



Complete Agenda

Democratic Services
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Meeting

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, THURSDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 2026

THERE WILL BE A BRIEFING MEETING FOR MEMBERS AT 10:00AM

Location

Hybrid - Siambr Dafydd Orwig, Council Offices, Caernarfon LL55 1SH

* NOTE

This meeting will be webcast

https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en_GB/portal/home

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(DISTRIBUTED 29/10/26)

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (18)

Plaid Cymru (12)

Councillors

Menna Baines
Linda Morgan
Meryl Roberts
Jina Gwyrfai
Berwyn Parry Jones
Geraint Wyn Parry

Rheinallt Puw
Gwynfor Owen
Einir Wyn Williams
Sian Williams
Elin Walker Jones
Beca Roberts

Independent (5)

Councillors

Elwyn Jones
Beth Lawton
Wendy Cleaver

Anwen J. Davies
Angela Russell

Gwynedd First (1)

Councillor Gareth Coj Parry

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 27

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meetings of this committee held on the 17th of September 2026 be signed as a true record

5. RESPONSE PLAN TO THE OUR BRAVERY BROUGHT JUSTICE REPORT

28 - 167

To provide assurance in terms of implementation following the committee's previous consideration in January 2026 and as part of the need to scrutinise the progress of the Response Plan.

6. PERFORMANCE REPORT FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

168 - 192

To scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

7. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

193 - 229

To scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

8. CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PROGRAMME

230 - 233

To adopt a revised work programme for 2026/27

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, 17 SEPTEMBER 2026

Present:

COUNCILLORS:

Elwyn Jones, (Chair), Beth Lawton, Jina Gwyrfai, Menna Baines, Elin Walker Jones, Sian Williams, Meryl Roberts, Berwyn Parry Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Rheinalt Puw, Angela Russell, Geraint Wyn Parry, Gareth Coj Parry, Gwynfor Owen, Anwen J Davies, Linda Morgan

Officers present:

Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Adviser) and Courtney Leigh Jones (Civic and Democracy Services Officer).

Present for item 5:

Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Cabinet Member for Housing and Property), Carys Fon Williams (Head of Housing and Property Department), Hedd Tomos (Assistant Head of Housing and Property Department), Sion Hughes (ADRA), Rhiannon Dafydd (Grŵp Cynefin), Edward Hughes (Clwyd Alyn), Allan Eveleigh (North Wales Housing Association)

Present for item 6:

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Adults), Councillor Menna Trenholme (Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families), Mari Wynne Jones (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Elliw Haf Hughes (Assistant Head of Safeguarding and Quality)

Present for item 7:

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Adults), Councillor Menna Trenholme (Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families), Mari Wynne Jones (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Elliw Haf Hughes (Assistant Head of Safeguarding and Quality), Hawis Melangell Jones (Commissioning, Contracts and Projects Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Einir Wyn Williams.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received. A declaration of interest was received from Councillor Gwynfor Owen.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note.

4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 17 July 2026, as a true record.

5. WORKING WITH THE HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

The item was submitted by the Head of Housing Department. It was confirmed that the social housing stock was transferred in 2010, and since then, Cyngor Gwynedd had been in a close and successful partnership with the housing associations operating within the county. It was noted that the aim of the partnership was to meet the housing needs of Gwynedd residents across the county, stating the local demand, providing funding, coordinating developments and building the houses themselves. Details were provided on the close relationship between the Council and the Housing Associations and the way that they worked together.

They proceeded to discuss the provision that was available because of this relationship and the collaboration plan.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions that had been previously provided to the housing associations, and the representatives answered each question in turn;

Implementing the housing allocation policy and new developments

1. Can you explain what is your role, as a housing association, in relation to the housing allocation policy?

It was explained that the housing associations operating within Gwynedd (Adra, Clwyd Alyn, North Wales Housing and Grŵp Cynefin) worked in partnership with Cyngor Gwynedd to implement the Gwynedd Common Housing Allocation Policy and the Common Housing Register. It was noted that the housing policy outlined how the housing register should be set out in terms of priority, and the Council was responsible for the policy. It was assured that the policy and the register were administered under Cyngor Gwynedd's ownership.

It was confirmed that applicants were prioritised according to their housing need from band 1 to band 4. As a property became empty, the Housing Association would ask for a nomination, and the property would be allocated in accordance with this.

