposal on the Current Provision

1.1 The high quality of the education provided

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections demonstrated a high level of confidence and support in the quality of the education provided at Ysgol Baladeulyn. The school is described as a supportive, caring and effective establishment that offers high-quality education in a close Welsh environment, and the school has a positive impact on the education, confidence and happiness of the children. This is reiterated by personal experience from former pupils who describe attending the school as a privilege.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the likely Impact of the proposal on Educational Quality and Standards was carried out and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The revised assessment acknowledges that the current performance of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been evaluated as 'Good' by Estyn, and that the current provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school. In the same context, the Council believes that the provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a more appropriate size and with a narrower age range, which may offer advantages to some learners. This could include greater opportunities for learning and socialising with peers of the same age. However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been based on broader evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and learner number projections that remain low in the medium and long term.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	The Assessment of the Impact on Educational Quality and Standards indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would likely have a neutral or partially positive impact on educational quality and standards. It is noted that the provision at the alternative school is at least equivalent to the current provision and enables some learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age.

1.2 An inclusive and supportive environment that fosters a sense of belonging

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections emphasised the inclusive, supportive and welcoming environment provided by Ysgol Baladeulyn. A view was expressed that the school had a close community that offered more than educational provision only, that it provided individual support to learners and a strong sense of belonging. Reference was made to the excellent advantages of a small and rural school, with some objectors stating that the sense of community and family was a unique and valuable feature of the existing provision. It was also noted that rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn provide a homely environment that is beneficial to learners. The school was described as an environment that helps children to thrive academically and personally. These views were reiterated by evidence of personal experience regarding the positive impact that the school had on the education, confidence and happiness of children, as well as some responders noting that the village's current children are happy at the school.	The Council notes the comments. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards, an Equality Impact Assessment, and a Well-being Impact Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. These assessments are available on the Council's website (www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation) as part of the documents published during the statutory process. The Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards note that, should the proposal be implemented, the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to provide access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experience.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	If the proposal were implemented, the needs of each learner would be considered individually when planning transition arrangements to Ysgol Talysarn. This would include consideration of the learners' emotional well-being, any additional support they may require, and the appropriate steps to help them become familiar with the school and the new learning environment.

1.3 Educational experiences and personal development beyond the classroom

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many objections drew attention to the valuable opportunities and the educational experiences by learners in a small school such as Ysgol Baladeulyn to develop personal skills beyond the classroom. The opinion that the size of the school allowed every child to receive attention and to fully partake in a broad range of activities and responsibilities was expressed. Reference was made to opportunities to serve on the School Council, take on roles at playtime, take part in public presentations and lead in school assemblies frequently. Some objectors stated that these experiences ensured that no child was excluded from opportunities and contributed significantly to developing confidence, self-respect and resilience. Attention was also drawn to special activities such as the local Eisteddfod held jointly with Ysgol Nebo, as well as outdoor activities and local trips, where it was noted that every child is encouraged and acknowledged for	The Council notes the comments. However, the Council does not consider that educational experiences and activities aimed at developing personal skills beyond the classroom are limited solely to small schools. Opportunities to participate in a range of activities such as presentations, assemblies, and eisteddfodau are also available in larger schools. Due to their size and higher number of learners, larger schools may be able provide learners with a broader range of resources, learning experiences, activities, and social opportunities to learners. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to its potential impact on learners through the impact assessments published as part of the statutory consultation process. These included an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards and an Equality Impact

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
their contribution, where it is noted that the experiences contribute to fulfilling the Curriculum for Wales purposes.	Assessment, together with other relevant assessments. These assessments are available on the Council's website (www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation) as part of the documents published during the statutory process. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards note that the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to offer access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experiences.

1.4 Moving to an education provision in a larger school (Ysgol Talysarn), and how that compares with the existing provision

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the possibility of transferring Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to a larger school, namely Ysgol Talysarn as the designated alternative school, questioning whether this would lead to an improvement in the quality of the educational provision. Some objectors stated that the size of the school in itself did not guarantee a better education, and they did not accept the assumption that a larger school would offer better educational results for learners. The view that the Council should provide clear evidence of how the proposal would maintain or improve the educational provision that was currently at Ysgol Baladeulyn was also expressed. There were further concerns relating to the possibility of losing some of the unique advantages of a small school. Reference was made to the individual	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the Likely Impact of the proposal on Educational Quality and Standards was undertaken and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. The revised assessment acknowledges that the current performance of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been evaluated as "Good" by Estyn and that the current provision offers a positive educational experience for the learners who currently attend the school. In the same context, the Council considers that the provision offered at Ysgol Talysarn, as the proposed alternative school, includes classes of a

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
support and the personal attention provided to learners, with some objectors arguing that there could be less capacity to provide the same level of support in a larger school. It was also noted that small schools offered a caring and nurturing environment that was difficult to re-create in larger settings, and particular concerns were expressed regarding the potential impact on learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), with some arguing that smaller classrooms and a small school environment was more beneficial to fulfil their needs. Reference was also made to the fact that small schools offer opportunities for every learner to take part in school activities and events. Although some responders acknowledged that experiences of large schools and small schools can be positive or negative, the overall objections reflected a concern regarding losing the advantages of the existing small school provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.	more appropriate size with a narrower age range, which could provide benefits for some learners. These include greater opportunities to learn and socialise with peers of the same age. However, it is noted that the review of the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn was undertaken because the school faces increasing challenges, including persistently low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, and learner projections that remain low in both the medium and long term. In addition, enrolment patterns within the catchment area show that the majority of learners choose to attend other schools. Based on a comparison of Estyn reports and an assessment of the options against the relevant criteria, the Assessment of the Impact on Educational Quality and Standards indicates that implementing the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn would likely have a neutral or partially positive impact on educational quality and standards. The assessment concludes that the provision at the alternative school is, at the very least, equivalent to the current provision and enables learners to be educated alongside a greater number of peers of the same age. In addition, the Council is not of the opinion that effective support for learners requiring additional assistance is limited solely to small schools. Every school has a responsibility to identify and respond to the needs of its learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), with access to relevant services and specialist expertise according to each learner's individual needs. Furthermore, larger schools, because of their size and higher numbers of learners, can provide a broader range of resources, learning experiences,

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	activities, and social opportunities, together with access to appropriate support and assistance tailored to their individual needs. Should the proposal be implemented, the Equality Impact Assessment and the Assessment of the Likely Impact on Educational Quality and Standards notes that the provision at Ysgol Talysarn is expected to offer access to a broader range of expertise, peers, and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' well-being, inclusion, and educational experience.

Theme 2: The Emotional Impact of the Proposal on Learners, Staff and Families

2.1 The emotional impact of the proposal on learners

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a significant concern regarding the emotional and well-being impact that the proposal could have on the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn. The view that the change could have a negative impact on the emotional well-being of some learners was expressed. Objectors stated that having to move from a small, familiar and supportive small school environment to a larger school could create a disruption for the learners. Reference was specifically made to the possibility of losing the personal support and the sense of belonging that they have from the existing provision. Concerns were also raised regarding the disruption that the change would cause to the children's daily lives, including the need to create new friends, familiarise with new staff and travel longer to school. It was emphasised that this transition period could be challenging for children and full consideration should be given to the potential impact on their well-being. A specific concern was also expressed regarding the timing of the proposal, with some noting	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Well-being of Future Generations Act Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal and was updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. In addition, the assessment was reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment notes that the Council recognises that, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, there may be some negative impact on learners' well-being during the transition period. If Ysgol Baladeulyn were to close, the local authority and the proposed alternative school would work closely with the closing school, learners, and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new school. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, together with appropriate

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
that moving schools in the middle of an academic year or before the Christmas holiday could exacerbate the emotional impact on learners.	support, would be able to mitigate negative effects and support the continuity of educational progress.

2.2 The emotional impact of the proposal on school staff and families

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections drew attention to the significant emotional impact that the proposal could have on staff, learners, families and the wider community. The view that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could cause great sadness amongst those who have personal and professional links to the school, including staff members who have served the school over long periods, was expressed. Some objectors referred to the feeling of uncertainty created by the proposal, noting that it had already had an impact on personal and professional decisions. Concern was also expressed that the impact of the proposal on staff posts and employment had received enough attention during the decision-making process. Objectors also emphasised the harmful impact that the proposal could have on local families, noting that many families had a long-standing connection with the school, with many generations having attended over the years. It was noted closing the school would create a sense of loss and sadness amongst the families and residents here, and some believed that the emotional implications for the community had been fully considered.	The Council notes the comments. Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 be implemented, it is acknowledged that there could be staffing implications that could result in redundancies, as the current posts would end if the school were to close. Throughout the statutory process, the Council has communicated clearly and openly with the staff of Ysgol Baladeulyn. Staff and Trade Union representatives were consulted specifically as part of the statutory consultation period. During the consultation, a drop-in session was held with representatives from the Council's Human Resources service available for any member of school staff who wished to discuss their situation. Staff were also encouraged to contact Human Resources directly at any time if they wished to have a one-to-one discussion. It is noted that any redundancies arising from the proposal would be required to comply with relevant employment law and the Gwynedd Redundancy Scheme. In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), an Assessment of the Likely Impact on the Community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	was undertaken and updated following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. Additionally, the assessment was reviewed and updated further following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. It is acknowledged that, should the Cabinet decide to proceed with confirming the proposal, it would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of learners living within the school's catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), and it is therefore concluded that community and educational links with neighbouring communities, including the Talysarn community, already exist. If the proposal were to be implemented, every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. If the proposal were to be implemented, discussions will be held regarding the possibility of ensuring that Ysgol Talysarn's community activities include the Nantlle community where appropriate. Furthermore, it is noted that if the proposal to close the school were to be implemented, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would provide the framework for undertaking further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area, as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.

Theme 3: The Impact of the Proposal on the Welsh Language

3.1 The role of the school in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A significant number of the objections emphasised the key role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in maintaining and promoting the Welsh language in the Nantlle area. Objectors expressed the fact that the school provided an environment where the Welsh language was used naturally as a live language from day to day, supporting linguistic development and strengthening the use of the Welsh language amongst children and local families. Reference was also made to the role of the school as an important centre for the Welsh language, the local community and the Welsh culture. Objectors noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn played a central role in the community life and contributed to maintaining a rural Welsh community, expressing concern that losing the provision could lead to less opportunities for individuals to use, develop and maintain their Welsh skills.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Linguistic Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking into full account of the comments and matters raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The revised Welsh Language Impact Assessment acknowledges the concerns expressed by respondents regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn on the use of the Welsh language within the community. Numerous comments received during the statutory consultation and objection period noted that the school makes a significant contribution to the use of Welsh in informal settings, such as social gatherings, after-school play activities, and interaction between parents and local residents. It was also expressed that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh on a daily basis and weaken the intergenerational transmission of the language, which could pose a significant risk to the sustainability of Welsh in the Nantlle area. The Council acknowledges that the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that some negative effects could arise from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis within the Nantlle community when dropping off and collecting

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	children from school or during school activities. However, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered such as promoting the use of Welsh through the inclusion of the Nantlle community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as by considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held there. In the educational context, the Council is of the view that the proposal is unlikely to have a negative effect on Welsh-medium education provision or learners' linguistic opportunities for the following reasons: • The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a broader group of their peers. • It is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners to use Welsh informally with their peers outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the informal use of the language would be stronger.

3.2 The impact of the proposal on progress towards county and national aims

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections argued that the proposal could have a negative impact on progress towards county and national aims relating to promoting and increasing the use of the Welsh language. The view that Ysgol Baladeulyn is located in an area that is considered to be a Welsh language stronghold, and that local schools are an important part of the linguistic infrastructure that maintains Welsh communities, was expressed. It was also noted that rural schools act as community and linguistic anchors that contribute to the sustainability and resilience of local communities, and it was argued that closing the school could be contrary to the objectives of the Council and the Welsh Government to increase the number of Welsh speakers and strengthen the use of the Welsh language in local communities. Some objectors specifically referred to the Cymraeg 2050 national target of reaching a million Welsh speakers, expressing the view that closing a school in a Welsh area would undermine progress towards that aim. Reference was also made to the views that emphasised the importance of supporting Welsh schools in rural areas to protect cultural heritage and ensure local access to education.	As above (see response 3.1) Additionally, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment notes the following: During the statutory objection period, a strong opinion was expressed by some objectors that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn goes against the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 aim because Ysgol Baladeulyn services an area that is one of the strongholds of the Welsh language, and losing the school would lead to a gradual decline in the use of Welsh. The integral role rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn have in sustaining and promoting local culture and the Welsh language in rural communities was emphasised. Concern was expressed that losing the school could lead to reduced opportunities to use the Welsh language naturally within the community, with reference to the school's activities where local residents and families can interact. It is noted that any discussions relating to reorganisation need to note the Welsh Government's effort to reach the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050. The Council acknowledges, should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected. The Council acknowledges that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to a possible negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, especially in terms of its use as a community language outside of the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection from school or during the school's activities. In order to mitigate any negative impacts, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of the Talaerau Federation (the Federation of Ysgol Talysarn

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	and Ysgol Brynaerau) could consider approaches to promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Nantlle community in the school's community activities. In addition, should the proposal be implemented, the Authority would need to consider options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held at the school. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn. In terms of education provision, Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn are Category 3, Welsh-medium primary schools. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn is implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school. It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision, nor linguistic opportunities for learners, primarily because: • The January 2026 PLASC data shows that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a broader group of their peers. On the above basis, from implementing the proposal, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for Baladeulyn catchment area learners to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	classroom, and the vitality level of Welsh and informal use of the language would be stronger. The full impact assessments are available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

3.3 The impact of the proposal on the future of the Welsh language in the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the impact that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn could have on the future of the Welsh language in the local community. Objectors expressed the view that the school plays a key part in transferring the Welsh language and local culture to future generations, and losing the provision could undermine that process. Some objectors emphasised that Ysgol Baladeulyn directly contributes to the sustainability of the Welsh language in Dyffryn Nantlle and towards the strength of the local Welsh community, and reference was made to concerns regarding the potential harmful impact on the daily use of Welsh in the village, with some stating that closing the school would be a huge blow to the Welsh language and its sustainability, and would speed up a deterioration in the use of the language within the community.	As above (see response 3.1).

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Concerns were also expressed regarding the long-term implications to Welsh primary education and to the future of Welsh rural communities wider, with some referring to existing patterns of deterioration already in Welsh communities. In addition, reference was made to differences in the level of use of the Welsh language between the two schools, with some responders noting that the percentage of Welsh speakers at Ysgol Baladeulyn was higher than Ysgol Talysarn.	

Theme 4: The Impact of the Proposal on Transport and Travel Arrangements

4.1 Eligibility for free transport to the alternative school

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections raised concerns regarding transport arrangements to the alternative school and the potential impact on families should Ysgol Baladeulyn close. Uncertainty was expressed regarding the eligibility of out-of-catchment learners to receive transport support from the Council, with some objectors calling for clear information regarding the arrangements that would be relevant to those families and their right to free transport. The need to consider the long-term implications of any change to the transport arrangements before making a final decision on the proposal was also emphasised. Specific questions were raised regarding whether the Council's school transport provision would extend to three and four-year-old learners, as well as whether safety arrangements were underway for young children travelling to an alternative school. Concerns were also expressed about the additional costs that some families could face as a result of having to travel further distances, including fuel	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the statutory process, a Travel Arrangements Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the proposal, and was revised following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation period. The impact assessment notes that, if the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn and providing education for the learners at Ysgol Talysarn were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be an impact on the children's travel arrangements. However, it is not expected that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school. It is noted that school transport to the school would be provided in accordance with the Cyngor Gwynedd's Transport Policy where appropriate, and it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
costs, and some objectors asked whether financial support would be provided to mitigate these additional costs.	catchment area would need to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor use any path to the school that is deemed unsafe. In accordance with Gwynedd Education's Transport Policy, Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from the school within their catchment area, the nearest school, or where learners travel to school along a route that the Council considers to be very dangerous. Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner qualifies for statutory transport. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. It is noted that, in accordance with the policy, learners who live outside the revised catchment area would not be eligible to receive free school transport to Ysgol Talysarn. However, the Council does consider individual applications in exceptional circumstances. The Policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents The assessment of the likely impact on travel arrangements is available on the Council's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation

4.2 The impact of new travel arrangements of the well-being of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the impact that new travel arrangements could have on the well-being of learners should Ysgol Baladeulyn close. Objectors noted that some children would face longer trips to an alternative school, and the view that this could have a negative impact on their well-being, particularly in the case of young children, was expressed. Matters were also raised in relation to safety and active travel. Some objectors noted that many children can walk safely to Ysgol Baladeulyn currently, developing confidence and independence by doing so. Concern was expressed that closing the school would mean losing this opportunity for local children, as there was no safe footpath between Nantlle and Talysarn. Consequently, it was asked whether the Council would consider investing into a suitable footpath to connect the two villages.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the statutory process, an Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travel Arrangements was undertaken in relation to the proposal and was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation period. The impact assessment notes that, should the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be an impact on learners' travel arrangements. However, it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor use routes to school that are considered unsafe. It is noted that school transport would be provided in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Transport Policy, where applicable. In accordance with the Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, transport is provided where a walking route is deemed dangerous or unsuitable, regardless of distance. Walking routes are assessed in detail in accordance with the policy, taking into account factors such as the nature of the road, the volume and speed of traffic, and overall safety at relevant times of the day. The policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents In regard to requests for investment to a dedicated walking route linking the villages of Nantlle and Talysarn, any consideration of developing or funding such a route would fall outside the scope of this statutory proposal and would need to be assessed separately through the appropriate planning and funding procedures.

Theme 5: The Local Community and the Impact of the Proposal on its Future

5.1 The school as a community focal point

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A significant number of the objections emphasised the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn as a key focal point to the community life of the area. The school was described by many responders as an essential community asset that plays a central part in the local community. The view that the school is much more than an educational setting, acting as a meeting point for residents and a social centre that supports family life, the use of Welsh and local culture was expressed. Some objectors noted that rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn play a unique part in the life of rural villages and, once they are closed, that it is very difficult to restore or replace the community role achieved by them. There was consistent reference to the way that the school brings children, families and local residents together through a broad range of activities and events. Objectors stated that concerts, sports events, celebrations, fund-raising activities and social gatherings provide regular opportunities to strengthen social connections and foster a sense of community. Reference was also made to the role of the school as an educational and social centre that provides opportunities to families and local residents to come together and take part in community activities. Some objectors referred to direct experience of seeing how the school's activities help to unite the community and contribute to the vitality of local life. Concern was expressed by many objectors about the impact that closing the school could have on the future of the community. It was noted that losing the school would be a huge blow to the life of the village and a huge loss to local residents, not only to learners and their families. It was noted that losing the school and its associated activities would impact the area's social fabric by	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
reducing opportunities for people to come together and maintain community connections.	In addition, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.2 The school's contribution to the identity and well-being of the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections emphasised Ysgol Baladeulyn's contribution to the identity and well-being of the local community, and that it offers more than just education. It was noted that the school plays an important part when fostering a sense of belonging and in maintaining social connections within the village, and that it has been central to local community life for decades. Some objectors referred to the role of the school in strengthening connections between generations, which is limited in rural areas, with the school providing events that bring children, families and local residents together.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.3 The role of the school when supporting families in a rural area with limited services

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections drew attention to the role that Ysgol Baladeulyn plays in supporting families in a rural area where local services are limited, and already under pressure. It was expressed that the school provided stability and an important resource to families, and concern was expressed that closing the school would specifically disrupt the existing childcare arrangements of some families, and have an impact on their family life when losing a local service and one of the village's main resources. Concerns were also expressed about additional costs to families as a result of the proposal, including the possibility of having to purchase a new school uniform.	As above (see response 5.2). In addition, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Well-being and Future Generations Act Impact Assessment and an Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd. As part of this assessment, the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on local community cohesion and on families facing socio-economic disadvantage was assessed. The assessments have been reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking into account the comments and matters

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	raised by consultees. In addition, the assessments were further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The Well-being and Future Generations Act Impact Assessment shows that, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, it is acknowledged that the local school would be located further away from homes within the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area, and from a deprivation standpoint, this would mean that one of the indicators, 'access to services' would move further away from residents of the area. However, should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that provision at Ysgol Talysarn would include access to a broader range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. Furthermore, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continuing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. Furthermore, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), and Assessment of the Likely Impact on Travel Arrangements was undertaken. As part of this assessment, the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the travel arrangements of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners was assessed. This

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	assessment has been revised and updated following the statutory consultation, considering the comments and matters raised by consultees. This option would have an impact on the travel arrangements of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn, as they would be educated at Ysgol Talysarn. School transport would need to be provided for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to Ysgol Talysarn, in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy. Additional transport costs are anticipated, with an estimated annual cost between £17,000 to £30,000. Some learners would travel further to school than they do at present. Nevertheless, no learners from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to the school, nor walk or cycle on dangerous routes to the school. Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment area school, or their nearest school (this does not include nursery learners). Learners receiving primary education (except for learners with additional learning needs or disabilities) are expected to walk up to 2 miles to meet any transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd. The policy can be found in the parents' handbook: Information for parents. It is noted that, in accordance with Gwynedd Education's Transport Policy, learners who live outside the revised catchment area would not be eligible to receive free school transport to Ysgol Talysarn. However, the Council does consider individual applications in exceptional circumstances. As noted in the Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd, the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: Financial help and support with education.

5.4 The impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of the community

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections expressed a concern regarding the long-term impact of the proposal on the future and sustainability of Nantlle community, stating that Ysgol Baladeulyn was an important part of the community and closing it would impact much more than just the educational provision. Objectors stated that the school contributes to the sustainability of the community, and closing the school would weaken the local community by undermining community cohesion, having a harmful and long-term impact on the future of the village, the wider community and future generations. The view that the proposal is a reflection of accepting the community's deterioration instead of investing in regenerating and maintaining it for the future was expressed, and the fact that some objectors did not perceive advantages to the Dyffryn Nantlle area deriving from the proposal. Some objectors argued that transferring learners to Ysgol Talysarn would not be able to replace the role that Ysgol Baladeulyn plays within the local community, and concern was expressed that children would lose the daily connection with their local community and that this could impact their sense of belonging.	The Council notes the comments. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), the Council undertook a Community Impact Assessment to assess the likely impact of the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on the local community. This assessment was reviewed and updated following the statutory consultation, taking account of the comments and issues raised by consultees. In addition, the assessment was further reviewed and updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections and comments received during that stage of the process. The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and objection period regarding the implications of this for community vitality are acknowledged; however, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that educational and community links with neighbouring communities, including Talysarn, already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and by promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, should a decision

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including potential community use where appropriate, in order to help mitigate any negative impact on the local community.

5.5 The demography of the local area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections connected the proposal with wider demographic challenges facing rural communities such as Nantlle. The view that factors such as lack of housing for local people, and an increase in holiday homes had contributed to these challenges, was expressed. Some objectors noted that the community is already fragile due to the reliance on the tourism industry and demographic changes. Concern was expressed that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would contribute towards further decline in the community, including losing young families, and some argued that closing rural schools could lead to small, rural villages becoming more like tourism destinations.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the statutory process, consideration was given to a range of factors, including the latest data on the number of learners that live in the catchment area and projections for the future. The information available to the Council showed that the number of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn are currently very low, and it is anticipated that they will remain low over the coming years. This reflects a broader demographic trend, including the depopulation that is impacting rural communities. Between 2011 and 2021, Gwynedd's population decreased by 3.7%, a reduction of 4,477 people. This reduction is not confined solely to rural communities only. During the same period, there was a 7.3% decrease in the number of children aged 0-15 years and a 14.7% decrease in the number of young people aged 16-24 years. Additionally, the Community Impact Assessment notes that some respondents during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period expressed concerns that closing the school, should the proposal be

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	implemented, could influence the decisions of young families whether or not to stay in the community or to move into it, given the importance of the school as a local asset. The Council notes this concern. However, taking into account current school enrolment patterns, including the fact that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area, there is no clear evidence that the proposal, if implemented, would directly lead to families leaving the community or to a significant reduction in the number of families moving into it. Based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that a high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (75%), with 50% of primary-age children from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attending Ysgol Talysarn. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the proposed alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council does not anticipate that the proposal would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area.

5.6 The impact of the proposal on families and how attractive the local area is

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections drew attention to the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn when supporting local families and contributing to the attractiveness of the Nantlle area as a place to live. The view that the presence of a local school was an important factor as families made decisions regarding moving into the area, and that the school generated a significant community benefit by serving local families and helping to maintain the community, was expressed. Some objectors referred to their hope that their families' future generations would have the opportunity to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn and be part of the local community. Concern was also expressed that closing the school would make the area less attractive for young families and new families who are considering moving to Nantlle. Some objectors noted that this could lead to fewer families choosing to live in the area in the future, with broader implications for the local community.	The Council notes the comments. The revised Community Impact Assessment notes that there is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would have a significant impact on the sustainability of the community or on population patterns within the catchment area. A high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (75%), with 50% of primary-age children from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attending Ysgol Talysarn. Consequently, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the proposed alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council does not anticipate that the proposal would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area.

Theme 6: Objections to the Proposal and Request to Reconsider

6.1 Objections to the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
All of the responses received under this sub-theme expressed an objection to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn. Many of the objectors clearly stated that they objected to the proposal, with some expressing a strong or full objection to the proposal.	The Council notes the objections.

6.2 A call to keep the school open, prevent or reconsider the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections included calls to Cyngor Gwynedd to refuse the proposal and keep Ysgol Baladeulyn open. Some of the responders also called on the Council to reconsider the decision, fully and carefully considering the potential long-term impacts of the proposal before making a final decision. Some objectors asked the Council to prevent or postpone the closure process to allow more time to find an answer or a sustainable plan for the future of the school. Others encouraged the Council to act carefully and proportionately when assessing the proposal, ensuring that all relevant impacts had been fully considered before coming to a decision.	The Council notes the comments. The proposal has been developed and considered in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), including holding a statutory consultation, publishing a Statutory Notice, providing an objection period and preparing an Objection Report. The Council is confident that the statutory process has been followed in full and that all relevant information presented throughout the process has been considered. This includes consideration of the educational, financial, community and linguistic impacts, as well as reasonable alternative options and the comments and objections received during the consultation and objection periods. Although some responders called for the process to be stopped, postponed or for the proposal to be reconsidered, the Council is of the opinion that the proposal has been assessed in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. Specifically, low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, learner projections which suggest that the vulnerable situation will continue in the medium and long term, as well as a broad age range within small classes that presents educational challenges. These factors have led to the consideration of whether a sustainable education provision can be maintained under the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by:

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	• Address the challenge that is low learner numbers in Ysgol Baladeulyn, as well as projections that remain low, and a high percentage of surplus places; • Providing classes with more suitable numbers and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with their peers, within an educational environment with a greater number of learners of the same age; • Reducing the cost per learner across all learners within the County.

Theme 7: Alternative Options

7.1 To ask to give full consideration to alternative options

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections called on the Council to investigate and assess each reasonable alternative option before proceeding with the proposal to close the school. Objectors expressed the view that all potential options had not been fully explored, encouraging the decision-makers to give full genuine consideration to each alternative option and identify the value of the school before deciding to close it. Many alternative options were suggested by objectors, including federalisation with other schools, joint leadership arrangements, sharing staff or resources, and developing partnerships or collaboration arrangements with nearby schools. Some argued that the federalisation model could provide savings to the Council whilst maintaining educational advantages to learners.	The Council notes the comments. As part of the review into Ysgol Baladeulyn's future, consideration was given to a range of alternative options before coming to a conclusion on the present proposal. An appraisal of these options was undertaken, and this work was outlined in the Consultation Document and Proposal Paper. The options that were assessed included, amongst others, doing nothing, federating Ysgol Baladeulyn with a nearby school, federating the school alongside establishing specialist education provision for learners with additional learning needs, establishing a multi-site school and developing other specialist educational uses for the school's site. Consideration was also given to the use of the school as a community centre and opportunities to co-locate other services, such as a language unit or centre, on the site. It was concluded that none of these options would offer a sustainable solution as there was no evidence that they would lead to an increase in the number

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
There was also a call to consider community enterprises as possible ways of supporting the future of the school. Some responders noted that the community was ready to work with the Council to explore sustainable solutions to keep the school open. Attention was drawn to alternative ways of making use of the school's existing assets, including expanding the community use of the school building, strengthening its role in the community and raising awareness of its value. Reference was also made to the possibility of Ysgol Baladeulyn contributing to the area's broader educational provision, as it could be a valuable resource for nearby schools or for learners who could benefit from a smaller educational environment. One responder also noted that the school building had practical characteristics in terms of adapting to climate change impacts, enabling teaching to continue during periods of very hot weather.	of learners or address the challenges relating to significant empty places, small classes, a wide age range and the school's financial sustainability. During the statutory consultation period, additional proposals and options were received by consultees. These were also given full consideration, and a further appraisal of the alternative options was undertaken alongside the options originally assessed. The details of the options considered, alongside the results of that appraisal, have been included in the Consultation Document and the relevant supporting documents. These documents are available on Cyngor Gwynedd's website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/modernisingeducation Following this appraisal work, it was concluded that the alternative options considered did not provide a suitable nor sustainable response to the challenges facing the school. For example, it was not anticipated that options such as federating or a multi-site school in themselves would lead to a meaningful increase of learner numbers or address the underlying matters relating to the high level of surplus places, continuing projections of low learner numbers and the associated costs. Throughout the statutory process, the Council has followed the requirements set out in the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government School Organisation Code. Consideration was given to the relevant information and evidence, including the impact assessments, the alternative options considered, and the comments and responses received during the statutory consultation and objection periods. As a result, it was concluded that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is the option that would provide the most suitable response to the challenges noted, that is low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, small classes with a broad age range, continuing low learner projections, a catchment area pattern where the majority of learners choose to attend

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	other schools, and a cost per learner that is substantially higher than the county average.

7.2 A restoration plan for small schools

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Many of the objections argued that Ysgol Baladeulyn would not have a sufficient opportunity to try to restore or increase their numbers before the proposal was introduced. Some responders suggested that the Council should implement a sustainability plan or a restoration plan over a two or three-year period to give the school time to respond to the challenges facing them and try to stabilise the number of learners. The view that such a period would allow the Council to assess the sustainability of the school over a longer period, instead of making a decision based on short-term circumstances, was expressed. Reference was also made to several steps that could be considered during such a restoration period, including engaging with local families and promoting the school. Some objectors suggested the possibility of establishing a specialist unit on the school's site during the period, whilst continuing to provide mainstream education, with the view that this could support the school's sustainability and the possibility of re-building numbers.	The Council notes the comments, however, the Council cannot commit to not considering the future of the school for such an extended period, as doing this would restrict its ability to fulfil its statutory duties. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), giving consideration to the relevant statutory factors, evidence collected, and the comments received throughout the statutory process. The school's number of learners has been decreasing over an extended period, leading to a critical situation with 6 Reception to Year 6 learners and 2 Nursery learners on the register by January 2026. It is noted that low learner numbers, a very high percentage of surplus places, projected learner numbers that suggest a continuity of the vulnerable situation in the medium and long terms, as well as a broad age range within small classes which present educational challenges. These factors have led to the consideration of whether a sustainable education provision can be maintained under the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by:

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	• Addressing low learner numbers in Ysgol Baladeulyn, as well as projections that remain low, and a high percentage of surplus places; • Providing classes with more suitable numbers and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with their peers, within an educational environment with a greater number of learners of the same age; • Reducing the cost per learner across all learners within the County. As part of the review into Ysgol Baladeulyn's future, consideration was given to a range of alternative options before coming to a conclusion on the present proposal, including the option to establish specialist provision for learners with additional learning needs on Ysgol Baladeulyn's site. An appraisal of this option was undertaken prior to starting the statutory consultation, and this work was outlined in the Consultation Document and the Proposal Paper. This option proposed continuing main-stream provision in Ysgol Baladeulyn, but including a specific specialist area on the school's site for children with additional learning needs. This alternative option was appraised against several factors, including learner numbers and surplus places, class sizes and age range, leadership and staffing, financial resources, the community, the Welsh language and geographical factors. Consideration was also given to the likely impact on quality and standards of education, travel arrangements and the community. It was concluded that the option would not respond adequately to the main challenges facing Ysgol Baladeulyn, and it was not anticipated that the option would increase the number of learners in Ysgol Baladeulyn.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Consequently, it was anticipated that low learner numbers, small classes and a broad age range would continue, alongside the associated financial challenges. On the basis of this appraisal, it was not concluded that this option provided enough basis to change the proposal, nor to postpone the final decision for the proposal. The Council is confident that this option has been given full consideration as a part of the statutory process that was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Theme 8: Challenges to the Statutory Process and the Basis of the Proposal

8.1 Criticism on the basis of the proposal

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections questioned the case for the proposal, arguing that it had not been sufficiently demonstrated that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn was the best solution. Concern was expressed that the financial savings expected from the proposal were likely to be significant in the long term, particularly when considering the costs of transporting learners to Ysgol Talysarn. Some objectors argued that the proposal put too much emphasis on financial considerations, including the cost per head and the existing numbers and learner projections, without putting sufficient attention to the wider impacts on the community. The view that education should not be solely treated as a financial matter or the value	The Council notes the comments. The review of Ysgol Baladeulyn's future is based on a combination of factors, including continued low learner numbers, a high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range and projections which show that learner numbers will remain low in the medium and long term. The Council continues to be of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn is the most suitable proposal to address the challenges facing the school which are low numbers of learners, a very high proportion of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, projections of continued low numbers, a

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
of a school should not be assessed based on the number of learners or its costs, was expressed. Some responders noted that the benefits and future of children should be at the core of any decision, emphasising that learners have the right to education that reflect their community and local culture, as well as the right to attend their local school. Also, the view that more emphasis should be given on the school's contribution to the sustainability of the community, learner well-being and the Welsh language was expressed. In addition, there was a call to reconsider the policy of reorganising schools and closing small schools based only on financial considerations. Reference was also made to the attendance of young families in the community, with some objectors noting that there was a genuine possibility for the school numbers to increase in years to come.	catchment area pattern where the majority of learners choose other schools, and a cost per learner significantly higher than the county average. The proposal addresses these challenges by: • Responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, together with projections that remain low, and the high percentage of empty places; • Offer classes of a more suitable size and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; • Reduce the cost per learner for all learners in the County. In addition, it should be noted that it was not financial considerations alone that led to the review of Ysgol Baladeulyn. The review was carried out due to the many challenges facing the school, including low learner numbers, a high level of empty places and challenges in terms of long-term sustainability. When developing the proposal, consideration was given to a wide range of factors, including the potential effects on the community, the Welsh language and well-being, as well as the financial implications.

8.2 The impact of the proposal on the alternative school and nearby schools

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objections noted that Ysgol Talysarn already operated close to its capacity, and a full assessment should be conducted, per year group, of the impact of transferring all the Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to the school should the proposal be implemented. Concern was expressed regarding the potential impact on the school's capacity, the need to change classroom arrangements, and the implications that this could have on staffing levels, educational resources, teaching space, learner well-being and the support provided to them. A concern was also raised regarding the potential impact on nearby schools in general, noting that they could be overloaded should the proposal be implemented.	The Council notes the comments. Ysgol Talysarn's capacity is 91 places for Reception to Year 6 learners and 13 Nursery places. In January 2026, there were 81 Reception to Year 6 learners and 17 Nursery pupils attending Ysgol Talysarn. Based on the January 2026 PLASC figures, it is anticipated that in September 2026 there will be 4 surplus places (and 3 surplus places in the Nursery) at Ysgol Talysarn. On the basis of this information, it is anticipated that there will be sufficient capacity for current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live in the Baladeulyn catchment area. It is acknowledged that, if all Ysgol Baladeulyn learners were to decide to transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, it is possible that the number of learners would exceed the capacity. Should this happen, the Local Authority would deal with admission applications in accordance with its School Admission Policy and would comply with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code. The Council is therefore satisfied that the school's capacity is sufficient to meet current demand and the demand anticipated in the future. Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, and learners transfer to Ysgol Talysarn, it would be a matter for the Governing Body of Ysgol Talysarn to determine class sizes and the allocation of the school's staffing resources. Current data from the Department of Education indicates that there is currently capacity in all primary schools in the Dyffryn Nantlle catchment area. The percentages of empty places in the neighbouring schools vary

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	between 9% and 44%, and therefore no school is currently overcrowded. It is noted that the review of Ysgol Baladeulyn's future is based on wider evidence relating to the long-term sustainability of the provision, including continued low learner numbers, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and forecasts of numbers that remain low in the medium and long term.

8.3 The Council's implementation of the statutory process

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections expressed a concern regarding the way that the statutory process was undertaken and the steps taken before submitting the proposal. Some responders argued that there had been a lack of engagement and consultation with local residents, parents and community stakeholders during the process, and it was also expressed that some objectors were of the opinion that the decision to close the school had already been made before the formal consultation was commenced. The view that the Council had not done enough to address the main challenge facing the school was also expressed, namely the low number of learners, nor has it given a sufficient opportunity for the school to try to restore its numbers before starting the statutory process. Some objectors noted that the Council had decided to proceed with the proposal after a period of reduction in the number of learners instead of considering potential measures to support the school and try to increase the numbers.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the Council has followed the statutory process set out in the Standards and Organisation of Schools Act (Wales) 2013 and the Code of Organisation of Schools (011/2018). On 11 February 2025, the Cabinet of Cyngor Gwynedd decided to allow the Education Department to hold formal discussions with the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn and other relevant stakeholders regarding the future of the school, due to concerns regarding the number of pupils at the school. Subsequently, a School Review Panel was established to consider the school's situation and a range of possible options for its future. On 14 October 2025, the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council decided to support a recommendation to hold a statutory consultation on the proposal to

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
A concern was also raised regarding the impact of the statutory process on the viability of the school. Some responders suggested that the uncertainty regarding the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn could influence the decisions of parents regarding registering their children at the school and the impact of the statutory process on the number of learners had not been fully considered. Reference was specifically made to the view that parents have been informed about the possibility of a proposal to close the school before making decisions regarding the education of their children, and this has reduced the confidence of some parents to choose the school, further contributing to the reduction in the number of learners.	close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The statutory consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026. Following the consultation, the responses and additional information submitted were considered, and a Consultation Report was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Code. The report summarised the comments received, noted the Council's response to them and recorded the further consideration given to the proposal and the alternative options. That report was presented to the Cabinet, and the Cabinet decided to allow the publication of a statutory notice on the proposal. Following the publication of the statutory notice, a statutory objection period was held in order to give anyone the opportunity to submit an objection to the proposal. This objection report summarises the objections received during that period and notes the Council's response to them in order to assist the Cabinet in considering the matter. The decision to hold a statutory consultation, or the subsequent decision to publish a statutory notice, was not a final decision to implement the proposal. These were steps within the statutory process, and they enabled the Council to collect and consider comments, evidence, alternative options and objections before the Cabinet made a final decision. The Council is confident that the process was carried out impartially and that no final decision had been made in advance. Consideration was given to the relevant information, evidence and comments at each stage of the process.

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	The Cabinet will make the final decision on whether or not to implement the proposal after considering the Objection Report and all relevant information before it. In addition, the Council recognises that stability and certainty are important factors for parents when making decisions about their children's education, and that periods of uncertainty can create worry for families. In this context, it is noted that the Council is reviewing the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn as the school is facing increasing challenges, including continued low learner numbers, a high percentage of empty places, catchment area patterns, and number projections in the medium and long term. The number of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn has been decreasing over an extended period, with a clear decline over the last five years. This continued reduction was a source of increasing concern in terms of numbers and the sustainability of the school, and the projections for the next few years show that this pattern is likely to continue.

8.4 Challenging the lawfulness of the proposal and the post use of the site

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections raised concerns about the lawfulness and transparency of the proposal, as well as the post use of the school site. Some objectors expressed the view that the proposal to close the school was connected with the possibility that the site could be sold and re-developed to holiday accommodation purposes. It was also questioned whether any use of this type would comply with the legislation requirements relating to Assets of Community Value and the Community to Propose, which safeguards community assets from being sold or re-purposed without due process, and whether the term 'Modernising Education' is used to justify such a business plan. Some responders noted that such a development could have a negative impact on the character of the area by increasing the provision of holiday accommodation instead of housing for local residents.	The Council notes the comments. It is noted that the school site is not currently for sale, and the proposal is not linked to any plan or commitment to sell the site or redevelop it for a specific purpose, including holiday accommodation. It is noted that the Council has followed the statutory process set out in the School Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the School Organisation Code (011/2018), and the school was prioritised for a review because it was facing a number of challenges, including the number of learners at the school being seriously reduced which had led to a critical situation. The term "Modernising Education" is not used to justify any business plan relating to another use of the site. If a decision to close the school was made, the Authority's Post-use Policy would act as the framework for considering and developing options for the future of the site. This policy would guide further discussions regarding appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to try to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. Any decisions regarding the future of the site would be made through the relevant processes and governance of the Council, taking into account policies, legal requirements and the interests of the local community. No specific use of the site in the future is part of the current proposal and no decision has been made regarding the post-use of the building.

8.5 The adequacy of the consultation documents

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
The view that the consultation report did not place enough emphasis on what learners could lose should the proposal be implemented, was expressed, including the potential impact on the well-being of learners and vulnerable learners. Some responders also argued that the advantages of attending a small school or the advantages of keeping Ysgol Baladeulyn open had been highlighted or considered fairly enough within the documentation. Reference was also made to statements in the consultation report regarding providing fair experiences to every learner. Some objectors believed that the responses submitted by the Council were unclear and could be interpreted like they were suggesting shortcomings in the existing educational provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn.	The Council notes the comments. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process and all the documentation drawn up as part of the process has complied with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Council is satisfied that the responses and views presented during the consultation and objection periods have been summarised and considered in accordance with the relevant statutory arrangements and requirements. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a Consultation Report was drawn up following the statutory consultation period. That report summarised the responses and issues raised during the consultation and included the Council's response to those issues, in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. The Consultation Report was submitted to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet for consideration, and after considering the content of that report and all other relevant information, the Cabinet decided to publish a statutory notice on the proposal and hold a statutory objection period. The current Objection Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code and contains a summary of the objections received during the statutory objection period, together with the Council's response to the issues raised. This report will be considered by Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet alongside all other relevant information before making a final decision regarding the proposal.

8.6 The adequacy of the impact assessments

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections questioned whether the proposal's impact assessments had sufficiently considered all the potential implications of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn. The view that not enough emphasis had been placed on the potential emotional impact on the school staff, learners and families, nor the impact on the well-being of learners, was expressed. Reference was made to a concern that the full impact of the proposal on families living outside of the school's catchment area had been sufficiently assessed. Some objectors argued that more attention had to be given to the potential impact on rural communities, noting that schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn were a foundation that maintained the local community and closing it would weaken the community. The view that more emphasis needs to be given to the proposal's linguistic assessment was also expressed, including its broader impact on the Welsh language and its contribution to the Welsh Government's strategic aims.	The Council notes the comments. The Council is satisfied that the statutory process, together with all the documentation drawn up as part of the process, has complied with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). The Council is also satisfied that all the relevant impact assessments have been carried out, considered and updated before, during and following the consultation periods, in accordance with the statutory requirements and the relevant arrangements. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018), a package of impact assessments was published during the statutory consultation period, including assessments of the likely impact of the proposal on the community, learner travel arrangements, quality and standards of education, well-being law, equality, and the Welsh language. These assessments were prepared in order to assess the potential effects of the proposal, taking into account the evidence available at the time, together with any concerns raised by consultees. Where appropriate, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce any potential adverse impact. In accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code, these assessments were reviewed and updated where necessary as a result of the comments and additional information received during the statutory objection period. The impact assessment package was submitted as an appendix to the Cabinet report, and following consideration of the content of the assessments, together with all other relevant information, including the information stated in the consultation report and the report to the Cabinet, the Cabinet decided to issue a statutory notice on the proposal to close

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
	Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December and approve moving on to the statutory objection period. Following the statutory objection period, the Community, Well-being, Equality and Linguistic impact assessments have received further attention and have been updated again, in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code (011/2018). These assessments will be published and considered by the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet alongside the other relevant documentation, before a final decision is made regarding the proposal.

8.7 Direction of education policies and direction of Modernising Education in Gwynedd

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some of the objections expressed a concern regarding how the proposal aligned with the direction of education policies. It was noted that local schools were valuable resources to rural communities and the proposal, in the opinion of some objectors, did not reflect the Council's responsibility to safeguard the benefits of rural communities or the Welsh language. Concerns were also expressed regarding the impact of reorganisation policies and modernising education work on rural communities, with some responders questioning whether there has been too much reorganisation and whether too much emphasis has been given to new methods of providing education. Reference was also made to policies and previous decisions regarding closing schools, with some arguing that this approach should be reconsidered. In addition, the view that there was a need to consider alternative ways of maintaining small schools, was expressed, referring to the school funding	The Council notes the comments. The School Organisation Code (011/2018) introduces special arrangements in relation to rural schools by establishing a procedural presumption against their closure. This does not mean that a rural school will never close but rather that the case for its closure must be strong, and that all other practical options have been conscientiously considered. Ysgol Baladeulyn has been designated as a rural school for the purposes of the Code, and as a result it is required to follow an additional series of procedures and criteria when considering any proposal to close it. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn was developed in response to a number of challenges facing the school. In particular, low numbers of learners are noted, a very high percentage of empty places, and number projections that suggest the continuation of the fragile situation in the

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
policy, with a call on the Welsh Government to reconsider the existing funding arrangements, given the financial pressures placed on Headteachers.	medium and long term, together with a wide age range within small classes that present educational challenges. These factors have led to consideration of whether sustainable educational provision can be maintained in the long term within the current arrangements. The Council is of the opinion that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn would address these challenges by: • Responding to the challenge of low learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn, together with projections that remain low, and the high percentage of empty places; • Offer classes of a more suitable size and age range; • Improve opportunities for learners to socialise and collaborate on a daily basis with peers, in an educational environment with more learners of the same age; • Reduce the cost per learner for all learners in the County.

8.8 Challenge the admission policy that allows parents to choose their child's school

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objectors noted the view that the Council should look into the reasons behind the low number of learners more thoroughly and why some families choose to send their children to other schools instead of their local school. It was suggested that factors such as uncertainty regarding the future of the school, transport arrangements or other admission matters could have influenced the parents' decisions, and these reasons should be fully understood and consideration should be given to appropriate measures to address them before coming to a conclusion about the viability of the school.	The Council notes the comments. However, school admission arrangements are a matter regulated by legislation and national statutory codes. The Council, as an Admissions Authority, implements these arrangements in accordance with those statutory requirements, and therefore this proposal does not provide a basis to amend the Admissions Policy or the relevant admissions criteria. School admission arrangements are administered in accordance with the Council's School Admission Policy and the relevant national statutory framework. Under the policy, each school has a specific catchment area

Summary of the matters	The Council's Response
Some objectors argued that the fact that learners attended schools outside of their catchment area should not be used as evidence in itself that the local school has no future. The view that the Council should look into the reasons for these choices in more detail was also expressed and to consider whether there is a need to review admission arrangements to encourage more learners to attend their catchment area school.	that it serves. School catchment areas are defined in order to be able to plan education provision, places and resources effectively across the County. These boundaries are not based on community boundaries, but on the official criteria which are the basis for allocating places and maintaining provision. Parents and carers have the right to express a choice about the school they wish their child to attend, subject to the schools' capacity and the admission criteria set out in the policy. These arrangements are applied consistently across the County. It is noted that parents make educational choices based on a variety of factors, including personal experience, care provisions, and family preferences. In addition, the proposal is not based solely on the fact that some learners attend schools outside the catchment area, but on a general consideration of the relevant factors that affect the sustainability and viability of the school in the long term, including continued low learner numbers, a very high percentage of empty places, small classes with a wide age range, and forecasts of numbers that remain low in the medium and long term.

Appendix 2 - Comparison of the current situation with the situation should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn be implemented

Factor	The current situation	The situation should the proposal be implemented
Class sizes	There is 1 class at Ysgol Baladeulyn (January 2026) with 6 learners (Reception - Year 6) together with 2 Nursery learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at different times of the day, with teaching assistants leading activities (with the younger learners). Based on projections, no increase in numbers is anticipated. Class sizes at Ysgol Baladeulyn are therefore likely to remain small. There is an age range of up to 8 years within a single class.	Learners would be taught in classes of a more appropriate size. Learners at Ysgol Talysarn are taught in classes ranging from 16 to 30 learners per class (September 2025). There are 4 mixed-age classes at Ysgol Talysarn, together with a Nursery class.
Learner numbers	Learner numbers continue to be low at Ysgol Baladeulyn (January 2026 numbers: 6 learners Reception - Year 6 and 2 Nursery learners). The number of surplus places remains high (49 surplus places (89%) Reception - Year 6; 54 surplus places (87%) Nursery - Year 6). School projections suggest numbers will remain low over the coming years.	Learners would be offered places at Ysgol Talysarn, where there were 81 Reception to Year 6 learners and 17 Nursery learners in January 2026. Numbers at the alternative school are more robust and sustainable. Implementing the proposal would reduce the overall surplus places across the Baladeulyn and Talysarn catchment areas from approximately 39% to 2% (Reception - Year 6), based on January 2026 numbers and assuming all learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment would transfer to Ysgol Talysarn.
Leadership and staffing	Ysgol Baladeulyn received a lower budget allocation for 2025/26 because September 2024 numbers were below 15 full-time learners. This will also apply in 2026/27, as September 2025 numbers are also below 15 full-time learners. The allocation ensures the ability to employ a headteacher and teaching assistant. Due to the staffing structure, the Headteacher is required to teach most of the time. Number projections indicate this is likely to continue.	Ysgol Talysarn has a permanent Headteacher with a 0% teaching commitment and 5 non-contact days for leadership and management. The staffing structure ensures teachers in every class and allows more leadership time for the Headteacher compared with Ysgol Baladeulyn.

Factor	The current situation	The situation should the proposal be implemented
Community	The school invites the community into the school for activities during and outside school hours, such as coffee evenings, presentations by the children and services. However, Llys Llywelyn Center and Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn are also available for community activities in the area.	Nantlle would lose a school and community focal point, and therefore some negative impact on the community is anticipated. The Council would seek to mitigate this by encouraging links and collaboration between the Baladeulyn community and Ysgol Talysarn. The Council's Post-use Policy would be followed when considering the future of the school building, taking account of current community activities.
Financial resources	According to the 2026/27 budget, Ysgol Baladeulyn's budget is projected to be £172,848. The projected cost per learner is £25,123, compared with a county average of £5,998, and the school will receive £74,446 through the minimum staffing protection policy.	According to the 2026/27 budget, the estimated cost per learner at Ysgol Talysarn will be £5,897. If the proposal were to be implemented, and if all learners from the Baladeulyn catchment transferred to Ysgol Talysarn, an annual saving of £150,000 is projected, less additional transport costs of up to £30,000, resulting in a net saving of approximately £120,000 per year. The cost per learner at Ysgol Talysarn is also projected to fall to £5,883.
Welsh language	Ysgol Baladeulyn is a Welsh-medium primary school, Category 3. The school contributes to the educational, social and community use of the Welsh language in Nantlle.	Learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium Category 3 primary school at Ysgol Talysarn. No negative impact is anticipated on the language of education, and greater opportunities are expected for learners to use Welsh informally with a larger peer group. At the same time, the loss of the school's presence in Nantlle may have a negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly as a community language outside the educational context. Mitigation measures would therefore be considered, including promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Baladeulyn community in community activities at the alternative school and considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held there.

Factor	The current situation	The situation should the proposal be implemented
Geographical factors	Current learners receive their education at Ysgol Baladeulyn within their local community.	Ysgol Talysarn is 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, with an estimated journey time of around 5 minutes each way by car or bus. No learner is expected to travel an unreasonable distance. Transport would be provided in accordance with the County School Transport Policy where applicable, and the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area would become part of the Ysgol Talysarn catchment area.

Appendix 3

Impact Assessments Ysgol Baladeulyn

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**ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE
COMMUNITY –
YSGOL BALADEULYN**

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

When developing proposals for the organisation of schools, the Authority is required to conduct an assessment of the likely impact on the community, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Background

Ysgol Baladeulyn is located in the village of Nantlle on the outskirts of Penygroes and serves the village and the surrounding area. There has been a significant reduction in the numbers of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn over the past 10 years. By January 2026, only 6 Reception to Year 6 learners and 2 Nursery learners are attending the school.

At their meeting on 11 February 2025, the Cabinet supported a recommendation to start formal discussions with Ysgol Baladeulyn stakeholders in order to consider options for the future. Between March and July 2025, 3 local meetings were held with Ysgol Baladeulyn's stakeholders where a number of options were proposed and discussed.

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026, and 30 responses to the consultation were received.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and approved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026 and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026 and 25 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures.

2. THE OPTIONS

The Authority considered and discussed a number of options for the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn, including:

- No change - continue with the current situation
- Federation with a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nantlle through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. The governing bodies of the individual schools would be dissolved, and a (new) federal governing body would be formed. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

As Ysgol Talysarn is considered the nearby school to federalise with, this option would mean establishing a formal collaboration arrangement, between 3 schools, as Ysgol Talysarn is already federated with Ysgol Brynaerau.

- Federation with a nearby school and adding a specialist area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nantlle through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. The governing bodies of the individual schools would be dissolved, and a (new) federal governing body would be formed. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

As Ysgol Talysarn is considered the nearby school to federalise with, this option would mean establishing a formal collaboration arrangement, between 3 schools, as Ysgol Talysarn is already federated with Ysgol Brynaerau.

In addition to federalisation, this option would also mean adding a location for an ALN unit at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

- *Close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)*

This option would mean closing Ysgol Baladeulyn and offering a place to learners from the catchment area at Ysgol Talysarn.

- *Merge local schools to support and maintain Ysgol Baladeulyn – Multi-site school*

This option would mean merging a number of local schools, by closing the schools and establishing one multi-site school which would include the Ysgol Baladeulyn site. The option would enable the possibility of sharing resources, buildings and expertise.

This option would ensure continuity in the presence of a school site in the village of Nantlle by establishing a multi-site school, led by a headteacher and one governing body.

- *Adding a specialised area for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn*

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Baladeulyn adding a specific specialised area for children with additional learning needs on the school site.

- *Include a language unit on Ysgol Baladeulyn site*

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Baladeulyn and adding a language unit on the school site. It would offer an immersion service in the Welsh language for children who require it before joining their chosen schools full-time.

Reasonable alternative options considered following the statutory consultation:

- *Re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a 'hybrid' mainstream and ALN primary school in order to provide specialist provision for the local area.*

This option would involve re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a 'hybrid' mainstream primary school that includes specialist education provision for children with Additional Learning Needs on the school site. This option would offer hybrid education, enabling primary learners in the local area to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream school and/or to access specialist ALN education provision.