It was confirmed that the local authority was responsible for the housing allocation policy and that this was a statutory responsibility. It was assured that the housing associations would allocate in accordance with the policy. It was noted that the Welsh Government set the guidelines in terms of developing a housing allocation policy to a Local Authority in Wales. It was noted that Gwynedd had pushed the boundaries as far as possible within the existing legislation in terms of favouring local applicants. It was explained that a local definition included a local connection for five years within designated areas.

It was confirmed that over 2,000 applicants were on the housing register in Gwynedd, which highlighted the need for social housing within the county. It was confirmed that ADRA had approximately 6,500 social houses in Gwynedd, which was equivalent to 75% of the county's social housing stock.

When referring to the intermediate rental houses, it was confirmed that Grŵp Cynefin administered the Tai Teg register on behalf of social landlords in Gwynedd.

Members asked questions about the housing register. It was assured that people were on the housing register for many reasons and were not necessarily homeless. It was noted that the applications were assessed and prioritised according to need and were placed in appropriate bands when waiting for houses. It was confirmed that there were also various people in band 1, not only homeless people, but members who significantly under occupied a dwelling, members leaving the armed forces and young individuals leaving home. There was a reference to the number of people living in temporary accommodation, stating that these numbers often changed significantly. It was noted that this was a significant cost for local government and was being monitored within the housing register. It was confirmed that the associations were committed to the housing policy to ensure fairness and transparency when allocating residents in houses across the county. It was assured that the housing associations allocated houses in a fair and transparent way in accordance with the policy and consistently acted within the policy's framework.

2. Do you always operate in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Common Housing Allocation Policy? If you deviate from the policy how often does this happen and why?

It was confirmed that the Housing Associations operated in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's Common Housing Allocation Policy and the procedure was followed throughout the county. It was assured that 93% of housing allocation cases by the Adra housing association had operated in accordance with the policy.

It was explained that there were some exemptions to this, stating that 7% within the social housing stock followed the 'controlled transfers' procedure for cases of domestic abuse, under occupation or when a house with relevant adaptations became available that was appropriate for a tenant in need. It was assured that this was allowed within the allocation policy.

The Local Allocation Policy that also took place within the policy and the number of cases that operated in accordance with section 106, Affordable housing, were mentioned. A Member expressed a concern regarding this due to some restrictions through the planning authorities, such as Parc Eryri. An observation was expressed that this system was disadvantageous to people who lived directly on the boundary outside of the park, and therefore the policy was not entirely comprehensive and could not operate effectively.

Grŵp Cynefin assured that they normally allocated houses through the Allocation Policy but acted immediately at times when the need arose through emergency circumstances or health and safety matters. It was explained that Grŵp Cynefin owned additional care housing, allocated through a joint allocation panel with Cyngor Gwynedd. It was confirmed that their intermediate rent properties had been allocated through the Tai Teg policy. Reference was made to Supported Housing that were managed by other agencies, such as the Homelessness Teams and partners such as GISDA, that were coordinated through specific procedures for those properties. It was asked why there were different procedures for these houses? In response, it was explained that there were different types of properties, where the allocation policy did not address the needs and properties of the dwelling, such as a house that was shared with individuals with profound needs. When talking about additional care, it was assured that the agencies worked very closely with social workers to arrange that houses were adapted appropriately and in accordance with the relevant care needs. It was explained that this was due to the nature of the plans, and the different need justified the difference in registrations. A concern was expressed regarding the different policies.

The fact that the various environments and exemptions all worked within the policy and were approved through the framework was reiterated.

It was asked what happened when an individual failed the rent affordability assessment. It was explained that this tended to happen when a single individual applied for a two-bedroom house, because that was currently the only property available in the area. It was explained that benefits were sometimes an option in a case like this, and various solutions were offered for the individual's benefit.

In response to an enquiry, it was assured that the housing associations informed the council if they objected to any nominations. It was assured that this was recorded in the housing management system.

3. Does your association have any new developments in the pipeline?

During the discussion, it was noted that the housing associations had a duty to the 2,000 individuals who needed social housing in Gwynedd and it was felt that their voices were often missing when arguments about housing were being heard. Consideration was given to the background of the need, referring to policies such as 'Right to Buy' and the lack of building social houses throughout the country. It was noted that the number of private housing developments in Gwynedd was also comparatively low and contributed to the volume of demand for housing in Gwynedd. It was highlighted that this drove the projects that were underway, and it was confirmed

that ADRA had developed over 400 social houses over the last five years, in Dwyfor, Arfon and Meirionnydd.