3. SUMMARY OF THE CATCHMENT AREA

3.1 The Area

Ysgol Baladeulyn is located in the rural village of Nantlle near the village of Talysarn and Penygroes in Gwynedd and within the ward of Llanllyfni. According to the 2021 census, there are 1,957 people living in Llanllyfni ward. Ysgol Baladeulyn's catchment area includes parts of the Dolbenmaen ward, Glaslyn ward, Waunfawr ward as well as a part of Llanllyfni ward.

3.2 The Economy

According to the 2021 Census, 55.5% of people aged between 16 and 74 within the Llanllyfni ward are economically active, and 3.7% of these are unemployed. 43.2% of people in the same age group are economically inactive with 5.9% of these ill or disabled for a long period.

The type of industry in which the population is active is varied in the area, with the highest rate (19.9%) working in the health and social work field (Census 2021).

According to data from the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation Wales (2025)' the employment rate of Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward compared to other wards in Wales gives a rank of 1152 out of 1917 wards. Therefore, Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is within the 50% least deprived in Wales.

3.3 Deprivation

Llanllyfni and Clynnog Ward is ranked within the most deprived 20%-30% in Wales (rank 546 out of 1917 wards).

A number of areas make up this overall index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment, and housing.

It is noted that Llanllyfni and Clynnog ward is within the 10% most deprived areas in Wales in the 'Housing' field. The indicators in this area are the proportion of people living in overcrowded homes (use of bedrooms), and the proportion of people living in homes without central heating.

In addition, the ward of Llanllyfni and Clynnog is within the 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales in the area of 'access to services', i.e. deprivation because people are unable to access a variety of services that are considered essential for day-to-day living. The indicators include average public and private travel times to a number of services such as food shops, doctor's surgery, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.

Below is a summary of how the Llanllyfni and Clynnog area is situated in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2025):

Area	Rank in Wales, out of 1917 areas. (1 = most deprived and 1917 = least deprived)	Most deprived % in Wales
Employment	1152	
Income	778	
Health	1247	
Education	835	
Housing	47	Within the most deprived 10%
Physical environment	448	
Access to services	86	Within the most deprived 10%
Community safety	767	

3.4 The Community

A number of activities are held in the Nantlle area, including;

- Tal y Mignedd Rae
- Gŵyl Dewi
- Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn
- Llys Llywelyn
- Christmas Service

4. YSGOL BALADEULYN AND NEARBY SCHOOLS

4.1 The context of the schools according to the Estyn Inspection Reports

As part of Estyn's reports, the schools are placed in context, and their community relations are detailed. This is the context given to Ysgol Baladeulyn by Estyn inspectors.

Ysgol Baladeulyn

"Ysgol Gynradd Baladeulyn is situated in the village of Nantlle near the foot of Snowdon, about three miles from Pen-y-groes in Gwynedd."

Source: Estyn Report, November 2017

Ysgol Talysarn

"The Talaerau federation, which includes Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau, is a warm and caring community in which pupils' wellbeing and progress is at the core of its ethos."

Source: Estyn Report, November 2025

4.2 Statistical information

The table below shows the numbers of Ysgol Baladeulyn and the other schools within the catchment area of Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle. This table also shows the school's capacity and number of learners on the register in January 2026. All schools teach through the medium of Welsh.

School	Full Capacity (N – Yr.6)	Number on the register January 2026 (N – Yr. 6)	Legal Category	Linguistic Category
Baladeulyn	62	8	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Talysarn	104	98	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Bro Lleu	207	189	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Llanllyfni	117	71	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Nebo	58	12	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Brynaerau	81	54	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3
Bro Llifon	196	149	Community School	Welsh Medium, Category 3

Source: PLASC January 2026

4.3 Catchment information and learners' choice of schools

Each school has a specific catchment area which it serves, and which is important in terms of the Council's access and transport policy. Learners do not have to attend their catchment area school; the choice is up to parents (in accordance with the admission policy).

The latest data (January 2026 data) shows that 75% of children who live in Ysgol Baladeulyn's catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area. The table below indicates the proportion of learners (Nursery – Yr. 6) who live in the catchment area and attend the catchment area school, and the proportion of learners from outside the catchment area who attend the school.

School	Proportion of catchment area learners who attend the catchment area school	Proportion of the school's learners who live within the school catchment area	Proportion of learners from outside the catchment area who attend the school
Baladeulyn	25%	25%	75%
Talysarn	81%	79%	21%

Source: January 2026 GIS Data

4.4 Summary of the various facilities in the community of Baladeulyn and Talysarn (September 2025)

	Baladeulyn	Talysarn
Community Centre / Village Hall	✓	✓
Chapel/Church	✓	
Public Transport	✓	✓
Shop		
Cafe/Pub		
Post Office		
Pharmacy		
Library		
Children's Playground	✓	✓
Bank		
Old People's Home		
Leisure Centre		
Garage	✓	
Tourist Attraction	✓	
Cylch Ti a Fi + Meithrin		✓

Community Centre

Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is located in the village of Nantlle which is 0.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn and hosts a number of community activities including:

- Summer Fair
- Christmas Fair
- Concerts
- Coffee Morning
- Market

4.5 Summary of the schools' use outside the school's core hours:

A summary of community or extra-curricular use of the local school buildings is seen below:

	Baladeulyn	Talysarn	Brynaerau	Bro Llifon	Bro Lleu	Llanllyfni	Nebo
Playgroups (School Holidays)							
Aelwyd yr Urdd						✓	
Plays							

Voluntary Groups						✓	✓
Morning/Evening Coffee	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Community Auction							
Choir Practice							
Welsh for Adults							
Town/Community Council Meeting							
Nursery School						✓	
Club/Sports Activity				✓		✓	
After School Club		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Local Interest Club							✓

A Cylch Meithrin is located in the village of Talysarn that provides early years care and education through the medium of Welsh for pre-school children. The collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Cylch ensures a smooth transition for children from the Cylch to the nursery class. The Cylch provides places for children aged 2 to 4, and offers 'Dechrau'n Deg' provisions, the 10-hour Early Years Education (Foundation Learning) program, along with wraparound care for nursery-aged children of Ysgol Talysarn and nearby schools. The Cylch Meithrin is also a part of the Childcare Scheme, a program offering up to 30 hours per week of free early years childcare. Children can take advantage of the Childcare Offer from the start of the term following their third birthday until the September after they turn 4.

There is no early years provision at Ysgol Baladeulyn, except for the school's nursery class.

4.6 Summary of activities or groups in which the school is regularly involved:

	Baladeulyn	Talysarn
Cylch Meithrin/Ti a Fi		✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/County/National)		
Sections of the Urdd		
Other activities (sports, clubs)		✓

4.7 If buildings, rooms, facilities or services are provided by a school on behalf of the community, where would they be provided if the school were to be closed?

School	Where will facilities be provided if it closes
Baladeulyn	According to the Headteacher in November 2025, the school invites the community to the school for school activities within and outside of school hours like coffee evenings, presentations from the children and assemblies. However, Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.

4.8 Information about distance and travel time to other schools in the catchment area

The table below indicates the distance and travel time between Ysgol Baladeulyn and schools in the area. We see that Ysgol Talysarn is the closest to Ysgol Baladeulyn. The journey times below take into account the nature of the lanes and the effect this can have on journey times in a rural area.

School		Baladeulyn
Talysarn	Miles	2.5
	Minutes	6
Bro Lleu	Miles	3.3
	Minutes	7
Llanllyfni	Miles	3.7
	Minutes	10
Nebo	Miles	5.2
	Minutes	14
Brynaerau	Miles	6
	Minutes	16
Bro Llifon	Miles	6.3
	Minutes	13

Source: Google Maps 2026

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

In order to assess the community impact of the possible options, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community assessment considerations of the School Organization Code 011/2018.

OPTION 1: NO CHANGE – CONTINUE WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	There will be no change to the current provision so no change to the impact on health and well-being is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As there would be no change to the current provision, it is not anticipated there would be an impact on public transport provision. Any transport required by Ysgol Baladeulyn for eligible catchment area learners will continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	There would be no change to the provision so no impact to the current use of the school is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	There would be no change to the provision, therefore no impact is anticipated on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	There would be no change to the provision. As a result, it is not anticipated that this option would encourage families with school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	There would be no change to what is currently provided so no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	There would be no change to what is currently being provided so no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral

General impact on the local community	There would be no change to what is currently provided so no impact on the local community is anticipated.	Neutral
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OPTION 2: FEDERATION WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL (YSGOL TALYSARN)

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, there would be no change to the current provision so no change to the impact on health and well-being is anticipated.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, no impact on the provision of public transport is anticipated. Any transport required by Ysgol Baladeulyn for eligible catchment area learners will continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, there would be no change to the current provision and therefore no impact on this criterion is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn would remain open, no change is anticipated to impact on wider community safety.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn would remain open, no impact is anticipated to how parents choose a school for their children or effect the choice of living in the catchment area or not. A high proportion of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment area (75%). As a result, it is not anticipated that this option would encourage families with school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, no change is foreseen to what is currently being provided, so no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn would remain open, no change is foreseen to what is currently being provided, so no adverse effect on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	Because federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, no change is foreseen to what is currently being provided so no impact on the local community is anticipated. However, opportunities are identified for the community of Baladeulyn and the communities of the schools that would be part of the federation to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 3: FEDERATION WITH A NEARBY SCHOOL AND ADDING A SPECIALIST UNIT FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AT YSGOL BALADEULYN

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but as part of a federation with a nearby school, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but as part of a federation with a nearby school, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site. Any transport that would be required to the Ysgol Baladeulyn site for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As federation would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn remains open, there would be no change to the current provision and therefore no impact on this criterion is anticipated.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, or that young families would be less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site. It should be noted that a high percentage of children (75%) in the catchment area already attend schools outside of the catchment area.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site. However, opportunities are identified for the community of Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn community to come together.	Neutral

OPTION 4: CLOSE YSGOL BALADEULYN AND OFFER THE LEARNERS A PLACE IN A NEARBY SCHOOL (YSGOL TALYSARN)

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concern was noted that learners would lose the current ability to walk or cycle to school safely if Ysgol Baladeulyn were to close, and this would reduce learners' independence and confidence. In addition, concern was expressed about the negative impact longer journeys to the alternative school would have on the well-being of learners. As the alternative school is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, and further from the homes of some learners in the catchment area, it is not anticipated that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would be likely to walk or cycle to the alternative school, should the proposal be implemented. School transport would be provided in accordance with the Authority's Transport Policy, which provides free transport for primary learners who live 2 miles or further from the catchment school or the nearest school. It is anticipated that being in a larger school would offer more opportunities to play and participate in team sports or clubs after school and therefore contribute positively towards the health and well-being of learners. During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, a number of comments emphasised that the school provides a solid and supportive start in life for children through offering a small and nurturing environment that supports well-being, confidence and social development. It was noted that vulnerable learners depend on the small and stable environment to develop and maintain their language skills, and concern was expressed that moving children to a larger school and further away from home could undermine these benefits, increasing stress and making the transition difficult for learners, especially for vulnerable learners or learners with Additional Learning Needs. Reference was made to the emotional impact of the proposal on the wider community, noting that the school had served local families for decades. The Council recognises that there may be some negative impact on the well-being of learners during the transition period, if Ysgol Baladeulyn were to close. Should the school close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, with the learners and their families, to ensure a smooth transition and to support the learners as they settle into their new schools. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, with appropriate support, would be able to mitigate negative effects and support continued educational progress. As stated in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook, ALN learners have the right to continue receiving the provision set out in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority's duty to ensure that provision continues even when school arrangements change. The Council continues to be of the opinion that the proposal would ensure that children in the area gain experiences by socialising with a wider range of peers, age-related and receiving a quality education in a school that can offer a learning environment and experiences to a wider range of learners. It is noted that a significant percentage of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to move forward with closing Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would try to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and	Neutral

	families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities of the alternative school. As a result, the impact on this criterion is expected to be neutral.	
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that there would be any impact on public transport provision as any transport to an alternative school as a result of any change will be arranged specifically for learners in the catchment area who are eligible in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	According to the Headteacher in November 2025, the school invites the community to the school for school activities within and outside of school hours like coffee evenings, presentations from the children and assemblies. During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, the role of the school in carrying out activities such as the above was highlighted, which bring families and local residents together and the strong inter-national relations they foster. Concern was expressed that the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn within the community cannot be replaced, and this may affect the sense of belonging to the community for future generations. It is recognised that if the Cabinet decided to move forward with closing Ysgol Baladeulyn, it is anticipated that there would be some negative impact on this criteria. If the proposal were to be realised, the Council would try to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities of the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that if the proposal to close the school were to be realised, the Authority's Post-use Policy would act as a framework to undertake further discussions regarding appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to try to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host community activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.	Negative
Impact on wider community safety	No impact on wider community safety is anticipated.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the loss of the school as a community hub could negatively influence the village's attractiveness to young families in the long term. It was noted that the presence of a local school is an important factor in terms of the attractiveness of an area for young families who are considering settling down. Based on the available evidence, the Council's view is that a high proportion of children in the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment (75%), with 50% of learners from Nursery to Year 6 from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment already attending Ysgol Talysarn. As a result, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community should the school close. In addition, given that the alternative school is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Talysarn, the Council does not anticipate that this option would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the community. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and	Neutral

	families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. As a result, the impact on this criterion is expected to be neutral.	
Impact on other services provided locally	Numerous events are held at Canolfan Llys Llywelyn. As the Centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school would have a significant direct impact on community use of the Canolfan Llys Llywelyn.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As the majority of children in the catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area, it is anticipated that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would have a neutral impact on the wider economy of the community.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, attention was drawn to the role of the school in facilitating daily social interaction between families and local residents. Concerns were expressed that closing the school would reduce natural opportunities for people to meet, socialise and maintain informal community connections. In addition, the school's role in facilitating daily social interaction between families and local residents, as well as in integrating new families into the Welsh-language life of the village, was highlighted. It was clearly stated during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period that the school is an essential focal point for the community, and closing the school would have a negative impact on the well-being and sustainability of the community in the long term. The Council acknowledges that there would be some likely negative impact on certain social and community aspects locally should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, such as reduced opportunities for parents/guardians/families and local residents to meet on a daily basis within the community when dropping off and collecting children from school. Furthermore, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, it is acknowledged that the local school would be located further away from homes within the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area, and from a deprivation perspective this would mean that one of the 'access to services' indicators would move further away from residents of the area. As a result, some negative impact on the local community is anticipated if the school were to close. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that should the proposal to close the school be implemented, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would operate as a framework for undertaking further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is also noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area, as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.	Negative

OPTION 5: MERGE LOCAL SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT AND MAINTAIN YSGOL BALADEULYN - MULTI-SITE SCHOOL

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	As the provision on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site would continue, it is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on health and well-being.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	As the provision on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site would continue, no impact on public transport provision is anticipated if this option were to be implemented. Any transport that would be required to the Ysgol Baladeulyn site for eligible catchment area learners would continue in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	As the Ysgol Baladeulyn site would continue as part of the multi-site school, it is not anticipated that the implementation of this option would have an impact on other facilities/services provided at the school.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	No impact is anticipated on wider community safety, as education provision would continue at Ysgol Baladeulyn site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	No impact is anticipated on this criterion, as education provision would continue at Ysgol Baladeulyn site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	As the Ysgol Baladeulyn site would continue as part of the multi-site school, no impact on other local services is anticipated.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would impact what is currently provided, so no adverse impact on the wider economy of the community is anticipated.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	As the Ysgol Baladeulyn site would continue, it is anticipated that the general impact on the local community would be Neutral if this option were to be implemented.	Neutral

OPTION 6: ADDING A SPECIALISED AREA FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AT YSGOL BALADEULYN

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criterion, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families with school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site. It should be noted that a large percentage of children within the catchment area attend schools outside of the catchment area (75%).	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with an additional learning needs unit also located on the site.	Neutral

OPTION 7: INCLUDE A LANGUAGE UNIT ON YSGOL BALADEULYN SITE

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and well-being as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the provision of public transport as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on these criteria as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, or that young families would be less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with the provision of a language unit also located on the site.	Neutral

OPTION 8: RE-CATEGORISING YSGOL BALADEULYN AS A 'HYBRID' MAINSTREAM AND ALN PRIMARY SCHOOL IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SPECIALIST PROVISION FOR THE LOCAL AREA

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on health and wellbeing, as Ysgol Baladeulyn's mainstream provision would continue, but with specialist ALN provision operating in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on Public transport, as Ysgol Baladeulyn's mainstream provision would continue, but with specialist ALN provision operating in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on this criterion, as Ysgol Baladeulyn's mainstream provision would continue, but with specialist ALN provision operating in a 'hybrid' model on the site.	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on wider community safety as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but with specialist ALN provision in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	It is not anticipated that this option would encourage families and school-aged children to leave the community, or that young families would be less likely to move into the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but with specialist ALN provision in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on other services provided locally, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but with specialist ALN provision in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the wider economy of the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but with specialist ALN provision in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral
General impact on the local community	It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the community, as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, but with specialist ALN provision in a 'hybrid' model.	Neutral

6. CONCLUSION

This Community Impact Assessment has been prepared as a further assessment following the statutory consultation period, and has fully considered all the original options set out in the consultation document, together with the reasonable alternative option proposed by consultees as part of the statutory consultation. The assessment was further updated following the statutory objection period in order to consider the objections received.

The assessment indicates that the likely impact on the local community would be neutral if the alternative option, which involves maintaining an operational school presence on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site — were implemented. This includes re-categorising the school as a 'hybrid' mainstream and ALN school. In this scenario, the presence of an operational mainstream school would be retained in the village, with the hybrid option enabling the provision of specialist ALN education for learners with additional learning needs.

The assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. The concerns raised during the consultation and the statutory objection period regarding the implications of this on the vitality of the community, such as the activities that will be held at the school and the opportunities for families and local residents to interact, are acknowledged. Also noted are the comments received regarding Ysgol Baladeulyn as the centre of the community and the emotional impact of the proposal on the wider community, as well as concerns about the long-term negative impact on the sustainability of the community if the school were to close.

However, it is noted that a significant percentage of Nursery - Year 6 children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to move forward with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would try to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting continued links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, Ysgol Talysarn, and promoting community collaboration where appropriate to ensure that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities of the alternative school. In addition, if there was a decision to close the school, the Authority's Post-use Policy would act as a framework to undertake further discussions regarding appropriate options for post-use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to try to mitigate any negative impact on the local community. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available for community activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.

LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT – YSGOL BALADEULYN

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

Supporting and developing Gwynedd's children's ability to learn and use their language skills is essentially important to the education strategies of the County.

Ysgol Baladeulyn is a community school located in the village of Nantlle, about three miles from Penygroes, that provides education for learners aged 3-11. There has been a decline in learner numbers at Ysgol Baladeulyn over the past few years. By September 2025, there were only 6 learners from Reception to Year 6 and 2 Nursery learners attending the school.

At their meeting on 11 February 2025, the Cabinet supported a recommendation to start formal discussions with Ysgol Baladeulyn stakeholders to consider options for the future. Between March and July 2025, three local meetings were held with Ysgol Baladeulyn stakeholders where several options were proposed and discussed.

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026, and 30 responses to the consultation were received.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and approved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026 and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026 and 25 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures.

1.1 The Situation in Gwynedd

Figures in the 2021 Census indicate that 66% of people over the age of three can speak, read or write in Welsh. The 2021 Census also states that 64% speak Welsh which is a decrease since the previous census, when the figure was 65%.

In Gwynedd, as in many other Local Authorities in Wales, there is a considerable difference in the percentage of Welsh speakers within different wards. At one extreme, in wards such as Aberdyfi, Tywyn and Bangor Central, between 26% and 44% of the population speak Welsh, while as much as 86% speak Welsh in the most Welsh areas e.g. Hendre and Llanrug.

1.2 Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)

The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan is the Local Authority's statutory document and accompanies the Welsh Government's priorities for the development of Welsh-medium education (in line with the targets of *Cymraeg 2050*). There are 7 outcomes that local authorities are expected to implement to achieve the outcomes, namely:

1. More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
2. More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
3. More children continue to improve their Welsh-language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.
4. More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
5. More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
6. An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
7. Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

1.3 Language Policy

Primary

The aim of the Language Policy is the same across all primary schools in the County, which is to develop the ability of all learners to be proficient in both languages by the end of KS2. Welsh is the official language of assessment at the school at the end of the Foundation Phase. In KS2, learners' grasp of the Welsh language continues to be developed, paying attention to developing their skills in both languages.

Secondary

In the secondary school, all learners who have reached the necessary level, which is level 3+ at the end of KS2, are expected to follow Welsh as a First Language in KS3 in order to ensure appropriate progression and continuity. It is hoped that these learners can study Welsh and English as subjects until the end of year 11.

The secondary schools build on the foundation laid in the primary by ensuring that all learners continue to develop skills in Welsh and English. The County does not define secondary schools according to linguistic categories as there is the same expectation in relation to the Language Policy, which is to give all learners in the County the opportunity to be proficient bilingually.

1.4 A million speakers by 2050

Cymraeg 2050 is the Welsh Government's latest strategy for the Welsh language and covers the next three decades. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the numbers who speak the language together with the use of Welsh.

The aims of *Cymraeg 2050* include:

	Aim	Target
1.	Increase the number of Welsh speakers	1 Million of Welsh speakers by 2050
2.	Increase use of the Welsh language	Daily users of Welsh increasing from 10% to 20%

The strategic document Welsh 2050: A million speakers emphasizes the importance of increasing the numbers who speak Welsh but it is also emphasized that increasing the daily use of the Welsh language is equally important.

Moving towards the position where we have a million speakers is one aspect of our vision for a thriving Welsh language. However, a thriving Welsh language is a language that is used. We want the use of Welsh to be a routine part of everyday life, so that speakers at all levels feel confident in its use in formal and informal situations..... The Welsh Language Use Survey 2013–15 (Welsh Government and Welsh Language Commissioner 2015) shows that there is a clear link between fluency and frequency of Welsh language use – 84 per cent of fluent Welsh speakers speak Welsh daily.

Source: Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers (2017)

1.5 Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023-2033

The Welsh Language Standards imposed on Cyngor Gwynedd by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 place an expectation on the Council to draw up a 5-year strategy that will show how it intends to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language across the county. The Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023-2033 is Cyngor Gwynedd's latest strategy for the Welsh language. This document sets out specific targets for increasing the numbers who speak the language:

	How will we increase the number of speakers?	How will we measure on a local level, and during the period of the strategy?
1.	Provide opportunities for children and young people who are not yet Welsh speakers (e.g., newcomers, children who do not receive mainstream education), to learn and become confident Welsh speakers.	Number of children receiving Welsh-medium education. Number of children receiving support through the immersion system of the education department.
2.	Provide opportunities for adults to become new speakers via the Council's learner support schemes and community provision of partners.	Number of Council employees receiving Learn Welsh lessons. Provision of community Welsh learning courses.

The strategy also contains a commitment to increase the use of Welsh in the following areas of work:

- Language of the early years
- Language of learning
- Language of Work and Service
- Language of the Community
- Technology and Research

2. LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF THE BALADEULYN CATCHMENT AREA

2.1 Gwynedd Language Profile Background

64.4% of the County's population who are over the age of three are Welsh speakers - significantly higher than the figure for Wales as a whole of 17.8%. In Gwynedd, the ability to speak Welsh is highest in Hendre ward (86% speak Welsh), and lowest in the Canol Bangor area (25.6%).

2.2 Wards

Ysgol Baladeulyn is located in the Llanllyfni ward, and the school's catchment area includes a part of Llanllyfni ward, a part of Dolbenmaen ward, a part of Glaslyn ward and a part of Waunfawr ward. Ysgol Talysarn is located in Llanllyfni ward. The linguistic profile of the wards of these schools is summarised in the table below:

	Llanllyfni	Dolbenmaen	Glaslyn	Waunfawr	Gwynedd	Cymru
Welsh identity only	1,316 (67.1%)	691 (59%)	934 (57.2%)	962 (65.9%)	69,560 (59.3%)	1,715,975 (55.2%)
No Welsh identity	28.2%	37.8%	39.2%	30.8%	36.3%	36.7%
Population 3+ years old	1,876 (100%)	1,146 (100%)	1,592 (100%)	1,411 (100%)	114,308 (100%)	3,018,172 (100%)
Able to speak Welsh	1,373 (73.2%)	752 (65.6%)	1,054 (66.2%)	1,018 (72.1%)	73,560 (64.4%)	538,296 (17.8%)
No Welsh skills	315 (16.8%)	290 (25.3%)	410 (25.8%)	291 (20.6%)	29,977 (26.2%)	2,259,017 (74.8%)
Able to understand oral Welsh only	137 (7.3%)	78 (6.8%)	109 (6.8%)	71 (5%)	8,166 (7.1%)	156,762 (5.2%)
Able to speak Welsh but unable to read or write Welsh	124 (6.6%)	84 (7.3%)	83 (5.2%)	65 (4.6%)	6,142 (5.4%)	68,391 (2.3%)
Able to speak and read Welsh but not able to write Welsh	56 (3%)	27 (2.4%)	36 (2.3%)	48 (3.4%)	3,170 (2.8%)	33,971 (1.1%)
Able to speak, read and write Welsh	1,157 (61.7%)	628 (54.8%)	927 (58.2%)	891 (63.1%)	63,256 (55.3%)	429,313 (14.2%)
Able to write Welsh but unable to speak or read Welsh	8 (0.4%)	4 (0.3%)	2 (0.1%)	5 (0.4%)	387 (0.3%)	4,970 (0.2%)
Able to read and write Welsh but not able to speak Welsh	14 (0.7%)	13 (1.1%)	5 (0.3%)	16 (1.1%)	1004 (0.9%)	17,560 (0.6%)

Another combination of Welsh skills	36 (1.9%)	13 (1.1%)	8 (0.5%)	14 (1%)	993 (0.9%)	6,621 (0.2%)
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Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics

2.3 Ysgol Baladeulyn

Ysgol Baladeulyn is a Category 3, Welsh medium school.

The table below shows that the majority of Ysgol Baladeulyn learners speak Welsh fluently.

School	Speak Welsh fluently at home	Speak Welsh at home but not fluently	No speaking Welsh at home but fluent	None speak Welsh at home and none fluently	No Welsh speaking at all
Baladeulyn	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%

Source: Percentage of January 2026 respondents

2.4 Nearby schools

Ysgol Brynaerau, Llanllyfni, Nebo, Bro Llew, Talysarn and Bro Llifon are Category 3, Welsh medium schools.

Linguistic data for the neighbouring schools can be seen below.

School	Speak Welsh fluently at home	Speak Welsh at home but not fluently	No speaking Welsh at home but fluent	None speak Welsh at home and none fluently	No Welsh speaking at all
Brynaerau	64%	11%	2%	11%	12%
Llanllyfni	68%	8%	2%	11%	12%
Nebo	56%	0%	22%	11%	11%
Bro Llew	69%	4%	1%	9%	17%
Talysarn	37%	15.5%	3%	19%	25.5%
Bro Llifon	85%	2%	2%	3%	8%

Source: Percentage of January 2026 respondents

2.5 Activities after school

This is a summary of what Ysgol Baladeulyn and the other schools in the Dyffryn Nantlle secondary catchment area offer on school sites.