ADRA confirmed that they had new developments underway, and they were in the process of developing or purchasing properties back, currently over 120 properties. It was assured that the majority of these were social housing. It was noted that they were working with the Council on this, and that work by contractors Tyddyn Fletcher and Jewsons were about to be approved soon. It was noted that the Welsh Government supported the work and had given more funding to develop and buy houses over the next three years. It was assured that the Housing Associations continued to lobby and influence for more funding and maximising the need for loans and grant funding in Gwynedd.

The need to meet the demand for housing for older people in Gwynedd as the county's population aged was mentioned, and reference was made to the developments that were underway at Plas Penrhos, Plas Lleiod and Frondeg. It was assured that more of this type of property and sheltered housing was underway in the future and a prosperous programme was expected.

Grŵp Cynefin assured that they had just housed 14 families in the Nefyn area at Cysgod Lefain and were in the process of developing eight homes in Aberdaron (six social properties and two intermediate properties). It was hoped that these would be completed before Christmas.

It was assured that 15 homes were being developed in Trefor at Llys yr Eifl, which would include 4 two-bedroom bungalows, 4 two-bedroom houses, 5 three-bedroom houses, 1 four-bedroom house and 1 six-bedroom house. It was reported that they had just received planning permission for 20 new units in Chwilog, and that discussions were underway in terms of the schedule.

The Clwyd Alyn housing association confirmed that they were developing properties in the Penrhos area in Pwllheli, including 12 properties for older people, 30 flats and 49 homes as part of their plans. It was explained that developments were underway in the Llan Ffestiniog area.

It was acknowledged that there was not much developmental work currently underway by the North Wales housing association, and reference was made to a few houses they had in the Abersoch area.

It was asked whether developments were underway in terms of renovating homes instead of always building new ones? It was highlighted that the answer to this question would be later on in the session.

House Swaps

4. Does your housing association have data on the number of house exchanges in the last 3 years and the locations of the swaps? (Managed Moves/House Swaps).

It was noted that section 118 of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act allowed tenants to swap houses for the benefit of each other. It was explained that no landlord had a legal right to refuse this from happening, unless there were genuinely valid reasons to do so.

Discontent was expressed towards this process, and it was noted that many Gwynedd residents were frustrated with this. It was reiterated that this happened for valid reasons and for the benefit of all. It was assured that it worked and was advantageous to both sides and significantly improved their quality of life. Examples were given of valid reasons, including social reasons, work reasons, not enough space in the house for families or too much space. It was emphasised that the process suited both tenants and this was the purpose of the scheme.

Adra confirmed that there had been 15 cases of house swaps in Gwynedd to date in 2026. It was assured that 93% of these occurred within Gwynedd, with one case outside Gwynedd, but it was noted that this person had a previous connection to Gwynedd and it was therefore a valid swap. It was mentioned that there had been 42 cases of house swaps in 2025 and 54 in 2024.

Grŵp Cynefin confirmed that there had been 13 cases of house swaps in Gwynedd over the last three years. It was noted that five of these were house swaps amongst their tenants at Grŵp Cynefin, and the other eight with other social landlords, including four with Adra and one with North Wales Housing, and these were within Gwynedd. It was noted that there were two from other counties in Wales. An overview was given of the locations of the properties, including the Bala, Botwnnog, Caernarfon, Cricieth, Morfa Nefyn, Mynytho and Penygroes areas.

It was highlighted that the only property where a house swap could be refused was a property with a Condition 106 attached, where the planning permission stated that the resident must have a local connection.

It was asked whether it was possible to tighten the house swap process for the housing associations to be able to screen who can move houses and to which community to get a better control over the process to ensure that it was fair and transparent? In response to this, it was confirmed that the housing associations were able to check the cases to some extent and that a screening system was in place but the house swap process could not be refused unless there was a very valid reason - therefore it was acknowledged that implementing the member's suggestion would be legally difficult. It was noted that the number of anti-social behaviour cases because of house swaps was very low, therefore no significant problems arose as a result of the existing process.