	Baladeulyn	Talysarn	Bro Llew	Llanllyfni	Brynaerau	Bro Llifon	Nebo
Playgroups (School Holidays)			✓				

Aelwyd yr Urdd				✓		✓	✓
Morning/Evening Coffee	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Cylch/Ysgol Feithrin			✓	✓		✓	
Club/After school club/Sports Activity		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

It can be seen in the table above that only activities such as Coffee Mornings/Evenings are held in Ysgol Baladeulyn which is significantly less than the after-school provision held in other schools in the area. This means that there are less opportunities for Ysgol Baladeulyn learners to take advantage of after school activities to use and develop their Welsh.

2.6 Community Activities

Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is located approximately 0.5 miles away from Ysgol Baladeulyn and hosts a number of activities. This is a sketch of the community elements that the school is regularly involved with;

- Summer Fair
- Christmas Fair
- Concerts
- Coffee Morning
- Market

2.7 Additional Evidence

Ysgol Baladeulyn

The Estyn report in 2017 says:

“Welsh is the main medium of the school’s life and work ... Approximately three-quarters of pupils speak Welsh at home ... There is a very strong Welsh ethos at the school, and provision encourages pupils to make full use of the Welsh language in all aspects of school life. Pupils show pride towards the language and an obvious appreciation of the culture and history of the local area.”

[Ysgol Baladeulyn Estyn inspection report November 2017](#)

Ysgol Talysarn

The Estyn report in 2025 says:

“Through initiatives such as 'Clwb Clebran' and 'Tîm Taran', they give pupils purposeful responsibilities to encourage their peers to speak Welsh naturally during break times and in other informal contexts. This leads to clear improvement in the Welsh oral skills of almost all pupils and fosters pride in their Welsh identity.”

[Ysgol Talysarn Estyn Inspection Report November 2025](#)

2.8 Statutory Consultation and Statutory Objection Period – Summary of the matters in relation to the impact on the Welsh Language

The main matters raised through the responses to the statutory consultation, specifically regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language, are outlined below.

In this context, it was strongly expressed that the school is an important basis for the natural and daily use of the Welsh language amongst children and families. It was noted that the school provides an environment where children speak Welsh consistently and confidently, strengthening the language as the main medium socially as well as educationally.

Concern was raised that transferring learners to a larger school could lead to more use of the English language, particularly in informal contexts. Reference was made to clear differences in the use of Welsh in the current school and the proposed alternative school. It was noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn has a very strong Welsh-language profile in comparison with other schools in the area, and concern was expressed that moving to a school with a lower percentage of Welsh-language fluency could have a negative impact on the children's linguistic confidence. A respondent referred to Ysgol Baladeulyn's work in relation to the Welsh Language Charter, noting that the school had achieved the gold award, as evidence of the high standard of work to promote the Welsh language.

Concern was expressed that closing the school would undermine the wider community use of the Welsh language and it was emphasised that the school is an integral part of the community's linguistic identity. It was noted that the school serves as an important focal point for Welsh-language life in the village, contributing to the use of the language beyond school hours and integrating new families, including those who are not fluent Welsh speakers, into local Welsh-speaking life. Concern was expressed that the loss of the school could undermine the local linguistic ecosystem, leading to a gradual decline in the community use of the Welsh language.

During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated, and further concerns were raised regarding the possibility that the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn could pose a risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in Nantlle and that the proposal goes against the national aims of Cymraeg 2050. Some objectors expressed the view that Nantlle is one of the strongholds of the Welsh language, and emphasised the vital role rural schools like Ysgol Baladeulyn have in maintaining and promoting local culture and the Welsh language within rural communities. Concern was expressed that the loss of the school could lead to reduced opportunities to use Welsh naturally within the community, referring to the school's activities where local residents and families are able to interact.

The Council acknowledges these concerns and notes that the Welsh Language Impact Assessment has evaluated the likely linguistic impact based on the available background evidence. The assessment indicates that the options involving the continuation of educational presence on the Ysgol Baladeulyn site are unlikely to have a negative impact on the Welsh language, and in some cases there is potential for a positive impact, particularly where a Language Unit is developed on site.

Regarding the option to close the school, the Council recognises that this presents a linguistic risk in terms of the use of Welsh as a living community language within the village. At the same time, the Council does not anticipate that the proposal would have an adverse impact on Welsh as the language of instruction, as learners from the Baladeulyn catchment would continue to receive education in a Welsh-medium school. In this educational context, it is expected that teaching learners in larger age-group cohorts, with more peers, would maintain and potentially strengthen opportunities to use Welsh informally both within and outside the classroom.

Should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would act as a framework for further discussions on appropriate options for the future use of the building, including uses that support the Welsh language where appropriate, in order to mitigate any potential adverse impact on the Welsh language within the community.

3. Assessment of the impact on the Welsh Language

3.1 The Options

- No change - continue with the current situation

Keeping the current system would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn continues in the same way, with the same staffing structure.

Note that although the case for change has been established, the 'Do nothing' option has been included in the assessment for comparison purposes.

- Federation with a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nantlle through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. The governing bodies of the individual schools would be dissolved, and a (new) federal governing body would be formed. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

As Ysgol Talysarn is considered the nearby school to federalise with, this option would mean establishing a formal collaboration arrangement between 3 schools as Ysgol Talysarn is already federated with Ysgol Brynaerau.

It is not anticipated that federalisation would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with opportunities to strengthen the leadership position, and work together for the school.

- Federation with another school and adding a specialist unit for children with additional learning needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn

This option would ensure continuity in the school's presence in the village of Nantlle through a collaborative arrangement with a nearby school or schools, led by a head or heads and one governing body. The governing bodies of the individual schools would be dissolved, and a (new) federal governing body would be formed. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, buildings, and expertise.

As Ysgol Talysarn is considered the nearby school to federalise with, this option would mean establishing a formal collaboration arrangement, between 3 schools, as Ysgol Talysarn is already federated with Ysgol Brynaerau.

In addition to federalisation, this option would also mean adding a location for an ALN unit at Ysgol Baladeulyn.

It is not anticipated that federalisation would have a significant impact on the Welsh language in the school as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue, with opportunities to strengthen the leadership position, and work together for the school.

- Close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)

This option would mean that Ysgol Baladeulyn would close, and that learners from the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn would be offered a place at Ysgol Talysarn (the alternative school).

The table on the next page contains an assessment of the impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn and teaching the learner at Ysgol Talysarn, on the Welsh language compared to the current situation. The table also outlines the additional opportunities for strengthening the Welsh language, and methods of mitigating any negative impact that may arise from the proposal.

- Merge local schools to support and maintain Ysgol Baladeulyn – Multi-site School

This option would mean closing local schools, including Ysgol Baladeulyn, and establishing a new school across several sites, including the current site of Ysgol Baladeulyn.

It is not anticipated that this option would have a negative impact on the Welsh language. Depending on the structure of the multi-site school, there may be opportunities for learners to have access to a wider range of suitable resources, a higher supply in terms of staffing, and they could be part of a larger group of peers.

- Adding a specialised area for children with additional needs at Ysgol Baladeulyn

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Baladeulyn adding a specific specialised area for children with additional learning needs on the school site.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Baladeulyn would continue.

- Include a language unit on Ysgol Baladeulyn site

This option would mean continuing with Ysgol Baladeulyn and adding a language unit on the school site. It would offer an immersion service in the Welsh language for children who require it before joining their chosen schools full-time.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language in the school as there would be no change to the education provision provided by Ysgol Baladeulyn. However, it is likely that there will be a positive impact on the Welsh language of the children who will attend the language unit.

3.2 Reasonable alternative options proposed by consultees in response to the consultation

- **Re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a ‘hybrid’ mainstream and ALN primary school in order to provide specialist provision for the local area.**

This option would involve re-categorising Ysgol Baladeulyn as a ‘hybrid’ mainstream primary school that includes specialist education provision for children with Additional Learning Needs on the school site.

This option would offer hybrid education, enabling primary learners in the local area to attend Ysgol Baladeulyn as a mainstream school and/or to access specialist ALN education provision.

It is not anticipated that this option would have an impact on the Welsh language, as Ysgol Baladeulyn’s mainstream provision would continue.

3.2 Assessment of the impact on the Welsh language

Assessment of the impact on the Welsh language - *Proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer the learners a place in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn)*

Part 1				
Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and work	Have any measures been identified to mitigate any negative impact or to create more positive opportunities	Final impact (following mitigation measures)
School language (formal)	<i>In the responses to the consultation, it was clearly stated that Welsh is used consistently and robustly as the main language of instruction in the current school. Concerns were raised that transferring learners to another school would lead to an educational experience in which Welsh is less prominent as the principal formal medium. Reference was made to Ysgol Baladeulyn's work in relation to the Welsh Language Charter, noting that the school has achieved the Gold Award.</i> Ysgol Baladeulyn is a Welsh-medium school. As Ysgol Talysarn is also a Welsh-medium school, it is concluded that the proposal would not have an impact on the children's language of education.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
School language (informal)	<i>Concerns were noted by respondents to the statutory consultation that transferring learners to a school with a weaker linguistic profile could reduce the level of formal and consistent Welsh-medium immersion across the curriculum. It was noted that such immersion is particularly important for children's linguistic progress and confidence, especially for those who do not receive the same level of Welsh exposure at home. Reference was made to clear</i>	Positive	Irrelevant	Irrelevant

	<i>differences in the use of Welsh between the current school and potential alternative schools.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated and comments referred to the fact that the proportion of Welsh speakers at Ysgol Baladeulyn is higher than at Ysgol Talysarn.</i> The concern outlined above is noted, and it is acknowledged that the January 2025 PLASC data showed that 55% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn spoke Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. However, the most recent PLASC data from January 2026 show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. As a result, no negative impact on this criterion is anticipated. As learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, the proposal could strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise through the medium of Welsh with their peers. As a result, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom.			
Access to Welsh medium education	Ysgol Talysarn is a Welsh-medium school, like Ysgol Baladeulyn. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would affect this criterion.	Neutral	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
Non-statutory provision	Learners would have access to increased provision in terms of staffing and would be part of a larger group of peers of the same age.	Positive	The local authority and Governing Body of Talaearau (Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau	Positive

			Federation) could discuss methods to ensure that learners can participate in extracurricular activities.	
Activities before/after school	Ysgol Talysarn is a larger school in terms of numbers of learners so the peer groups would be larger. As noted in Section 2.5 of the Impact Assessment, Ysgol Talysarn offers after-school activities such as an after-school club or sports activities.	Positive	The Local Authority and Governing Body of Talaerau (Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau Federation) could consider any additional opportunities for holding activities after school, ensuring that arrangements are in place to include learners in the Baladeulyn catchment area.	Positive
Use of the Welsh Language in the community	<i>In the responses to the statutory consultation, it was noted that the school plays an important role in integrating new families, including those from English-speaking backgrounds, into the Welsh-language life of the village. Concerns were expressed that the loss of the school could undermine this process, leading to less natural use of Welsh among new families. It was emphasised that the school makes a significant contribution to the use of Welsh in informal contexts, such as social gatherings, after-school play, and interactions between parents and local residents which ensures that the Welsh language remains a living language within the community.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated and strengthened, emphasising that the school plays an integral role in promoting and sustaining the Welsh language and Welsh culture within the local community. Concern was expressed that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh on a daily basis and weaken the process of inter-generational language</i>	Negative	The Local Authority and the Governing Body of Talaerau (Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau federation) can consider methods of promoting the use of the Welsh language by including the Nantlle community in the school's community activities. If the proposal is implemented, the Authority would have to consider options for the subsequent use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently being held at the school. It is noted that	Neutral/ Partially Negative

	<i>transmission, with reference made to activities held in the school that encourages interaction between local residents and families. Concern was expressed that closing the school could pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the community of Nantlle.</i> If the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were to be implemented, then it is anticipated that some elements of community events will be affected. It is anticipated that there may be some negative impact resulting from the implementation of the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would not meet daily in the Baladeulyn community when dropping off/collecting children from school, nor during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. The school invites the community to the school for school activities within and outside of school hours like coffee evenings, presentations from the children and assemblies. However, it is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn. However, it is also noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that the level of daily engagement with the school as a social or linguistic space varies among families within the Nantlle community. Impact on the local economy: Although the proposal is not expected to have a substantial negative impact on the local economy in Nantlle, it is acknowledged that, if Ysgol Baladeulyn were to close, it		Canolfan Llys Llywelyn, as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn, are available for the provision of community activities. To mitigate the impact on the Welsh language within the community, opportunities are noted to ensure that the Nantlle community is made aware of the activities of the alternative school, and community collaboration between Ysgol Talysarn and the Nantlle community is encouraged, where appropriate.	
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	would lead to a reduction in Welsh-medium employment opportunities in the village of Nantlle.			
Part 2 - How will the proposal affect/contribute towards/conform with the Welsh Language Standards, language policies, strategies and other relevant guidelines regarding the Welsh language				
Gwynedd Welsh Language Strategy 2023		Noted below is a summary of the anticipated impact on the areas of work in the Language Strategy:		
		Early years language: As the Cylch Meithrin is located in the village of Talysarn, and collaborates with Ysgol Talysarn (the alternative school), it is anticipated that the proposal would have a positive effect on early years language. Learning Language: Ysgol Baladeulyn is a Welsh-medium school, Category 3. As Ysgol Talysarn is also a Welsh-medium school (Category 3), it is concluded that the proposal would not have an impact on the language of the children's education. Work and Service Language: <i>Respondents to the consultation noted that the presence of Ysgol Baladeulyn strengthens the status and confidence of the Welsh language in practical contexts, supporting use of the language among families and new speakers in everyday life. Concerns were expressed that the loss of the school could lead to a gradual decline in the use of Welsh in community services and activities. Positive reference was made to Ysgol Baladeulyn's work in promoting the Welsh language through the Welsh Language Charter, noting that the school has been awarded the Gold Award for the quality and consistency of its provision.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these comments and concerns were reiterated. Some objectors raised that losing the school would mean losing a Welsh-language service within the community, and some comments referred to the dedication and service of the school staff.</i> It is acknowledged that, if the proposal is implemented, there would be some negative impact on the language due to the loss of a Category 3 Welsh-medium school presence in the village of Nantlle serving the area, and it would lead to redundancies among school staff/workforce.		

	However, it is noted that the alternative school (Ysgol Talysarn) that would serve the Nantlle area if the proposal is implemented, is also a Welsh-medium school (Category 3). It is not anticipated that the proposal would affect the language of work and service provided at the alternative school. Community Language: <i>Strong concern was expressed by respondents to the consultation that the proposals could have a detrimental impact on the Welsh language and the community's culture, with the view that the school is central to sustaining Welsh as a living and natural language in the life of the village. It was noted that the school functions as an important hub for the Welsh-language life of the village, contributing to the use of the language beyond school hours, and reference was made to how the school integrates new families, including those who are not fluent Welsh speakers, into local Welsh-language life.</i> <i>During the statutory objection period, these concerns were reiterated and strengthened by objectors. Concern was expressed that losing the school could reduce opportunities to use the Welsh language on a daily basis and weaken the process of inter-generational transmission of the language, with reference to the school's various activities, and this would pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle area.</i> The Council acknowledges that if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn is implemented, it is anticipated that certain elements of community events would be affected. It is foreseen that there may be some negative impact on the language within the community resulting from the implementation of the proposal, for example, as parents/guardians/families and local residents will no longer meet daily in the Nantlle community when dropping off/picking up children from the school or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn. In order to mitigate any negative effects, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of Talaerau (Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau Federation) could consider ways to promote the use of the Welsh language by including the Nantlle community in the school's community activities. In addition, if the proposal is implemented, the Authority will have to consider options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held at the school.
Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Government	<i>Through the responses to the consultation, concern was expressed that the proposal could have a negative impact as the school is considered central to sustaining the daily use of Welsh among children, families and the wider community. It was noted that the school provides strong linguistic immersion, supports the integration of new families into Welsh-</i>

language life, and normalises the use of Welsh beyond the classroom within community life. The view was expressed that the loss of the school could lead to a gradual decline in the use of the Welsh language.

During the statutory objection period, these viewpoints were reiterated and strengthened. A strong opinion was expressed by some objectors that the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn goes against the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 aim because Ysgol Baladeulyn services an area that is one of the strongholds of the Welsh language, and losing the school would lead to a gradual decline in the use of Welsh. The integral role rural schools such as Ysgol Baladeulyn have in sustaining and promoting local culture and the Welsh language in rural communities was emphasised. Concern was expressed that losing the school could lead to reduced opportunities to use the Welsh language naturally within the community, with reference to the school's activities where local residents and families can interact.

It is noted that any discussions relating to organisation need to note the Welsh Government's effort to reach the goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Should the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, it is anticipated that some elements of community events would be affected. The Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities.

In order to mitigate any negative impacts, the Local Authority and the Governing Body of the Talaerau Federation (the Federation of Ysgol Talysarn and Ysgol Brynaerau) could consider approaches to promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Nantlle community in the school's community activities. In addition, should the proposal be implemented, the Authority would need to consider options for the future use of the school building, taking into account the community activities that are currently held at the school. It is noted that Canolfan Llys Llywelyn is available to host activities in the area as well as Trigonos Plas Baladeulyn.

In terms of education provision, Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn are Category 3, Welsh-medium primary schools. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn is implemented, learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school.

It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or learners' linguistic opportunities, primarily because:

	- January 2026 PLASC statistics show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, and 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn do so. - The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places to its learners at a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) would mean that Baladeulyn catchment learners would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, category 3. - Learners would be taught in larger classes with more children of the same age group, and it is anticipated that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with more of their peers. In the educational context, on the above basis, if the proposal is implemented, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities for Baladeulyn catchment area learners to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and the vitality level of Welsh and informal use of the language would be stronger.
To what extent the proposal would support the targets in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan approved (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (2022-2032))	Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn are Welsh-medium primary schools, category 3. Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn operate the objectives of Cyngor Gwynedd's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032. This includes: • That all learners in the county have appropriate language skills in Welsh and English, and that this expectation is consistent across all schools. • That there is appropriate provision to enable every learner to develop bilingual proficiency. In this context, schools are expected to continue nurturing the skills of those learners who are Welsh speakers, and to introduce Welsh to those who are learners. • That all educational institutions in the county reflect and reinforce the Language Policy in their administration, social life, and routine management, as well as in their curriculum provision. As a result, if the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and transfer learners to Ysgol Talysarn is implemented, learners would continue to be taught in a Welsh-medium school, Category 3, which operates objectives and supports the targets of the WESP. On the basis of the above, it is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have a negative impact on the achievement of Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of the Cyngor Gwynedd Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032, namely: Outcome 1: More nursery/3-year-old children receiving Welsh-medium education. Outcome 2: More reception/5-year-old children receiving Welsh-medium education.

	Outcome 3: More children continuing to improve their Welsh skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another. Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts within the school. Outcome 6: Increase in Welsh-medium education provision for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) (in accordance with the duties set out by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018). As a result, it is concluded that implementing the proposal would align with the objectives of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-32, and the targets approved in the Welsh Strategic Plan.
How the proposal would expand or reduce Welsh-language provision, and in cases where it would reduce provision, explain why the provision would be reduced	The proposal would mean that a Welsh-medium school, Category 3 (Ysgol Baladeulyn), would close. However, if the proposal is implemented, learners would be offered a place in an alternative school, which is also a Welsh-medium, Category 3 school, namely Ysgol Talysarn. Ysgol Talysarn has sufficient capacity for current learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn who live in the Baladeulyn catchment area.
Compliance with the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011)	The Council confirms that the entire statutory process in relation to reviewing the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Language Standards 88-93 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. In accordance with Standards 88, 89 and 90, conscientious consideration was given to the possible effects that the policy decision could have on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English, including consideration of the positive and adverse effects possible, how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to ensure more positive effects, and how any potential adverse effects could be reduced. In addition, in accordance with Standards 91, 92 and 93, an opinion was considered and sought through the statutory consultation process regarding these linguistic effects, including an opinion on how the proposal could be formulated or modified in order to increase positive effects or reduce adverse effects on the Welsh language. These requirements were supported by carrying out this Linguistic Impact Assessment, together with related impact assessments, including the Equality Impact Assessment, and it is noted that these assessments have been reviewed and updated following consideration of the responses received during the statutory consultation, as well as the objections received during the statutory objection period.

4. CONCLUSION

Our expectations are that all learners in the County have a balanced, age-relevant bilingualism so they can be complete members of the bilingual society they are part of. The proposals for reorganisation will need to take full account of all the linguistic effects. Maintaining and improving the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among children will be a key consideration when drawing up proposals within the area.

Responses to the statutory consultation have highlighted a wide range of perspectives regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. It was noted that the school provides exceptional Welsh-medium education and creates an environment in which children speak Welsh confidently and naturally, strengthening the language as a primary social medium as well as an educational one. It was stated that the school plays an important role in integrating new families, including those from English-speaking backgrounds, into the Welsh-language life of the village. It was emphasised that the school makes a significant contribution to the use of Welsh in informal contexts, such as social gatherings, after-school play and interactions between parents and local residents.

The Council acknowledges that these concerns have been reiterated and strengthened during the statutory objection period, particularly in relation to Ysgol Baladeulyn's role in sustaining and promoting the Welsh language as a living language within the local community of Nantlle. It was also noted the concern raised by some objectors that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use the Welsh language on a daily basis and weaken the process of inter-generational transmission, and this would pose a significant potential risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle area, which goes against the objectives of Cymraeg 2050, particularly in terms of increasing the natural and community use of the Welsh language.

The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight the possible detrimental impact on local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council's view is that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons:

- The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
- It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and with more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers.

In the educational context, based on the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger.

At the same time, having considered responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle

community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nantlle community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities currently held there.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within the Nantlle area, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not indicate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop the Welsh language within the educational setting.

**WELL-BEING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT
IMPACT ASSESSMENT –
YSGOL BALADEULYN**

September 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

As a Council, we are committed to the principles within the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in Gwynedd.

The Council's vision:

Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to thrive and live full lives in their community, in a county which is one of the best counties to live in.

The Council has adopted well-being objectives which reiterate the national well-being goals, to ensure the following for the residents of Gwynedd:

- Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life
- Strengthening the economy and supporting the residents of Gwynedd to earn a worthy wage
- Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities
- Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities
- Ensuring that we give every possible opportunity for our residents to use the Welsh language in the community
- Protecting the natural beauty of the county, and responding positively to the climate change crisis
- Putting the people of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently.

The table below outlines the link between our well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

	Llewyrchus	Cydnherth	Iachach	Cyfartal	Cymunedau Cydlynus	Diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r iaith Gymraeg yn ffynnu	Yn gyfrifol ar lefel fyd-eang
GWYNEDD YFORY Rhoi'r cychwyn gorau posib mewn bywyd i'n plant a'n pobl ifanc							
GWYNEDD LEWYRCHUS Cryfhau'r economi a chefnogi trigolion Gwynedd i ennill cyflogau teilwng							
GWYNEDD GLYD Cefnogi pobl Gwynedd i fyw mewn cartrefi addas a fforddiadwy yn eu cymunedau							
GWYNEDD OFALGAR Cefnogi trigolion Gwynedd i fyw bywydau llawn a diogel yn ein cymunedau							
GWYNEDD GYMRAEG Sicrhau ein bod yn rhoi pob cyfle posib i'n trigolion ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg yn y gymuned.							
GWYNEDD WERDD Gwarchod harddwch naturiol y sir, ac ymateb yn gadarnhaol i'r argyfwng newid hinsawdd							
GWYNEDD EFFEITHLON Rhoi trigolion Gwynedd yn gyntaf gan eu trin yn deg a sicrhau fod y Cyngor yn perfformio'n effeithiol ac effeithlon							

The Education Department has a role to promote the Act's well-being aims amongst learners through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the "Gwynedd Plan 2018-23".

2. HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET CYNGOR GWYNEDD'S WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES?

The proposal:

On 14 October 2025, the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 10 December 2025 and 28 January 2026, and 30 responses were received during the consultation.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and approved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026 and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026 and 25 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, containing 500 signatures.

Objectives	
Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, several comments received emphasised that the school provides children with a strong and supportive start in life through providing excellent education in a small and nurturing environment that supports wellbeing, confidence and social development. In addition, it was noted that vulnerable learners rely on the small and stable environment to develop and maintain their language skills. Concerns were expressed that moving children to a larger school further from home could undermine these benefits, increasing stress and making the transition difficult for learners, particularly vulnerable learners or those with Additional Learning Needs. The Council acknowledges that there may be some negative impact on learners' wellbeing during the transition period. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, and with the learners and their families, to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, with appropriate support, can mitigate negative impacts and support the continuity of educational progress. As stated in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook, learners with ALN have the right to continue receiving the provision set out in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority's duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change. The Council is committed to prioritising individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and/or learners with additional learning needs, should the school close. However, the Council remains of the opinion that the proposal will ensure that children in the area gain experiences by socialising with a broader range of age-relevant peers, receive high quality education in a school that is able to offer a learning environment and experiences to a broader range of learners.
Strengthening the economy and supporting the residents of Gwynedd to earn a worthy wage	It is anticipated that implementing the proposal would likely have a negative impact on this objective, as it could lead to staff redundancies. Cyngor Gwynedd, in conjunction with Trade Unions and headteachers have developed a detailed staffing policy. The policy will form the basis for any change in staff employment deriving from any proposal. Clear and open communication will be a core part of the successful implementation of any proposals.
Supporting the people of Gwynedd to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the loss of the school as a community asset could negatively influence the number of young families moving into the village. It was noted that the presence of a local school is an important factor in the attractiveness of an area to young families considering settling there. Reference was also made to other factors, such as the presence

	of holiday homes in Nantlle, and concerns were raised that closing the school could result in a decline in the number of young families choosing to settle in the area and could contribute to the village's long-term decline. Based on the available evidence, a high proportion of children from the catchment area already attend schools outside the catchment (75%), with 50% of learners from Nursery to Year 6 in the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area already attending Ysgol Talysarn. As a result, the Council does not anticipate that families with young children would leave the community if the school were to close. Furthermore, given that the proposed alternative school is located 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council does not anticipate that this option would encourage families with school-age children to leave the community, nor that it would make young families less likely to move into the area. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the proposed alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate, and ensuring that Nantlle residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities, and activities available at the alternative school. As a result, no negative impact is anticipated on this Well-being objective.
Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities	Ensuring that the learners receive education of the highest quality will be integral to the proposal, to ensure that they receive an education of the same standard and quality in the alternative school.
Ensuring that we give every possible opportunity for our residents to use the Welsh language in the community	Strong concern was expressed by respondents to the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period that the proposal could have a detrimental impact on the Welsh language and community life, with the opinion that the school is central to sustaining Welsh as a living and natural language in the life of the village. It was noted that the school acts as an important hub for Welsh-language life of the village, contributing to the use of the language beyond school hours, and reference was made to how the school integrates new families, including those who are not fluent Welsh speakers, into local Welsh-language life. Concern was raised that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh on a daily basis and weaken the process of transferring the language between generations, and that this would pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle area. As part of the statutory process, the Authority undertook an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. This assessment was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory objection period. In the conclusion of the assessment, it is noted that the Council recognises the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that comments received highlight a potential negative impact on elements of local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council is of the view that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons: • The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers. In the educational context, given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and

	outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger. At the same time, having considered the consultation responses, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nantlle community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities currently held there. In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within the Nantlle area, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not indicate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop the Welsh language within the educational setting.
Protecting the natural beauty of the county, and responding positively to the climate change crisis	No impact.
Putting the people of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently	No impact.

3. DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET THE WELL-BEING GOALS OF THE ACT?

Aim	Does the proposal contribute to this goal?	Negative impact mitigating measures for this goal:
A prosperous Wales An innovative society which uses resources proportionately, a well-educated population which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities.	The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and educate the children in Ysgol Talysarn would mean that the learners foster experiences by socialising with a broader range of age-relevant peers and receive a quality education at a school which can offer a learning environment and experiences to a broader range of learners. Introducing this proposal could lead to staff losing their jobs.	Staff and Union representatives will be consulted specifically as part of the statutory consultation period. Cyngor Gwynedd has developed a detailed staffing policy, jointly with Trade Unions and headteachers. Any redundancies resulting from this proposal will have to comply with that policy. Clear and open communication will play a core part in the implementation of any proposals.
A resilient Wales A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse environment with healthy ecosystems that support resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).	It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to impact this aim.	No impact
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.	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, specific concerns were raised regarding the potential negative impact of the proposal on learners' emotional well-being should Ysgol Baladeulyn close and the learners transfer to a larger school. It was emphasised that the caring and nurturing environment at Ysgol Baladeulyn has a positive impact on learners' well-being, confidence, and development, particularly vulnerable learners or learners with ALN. Concerns were expressed that moving children to a larger school further from home could undermine these benefits, increase stress, and make the transition more difficult for learners, especially for vulnerable learners or learners with ALN. Reference was made to the fact that current learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn are able to walk or cycle to school, but if the school were to close, this would not be possible for the alternative school, as there is no safe route available. A number of concerns were raised regarding the negative impact that longer journeys to the	The Council acknowledges that there may be some negative impact on learners' wellbeing during the transition period. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the learners and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. It is anticipated that carefully planned transition arrangements, with appropriate support, can mitigate negative impacts and support the continuity of educational progress. As stated in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26, learners with Additional Learning Needs have the right to continue to receive the support specified in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority's duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change. As the proposed alternative school is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, and further from the homes of some learners within the catchment area, it is not anticipated that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would be likely to walk or cycle to the alternative school, if the proposal were implemented. It is not anticipated that any learner from the Ysgol Baladeulyn

	alternative school could have on learners' well-being, should the proposal be implemented.	catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school, or expected for them to walk or cycle on dangerous routes to the alternative school, if the proposal were to be implemented. School transport would be provided in accordance with the Authority's Transport Policy, which provides free transport to primary-age learners living 2 miles or more from the catchment-area school or nearest school. It is anticipated that attending a larger school would offer greater opportunities to participate in team sports or after-school clubs, thereby contributing positively to learners' health and well-being, as well as providing opportunities to socialise with a broader range of age-appropriate peers.
A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that changes to the current arrangements could lead to less equitable experiences for some children, particularly the most vulnerable. Comments received noted that in small schools like Ysgol Baladeulyn, no child is excluded and is afforded equal opportunities to have prominent roles in activities or various responsibilities such as with the School Council. Specific concerns were raised regarding the experiences of learners with Additional Learning Needs, with the view that the school's small size supports continuity, stability and effective personalised support. Concerns were also expressed that transferring to a larger and unfamiliar school could have a negative impact on vulnerable children or those with ALN. A strong concern was expressed that the proposal would have a negative impact on the wellbeing of families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, particularly families without easy access to a car, with reference made to unreliable public transport. In addition to this, concern was also expressed regarding additional costs for families, should the school close, such as having to buy a new school uniform or fuel costs to transport children. Some comments noted a potential negative impact of the proposal on families that live outside of the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area, as well as the potential impact on childcare arrangements if the school were to close. The Council remains of the opinion that that the proposal will improve the Authority's ability to <i>"provide education of the best</i>	Although concerns have been expressed regarding the potential impact on vulnerable children, including learners with additional learning needs and emotional difficulties, specific mitigation measures are in place to ensure that the proposal would not result in exclusion or disproportionate discrimination. In accordance with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the ALN Code for Wales, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that every learner with additional learning needs continues to receive the provision set out in their Individual Development Plan, regardless of any change in school arrangements. If the proposal were to be implemented, transition arrangements would be carefully planned, with appropriate support for learners and families, including early engagement with the receiving school, relevant support staff and support services. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, it is acknowledged that the local school would become more distant from homes within the current catchment area of Ysgol Baladeulyn, and in terms of deprivation, this would mean that one of the indicators 'access to services' would become more distant from residents of the area. However, should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that provision at Ysgol Talysarn would include access to a broader range of expertise, peers and professional support, with the aim of maintaining or improving learners' wellbeing, inclusion and educational experience. In relation to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy, ensuring that cost or

	<i>possible quality that will provide the county's children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens" in accordance with the 'Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd' strategy.</i>	accessibility of transport does not present a barrier to equal access to education. Potential impact on individual families would be considered where relevant. Following consideration of the comments submitted during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, the Equality Impact Assessment was updated to reflect the concerns raised and their potential impact on protected characteristics and wider equality. This assessment identifies that the proposal could lead to potential partially negative effects on some groups, including in relation to Disability, Age, the Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Considerations. However, the further assessment also notes that potential positive effects could arise should the proposal be implemented, including in relation to access to broader educational provision, additional social and educational opportunities, and access to extended expertise and support. In order to mitigate any potential negative effects, it is noted that robust policies and procedures are already in place within the Authority, applicable to all schools across the county, to ensure compliance with equality duties, prevent unlawful discrimination, and promote equal opportunities for all learners. In addition, it is noted that robust policies and arrangements are in place to ensure that the proposal would take equal rights into account and align with them. It is also noted that measures are already in place to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination or harassment.
A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, it was consistently expressed that the school is a core element of village life and central to the identity of the community. Attention was drawn to the school's role in facilitating daily social interaction between families and local residents such as activities like concerts and assemblies. Concerns were expressed that closing the school would reduce the natural opportunities for people to meet, socialise and maintain informal community connections. It was emphasised that a local primary school is an important factor in attracting and retaining young families, and that losing the school could have a negative impact on the long-term sustainability of the community. The community of Nantlle is strong and vibrant and it is acknowledged that the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn could have some negative impact on the community.	As part of the statutory process, the Authority undertook an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the community. This assessment was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. In the latest assessment, it is noted that there would be some likely negative impact on the community should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community as a community hub. In addition, should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, it is acknowledged that the local school would be located further away from homes within the current Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area, and from a deprivation perspective this would mean that one of the 'access to services' indicators would move further away from residents of the area. As a result, some negative impact on the local community is anticipated if the school were to close. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn

		(50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn, the Council would seek to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging and supporting ongoing links between the Nantlle community and the alternative school, promoting community collaboration where appropriate and ensuring that residents and families are aware of the opportunities, facilities and activities available at the alternative school. In addition, it is noted that, should a decision be made to close the school, the Authority's Post-Use Policy would operate as a framework for undertaking further discussions regarding appropriate options for the future use of the school building, including community use where appropriate, in order to seek to mitigate any negative impact on the local community.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language 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.	During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, it was noted that the school plays a vital role in sustaining the Welsh language and culture. Reference was made to the school's role in integrating new families, including those from English-speaking backgrounds, into the Welsh-language life of the village. Concern was expressed that closing the school could reduce opportunities to use Welsh on a daily basis and weaken the intergenerational transmission of the language, which could pose a significant risk to the sustainability of Welsh in the Nantlle area. It was emphasised that the school makes a significant contribution to sustaining the use of Welsh in informal and formal contexts within the community, such as interaction between parents and local residents during collection/ drop off times for children and the school's activities. Respondents to the consultation also noted concerns that transferring learners to a school with a weaker linguistic profile could reduce the level of Welsh-language immersion. Reference was made to Ysgol Baladeulyn's work in relation to the Welsh Language Charter, noting that the school has achieved the Gold Award. The Council acknowledges the concerns regarding the potential impact of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn on the linguistic vitality of the local community. However, based on the most recent data and the fact that learners from the Baladeulyn catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school with broader	As part of the statutory process, the Authority undertook an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language. This assessment was updated following consideration of the comments received during the statutory objection period. In the conclusion of the assessment, it is noted that the Council recognises the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that comments received highlight a potential negative impact on elements of local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council is of the view that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons: • The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children from the same age group, and that the proposal

	opportunities to socialise through the medium of Welsh, it is anticipated that the proposal would maintain or even strengthen the informal use of Welsh among learners. Nevertheless, the Council also recognises that, should a decision be made to close the school, the change could lead to a negative impact on the use of Welsh as a community language outside the school setting, and would consider mitigation measures such as involving the Baladeulyn community in the activities of the alternative school and exploring options for the future use of the school building.	would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers. In the educational context, given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger. At the same time, having considered the responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nantlle community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities currently held there. In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within the Nantlle area, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not indicate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop the Welsh language within the educational setting.
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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.	It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to impact this aim.	No impact
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4. PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Sustainable Development	Does the proposal consider the principle?
Long Term Balance short term needs with long term ones and plan for the future.	The pattern of declining learner numbers has been consistent since 2016, with projections showing that the numbers of learners in Ysgol Baladeulyn will reduce further over the coming years, which demonstrates that the current challenges facing the school are long-term and clearly shows that the case for change is clear.
Prevention Allocate resources to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse. We will address problems by prevention and early intervention rather than being responsive.	Should the Cabinet decide to take further steps, the learners' needs will be the priority during all steps of any process.
Integration Have a positive effect on people, the economy, the environment and culture.	The authority decided to begin the process of examining the future of Ysgol Baladeulyn due to the urgent situation facing the school.
Collaboration Work with other partners to provide services.	Collaboration with other relevant departments and the alternative school will be an important part of achieving the objectives for the benefit of the school and the catchment's children.
Involvement (Communication and Engagement) Involve the people of Gwynedd when seeking to realise our plan and ensure that those people reflect the diversity of the area.	The proposal will be subject to public consultation, and consultation for children. The process to date has included local review meetings to engage with the relevant stakeholders of the school. These meetings have involved the Governing Body, staff, and parents of Ysgol Baladeulyn.

5. CONCLUSION

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and the Council's well-being objectives, it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

During the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period, concerns were raised regarding the impact of the proposal on vulnerable children, learners with additional learning needs, the wellbeing of families facing socio-economic disadvantage, and the linguistic and community vitality of the village.

It is acknowledged that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, it could result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children living within the school's catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting a link between the schools, and the community of the school already exist. Every effort would be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn, should the proposal be implemented. Should the proposal be approved, discussions would take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Talysarn's community activities would include the Nantlle community where appropriate.

It is also acknowledged, that there may be some negative impact on learner well-being during the transition period, if the school were to close. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the closing school, and with the learners and their families, to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including those of vulnerable children and learners with Additional Learning Needs, should the school close.

It is anticipated that the proposal would ensure that children in the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, increasing opportunities for socialising and collaborating with others and giving them a fair chance to thrive among their peers.

Assessment of the Impact on the People of Gwynedd

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

- **Equality Act 2010.** It places a duty on public organisations to give due attention to the impact of any new policy, procedure or plan, etc. (or as they are adapted) on persons with protected characteristics. We are required to
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act.
 - advance 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 any 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 any 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.

Ysgol Baladeulyn

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Date: September 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?

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures (which modify service delivery or employment practices)

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

On 14 October 2025, Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet decided to undertake a statutory consultation process on a proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026, and to provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.

The consultation was held between 10 December and 28 January, and 30 responses to the consultation were received.

Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet considered the consultation report at its meeting on 19 May 2026 and approved to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and offer places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027 onwards. The Statutory Notice was published on 3 June 2026 and a statutory objection period of 28 days was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period came to an end on 30 June 2026 and 25 objections were received during that period. A petition was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn objecting to the proposal, with 500 signatures.

Ysgol Baladeulyn has been prioritised for a review of the educational provision as the school is facing a number of challenges. Learner numbers at the school have fallen consistently in recent years and have been vulnerable for some time. Consequently, it is likely that the school is facing increasing challenges, including:

- **Number of learners** – Census PLASC data from January 2026 shows that only 6 full-time learners were attending the school with 2 children in the Nursery Class. The school has a capacity for 55 learners Admission to Year 6 (+7 in the Nursery Class).
- **Learners in the catchment area** – January 2026 data shows that only 25% of Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area learners choose to attend the school. 75% of learners in the catchment area choose to attend schools outside the catchment area.
- **Projections of numbers** - Projections of numbers (including the Nursery Class) recommend that the numbers will remain vulnerable into the future: September 2026=9; September 2027 = 9; September 2028= 8
- **High percentage of surplus places** - Based on January 2026 figures, there are approximately 89% empty places (49 in number).
- **Small class sizes** – In Ysgol Baladeulyn (September 2025) there is one class which includes all learners in the school - namely 6 Reception-Year 6 learners (Reception, Years 1 and 2, and Years 4 and 5) and 2 Nursery learners. Within this class, different groups are formed at different times of the day, with the assistants leading the activities (with the youngest learners). This therefore means that the age range in the whole class extends up to 8 years.
- **Broad age ranges within classes** - There is an age range of 8 years in one class.
- **Additional funding to the usual allocation** - Ysgol Baladeulyn receives an additional amount to the normal allocation through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and a teacher in every school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools with less than 15 full-time learners). The total additional amount during the 2026-27 financial year (based on September 2025 numbers) is £74,446
- **Cost per learner** – The average cost per learner at Ysgol Baladeulyn in 2026-27 is £25,123 compared to the county average of £5,998.

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

- Staff, Governors and Parents/Guardians of Ysgol Baladeulyn
- A statutory consultation was held on the proposal, consulting with all consultees specified in the School Organization Code.
- Education Department and Officers from other Cyngor Gwynedd departments.

STEP 2 – Engagement Data and Assessing the Impact

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

Yes

The engagement details. Note any consultation or engagement you have conducted or intend to conduct.

Action	Dates	Information
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Ysgol Baladeulyn Review Panel 1	17 March 2025	The Ysgol Baladeulyn School Review Panel (SRP) was established in March 2025 and a series of meetings were held between March and July 2025, with the last of these held on 7 July 2025. The SRP membership included the school's headteacher and staff, governors, the Local Member, parents and guardians. During the meetings, a number of options were considered for primary education in the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to ensure a sustainable provision for the future and respond specifically to the small numbers of learners.
Ysgol Baladeulyn Review Panel 2	19 May 2025	
Ysgol Baladeulyn Review Panel 3	7 July 2025	
Statutory Consultation	December 2025 – January 2026	A statutory consultation was held on the proposal, in accordance with the School Organisation Code. The consultation was held between 10 December and 28 January, and 30 responses to the consultation were received.
Statutory Objection Period	3 June – 30 June 2026	A statutory notice regarding the proposal was published on 3 June 2026, and a 28-day statutory objection period was held between 3 June and 30 June 2026. The objection period ended on 30 June 2026, and 25 objections were received during that period. A petition opposing the proposal was also received from the Governing Body of Ysgol Baladeulyn, containing 500 signatures.

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	Gwynedd schools have relevant policies in place to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-bullying Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd states anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race in the school. Also, it is states in the	None

	Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd primary schools that schools <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i> Therefore, it is not anticipated that this proposal would have a negative impact on this characteristic.	
Disability	During the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, concerns were raised about the negative impact of the proposal on certain groups of learners, particularly those with complex Additional Learning Needs, of transferring to a new school that is larger and unfamiliar to them. Questions were also raised about whether the continuity of support, such as support staff and the number of support hours for an ALN learner, would transfer to the alternative school in order to mitigate the impact of moving to a new school. It was noted that parents had specifically chosen Ysgol Baladeulyn because of the care, learning environment and personal support that learners receive in a smaller school. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with the learners and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including for vulnerable learners and learners with Additional Learning Needs, should the school close. The Quality and Standards of Education Impact Assessment refers to elements such as improved conditions for the additional learning needs co-ordinator to meet statutory requirements, and the availability of a broader provision map in larger schools. It is not anticipated that the change would have a negative impact on this characteristic. An accessibility assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be held, and we will ensure that any transport provided (in accordance with the Education Department's	As a result of the comments received during the consultation, a potential negative impact was identified for some learners with complex Additional Learning Needs, due to concerns about transferring to a larger and unfamiliar school, and about whether continuity of support staff for the learner would be maintained at the alternative school in order to mitigate any potential negative impact. However, the Council's assessment is that there would be a neutral or positive impact on this characteristic should the proposal be implemented, as it is anticipated that the alternative school would be able to offer improved conditions for the Additional Learning Needs co-ordinator to meet statutory requirements, and the availability of a broader provision map. An assessment of any relevant alternative schools would be undertaken on the basis of accessibility, and we would ensure that any transport provided (in accordance with the Education Department's transport policy) is suitable for the individual's needs. The needs of any disabled child would be considered in line with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies. Although it cannot be guaranteed that the continuity of support staff would be maintained at the alternative school, it is noted that each request is assessed on an individual basis. As stated in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26, learners with

	transport policy) is suitable for the needs of the individual. The needs of any disabled child would be considered in accordance with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies.	Additional Learning Needs have the right to continue to receive the support specified in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority's duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change.
Sex	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on this characteristic. Implementing the proposal will mean that everyone will be treated according to their need, whatever their gender. Every school implements an Equality Policy stating that the school: <i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	None
Age	During the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, it was noted that the current school provides equal opportunities and experiences for all to participate, without excluding any learner, which fosters positive and inclusive relationships between learners, staff and families. Concern was expressed that moving to a larger school could weaken these aspects and experiences and specific concerns were raised regarding wellbeing, mental health and the risk that some learners may find it difficult to transition to a larger school, with potential implications for their educational experience, particularly for vulnerable children. Concern was expressed regarding the emotional impact of the proposal on learners, families and community wellbeing should the school close. The Council notes these concerns and notes that equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination safeguarding policies are in place within both the current provision and the alternative school. It is acknowledged that the transition period is naturally emotional for learners of all ages, and should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would place emphasis on individual needs to mitigate any negative effects. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn would benefit from having more age-related peers in their class as there are more learners at Ysgol Talysarn, and it will be a way to ensure age-appropriate educational and extra-curricular experiences, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities. In addition, it is	As a result of the comments received during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, a potential negative impact is identified on the wellbeing of learners (particularly those who are vulnerable), due to concerns that transferring to a larger and unfamiliar school could reduce individual attention and support, thereby increasing the risk of difficulties during the transition period. Should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would place emphasis on individual needs in order to mitigate any negative effects arising from the transition period, with priority given to addressing any specific individual needs. However, the Council's assessment is that the proposal would have a neutral or positive impact on this characteristic if implemented as the proposed alternative school would be able to offer classes with a greater number of age-appropriate peers, together with access to a broader range of extracurricular activities and educational experiences suited to learners' age groups. Learners at Ysgol Talysarn are taught in classes of a more appropriate size, ranging from 16 to 30 learners per class (September 2025). There are four mixed-age classes at Ysgol Talysarn, as well as a Nursery class.

	anticipated that there would be more opportunities to socialise with a greater number of age-related peers. We believe that learners will receive more age-appropriate experiences at the nearby alternative school since the learners will have learning experiences in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question. It is anticipated that implementing the proposal would mean that people of any age would be treated fairly and according to their need. Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn implement an equality policy stating that the schools: <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i> A number of comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period referred to the fact that current learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn are able to walk or cycle to school, however, if the school were to close, it would not be possible for them to do so to the alternative school, as there is no safe route available. Several concerns were raised regarding the negative impact that longer journeys to the alternative school could have on learners' well-being should the proposal be implemented. In addition, concerns were raised regarding eligibility for free school transport for children who are not of statutory school age (under 5 years old), as well as concerns about suitable safety arrangements for transporting young learners to non-statutory provision. As the proposed alternative school is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, and further from the homes of some learners within the catchment area, it is not anticipated that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would be likely to walk or cycle to the alternative school if the proposal were implemented. Should the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, Cyngor Gwynedd would, in accordance with Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, provide free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, nearest school, or where learners	As a result of the comments received during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, a potential negative impact has been identified on learners' well-being should the proposal be implemented, with reference made to the longer journeys for learners to attend the alternative school and that they would no longer be able to walk or cycle to school. The Council's assessment is that there would be both some negative impact and some positive impact on the physical well-being element of this characteristic should the proposal be implemented. If the proposal were implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however, it is not anticipated that any learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school. Given the distance between the alternative school and Ysgol Baladeulyn, it is not anticipated that learners from Ysgol Baladeulyn would be likely to walk or cycle to the alternative school. However, it is anticipated that there could be a potential positive impact on this characteristic, as attending a larger school would offer greater opportunities to participate in team sports or after-school clubs, thereby contributing positively to learners' health and well-being, as well as providing opportunities to socialise with a broader range of age-appropriate peers. As noted in section 2.5 of the Linguistic Impact Assessment, Ysgol Talysarn offers after-school activities such as an after-school club and sports activities.
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	travel to school along a route that the Council considers to be highly dangerous. The policy can be found in the Parents' Handbook: Information for parents . Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner qualifies for statutory transport. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however, no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor would they be expected to walk or cycle to school along a dangerous route.	
Religion and Belief	Ysgol Baladeulyn and the alternative school noted in the proposal (Ysgol Talysarn) are community schools. Every school has an Inclusion Policy that would deal with any discriminatory incident that may occur at the school, which is associated with religion or belief. Therefore, it is not anticipated that this proposal would have an impact on this characteristic.	None
Sexual Orientation	Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework that was published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged between 3 and 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, that are all based on respect and trust on both sides, which is core to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships. We believe that learners will receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class in an alternative school.	None

	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of sexual orientation. Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn, the proposed alternative school, implement an equality policy stating that the school: <i>"... is opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	
Gender reassignment	It is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have an impact on people on the grounds of gender reassignment. It is stated in the Equality policy that is implemented by Gwynedd primary schools including Ysgol Baladeulyn and Ysgol Talysarn that the schools <i>"... are opposed to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledge that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i>	None
Marriage and Civil Partnership	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on anyone who is married or in a civil partnership, as both schools who are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	None
Pregnancy and Maternity	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on anyone who is pregnant, whether staff or parents, as both schools which are a part of the proposal implement the same policies.	None
The Welsh Language	Through the responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to the Welsh language being treated less favourably than English in practice, despite Welsh-medium educational provision continuing. Respondents emphasised that Ysgol Baladeulyn provides an environment in which Welsh is used naturally and socially on a day-to-day basis, not solely as the language of instruction, and that the loss of the school could significantly reduce these opportunities within the local community. It was noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn has a very strong Welsh-language profile compared with other schools in the area, and concern was expressed that moving to a school with a lower proportion of Welsh-language use could have a negative impact on children's linguistic confidence.	As a result of the comments received during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, a potential negative impact is identified on the linguistic confidence and Welsh-language use of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn should the school close and learners transfer to the alternative school, with reference made to the lower proportion of Welsh-language use at the alternative school. However, the Council's assessment is that there would be a neutral or positive impact on the educational provision aspect of this characteristic should the proposal be implemented, as learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children from the same age group. It is anticipated that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in

	It was also noted that the loss of the school could undermine opportunities for people to use Welsh in a living and practical way in everyday community life, with reference made to the natural opportunities for children, parents/guardians and local residents to gather and converse within the community during school drop-off and pick-up times or during school events such as concerts or assemblies. Strong concern was expressed that closing the school could result in the loss of these opportunities, thereby weakening the status of Welsh as a living community language and potentially undermining the principle of not treating the Welsh language less favourably. Several comments emphasised that the school functions as an important hub for Welsh culture and the Welsh-language life of the village, contributing to the use of the language beyond school hours. Reference was made to how the school integrates new families, including those who are not fluent Welsh speakers, into local Welsh-language life. Concerns were expressed that closing the school would undermine the wider community use of Welsh, and it was emphasised that the school is a key part of the community's linguistic identity and closing the school would pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle, which goes against the aims of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, particularly in terms increasing the community and natural use of the Welsh language. The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight a potential negative impact on elements of local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision. However, based on the information available, the Council is of the view that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons:	Welsh with a broader group of their peers. The Council is not of the view that the proposal would result in a negative impact on learners' Welsh-medium educational provision. As a result of the comments received during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, a potential negative impact is identified on opportunities for people to use Welsh in a living and practical way in everyday community life, with reference made to the natural opportunities for children, parents/guardians/families and local residents to gather and converse within the community during school drop-off and pick-up times or the school's activities. The Council's assessment is that there would be some negative impact on the community element of this characteristic should the proposal be implemented, as parents/guardians and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis within the Nantlle community when dropping off and collecting learners from school or during the school's activities. In order to mitigate any negative impacts, the Local Authority and Talaerau Governing Body could consider methods of promoting the use of the Welsh language by involving the Baladeulyn community in the school's community activities, as well as considering options for post-use of the school building, taking into account the community activities currently held at the school.
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	• The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn. • The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) would mean that learners from the Baladeulyn catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school. • It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers. In the educational context, given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger. At the same time, having considered the responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nantlle community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities currently held there.	
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	The Community Impact Assessment shows that it is anticipated that there may be some negative impact on the community, if the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn were implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would lead to the loss of a school within the Nantlle community, however, the assessment notes that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), thus concluding that a connection between Ysgol Talysarn and the community of Ysgol Baladeulyn already exist. The Gwynedd Education Language Policy has the same aim for all of the county's primary schools, and every primary school (except for one) falls into category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn will be able to continue to receive their education through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Education Language Policy at Ysgol Talysarn.	
Socio-economic Considerations	Specific concerns were highlighted during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period regarding the lack of suitable public transport, unreliable timetables and lower levels of car ownership. It was noted that Talysarn is a deprived area and that this would pose a significant challenge for families who do not drive, low-income families, single parents, and families where limited mobility is a factor, making daily travel to a more distant school very difficult in practical terms or impact on childcare arrangements for families. Additionally, concerns were expressed regarding additional costs such as new school uniforms and fuel costs if the proposal were implemented. The Council acknowledges these concerns and notes that, should the school close, free transport would be provided to eligible learners in accordance with the County's School Transport Policy, which ensures that all primary-age learners living 2 miles or more from the nearest relevant school are eligible to receive free transport. The policy also includes consideration of walking route safety and individual needs where relevant. It is not anticipated that any learner from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area would be	As a result of the comments received during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council's assessment is that there would be some negative impact as well as a potential positive impact on this characteristic, if the proposal were implemented. A possible negative impact is acknowledged as implementing the proposal would lead to the loss of a school within the Nantlle community and the challenges this could pose for families experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, including new school uniform costs and costs arising from further travelling distances. However, the Council anticipates a potential positive impact on this characteristic, if the proposal were implemented, through ensuring access to a broader range of educational provision, additional social and educational opportunities within classes containing age-appropriate peers, and access to extended expertise and support. It is also noted that significant proportion of children from the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that

	required to travel an unreasonable distance to school should the proposal be implemented. The Community Impact Assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community should the proposal be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community, and in terms of deprivation, this would mean that one of the indicators 'access to services' would become more distant from residents of the area. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. With regard to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy. It is also noted that the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: Financial help and support with education It is anticipated that the proposal would reduce social disadvantage by ensuring more experiences and diversity of learning, more resources and access to more services and activities in the alternative school.	community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist.
Those Who Serve or Who Have Served in the Armed Forces, As Well As Their Families	It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, as well as their families. Learners from military or ex-military families will get the same fair play whichever school they attend.	None
Human Rights	It is not anticipated that implementing the proposal would have an impact on human rights.	None
Other	-	-

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

All assessments were updated after considering the responses to the statutory consultation. Following the statutory objection period, the assessment was reviewed further in order to consider the objections received and to assess whether they presented any additional relevant information in relation to equality.

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

We are not aware of any proposed policies that would impact on the learners and young people of the area.

8. What does the proposal include to demonstrate you have given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (to promote equality of 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?

It is not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on the school's statutory duty to protect learners from any discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The aim is to promote equal opportunities and encourage the alternative school to continue to follow equality policies and procedures. Should the proposal be realised, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities when placed in Ysgol Talysarn since the learners would have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

During the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, concerns were raised about the negative impact of the proposal on certain groups of learners, particularly those with complex Additional Learning Needs, of transferring to a new school that is larger and unfamiliar to them. Questions were also raised as to whether continuity of support, such as support staff members and the number of support hours for an ALN learner, would transfer to the alternative school in order to mitigate the impact of moving to a new school. It was noted that parents had chosen Ysgol Baladeulyn because of the care and education their children receive in a smaller school. The Council acknowledges these concerns, and although it cannot guarantee that continuity of support staff would be maintained at the alternative school, it is noted that each case is assessed on an individual basis. As stated in the Gwynedd Parents' Handbook 2025/26, learners with additional learning needs have the right to continue to receive the support specified in their Individual Development Plan, and it is the Authority's duty to ensure that this provision continues even when school arrangements change. Should Ysgol Baladeulyn close, the authority and the alternative school would work closely with learners and their families to ensure a smooth transition and to support learners as they settle into their new schools. The Council is committed to ensuring that any transition arrangements prioritise individual needs, including vulnerable learners and learners with additional learning needs, should the school close.

During the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, it was noted that the current school provides equal opportunities and experiences for all to participate, without excluding any learner, which fosters positive and inclusive relationships between learners, staff and families. Concern was expressed that moving to a larger school could weaken these aspects and experiences and specific concerns were raised regarding wellbeing, mental health and the risk that some learners may find it difficult to transition to a larger school, with potential implications for their educational experience, particularly for vulnerable children. Concern was expressed regarding the

emotional impact of the proposal on learners, families and community wellbeing should the school close. The Council notes these concerns and notes that equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination safeguarding policies are in place within both the current provision and the alternative school. It is acknowledged that the transition period is naturally emotional for learners of all ages, and should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would place emphasis on individual needs to mitigate any negative effects. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn would benefit from having more age-related peers in their class as there are more learners at Ysgol Talysarn, and it will be a way to ensure age-appropriate educational and extra-curricular experiences, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities. In addition, it is anticipated that there would be more opportunities to socialise with a greater number of age-related peers.

Additionally, a number of comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period referred to the fact that current learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn are able to walk or cycle to school, however, if the school were to close, it would not be possible for them to do so to the alternative school, as there is no safe route available. Several concerns were raised regarding the negative impact that longer journeys to the alternative school could have on learners' well-being should the proposal be implemented. In addition, concerns were raised regarding eligibility for free school transport for children who are not of statutory school age (under 5 years old), as well as concerns about suitable safety arrangements for transporting young learners to non-statutory provision. As the proposed alternative school is located approximately 2.5 miles from Ysgol Baladeulyn, and further from the homes of some learners within the catchment area, it is not anticipated that Ysgol Baladeulyn learners would be likely to walk or cycle to the alternative school if the proposal were implemented. Should the option of closing Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented, Cyngor Gwynedd would, in accordance with Gwynedd Education Transport Policy, provide free transport for learners who live 2 miles or more from their catchment school, nearest school, or where learners travel to school along a route that the Council considers to be highly dangerous. Nursery-age learners are not eligible under the policy, and the policy does not assume that parents are responsible for providing transport where a learner qualifies for statutory transport. Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that some learners would travel further to school than they do at present, however, no learner from the Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school, nor would they be expected to walk or cycle to school along a dangerous route. The Council acknowledges the importance of reliable transport for families. However, school transport is not normally provided to facilitate access to additional services, and such arrangements are considered in accordance with the transport policy and the relevant statutory criteria. However, the proposal is also expected to have a potential positive impact on this aspect. Attending a larger school would offer greater opportunities to participate in team sports and after-school clubs, thereby contributing positively to learners' health and well-being, while also providing opportunities to socialise with a wider range of age-appropriate peers.

Specific concerns were highlighted during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period regarding socio-economic matters such as the lack of suitable public transport, unreliable timetables, and lower levels of car ownership. It was noted that Talysarn is a deprived area and that this would present significant challenges for non-driving families, lower-income families, single parents, and families where limited mobility is a factor, making daily travel to a more distant school very difficult in practical terms or having an impact on family childcare arrangements. In addition, concerns were expressed about additional costs, such as purchasing a new school uniform and increased fuel costs, should the proposal be implemented. The Council notes these concerns and notes that, should the school close, free transport would be provided to eligible learners in accordance with the County's School Transport Policy, which ensures that all primary learners living 2 miles or more from their nearest school are eligible to receive free transport. The policy also includes consideration of the safety of walking routes and individual needs where relevant. It is not anticipated that any learner from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school if the proposal were implemented. The Community Impact Assessment indicates that there would likely be some negative impact on the community should the proposal be implemented, as it would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community, and from a deprivation perspective, this would mean that one of the indicators 'access to services', would become more distant from residents of the area. It is also noted that a significant proportion of children from the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), suggesting that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. With regard to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy. It is also noted that the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: [Financial help and support](#)

[with education](#) . It is anticipated that the proposal would reduce social disadvantage by ensuring access to a broader range of learning experiences, greater diversity of educational opportunities, more resources, and access to a broader range of services and activities at the alternative school.

Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework that was published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners aged between 3 and 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in learners' education and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, that are all based on respect and trust on both sides, which is core to relationships and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to developing emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers the learners to understand themselves, to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and to form relationships. By implementing the proposal, it is anticipated that learners would receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class.

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.)

Specific concerns were highlighted during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period regarding the lack of suitable public transport, unreliable timetables and lower levels of car ownership. It was noted that Talysarn is a deprived area and that this would pose a significant challenge for families who do not drive, low-income families, single parents, and families where limited mobility is a factor, making daily travel to a more distant school very difficult in practical terms or impact on childcare arrangements for families. Additionally, concerns were expressed regarding additional costs such as new school uniforms and fuel costs if the proposal were implemented. The Council acknowledges these concerns and notes that, should the school close, free transport would be provided to eligible learners in accordance with the County's School Transport Policy, which ensures that all primary-age learners living 2 miles or more from the nearest relevant school are eligible to receive free transport. The policy also includes consideration of walking route safety and individual needs where relevant. It is not anticipated that any learner from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area would be required to travel an unreasonable distance to school should the proposal be implemented. The Community Impact Assessment shows that there would be some likely negative impact on the community should the proposal be implemented, as this would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community, and in terms of deprivation, this would mean that one of the indicators 'access to services' would become more distant from residents of the area. However, it is noted that a significant proportion of children in the catchment area (75%) already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn (50%), which suggests that community and educational links with neighbouring communities already exist. With regard to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy. It is also noted that the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: [Financial help and support with education](#) .

It is anticipated that the proposal would reduce social disadvantage by ensuring more experiences and diversity of learning, more resources and access to more services and activities in the alternative school. It is anticipated that implementing the proposal would reduce inequality arising from socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that learners have access to a broader range of experiences and greater access to services and activities at the alternative school. By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education. It is anticipated that learners would benefit from having more age-related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

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?

Our expectations are that all of the County's learners have ability-relevant and well-balanced bilingual skills to enable them to be full members of the bilingual society of which they are part. Proposals to change local arrangements would have to take full consideration of all linguistic impacts. Supporting and improving the use of the Welsh language as an educational and social language among learners will be a key consideration when drawing up an option.

The Gwynedd Education Language Policy has the same aim for all of the county's primary schools, and every primary school (except for one) falls into category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn will be able to continue to receive their education through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Education Language Policy at Ysgol Talysarn, should the proposal be implemented.

Through the responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, concerns were expressed that the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn could lead to the Welsh language being treated less favourably than English in practice, despite Welsh-medium educational provision continuing. Respondents emphasised that Ysgol Baladeulyn provides an environment in which Welsh is used naturally and socially on a day-to-day basis, not solely as the language of instruction, and that the loss of the school could significantly reduce these opportunities within the local community. It was noted that Ysgol Baladeulyn has a very strong Welsh-language profile compared with other schools in the area, and concern was expressed that moving to a school with a lower proportion of Welsh-language use could have a negative impact on children's linguistic confidence.

It was also noted that the loss of the school could undermine opportunities for people to use Welsh in a living and practical way in everyday community life, with reference made to the natural opportunities for children, parents/guardians and local residents to gather and converse within the community during school drop-off and pick-up times or during school events such as concerts or assemblies. Strong concern was expressed that closing the school could result in the loss of these opportunities, thereby weakening the status of Welsh as a living community language and potentially undermining the principle of not treating the Welsh language less favourably.

Several comments emphasised that the school functions as an important hub for Welsh culture and the Welsh-language life of the village, contributing to the use of the language beyond school hours. Reference was made to how the school integrates new families, including those who are not fluent Welsh speakers, into local Welsh-language life. Concerns were expressed that closing the school would undermine the wider community use of Welsh, and it was emphasised that the school is a key part of the community's linguistic identity and closing the school would pose a significant risk to the sustainability of the Welsh language in the Nantlle, which goes against the aims of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050, particularly in terms increasing the community and natural use of the Welsh language.

The Council acknowledges the concerns raised regarding the role of Ysgol Baladeulyn in supporting the community use of the Welsh language within the village, and accepts that the comments highlight a potential negative impact on aspects of local linguistic vitality outside the formal educational provision.

However, based on the information available, the Council is of the view that the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' language opportunities, for the following reasons:

- The January 2026 PLASC data show that 29% of learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn speak Welsh fluently at home, compared with 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn.
- The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners in a nearby school (Ysgol Talysarn) means that learners in the Nantlle catchment area would continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school.
- It is anticipated that learners would be taught in larger classes and alongside more children from the same age group, and that the proposal would strengthen opportunities for learners to socialise in Welsh with a wider group of their peers.

In the educational context, given the above, if the proposal were to be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be increased opportunities for learners from the Ysgol Baladeulyn catchment area to use Welsh informally with their peers both inside and outside the classroom, and that the vitality of the Welsh language and the level of informal language use would be stronger.

At the same time, having considered the responses to the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council recognises that the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn could have a potential negative impact on the use of Welsh within the local community, particularly in terms of its use as a community language outside the educational context. It is anticipated that there could be some negative impact from implementing the proposal, as parents/ guardians/ families and local residents would no longer meet on a daily basis in the Nantlle community during learner drop off/collection periods or during the school's activities. The school invites the community to the school for activities such as concerts, presentations and assemblies during school hours and outside of school hours. However, it is noted that consideration could be given to mitigation measures, by promoting the use of Welsh through involving the Nantlle community in the alternative school's community activities, as well as considering suitable options for the future use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities currently held there.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council has considered the comments received during the statutory consultation and the statutory objection period. While it is acknowledged that the proposal could have a potential negative impact on certain aspects of the community use of the Welsh language within the Nantlle area, the Council's view is that the available evidence does not indicate that the proposal would have a negative impact on Welsh-medium education provision or on learners' opportunities to use and develop the Welsh language within the educational setting.

The Community Impact Assessment shows that some negative impact on the community is anticipated should the option to close Ysgol Baladeulyn be implemented. It is acknowledged that closing Ysgol Baladeulyn would result in the loss of a school within the Nantlle community, however, the assessment notes that a large proportion of learners living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn, thus it is concluded that a link between Ysgol Talysarn and the Ysgol Baladeulyn community already exists. The Gwynedd Education Language Policy has the same aim for all of the county's primary schools, and every primary school (except for one) falls into category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's Guidance on school categories according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn will be able to continue to receive their education through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Education Language Policy at Ysgol Talysarn.

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?

Through the responses to the statutory consultation, it was stated that Ysgol Baladeulyn makes a significant contribution to the long-term wellbeing of learners, families and the community by providing a stable and supportive environment that promotes wellbeing, equality and community cohesion. It was noted that the current provision

supports vulnerable learners or learners with Additional Learning Needs, and sustains Welsh as a living language, with concerns expressed that any changes could undermine these benefits. Attention was also drawn to the way in which the school contributes to several wellbeing objectives by providing local access to education that is central to social interaction and the everyday life of the village, and that promotes the natural use of the Welsh language among people of all ages and backgrounds. Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

It is acknowledged that should the Cabinet decide to proceed with this proposal, it may result in the closure of a school in the community of Nantlle, however a large number of the learners living within the school's catchment area already attend other schools, including Ysgol Talysarn, and therefore there is already a link between the schools and the community of that school. Every effort will be made to mitigate any negative impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities and Ysgol Talysarn. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will take place to discuss the possibility that Ysgol Talysarn community activity includes the community, where appropriate.

The proposal will ensure that the learners of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

The Well-being and Future Generations Act Impact Assessment is available to read fully on the Council's website: [Modernising Education](#)

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)?

No

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?

Significantly Positive Impact:

Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that learners would receive more equal opportunities when placed in an alternative school since the learners will have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education and allow access to more activities that are appropriate for their ability level. The learners would benefit from having

more age-related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

Significant Negative Impact:

It is recognised that the options may have an impact on an organisation within the community and on community cohesion, and the need is anticipated to mitigate this by fostering links between the school and the community.

As a result of the comments submitted during the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, a potential negative impact was also identified for some learners, particularly vulnerable learners or learners with Additional Learning Needs or emotional/social needs, due to concerns about losing the benefits of small class environments and personalised support, as well as the challenges of transitioning to a larger school if the proposal were implemented. In response to these concerns, the Council notes that, should the proposal be implemented, transition arrangements would focus on individual needs and the child's voice, with inclusion and equality policies in place at the alternative school, if the proposal were to be implemented.

The school (and its Governing Body) is responsible for implementing its equality policy, and the Authority, through its routine support and monitoring procedures, will ensure compliance.

14. Explain any intentional negative impact and why it is believed that there is justification for operating in this way (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

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

Not applicable.

Note the reason for stating this and the justification for proceeding

Not applicable.

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?

Following the statutory consultation and statutory objection period, the Council has considered the comments received and has updated the Equality Impact Assessment in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. If the proposal proceeds, the impact will continue to be monitored as part of the Council's ongoing statutory duties.

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?

With regard to families from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, it is noted that school transport arrangements would be administered in accordance with the Council's statutory policy. It is also noted that the Schools Essentials Grant is available for families that are eligible for support to buy equipment or school uniform. More information is available on the Council's website: [Financial help and support with education](#).

It is envisaged that the proposal would reduce socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities in the alternative school. Learners would receive more equal opportunities since the learners would have learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a range of methods, including working in collective groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, along with lessons that have been appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

By implementing the proposal, the learners of Ysgol Baladeulyn would have a better learning environment at a school with more learners of the same age, and it would ensure that they make the most of their education. The learners would benefit from having more age-related peers at a school with more learners, which will be a way to ensure suitable educational and extra-curricular experiences for them, as well as access to additional extra-curricular activities.

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?

The proposal is expected to have a positive impact on the Welsh language, as learners at Ysgol Baladeulyn would benefit from increased opportunities to use Welsh with a broader range of peers both in the classroom and socially. The proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn and offer places for learners at Ysgol Talysarn would ensure continuity of Welsh-medium education, with PLASC (January 2026) data showing that 37% of learners at Ysgol Talysarn (compared with 29% at Ysgol Baladeulyn) speak Welsh fluently at home. While the Council acknowledges concerns about the potential impact on community use of Welsh in Nantlle, it is noted that mitigation measures could be considered such as promoting the use of the Welsh language through involving the Nantlle community in the community activities of the alternative school, as well as considering appropriate options for the post-use of the school building, taking into consideration the community activities that are held there currently.

Should the school close, the Local Authority and Governing Body of Talaerau could consider methods to promote use of the Welsh language socially by means of extra-curricular and community activities.

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 EqlA process is an ongoing one that doesn't end when the policy/practice and EqlA 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
-	-	-	-	-

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

Should the proposal be realised, we will monitor the impact of the closure of the school and endeavour to assist with any negative impact that may derive from the policy.	Continuous	Education Department	No
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Councillor Peter Thomas' comments on the report to be presented to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on 15 September, reporting on the outcome of the statutory objection period held in relation to the proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn on 31 December 2026 and provide a place for learners at Ysgol Talysarn from 1 January 2027.

I would like to thank to everyone who signed the petition submitted by the governing body opposing the Council's proposal to close Ysgol Baladeulyn.

The fact that 500 people signed the petition demonstrates the strong support that exists for keeping this resource open in Nantlle. Also thank you to everyone who expressed their opposition by sending messages to the Council during this period.

I have not changed my view that closing the school would be a devastating blow to the village and it would also have a detrimental impact on the use of the Welsh language, and the village would lose the facilities in the school that are used by the community.

The Cabinet is aware that throughout this process I have favoured federating Ysgol Baladeulyn with Ysgol Talysarn (aln) and sharing resources. I am also concerned that if all pupils from Ysgol Baladeulyn transfer to Ysgol Talysarn the school will exceed its capacity and this would be a significant change for children who are used to attending a school with low pupil numbers.

I hope that the Cabinet will consider the objections and the petition containing 500 signatures as well as the impact that the closure of Ysgol Baladeulyn could have on the children, parents, the community, and the Welsh language.



Title of item:	Complaints and Service Improvement Report Quarter 1 2025/26
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Llio Elenid Owen
Relevant officer:	Catrin Love, Deputy Head of Corporate Services
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. Decision Sought

The Cabinet is asked to approve the report and offer any relevant comments or suggestions about the Council's performance in dealing with complaints in an appropriate and timely manner.

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

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council's performance in relation to dealing with complaints and improving services, highlighting successes, challenges, and developments. This is to ensure that the Cabinet is satisfied with the performance over the periods in question.

An analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is submitted, which is a measure of the Council's performance in this context for the period 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, together with comparative information about the previous years.

3. Introduction and Rationale

3.1 Background

The Council's 'Complaints and Service Improvement Arrangements' was introduced in 2015, drawn up under the supervision of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. It corresponds with Welsh Government guidelines and is therefore in line with the complaints procedures of other public bodies.

The Cabinet adopted the procedure with the aim of bringing specific benefits to the citizen by focusing on the solution instead of the process and allow Officers to deal with complaints quicker.

The ownership for responding to complaints sits within the individual Departments, but the role of coordinating and offering guidance has been transferred to the Customer Contact team, Corporate Services Department, following the resignation of the Service Improvement Officer.

The complaints page on the Council's website has been amended to help customers understand the difference between a complaint and a failure to provide a service. Additional work will be done during the year to further develop the information and guidelines.

It should be noted that this procedure does not apply to Social Services users, as they have a separate statutory procedure. Schools also implement their own complaints procedures.

3.2 Responding to Complaints - An explanation of the terminology that is used

3.2.1 Resolving Informal Complaints

Complainant informally contacts the Customer Contact Team or relevant Service to resolve the concern.

3.2.2 Investigating Formal Complaints

Complainant submits a formal complaint through the complaints procedure. An investigation is carried out by an officer in the relevant Department, who is sufficiently senior and independent from the source of the complaint.

3.2.3 Complaint to the Ombudsman

The complainant could go to the Ombudsman if they are not satisfied with the Council's formal response.

After looking at the complaint, the Ombudsman may decide on one of the following:

- *No Investigation* - where the Ombudsman is satisfied with the way the authority has dealt with the matter and feels that there is no need for a further investigation. It could also be a matter beyond its jurisdiction.
- *Premature* - if the Ombudsman is of the opinion that the authority has not yet had an opportunity to consider the matter.
- *Hold a further investigation* - where the Ombudsman feels that further investigation is needed, to assess how the authority has dealt with the matter.
- *Settlement* - where there is an agreement with the complainant and they accept the resolution.

4. Frequency of the Report

The Annual Report for 2025/2026 is submitted to the Cabinet, along with the Annual Letter of the Ombudsman.

'Live' data is available to Heads of Department, the Senior Leadership Team and the Cabinet at any time upon request.

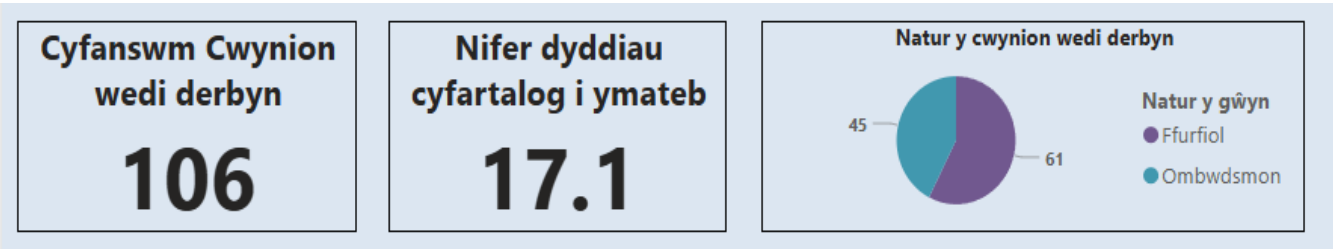
This report summarises the developments for the period 01/04/2025 - 31/03/2026, focusing on Valid Formal Complaints and complaints submitted to the Ombudsman.

The figures for the period from 01/04/2025 to 31/03/2026, are noted below -

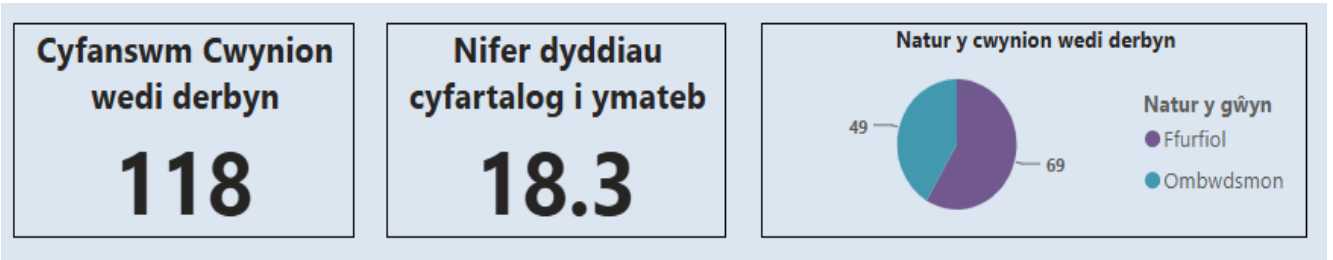
- 69 Valid Formal Complaints between 01/04/2025 and 31/03/2026
- 49 Ombudsman Complaints between 01/04/2025 and 31/03/2026
- 33 No Investigation; 8 No Investigation - Premature; 7 - Settlement; 1 - closed)

5. Quantitative Data

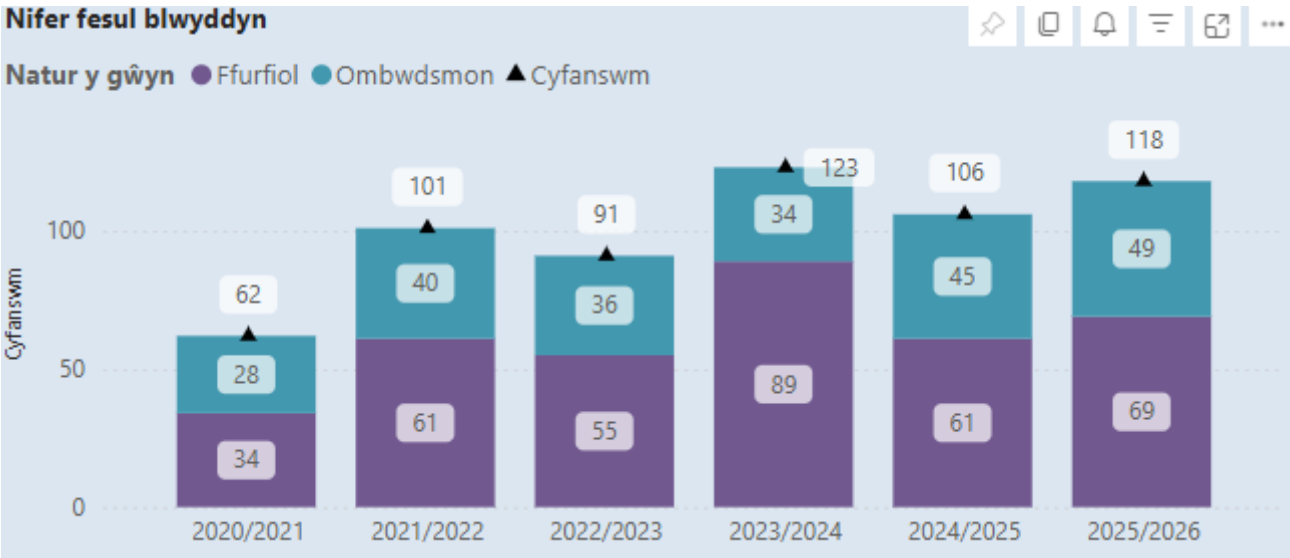
5.1 Number of Complaints:
2024/25 Quarter 1- 4