5. How many people with a local connection have swapped a house to move back to live in Gwynedd?

It was confirmed that 111 families had completed the house swap process over the last three years, and that 100 of these already lived in Gwynedd. It was confirmed that six had moved back to the area who had a previous connection to Gwynedd. It was noted that five had moved from another area beyond Gwynedd. It was reiterated that the Landlords did not have the right to refuse this without a very valid reason and that the Renting Homes (Wales) Act highlighted this. It was noted that Adra had an Agreement Transfer Policy to ensure that these transfers were administered correctly and to respect the right of the tenants to do this when there were valid reasons for doing so.

There had been an extensive discussion on the matters as Members stated points of discontent and frustration with the process and the lack of houses available in Gwynedd for local people. The frustration was acknowledged, ensuring that the housing associations acted in accordance with the policies and within the appropriate procedures for the benefit of residents. Assurance was provided that only 3% of the allocation cases went through the house swap process and that most of the allocations went through the housing register.

Emphasis was placed on the need to ensure that houses were available to young families to ensure the thriving future of Gwynedd.

Tenant support and under occupation

6. How do you manage under occupation? Are property swaps as a result of under occupation, common?

It was noted that under occupation was managed through the main Housing Register in the first instance. It was noted that everyone who was eager to get a smaller house or a larger house registered on the housing register and followed the normal allocation procedure.

Reference was made to the Adra Under Occupation Policy, noting that this was for the most intense / most urgent cases through the house swaps. It was noted that there were approximately 20 cases annually because of under occupation.

It was hoped that the developments at the Frondeg, Plas Penrhos and Plas Lleiod sites would encourage people to move within their communities. It was emphasised that the personal element was also important to the housing associations, and that they were not eager to force anyone to move from their home. It was noted that the schemes would provide a supportive network to continue living in the area and the community, if they moved from their houses for additional care.

It was explained that the Renting Homes (Wales) Act sets out the legal reasons for enforcement, in exceptional situations such as a property with significant adaptations, significant under occupation or in cases of specific succession.

7. How many tenants have swapped properties as a result of under occupation in the past year?

It was admitted that this was a question that was difficult to answer directly. It was noted that the figure was a combination of the house swaps through the common housing register, the managed moves and the house swaps, therefore it was difficult to determine a figure for the entire county. It was assured that property swaps as a result of under occupation were being encouraged by the housing associations, to try to meet the housing demand.

Grŵp Cynefin was proud of the way that they tried to manage under occupation, stating that they had created the Right Home, Right Size Policy jointly with the tenants. It was noted that the policy noted the options and the support that was available for tenants with under occupation, including adding incentives for them.

It was noted that there were some cases of property swaps based on under occupation but there were other cases due to overcrowding of properties or growing families.

It was asked whether there were any financial implications for people who stayed in properties and were under occupation because they were eager to continue staying in the property? In response, it was assured that this would impact individuals who continued to be of a working age, but once the individuals reached pension age, this would not directly impact individuals. Attention was drawn to the increasing bills as a result of under occupation, and the implications for some individuals as they aged in a house that was too big for them.

It was asked whether it was possible to add a note in the tenancy agreement to encourage individuals to move to another house if circumstances changed. It was assured that the housing associations would not force anyone to move, but appropriate discussions would proceed to ensure that they provided the best provision to the community.

8. How many community officers does your housing association have to support tenants at grassroots level?

It was noted that the role of housing associations had changed significantly over the last decade. It was noted that officers faced broad and increasing challenges in the communities, including poverty, anti-social behaviour, loneliness and mental health issues. It was highlighted that public services had shrunk in communities due to extensive cuts and significant pressure on services. It was explained that the Housing Associations had to step up because of this.

It was noted that ADRA provided a broad range of progressive support to the communities through 70 officers working at grassroots level in communities. An overview was given of the different roles, stating the specific functions.

- Rent Officers - who collected the rent, maximised income and benefits and worked with partners such as DWP/CAB/community hubs.
- Community Wardens - who maintained the tenancy and the face and voice of ADRA in the communities. It was noted that these officers collaborated at a multi-agency level regularly.
- Area Officers - who dealt with anti-social behaviour, tenancy management cases, cases deriving from mental health issues. It was noted that they regularly worked with agencies such as the Police, Social Services and individuals returning home from prison. (probation).
- Community Housing Officers - it was noted that they supported people to maintain their tenancies. It was explained that they held various activities within the locations and prioritised serving individuals who were dealing with loneliness. It was assured that they worked closely with the third sector.
- Tenant Liaison Officers - it was noted that these officers organised major work on the estates.
- Community Team - it was highlighted that the priority of this team was the 'Voice of the Tenant' which prioritised community events and community financial funds.
- Allocation - it was highlighted that this team organised the allocation of houses and ensured that everyone had settled into their new properties. It was noted that this team worked closely with community wardens.

Grŵp Cynefin provided details of the working arrangements of their officers, stating that housing officers were responsible for approximately 330 households within their operational area. It was noted that there were six housing officers for general properties in Gwynedd, but some also managed properties in other counties. It was noted that Housing Team Leaders supported the officers, for example, when complex cases arose.

Further details were provided about the work of the officers, stating;

- There were two Housing Officers in sheltered properties
- There were two Housing Officers placed in the Additional Care schemes, as well as a Team Leader
- A Housing Officer was responsible for intermediate properties
- A Housing Officer was responsible for supported housing properties
- Officers worked on a Homelessness Prevention plan
- It was assured that Income Collection Officers and Financial Welfare Officers supported tenants
- That a Community Enterprises Team led on community activities across the operational area.

North Wales Housing and Clwyd Alyn assured the members that their staffing structure was very similar. It was noted that they had housing officers who were responsible for approximately 300 - 350 houses and income officers who were responsible for giving support to tenants. It was noted that carers working at grassroots level were often responsible for the condition of community houses. The way the associations had changed, and the increasing challenges that became prominent were mentioned.

The work of the officers was praised, and they were thanked for their work. The councillors were welcome to work with the officers and wardens.

Housing Quality and Maintenance Work

9. What is the quality of your houses in Gwynedd and what plans are in place to maintain and improve them?

Grŵp Cynefin explained that it had a 30-year investment plan for planned works, in line with Welsh Government expectations. It was noted that the programme is informed by information about the condition of the stock and prioritised work related to safety, compliance, property condition, value for money and tenant needs. It was confirmed that they were working to meet WHQS requirements and were working to improve the energy performance of homes, including targeting SAP 75 where practicable.

Adra reported that it had spent £66m of capital work in its housing stock in Gwynedd over the last 5 years. It was noted that local contractors and the Repair Team would carry out the work. It was ensured that 90% of the current housing stock met the requirements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard.

It was noted that £44m had been spent on revenue maintenance in the existing housing stock through the work of the Repair Team. It was noted that the work on the houses included roofing, doors, windows, EWI, insulation, kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, walkways and fencing. It was ensured that 80% of customers had been satisfied.

It was reported that they are focusing on the investment programme over the next 5 years, with a minimum of £91m of capital work programmed in the current housing stock in Gwynedd. It was noted that Adra had been in talks with the banks to extend loans. It was noted that this will focus on repairing kitchens and bathrooms and that local contractors had been contracted to complete the work. It was noted that Tŷ Gwyrddfai supported this agenda.

10. What is the process to submit a request for repair work?

This was ensured through a number of channels, including; telephone, application via website, email, ADRA officers such as community warden/ housing officers picking up a work card on behalf of the tenant. It was noted that developments were underway to create a portal for tenants, and that this was a priority for the future.

It was assured that emergency repairs outside normal working hours could be reported through the out of hours emergency repair service.

11. Is your property maintenance service available consistently throughout the county and does the waiting time for repairs vary throughout the county?

It was assured that the maintenance service was consistent across Gwynedd and North Wales. It was noted that the standard was consistent across the area, but it was admitted that waiting time for repairs could vary due to a number of reasons, including; availability of specialist contractors, specific materials, access arrangements (from both sides) and seasonal demand.

It was noted that a workforce of 130 repairmen and subcontractors mainly from the county completed the work. It was noted that a Tender Scheme existed to have local contractors on its register of contractors.

Grŵp Cynefin noted that it was monitoring performance across the county as one operational area. It was noted that the key performance indicators were regularly scrutinised to identify any patterns or issues affecting response times, including factors of geography, access and availability of contractors.

12. What is the average waiting time for a tenant awaiting repairs to be made to their house?

It was assured that ADRA completed 32,000 repair requests annually. It was confirmed that urgent works were usually completed within 24 hours, and that Adra had successfully completed over 99% of enquiries.