2025/26 Quarter 1- 4

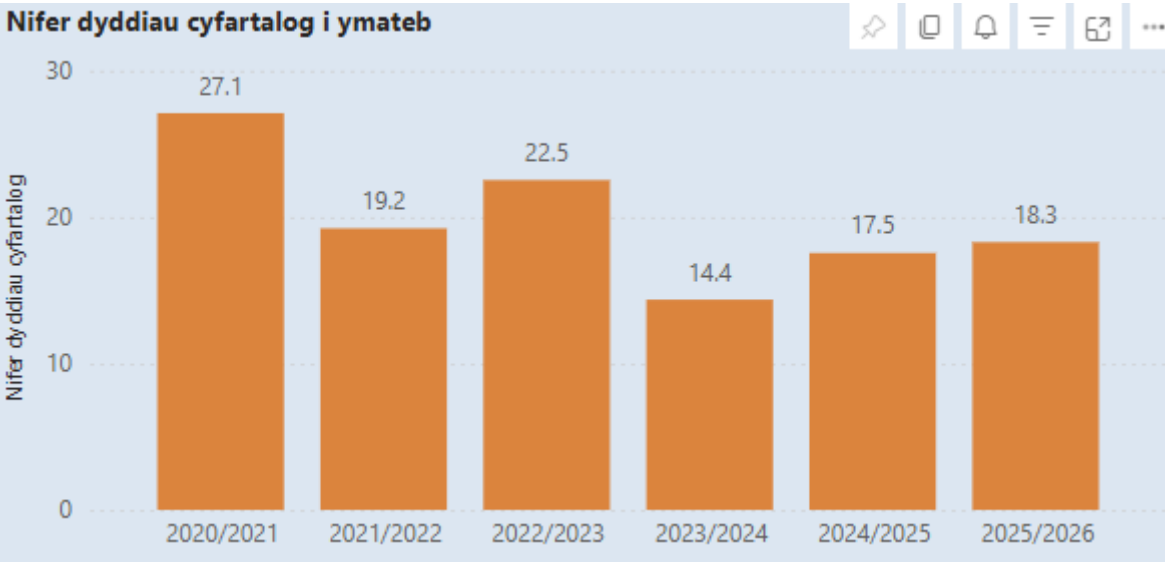


5.2 Number of Complaints: Position Over Time since 2020-21



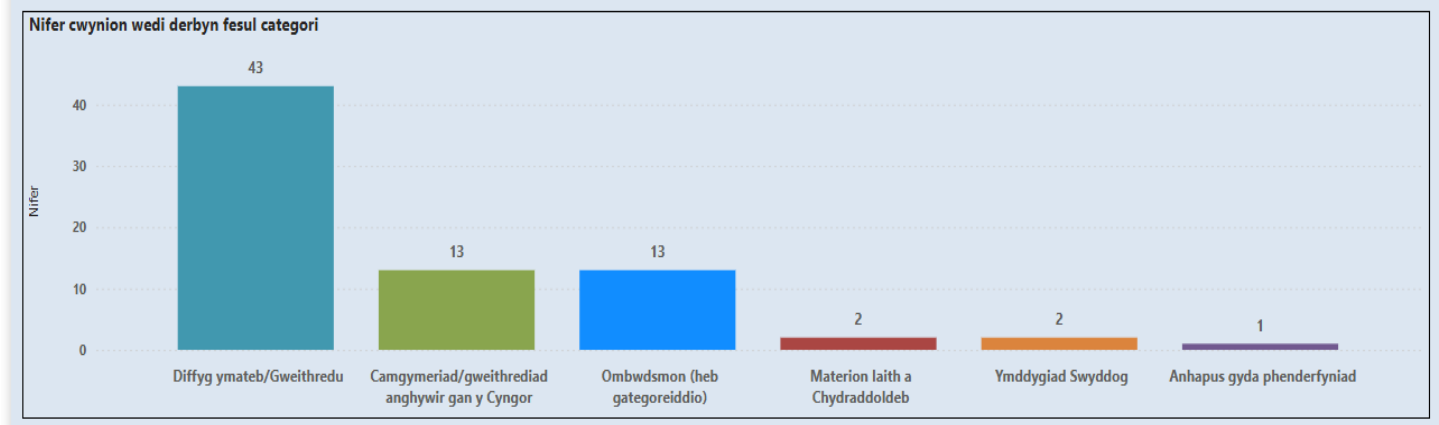
Natur y gŵyn	Ffurfiol		Ombwdsmon		Cyfanswm	
Adran	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau
☐	2	22.5			2	22.5
Priffyrdd	2	22.5			2	22.5
☐ Addysg	2	56.0	5	14.6	7	26.4
Addysg	2	56.0	5	14.6	7	26.4
☐ Amgylchedd	17	19.4	20	3.6	37	10.8
Cynllunio	7	38.7	9	1.1	16	17.6
Gwastraff	5	3.4	1	2.0	6	3.2
GYC	2	5.0	5	3.4	7	3.9
Llwybrau			2	7.5	2	7.5
Parcio a Gwaith Stryd			1	27.0	1	27.0
Rheolaeth Adeiladu			1	0.0	1	0.0
Trafnidiaeth	2	10.5			2	10.5
Trwyddedu	1	10.0	1	0.0	2	5.0
☐ Cyllid	27	20.2	7	11.3	34	18.4
Cyllid	4	10.3	1	0.0	5	8.2
Refeniw	23	21.9	6	13.2	29	20.1
☐ Economi a Chymuned	3	16.3			3	16.3
Economi a Chymuned	1	6.0			1	6.0
Hamdden	1	14.0			1	14.0
Morwrol a Pharciau	1	29.0			1	29.0
☐ Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol	3	15.0	1	0.0	4	11.3
Cofrestru	1	38.0			1	38.0
Cyswllt Cwsmer	1	0.0	1	0.0	2	0.0
Gwas Corff	1	7.0			1	7.0
☐ Oedolion, Iechyd a Llesiant			5	16.0	5	16.0
Gwas Cymd			5	16.0	5	16.0
☐ Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd	1	46.0	6	4.0	7	10.0
Gwas Cymd			3	6.7	3	6.7
Plant	1	46.0	3	1.3	4	12.5
☐ Priffyrdd, Peirianeg a YGC	1	15.0			1	15.0
Priffyrdd	1	15.0			1	15.0
☐ Tai ac Eiddo	11	46.4	5	22.2	16	38.8
Cyfanswm	69	24.9	49	8.9	118	18.3

5.3 Response Time over Period since 2020-21

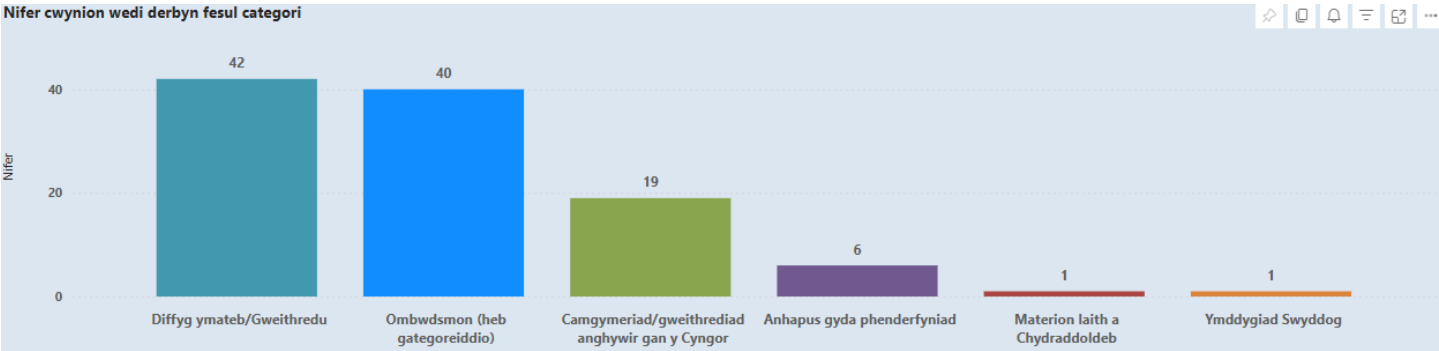


6. Analysis of the Complaints

Per Category Year 2024/25 Quarter 1 - 4



Per Category Year 2025/26 Quarter 1 - 4



Analysis per Department

We have reviewed the previous approach of providing detailed information about complaints because of the risk that a high level of detail could unintentionally lead to the identification or disclosure of individual cases. While sharing information can support learning activities, performance monitoring and service improvement, it is important to ensure that the information presented is proportionate and does not compromise the confidentiality of individuals.

Adran/Gwasanaeth	Anhapus gyda phenderfyniad	Camgymeriad/gweithrediad anghywir gan y Cyngor	Diffyg ymateb/ Gweithredu	Materion Iaith a Chydraddoldeb	Ombwdsmon (heb gategoreiddio)	Ymddygiad Swyddog	Cyfanswm
Addysg		3	1		3		7
Addysg		3	1		3		7
Amgylchedd		4	13		18		35
Cynllunio			7		9		16
Gwastraff		3	2		1		6
GYC			2		4		6
Llwybrau					2		2
Parcio a Gwaith Stryd					1		1
Rheolaeth Adeiladu							
Trafnidiaeth			2				2
Trwyddedu		1			1		2
Cyllid	3	10	16		7		36
Cyllid		1	3		1		5
Refeniw	3	9	14		6		32
Economi a Chymuned	2			1			3
Economi a Chymuned	1						1
Hamdden	1						1
Morwrol a Pharciau				1			1
Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol		1	2		1		4
Cofrestru			1				1
Cyswllt Cwsmer		1			1		2
Gwas Corff			1				1
Oedolion, Iechyd a Llesiant					3		3
Gwas Cymd					3		3
Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd			1		4		5
Gwas Cymd					2		2
Plant			1		2		3
Priffyrdd, Peirianeg a YGC			1				1
Priffyrdd			1				1
Tai ac Eiddo	3	3	8		4	1	19
Eiddo			2				2
Tai	3	3	6		4	1	17
Tim Arweinyddiaeth a Chyfreithiol			2				2
Cyfreithiol			2				2
(gwag)			2				2
Priffyrdd			2				2
Prif Gyfanswm	8	21	46	1	40	1	118

7. Main Messages

- It can be seen that the number of Valid Formal Complaints has increased, and those that have gone to the Ombudsman have increased again this year, compared against the same period in 2024/2025.
- The pattern / trend over a longer period shows that the number of Formal Complaints has reduced gradually since 2018/2019, when a substantial increase was seen, but things seem to be relatively stable.
- A change in culture was seen, with most Services receiving complaints in a more positive and constructive way in order to learn from them, with the response time gradually reducing.

8 Next Steps

The intention this year is to conduct an internal review of how we respond to complaints, using the Ombudsman's good practice as grounds for staff training and amending our digital systems. This will enable us to reduce the time it takes for officers to respond to complainants, and to learn lessons in order to continue to improve services.

The new Customer Care training for Managers will refer specifically to the complaints procedure and the expectations on us to respond promptly. The complaints procedure is a core part of the work taking place through the Customer Care Plan. The charter, and the response standards outlined in the new Plan in relation to responding to Members, general correspondence and complaints, will provide a framework and definitive guidance for staff. The hope is that this will reduce the number of complaints about a lack of response or lack of action in the future and will ensure that staff are equipped with the information they need to keep to the response requirements.

The Successes Wall is still growing, and it is very good to see that several messages of Thanks/Praise are being received from the Public, from Members and from Staff. Seeing that their work is appreciated is very helpful in raising staff morale, particularly among front-line staff.

9 Views of the Statutory Officers

Chief Finance Officer:

Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety.

Monitoring Officer:

The complaints process includes provision that the Cabinet receives reports on the Councils Complaints and Service Improvement arrangements from the perspective of maintaining the quality of services. The Governance and Audit Committee has a role in reviewing the effectiveness of the arrangements in accordance with their statutory duties. No observations to add in relation to propriety.

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of Meeting : 15 September 2026
Cabinet Member : Cllr. Craig ab Iago
Relevant Officer : Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services
Title of Item : Financial bid to develop climate and nature work in Cyngor Gwynedd 2026/27 – 2029/30.

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

1. Decision Sought

- i. That Cabinet approves the bid for finance to yn cymeradwyo'r cais am gyllid i fund employment costs and implementing projects within the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan:
 - ii. Employment costs until March 2030 - £416,383.
 - iii. Project costs - £582,750
-

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

- i. The budget allocated by Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet in 2023 for the use of the implementation of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan has been spent or has been allocated for expenditure on current work. Cabinet will need to approve a request for further funding in order to continue the work from 2026/27 onwards.
- ii. The existing contracts of 3 positions implementing the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan expire in 2027, so a timely decision is needed to ensure the continuation of the work.

3. Background

- i. 'Green Gwynedd' is one of the Council's eight Improvement Priorities, and the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23–2029/30 (the Plan) is one of the 5 projects within that priority. The Plan sets the ambition for Gwynedd Council to be net zero carbon and ecologically positive. Within this context, the application seeks to secure resources over a four-year period, up to 2029/30, which is the last year of the current plan and the date for achieving the first phase of the corporate ambition.
- ii. Cyngor Gwynedd's [Climate and Nature Emergency Plan](#) was passed by the Council's Cabinet on 7 July this year, following public consultation and input from the Council's Communities Scrutiny

Committee. This version of the plan evolved on the original plan which had been in place since April 2022.

- iii. The need for investment is underpinned by wider legislative and policy requirements, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, the Energy Act 2023 and the international commitments arising from the 2015 Paris Agreement. In addition, the Welsh Government is committed to preventing and reversing nature loss by 2030, including the '30 by 30' target, which means effectively protecting and managing 30% of land and sea for nature by that date.
- iv. There are a total of 39 risks on the Council's Corporate Risk Register related to climate change and nature. 15 of these relate directly to the implementation of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan such as threats of flooding, lack of transport, waste collection, rising energy costs etc. An additional 24 are associated risks such as fuel poverty challenges for residents, loss of access to care and education services, rising costs of service provision etc.
- v. This request for funding is structured around two areas:
 - 1. **employment costs** to maintain core capacity and attract external funding
 - **continued investment** in existing decarbonisation projects across buildings, energy and charging infrastructure.
- vi. The financial information has been presented annually over a 4-year period between 2026/27 and 2029/30. Multi-year funding certainty would enable better planning, more strategic action and greater impact in terms of reducing carbon emissions and strengthening nature's resilience.
- vii. In addition to the two funding headings in 3.v above, initial work will take place in 2026/27 to explore possibilities to develop **new innovative schemes**, particularly in collaboration with communities, in order to deliver services that will reduce carbon emissions and generate income or reduce costs. As the costs are not yet known any relevant funding applications will need to be submitted as the business cases mature.

4. Employment

- i. Funding is requested to continue three key positions until 31/3/2030: Climate and Nature Programme Manager (part-time), Climate and Nature Project Officer, and Biodiversity Officer. The current contracts for these positions expire in 2027.
- ii. **Climate and Nature Programme Manager (part-time) –**
- iii. *Achievements to date:*
 - The post has provided clear value in terms of the Council's ability to **attract external funding and move priority projects forward**. Since January 2024, the Programme Manager, in conjunction with the Professional Trainee, has successfully **attracted £892,297 in grants**, enabling investment in key projects such as charging points, EV fleet development, urban tree planting and ecological studies.
 - Strategically, the role has established the **leadership and coordination structures** needed to deliver the climate change programme, including:
 - providing expert advice to the Climate Change Response Board;
 - developing and informing the content of the Climate and Nature Plan;
 - ensure cross-departmental alignment and coordination on projects;

- strengthen the evidence base for investment (carbon and financial benefits, value for money).
- As a result, the post has been instrumental in moving the Council from individual activity to **a more systematic, harmonised and better evidence-based programme.**

iv. Priorities for the next phase:

- The main focus will be to move from development to **delivery at scale**, with the Programme Manager central to achieving this. Priorities will include:
 - Lead the implementation of the new Climate and Nature Plan, ensuring its adoption and implementation across the Council and its presentation to Cabinet;
 - Strengthen the governance and monitoring of program performance by ensuring that departments are accountable for delivery and outcomes;
 - Develop and prioritise the projects, improving the evidence of costs, carbon and financial benefits and payback periods to support investment decisions;
 - Continue to attract external resources and grant funding, and maximise funding opportunities as they arise;
 - Strengthen internal and external collaboration, ensuring that the Council makes the most of regional and partnership opportunities.
- In summary, the priority is **to accelerate delivery and ensure measurable impact from the programme.**

v. Risk if the post did not continue:

- There would be an immediate risk to the Council's ability to:
 - lead and coordinate the climate change programme across departments, resulting in a **lack of consistency and duplication**;
 - **deliver the Climate and Nature Plan** at scale and on time, undermining one of the Council's core improvement priorities;
 - **attract further external funding**, reducing the ability to invest in projects that generate carbon and financial benefits;
 - **provide strategic overview and sound governance**, creating risk to the quality of investment decisions and value for money;
- In practice, the effect would be:
 - reduction in programme leadership capacity;
 - slowing down or delaying projects;
 - and a higher risk of **not meeting the Council's climate targets and corporate priorities.**

vi. Climate Change Officer

vii. Achievements to date:

- The post (or the equivalent role of Professional Trainee to date) has provided **vital operational capacity** to enable the practical delivery of the climate change programme as well as support for the Programme Manager.
- In particular, the post has:
 - supported the **attraction of grants (£892k+)** and the development of priority projects;

- contribute to **the development of business cases, reports and decision papers**, strengthening the programme's evidence base;
- supporting **project co-ordination** and workstreams across departments;
- enabling **the collection, analysis and presentation of data**, improving the quality of information for decisions;
- facilitate **internal and external collaboration**, ensuring a more coordinated response to the requirements of the programme.

viii. Priorities for the next phase: (6–12 months):

- The priority is to strengthen the delivery capacity of the programme as the Council moves to deliver at scale. The role will be key to:
 - **Implementing and delivering Climate and Nature Plan projects**, ensuring measurable progress;
 - **Coordinate and manage** multiple workflows and projects, ensuring order, prioritisation and timely delivery;
 - **Developing business cases and grant applications**, and taking advantage of funding opportunities as they arise;
 - **Analysing project data and performance**, providing robust input to investment decisions;
 - **Supporting governance and communication arrangements**, ensuring that progress and risks are effectively reported;
 - **Strengthen cross-departmental collaboration**, ensuring consistent implementation across the organisation.

ix. Risk if the post did not continue:

- The role is critical to **the delivery capacity of the programme**. Without the job:
 - there would be a lack of capacity to **coordinate and manage multiple projects**, leading to delays and lack of prioritisation;
 - there would be less ability to **develop grant applications and take advantage of funding opportunities**, resulting in a loss of external income;
 - the **quality** of data, reporting, and evidence for decisions would **decline**;
 - there would be a higher risk of **not delivering the Climate and Nature Plan projects** on time and within resources;
 - the pressure would increase significantly on the Programme Manager, who is a part-time position (3 days a week).

x. Biodiversity Officer

xi. Achievements to date:

- The post has provided **vital technical expertise and** evidentiary capacity to strengthen the Council's ability to plan, measure and report on biodiversity and nature activities.
- Since his appointment to the post in November 2025, the role has:
 - developed **mapping and data management systems** for Council projects and lands;
 - using GIS to centralise information and **identify opportunities** at landscape scale;
 - improving the **ability to collect data** and report through the use of drone technology;

- supporting work to explore **methods of measuring carbon on Council land** and strengthening the evidence base for the 2030 environmental targets.
- As a result, the post has helped the Council move towards a more systematic, data-based and strategic approach to managing biodiversity and nature work.

xii. Priorities for the next phase:

- The priority is **to strengthen the Council's ability to manage, monitor and prioritise biodiversity work** on the basis of robust data and evidence.
- The role will be key to:
 - **Mapping and collecting data** on the condition of the Council's lands and woodlands;
 - **Developing bids to attract external funding** for environmental assessments and land management;
 - **Assessing the state of nature reserves** and producing reports to Welsh Government on progress against 2030 targets;
 - Identify **opportunities for tree planting** and implementation of tree-related projects in the Climate and Nature Plan, supporting a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to nature.

xiii. Risk if the post did not continue:

- The role is essential to maintain **the Council's technical capacity and expertise** in the area of biodiversity, nature and **environmental compliance**. Without the post:
 - there would be less capacity to collect, analyse and manage environmental data, weakening **the evidence base for decisions**;
 - there would be **less capacity to develop** management plans and investment priorities for the Council's land and habitats;
 - there would be a higher risk of **not meeting the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016** and new biodiversity legislation;
 - the Council's ability to demonstrate measurable progress towards the 2030 environmental targets would be significantly reduced.

*xiv. Funding is sought for total employment costs of **£416,383** to support 3 posts between 2026/27 and 2029/30, with information broken down as follows:*

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Climate Change Programme Manager 27/28 - 29/30 (based on 0.6 FTE)		42,711.59	43,992.93	45,312.72
Climate and Nature Project Officer 4 years 26/27 - 29/30	5,611	35,288.35	60,787.51	62,611.14
Biodiversity Officer 2.5 years 27/28 - 29/30		23,728.66	47,457.31	48,881.03
Total £	5,611	101,728.59	152,237.76	156,804.89

5. Project Costs

- i. Financial support is requested for a range of decarbonisation projects within the Climate and Nature Plan, mainly in the areas of buildings, energy and charging infrastructure. Information is included per project regarding the costs, carbon and financial benefits, payback periods and risks, to enable you to make a value for money decision and prioritise investment.

6. Project: Changing lighting in Council offices and premises to LED - all sites.

- i. **Description / Business Case:** An additional £4m is needed to roll out the work. Expected 30% electricity/financial savings.
- ii.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 -29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)	Financial Saving
£1,000,000	£3,000,000 (£1m per year)	462/ tCO2e/year	£443,503 per year

iii. Comments / risk

Reducing electricity consumption would free up the remaining capacity on sites to be used for heat electrification. This would result in annual revenue financial savings and cost savings by avoiding the need to upgrade the grid in order to increase electricity capacity. E.g. Savings of £14k at Ysgol Llanbedrog, £30k at Hafod Lon as a result of not spending on grid upgrades.

Savings like this are in addition to the £444k savings shown in the box above.

iv. Recommended funding source:

The recommendation of the Finance Department is to borrow through the Salix programme.

Salix's borrowing rates are currently favourable and Finance's recommendation is that that would be a better option for the Council than to borrow from a source such as the PWLB rather than to use internal resources. While the rates change daily, at a certain point here in August the borrowing rate from the PWLB for a period of 6 years was 5.43% compared to 2.45% for borrowing through Salix.

It is noted that funding needs to be applied for from Salix, so there is no guarantee of funding. Should the application be unsuccessful we will consider what the best option is at this time, as borrowing/investment rates vary on a daily basis.

7. Project: Switching site heating method from gas to electricity - Heat decarbonisation (retrofit)

- i. **Description / Business Case:** Complete payment to upgrade 2 sites - Hafod Mawddach care home and Byw'n Iach Penllyn - to meet the terms of a grant already received (Hafod Mawddach) and 10% match funding to a grant application to finish Penllyn.

ii.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 - 29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)	Financial Saving
£411,000		Penllyn: 107 tCO ₂ e/year Hafod Mawddach: 48 tCO ₂ e/year	Not at the moment, but protects the Council from the risks of future fuel price increases

iii. **Comments / risk**

This is an application to fund the completion of a programme of work already underway. The risk of not funding is that grant conditions are not adhered to, and that the work that has already been done becomes wasteful.

iv. **Recommended funding source:**

The Finance Department's recommendation is to add this project to the Asset Management Plan.

Finance's view is that it should be prudent and assume that new funding needs to be sought to deliver this project – although there is money remaining in some relevant funds, this money appears to have been extensively committed to other schemes. This scheme has not been included in the capital budget at this time, and as the grant is at risk if the Council does not move forward, it is recommended to use the limited flexibility available in the capital budget, whilst recognising that consideration of the Asset Management Plan is a wider issue.

8. **Project: New solar panels**

- i. **Description / Business Case:** Installing solar (PV) panels at 23 new sites and adding to the capacity of some existing sites to power the building and charge EVs. If fully supported it will provide around half of the Council's electricity needs resulting in savings of £627k per annum.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 -29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)	Financial Saving	Payback term
	£2,300,000 (2027/28)	589 tCO ₂ e/year (if including work already funded)	£627k per year	4 years

ii. **Comments/risk:**

A risk of not doing so is to pay higher energy costs. There is a separate risk that you may need to pay the costs of upgrading the grid if you want to install EV charging.

iii. **Recommended funding source:**

The Finance Department's recommendation is to look further into what the Salix programme offers as a source of funding. In cases such as this in the past, the Council has established a "negative fund" which was repaid as savings were realised. However, this is no longer considered an acceptable course of action, and Audit Wales has confirmed this. Salix is used as the main source of funding for solar panels in local authorities and Finance believes that Gwynedd Council should consider doing the same. As with the lighting change project described above, the funding will have to be applied for and there is no guarantee of success, but the terms they offer are more favourable than the other options available to us for expenditure of this size and nature.

9. **Installation of energy consumption management and monitoring systems – electricity / Installation of energy consumption management and monitoring systems – LPG and oil**

- i. **Description / Business Case:** Installation of heating control systems (BMS) at 3 new sites over 3 years. Monitoring energy consumption to identify waste resulting in finance and carbon savings. AMR = an energy monitoring system equivalent to BMS but for sites with LPG and oil heating. Monitoring energy consumption to identify waste resulting in finance and carbon savings.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 -29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)	Financial Saving	Payback term
BMS £20,000 (2026/27)	£40,000 (2027/28)	49 tCO ₂ e/year	£15k per year	4 years
AMR £46,750	£46,750	-	£15k	

ii. **Comments / risk:**

Significant benefit from a small investment. Without putting the AMR in place, it is impossible to know if there is waste. It can be high or low. As a result, ROI cannot be calculated. Savings are therefore difficult to declare definitively.

iii. **Recommended funding source:**

The Finance Department's recommendation is to use existing funds, or treat these applications as investment to save. The author's comments note that the returns on investment cannot be definitive, and further it is noted that no monitoring system can bring savings of its own without there being definite action on the results. As it is not possible to accept assurance that savings will come this cannot be treated as an investment to save application at the moment so it is seen that there is no option but to identify additional resources within 2026/27 and 2027/28 but with a commitment that any savings arising from the scheme will be used to repay the commitment, by reducing budgets.

10. Project: Switching site heating method from gas to electricity - Heat decarbonisation (retrofit)

- i. **Description / Business Case:** Capital of 10% match funding for the sites that are part of stage 4 of Welsh Government's Low Carbon Heat Grant – Plas Silyn, Plas Ffrancon and Ysgol Llanllyfni.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 -29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)	Financial Saving
£105,000		Plas Silyn: 13 tCO ₂ e/per year Plas Ffrancon: 13 tCO ₂ e/ per year Ysgol Llanllyfni: 2 tCO ₂ e/ per year	Protecting the Council from future energy cost increases

ii. **Comments / risk:**

Failure to support the application would result in the loss of a £900k grant from the Welsh Government, and the project not being able to be delivered.

iii. **Recommended funding source:**

The Finance Department's recommendation is to use the Transformation Fund as a first resort, and if this is not acceptable, the scheme is added to the Asset Management Plan. The commitment would release £900,000 of government grant so is considered to be a reasonable use of the Transformation Fund.

11. Project: Internal costs of installing 6 site charging points / Purchase of X 3 charging points at 6 sites

- i. **Description / Business Case:** 6 sites × £4k, with a maximum of £200k on the installation costs / Equipment, back office, maintenance and warranty. 18 × £4,536, based on no grants.

Cost 26/27	Cost 27/28 -29/30	Carbon Saving (4 years)
£224,000		No direct savings, but installed EV chargers is essential for implementing the Council's Green Fleet Plan.
£81,660		No direct savings, but installed EV chargers is essential for implementing the Council's Green Fleet Plan.

ii. **Comments / risk:**

The installation of charging points for the use of the Council's fleet is necessary in order to be able to cater for the increasing number of electric vehicles.

iii. **Recommended funding source:**

The Finance Department's recommendation is to an existing fund. The Council received a relevant grant in a previous year for this purpose, and there is remaining money available for use.

12. Innovative Schemes

- i. To date, the Council has focused on implementing 'traditional' schemes (e.g. buildings, energy and fleet), which have provided carbon reduction and financial savings. Although they have been successful they have also limited the ability to explore new ways of working and collaborating with partners. The new Climate and Nature Plan sets out an intention to increase the level of collaboration with communities, creating the need for a more flexible resource to enable this.
- ii. We have not yet explored the possibilities for the Council to seek to deliver existing services in different or innovative ways. We will begin the preparation and research work in 2026/27 to assess whether the Council can generate income or significantly reduce costs, perhaps by establishing arm-length services.
- iii. Innovative projects can be implemented by the Council alone or in partnership with the community, public or private sector. The benefits (carbon and financial) would depend on the nature of the project, but any investment would be assessed against clear criteria, namely whether it is:
- a. reducing the Council's carbon emissions;
 - b. increase income;

- c. or reduce demand for services leading to reducing costs.

13. Measuring success

- i. We will continue to collect data on Cyngor Gwynedd's annual carbon emissions and submit them to the Welsh Government in accordance with the procedure in place since 2021.
- ii. Those results are published in annual reports, which can be seen [here](#).

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

- i. An Impact Assessment on the Characteristics of Equality, the Welsh language and the Socio-Economic Duty was produced on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan when it was adopted at the Cabinet meeting on 8 March 2022. An update to the assessment can be found at Appendix 1.

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

- i. Have you included residents / service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult with them?

A public consultation on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan was conducted during the summer of 2025 and the results can be seen [here](#).

- ii. Have you considered collaboration?

Chapters 11 and 12 of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan cover the work carried out in part by the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, namely a consortium of local organisations led by the Council. A number of other projects in CNEP are carried out in partnership with others, such as active travel projects in collaboration with Public Service Board partners.

The new review of the CNEP lists new projects where it will be absolutely essential to collaborate with community organisations and residents in order to achieve them – eg. 'collaborating with community organisations in order to produce and distribute renewable energy'.

- iii. What has been done or will be done to prevent problems arising or worsening in the future?

One of the basic principles of CNEP is to try to prevent further increases in the average temperature of the planet and to limit global warming to "well below 2oC" in accordance with the United Nations Paris Agreement. Each of the plan's projects seek to stabilise or even reverse the probability that the current situation will lead to further problems in the future.

- iv. How have you considered the long-term and what will people's needs be in coming years?

As noted above, the basis of the CNEP is to seek to prevent global warming problems from getting worse in the future, and while the Council has its own target of net zero carbon by 2030 the Welsh

Government has set a target for the whole of Wales to be net zero by 2050. The CNEP therefore also takes into account that changing the habits of Gwynedd's residents and businesses will be long-term work beyond 2030.

v. To ensure integration have you considered the possible impact on other public bodies?

A large number of CNEP projects are planned or implemented in collaboration with other public bodies or with the voluntary sector and communities. There is ongoing collaboration with other local authorities across north Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh Government's Energy Service, and Transport for Wales which has resulted in joint planning and commissioning.

A number of local public bodies including Cyngor Gwynedd are members of the Public Services Board and one of the three Well-being Objectives in the Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan 2023-2028 is 'We want to work together to support our services and communities to move towards Net Zero Carbon'.

16. Next Steps and Timetable

- i. Continue to develop projects and business cases and find funding to fund them.
 - ii. Publication of an Annual Report for the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30 in the Autumn term each year to review progress on the projects.
-

Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

No observations to add in relation to propriety

Chief Finance Officer:

Officers from the Finance Department have had the opportunity to offer input to the report while the author was preparing it and I am satisfied with the information that has been included.

Some of the proposed schemes will be an opportunity to realise financial savings as well as reducing carbon emissions and where this happens budgets will need to be reduced as appropriate, noting that any loans will need to be repaid.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Impact Assessment on the Characteristics of Equality, the Welsh language and the Socio-Economic Duty

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 any change in any policy or procedures (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 should 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?

Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30: Version 2 (CNEP)

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

Cyngor Gwynedd has been implementing its Climate and Nature Emergency Plan since March 2022, but during 2025/26 the plan was reviewed by council staff and elected members; a public consultation was held; and comments were received from the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Changes have been made to the scheme following these consultations, and a revised version of the CAHN will go before Gwynedd Council's Cabinet on 7 July 2026.

The CNEP explains why there is a need to respond to the impacts of climate change that have already occurred as well as why global temperature increases need to be reduced into the

future. Following on from that, it explains what steps the council will take to change its working arrangements to reduce its carbon emissions and to increase the carbon absorption capacity of the lands it owns.

The changes made between Version 1 and Version 2 of the CNEP are:

- Archiving 8 projects because a project needs to be merged, or the work has become a habit and everyday work
- Add 10 new projects

Further details can be found in the draft of the CNEP in papers to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting on 7 July 2026.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Bethan Richardson - Climate Change Programme Manager

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

Version 1 - February 2022

Version 2 – June 2026

2) Action

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

All residents of Gwynedd will be affected by global warming, but there are some climate change impacts that are going to have a greater impact on some residents than others, e.g.: residents living in areas that are more likely to be flooded or residents living in fuel poverty.

The CNEP needs to be implemented in conjunction with a number of other organisations and with communities across Gwynedd. Version 2 of the CNEP places greater emphasis on working with partners and communities across Gwynedd in order to plan and implement projects.

2.2 What steps have you taken to engage with people with 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 public consultation was carried out between 12 June and 31 July 2025 to seek views on:

- Do residents think climate change is important, and should it be a priority for the

Council?

- Content of the current Plan
- Proposals on changes to existing projects and the addition of new projects
- What can Gwynedd Council do to support Gwynedd residents to reduce carbon emissions?

2.3 What was the outcome of the engagement?

The results of the consultation can be found [here](#) but briefly the results show:

- 84% of respondents believe climate change is important to them
- 83% of respondents believe that Gwynedd Council should be taking action on climate change
- The majority of respondents agreed that the current Plan was understandable, with a clear vision and timetable, and that the aim was ambitious enough (between 56-75% agreed with the various statements)
- A majority (52%) disagreed that the Council is doing enough to support residents to adopt sustainable living and working habits
- The majority of respondents agreed that 10 new projects should be added to the Scheme (support for individual projects ranging between 59% and 79%)
- The projects with the highest percentages supported were 'continuing to implement Gwynedd Council's Flood Strategy' (79.5%), and 'working with community organisations to produce and distribute renewable energy' (78.8%)
- The projects with the highest percentages of disagreement were 'developing and implementing Gwynedd Council's Charging Strategy to develop the Council's public charging network and for the Council's fleet (21.2% disagree but 71.2% agree) and 'researching and measuring blue carbon absorption on our coastline (20.5% disagree but 59.6% agree)
- The topic of climate change placed as a top priority was 'reducing household fuel poverty' (63.3%)
- The additional benefit that follows from the highest scoring climate change action was 'access to public transport'.

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

We collect data on the Council's emissions and carbon absorption levels annually, at the request of the Welsh Government, and receive information on carbon emission reduction plans that are in the care of regional and national partners and use them to shape our work programme.

We have data on how much of Gwynedd's population, and what the infrastructure is, at risk of flooding. We know that the population demographics of some areas likely to be flooded mean that a high number of older people will be affected.

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

The Census provides us with data on the demographics of geographical communities but will

not provide us with full information on each of the 5 protected characteristics. We would need to keep track of further information about characteristics such as sexual orientation or belief/religion as we hold consultations with communities, and act on any evidence that these are not being given due attention.

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 impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics? There is also a need to consider the impact on the socio-economic disadvantage and on the Welsh language.

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's race (including nationality) will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Disability	Positive	While the consequences of climate change affect all people, not responding to the consequences would affect disabled people worse than the rest of the population. The CNEP seeks to respond to problems caused by flooding, hoping to reduce the likelihood of flooding in the first place, and plans how to respond when flooding events arise. These response plans take account of the need to offer suitable or additional support to disabled people. The Local Flood Strategy will contribute to the CNEP, and will take account of creating easy access for disabled people when planning flood defences. Our plans to install electric car charging points across the county will increase the accessibility of residents living in rural communities to low or zero carbon transport. They will be able to use electric vehicles adapted to their needs without having to rely on a fossil fuel motor. It will be necessary to be aware, at the same time, that the charging points are being installed in places that are accessible and safe for disabled people. The council also encourages staff and elected members to prioritise virtual methods of holding meetings and to carry

		out their work. This can increase the opportunities for disabled people to carry out their work from home, or from a location convenient to them, without having to travel to a location such as an office. On the other hand, we will also need to ensure that disabled people are suitably equipped to carry out their work from home safely and efficiently. Our active travel plans and biodiversity projects contribute positively to the mental well-being and health of residents and visitors to Gwynedd. Access to nature and green spaces has been proven to be a positive factor in maintaining healthy mental health.
Gender	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's gender will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Age	Positive	If we do not respond to the effects of climate change and reduce the likelihood of global warming, then young and older age groups will be affected worse than others. These two age groups would need additional support to protect themselves – e.g. in cases of flooding; to find food if there is a threat to our ability to grow crops; to travel if there is no public transport. Our active travel schemes, plans to grow and plant trees and create nature habitats are going to help the education and well-being of both age groups. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's age will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Sexual orientation	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's sexual orientation will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's religion or

		belief (or non-belief) will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Gender reassignment	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's gender reassignment will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Pregnancy and maternity	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a woman's pregnancy will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
Marriage and civil partnership	None identified	There are no current individual plans that involve this feature. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider, and we will ensure that a person's marriage and civil partnership status will not be a barrier to them having access to any future consultations so that we can gather their views.
The Welsh language	Positive	All schemes named in the CNEP will be maintained and promoted in Welsh or bilingually in accordance with the Council's language policy. The CNEP will contribute to regional plans to improve 'green' energy and transport infrastructure and therefore all communities – rural and urban – should benefit equally. Our plans to install electric car charging points across the county will increase the accessibility of residents living in rural communities to low or zero carbon transport. All of this will mean that Welsh-speaking residents can continue to live in their local communities.
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive	In line with the Welsh Government's intention in Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) our approach to reducing carbon emissions should not have a greater impact on some sections of society than others – i.e. we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'. The CNEP encourages the use of electric private cars, but also recognises that, at present at least, their cost is beyond the reach of a large number of people. We will therefore also work with others to develop a network of low carbon public transport. Many of the individual schemes, as well as trying to reduce waste, also seek to reduce financial poverty. Our support

		for partners supporting residents with fuel poverty will all help residents who are under socio-economic disadvantage.
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* To be deleted as required

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 plan as a whole and the individual schemes should have a positive impact on the duty. The Equality Impact Assessments on the individual schemes will need to identify any matters to consider.
Promote equal opportunities	Yes	In line with the Welsh Government's intention in Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) , we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'. In engaging on and through the implementation of the CNEP we will ensure that everyone has equal access to information on the impacts of climate change and can contribute to the debate in the field.
Foster good relationships	Yes	In engaging on and through the implementation of the CNEP we will ensure that everyone has equal access to information on the impacts of climate change and can contribute to the debate in the field. By negotiating solutions to the problems of climate change we can bring communities closer together.

* To be deleted as required

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, and that every opportunity to promote the Welsh language is taken (beyond providing bilingual services) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

In addition to the information under the headings of 'the Welsh language' in 3.1, the CNEP will promote the Welsh language through the following actions –
All information and advertising signs and materials will be published bilingually with Welsh first, in line with the Council's language policy.

Projects in the field of 'land use' and 'ecology' targeted at children and young people will increase their knowledge and confidence in the Welsh language outside the classroom. We will work with community organisations to carry out activities that will teach about climate change and on practical projects to respond to the effects of climate change – all through the medium of Welsh and English, with the Welsh language being given priority.

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?

In monitoring the plan we will look for any problems that might have suggested that the council's language policy is not being followed, and correct that.

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 improving outcomes for everyone only).

In line with the Welsh Government's intention in [Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 \(2021-25\)](#) our approach to reducing carbon emissions should not have a greater impact on some sections of society than others – i.e. we should 'ensure that no one is left behind'. The CNEP encourages the use of electric private cars, but also recognises that, at present at least, their cost is beyond the reach of a large number of people. We will therefore also work with others to develop a network of low carbon public transport. Many of the individual schemes, as well as trying to reduce waste, also seek to reduce financial poverty. Our support for partners supporting residents with fuel poverty will all help residents who are under socio-economic disadvantage.

3.6 What measures or other changes can you include to strengthen or change the policy / custom to show 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?

We review the progress made on our Climate and Nature Emergency Plan annually, and make any necessary changes to our work programme. This is in addition to the schemes referred to in 3.2 and 3.5. If Equality Impact Assessments are required on future individual plans then they will need to identify any matters to consider.

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?

The CNEP has had a positive impact on all equality characteristics, or no impact has been identified. Equality impact assessments will be completed for individual projects. The impact of climate change hits all members of society, and so as we plan our response to those impacts we deliver on the basis of different needs – e.g. flood defences and response plans.

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 for the CNEP as a whole, but equality impact assessments will be completed for individual projects.

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

This is not relevant to the Plan in its entirety.

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

This is not relevant to the Plan in its entirety.

5) Monitoring

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

This plan will be monitored regularly through the Council's internal performance monitoring arrangements, and information on the development of the plan will be shared publicly through Cabinet Members' Performance Reports to Cabinet meetings; through reports to the Communities and through Gwynedd Council's Annual Performance Report. We have a Climate Change Board that provides strategic leadership to the work. One element of the regular monitoring is the collection of data on emission levels and carbon absorption, and we will do so by following the Welsh Government's methodology ([Welsh Public Sector Guide for Zero Net Carbon Reporting](#)) while also adapting our methodology if guidance is issued to do so. Annual data results will form part of Gwynedd Council's Annual Performance Report, and following their publication we will also review this plan to ensure that we are on track to achieve our ambition by 2030.

CABINET CYNGOR GWYNEDD



Date of meeting :	15/09/2026
Cabinet Member :	Menna Trenholme
Relevant Officer:	Sioned Owen Early Years Senior Manager
Item Title :	Expanding the Flying Start programme

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To agree to expand the Flying Start Programme within the Children and Communities Grant by extending the full scheme to a new area being Pwllheli, following a reduction in the number of children eligible for the current programme.

2. REASON FOR THE DECISION

- 2.1 Cabinet approval is required for the proposed direction of extending the Flying Start Programme across the county and to enable the submission of a business case to the Welsh Government as soon as possible.

3. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISION

- 3.1 The Flying Start Programme is already available in seven communities across Gwynedd. It supports families with children aged 0 to 4 years through the provision of an enhanced health visiting service, family support, speech and language support, and 12.5 hours of free childcare for children from the age of two.

- 3.2 The communities currently included in the programme are:

- Marchog 1 and 2, Maesgeirchen, Bangor
- Deiniolen
- Peblig and Cadnant, Caernarfon
- Gerlan, Ogwen 1 and Ogwen 2, and parts of Tregarth
- Talysarn, Llanllyfni, Carmel, Clynog Fawr and Penygroes
- Diffwys and Maenofferen, Bowydd and Rhiw, Blaenau Ffestiniog
- South Dolgellau

- 3.3 As a result of decreased birth rates affecting child population over recent years, the Flying Start Programme has already been gradually expanded to include the remainder of Ogwen 2 and Tregarth, Deiniolen, and the remainder of Penygroes LSOA.

- 3.4 Although the above expansion has been implemented successfully and new areas have been added, the project continues to experience a reduction in the number of children enrolled on the scheme due to declining birth rates across the areas listed above. The programme cannot fall below 10% of its target number of children. The current numbers are considered unacceptable by the Welsh Government, which invests over £4,400 per child and is consequently facing an annual underspend within the programme.
- 3.5 The Welsh Government has also recently announced its intention to expand childcare provision to include all two-year-old children in Gwynedd, with particular emphasis on strengthening Welsh-medium childcare provision.
- 3.6 Before extending childcare provision (Phase 3) to every area of the county, it was necessary to consider increasing the number of children within the Flying Start Programme and to target the most deprived area in Gwynedd so that the most vulnerable families could benefit from full access to all four elements of the Flying Start Programme.
- 3.7 Following Welsh Government guidance, analytical work was undertaken using health data, Gwynedd poverty data, and Welsh Government data to identify the areas with the greatest level of need and therefore the most suitable areas for consideration.
- 3.8 An analysis was undertaken of the most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). When comparing the options, most of the areas assessed showed a low caseload and comparatively low levels of complex need. In contrast, South and North Pwllheli demonstrated a combination of a higher number of children, a higher proportion of vulnerable children, the presence of social housing, and existing service infrastructure. This offers the best opportunity to target resources where they can achieve the greatest impact. This would enable approximately 91 additional children in the area to qualify for the full programme from birth until the age of four.

(See Appendix 1)

- 3.9 An Integrated Impact Assessment was undertaken to assess the impact of the proposed change to the scheme on the county's population, considering the requirements of a range of relevant legislation. The proposal will contribute towards achieving several of the well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, supporting families to live in a more equal Wales, a healthier Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, and a Wales with a vibrant culture where the Welsh language thrives. The Flying Start programme will continue to operate in the same way as in other areas, promoting the five ways of working. This will include integrated working with health services through the co-location of services locally, as well as providing early intervention to prevent problems from arising or escalating in the future.

(See Appendix 2.)

- 3.10 As the programme is currently operating within its existing funding cap, we have identified sufficient financial capacity to expand the scheme to Pwllheli within the current Flying Start grant allocation, at a maximum cost of £131,805 over a full year. In addition, more childcare places will become available from April 2027 onwards through a major capital development involving the installation of a new modular building on the grounds of Ysgol Cymerau, Pwllheli. This will ensure sufficient childcare capacity to meet demand.
- 3.11 The evidence clearly suggests that South and North Pwllheli is the option that provides the greatest strategic benefits. The level of need, the number of vulnerable children, the concentration of social housing, and the planned capital investment together provide a strong case for prioritising these areas as the next stage of the Flying Start expansion programme.
- 3.12 The findings were presented to the Flying Start Management Board and the Children's Department Management Team, who concluded that the recommendation should be to extend the service to the South and North Pwllheli LSOAs.
- 3.13 If the recommendation is accepted and the Welsh Government approves the business case, it will be possible to begin providing services to families from January 2027, subject to a phased implementation approach.
- 3.14 We will also continue to run an outreach campaign to engage more families living close to the boundaries of the existing scheme and provide services to vulnerable families on its periphery. This will allow the programme to support the greatest possible number of families within the available grant funding.

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMESCALE

- 4.1 Submit a Business Case to the Welsh Government seeking approval to extend the full Flying Start Programme to South and North Pwllheli.
- 4.2 Start registering families on the programme from January 2027, subject to the successful recruitment of staff.

5. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

5.1 Monitoring Officer

'The report reflects the work which has gone into arriving at the recommendation. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought.'

5.2 Chief Finance Officer

"For the reasons outlined in the report, the Council does not currently maximise the benefits it obtains on behalf of Gwynedd families through Dechrau'n Deg, since there is underspend. I

have no comments from the perspective of financial propriety on the methodology used to consider the options for extending the scheme."



Appendix 1 – Expansion Option Appraisal 2026

Option 1: Remaining Area of Tregarth and Mynydd Llandygai

Advantages

- Relatively low caseload, with 88% of families assessed as having low-level needs.
- Small number of children (approximately 10 per year), making implementation relatively straightforward to be included to the Bethesda area.
- Expanding access to childcare for two-year-olds could increase participation in early education. This could be done through Phase 3 childcare expansion

Disadvantages

- Limited evidence of high levels of need or complex vulnerability.
- Resources could potentially be targeted more effectively towards areas with greater levels of need.

Option 2: Upper Bangor, Glyder and Deiniol

Advantages

- Potential to support approximately 20 children per year.
- Moderate ranking on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).
- Provides an opportunity to extend access to childcare for two-year-olds. This could be implemented with the Phase 3 childcare expansion. Number of Capital projects have been completed or are in progress in the city.

Disadvantages

- 88% of cases are assessed as having low-level needs.

Option 3: Remaining Areas of Cadnant and Peblig

Advantages

- Could extend access to childcare for two-year-olds within an additional area. This could be implemented through the Phase 3 expansion.
- Families with higher levels of need would continue to receive outreach support.

Disadvantages

- The need for Flying Start services is not clearly evidenced.
- The number of outreach referrals is low.

- The majority of families are assessed as having low-level needs.

Option 4: Llanuwchllyn and Llanycil

Advantages

- Would provide access to services for additional rural communities.
- Approximately 18 children per year would be eligible.
- Could extend access to childcare for two-year-olds within an additional area in the Bala vicinity. This could be implemented through the Phase 3 expansion.

Disadvantages

- All current cases are assessed as having low-level needs.
- Limited evidence of complex or high levels of need.

Option 5: Nefyn and Morfa Nefyn

Advantages

- Approximately 15 children per year would be eligible.
- 94% of cases are assessed as low-level need, making implementation relatively straightforward.
- A new capital development is planned by 2027. This could be implemented through the Phase 3 expansion

Disadvantages

- Relatively low level of complex needs.
- Less evidence of vulnerability compared with some other areas.

Option 6: South and North Pwllheli

Advantages

- Significantly higher caseload than the other areas, with 57 children in North Pwllheli and 34 in South Pwllheli.
- 13 children with medical needs or Additional Learning Needs (ALN) across the two areas.
- 12 children on the Child Protection Register across the two areas.
- Strong presence of social housing, indicating higher levels of economic and social vulnerability.
- A capital project is planned for Ysgol Cymerau, strengthening the long-term sustainability of provision and facilitating service integration.
- Having a Flying Start presence in Dwyfor.

Disadvantages

- Greater potential demand on staffing resources due to the higher level of need

Impact Assessment

Background

This document assesses the impact that a policy, procedure, plan, etc. will have on the county's population and operates under a number of legislative requirements, including:

- **Equality Act 2010:** Requires public bodies to consider the impact of policies and decisions on people with protected characteristics.
- **Socio-economic Duty:** Requires consideration of socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decision-making.
- **Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011):** Requires consideration of the impact on opportunities to use Welsh and ensures Welsh is not treated less favourably than English.
- **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:** Requires implementation of the five ways of working and contribution to the seven well-being goals.
- **Armed Forces Act 2021:** Requires due regard to be given to impacts on serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families.

Author: Sioned Owen (PLANT)
Job Title: Senior Early Years Service Manager
Date: 01/09/2026
Version: Version 1

STEP 1 - Main Aims and Objectives

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

- Service review or restructuring proposals affecting the community and/or staff.
- Decisions affecting service users, employees, or the wider community, including commissioning, decommissioning, or reviewing services.

2. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes?

There has been depopulation in the number of children accessing the Flying Start grant programme. Therefore, there is a need to increase the number of children on the programme by adding a new area, ensuring that expected participation levels are achieved in line with Welsh Government grant requirements.

3. Who are the main stakeholder groups?

Children aged 0-4 and their families.

STEP 2 - Engagement Data and Impact Assessment

4. Has engagement taken place?

No.

It has not been possible to engage with families because the proposal follows Welsh Government grant guidance.

5. Evidence and Potential Impacts

Characteristic	Evidence	Potential Impact
Race	Higher proportion of Welsh-origin residents in the area. Open access for all families regardless of ethnicity.	Positive impact through improved child development and access to services.
Disability	High number of children with ALN (Additional Learning Needs).	Positive impact through greater access to local intensive services.
Sex	High number of single-parent families, mostly female-headed households.	Positive impact through childcare provision enabling parents to work or undertake training.
Age	Relevant to families with children under 4.	Positive impact through more local services.
Religion and Belief	No evidence identified.	No impact identified.
Sexual Orientation	No evidence identified.	No impact identified.
Gender Reassignment	No evidence identified.	No impact identified.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No evidence identified.	No impact identified.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Opportunity to work with pregnant mothers earlier.	Positive impact through intensive local services.
Welsh Language	High proportion of Welsh-speaking households in Pwllheli. Services provided bilingually.	Positive impact through Welsh-medium childcare and bilingual staffing.

Socio-economic Factors	Area selected using health and deprivation data.	Positive impact on reducing child poverty outcomes.
Armed Forces Community	No evidence identified.	No impact identified.
Human Rights	Children's rights are central.	Positive impact.
Other	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

6. Data Gaps

Further detailed analysis of:

- Health data
- Numbers of children with ALN
- Child poverty data

7. Cumulative Impact

Not applicable.

8. Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal aims to improve outcomes for pre-school children in a disadvantaged area, helping reduce inequalities and promote equal opportunities. Family support groups will be open to all families.

9. Socio-economic Duty

The grant programme is designed to improve outcomes relating to child poverty and provide children with the best possible start in life, reducing inequalities and socio-economic disadvantage.

10. Welsh Language Standards

- Promotion of Welsh throughout the programme.
- Commissioning bilingual childcare settings.
- Providing support through bilingual staff.

11. Well-being of Future Generations Act

The proposal contributes to:

- A More Equal Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- Cohesive Communities
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

The Flying Start programme supports the five ways of working:

- **Long-term**
- **Prevention**
- **Integration**
- **Collaboration**
- **Involvement**

STEP 3 - Procurement and Partnerships

I2. Will the policy be delivered through contractors or partnerships?

Yes.

Procurement

Approved Gwynedd Council Childcare Framework, including assessment of Welsh language provision and Care Inspectorate Wales requirements.

Partnerships

- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Service Level Agreements covering Health Visitors and Speech and Language Therapy services.

STEP 4 - Addressing Negative Impacts

I3. Significant Positive Impacts

More families in disadvantaged areas of Gwynedd will receive early years services.

Significant Negative Impacts

The service cannot be available across all areas of Gwynedd because it must comply with Welsh Government grant conditions, including child participation targets and funding levels.

I4. Justification for Any Negative Impact

As childcare provision has been expanded by Welsh Government, more children outside Flying Start areas will receive childcare services. Assessment identified Pwllheli as the area meeting the required criteria. All children within the relevant Pwllheli LSOAs will have equal access.

I5. Does this amount to unavoidable unlawful discrimination?

No.

Due to falling numbers within the Flying Start programme, participation must increase to make best use of grant funding. The Welsh Government requires local authorities to remain above the permitted participation threshold.

I6. Measures to Strengthen Equality

- Extend Flying Start to Pwllheli.
- Expand Welsh Government-funded childcare simultaneously.
- Ensure full access for eligible families with children under four.
- Provide local, bilingual services.
- Place families at the centre of planning and support.

I7. Measures to Reduce Socio-economic Inequality

Data analysis identified Pwllheli as the area with the greatest need for the service.

I8. Measures to Support Welsh Language Use

Delivery will continue in accordance with Welsh Government grant conditions and guidance.

I9. Is there sufficient information to proceed?

Yes.

STEP 5 - Decision

20. Recommended Action

Continue with the policy/practice in its current form.

STEP 6 - Monitoring and Review

21. Actions for Monitoring

Action	Date	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Collect more data from additional families	January 2027	Six-monthly	Business Officer	No

22. Monitoring Arrangements

Monitoring and Review Arrangements	Timescale	Lead Responsibility	Add to Service Plan
Monitoring in line with Welsh Government requirements	Six-monthly	Business Officer	No

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Date of discussion at the Cabinet	Items to be discussed	Cabinet Member
Quarter 3 2026/27 1 October – 31 December		
13 October 2026	Annual Equality Report	Cllr Llio Elenid Owen
	Annual Employment Report	Cllr Llio Elenid Owen
	Annual Health and Safety Report	Cllr Llio Elenid Owen
	Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report 25/26	Cllr Menna Trenholme
	Annual Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan Monitoring Report	Cllr Craig ab Iago
	Assets Plan	Cllr Nia Jeffreys
	Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2025/26	Cllr Dilwyn Morgan
	Corbett Arms Report	Cllr Craig ab Iago
	Trees Policy	Cllr June Jones
	The Voice of the Child Strategy	Cllr Dewi Jones
	Revenue Budget 2026/27 – End of August Review	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones

Date of discussion at the Cabinet	Items to be discussed	Cabinet Member
	Capital Programme 2026/27 – End of August Review	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Savings Overview: Progress Report on Realising Savings Schemes	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
10 November 2026	Quarterly Report of the Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board	Cllr Nia Jeffreys
	Local Authority Sufficiency Scheme for Looked-after Children under the Welsh Government's Programme for Removing Profit	Cllr Menna Trenholme
	Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 25/26	Cllr Nia Jeffreys
	Council Tax - Discount / Premium	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	2027 and 2028 Eisteddfod	Cllr R Medwyn Hughes
	Housing LIN Report	Cllr Dilwyn Morgan
	Gwynedd Culture Action Plan	Cllr R Medwyn Hughes
	Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26	Cllr Craig ab Iago
8 December 2026	LDP – Key Issues and Growth Options.	Cllr Craig ab Iago
Quarter 4 2026/27 1 January – 31 March		
26 January 2027	Revenue Budget 2026/27 – End of November Review	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones

Date of discussion at the Cabinet	Items to be discussed	Cabinet Member
	Capital Programme 2026/27 – End of November Review	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Savings Overview: Progress Report on Realising Savings Schemes	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Penrhos Care Home Full Business Case	Cllr Dilwyn Morgan
16 February 2027	2027/28 Budget	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Savings and Cuts 2027/28	Cllr Huw Wyn Jones
	Council Plan Review 2027/28	Cllr Nia Jeffreys
	North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2027 – draft report	Cllr Dilwyn Morgan
9 March 2027	One-off Bids	Cllr Nia Jeffreys