It was noted that maintenance work would usually be completed within a month, and that they worked on an average of 20 days.

Customer satisfaction levels were noted to be 80% and reflected the figures.

It was noted that the Repair Team had completed 32,000 maintenance/compliance requests in the last 12 months.

It was asked if there was any planning software in place to try to manage this work. It was assured that this was in place and that developments were underway to record the work programme. It was assured that the cases were properly prioritised as needed.

Members commented that residents had to wait over half an hour on the phone with the housing associations, and that this had been happening regularly over the last few months.

It was asked what priority was given to vulnerable people when arranging repairs that caused health and safety problems. It was assured that vulnerable individuals were prioritised in order to try to minimise health and safety risks. It was explained that this could depend on the nature of the repair work and the nature of the vulnerability. It was noted that the housing associations were trying to prioritise resources and work effectively for the benefit of the tenants. It was noted that emergencies were completed within 24 and that reducing the risk to individuals was a priority. It was assured that the housing associations shared the work programme of the repair schedule with the

tenants in order to promote a good relationship between the housing associations and the tenants.

13. What kinds of things usually lead to delays before commencing repairs?

It was acknowledged that it had been a challenging time recently and that the number of officers in the team had increased in order to try to cope with the demand. An overview of the factors that could usually cause delays was given, including;

- The need for specialist work and specialist contractors, specialist materials.
- Effects of the weather
- The need for a survey before starting the work and then arranging it.
- Access issues.
- Lack of information or an accurate description of the work at the time the request was raised
- Situations where the property needed to be cleaned or made safe before a workforce or contractor could attend.

14. Many tenants received digital vouchers for paying for painting after electrical work or repairs but some were struggling to use them due to a lack of internet access. Is it possible to supply vouchers to these people?

It was confirmed that Adra was in the process of introducing a new voucher scheme with Huws Gray. It was noted that vouchers were currently available through Dulux, but it was acknowledged that this did not work for everyone due to the location of the local branches.

It was assured that Adra painted all empty properties and that this included over 600 homes annually in North Wales.

They assured that they were trying to arrange reasonable alternatives where a tenant was having difficulty using digital vouchers, to ensure that a lack of digital access was not a barrier for individuals to receive support. It was noted that this could include support from staff, a direct arrangement or a suitable alternative option depending on the circumstances.

15. How many accessible houses do the housing associations have?

It was reported that Grŵp Cynefin had 239 Extra Care flats (70 in Gwynedd) and 253 bungalows across its General Housing and Sheltered Housing stock. It was noted that data regarding modifications or ground floor properties was not recorded in the asset management system. In response to an enquiry, it was assured that they were developing the database with the details to be able to easily report on them in the future. It was assured that modifications were considered dependent on the needs of the tenants and that was subject to change on a daily basis.

It was noted that Adra had 499 care homes, which had wardens, and 989 designated houses, such as apartments with access and lift. The specialist accessible properties

available were detailed, noting that 90 homes were wheelchair accessible, 11 houses were built with specialist features and 421 new homes were built through the Lifetime Home scheme. It was assured that many kitchens and bathrooms had been adapted, that stairlifts had been added and bungalows that had specific modifications had also been added.

16. Do you receive a number of requests to make modifications in order to make houses accessible?

It was noted that Grŵp Cynefin completed modifications to its stock within Gwynedd annually to make housing accessible. It was reported that they had completed 44 requests in the year 2025-26 and there had been expenditure of around £186k in Gwynedd alone.

Adra noted that it received an annual modifications budget of £900k (including elements of external grant). It was noted that 450 minor modifications had been carried out and 130 moderate modifications had been carried out. It was noted that the Adra modifications panel was made up of Gwynedd Council Occupational Therapists and that they met on a monthly basis to agree the priorities. An overview of the requests was given, noting accessible showers, ramps, and stairlifts. It was noted that they were trying to make the best use of the existing housing. It was noted that they would continue to lobby nationally for more money to complete adaptations and that the need for this continued to increase.

It was asked what plans the associations had to decarbonise the housing stock and what measurable plans were in place to monitor this. In response, it was assured that they were working within the Welsh Government framework and that they were working to ensure that the properties would reach EPC C by 2030. It was highlighted that much of this work was dependent on the budget, which caused challenges in completing the work. It was noted that additional funding was needed to try to realise decarbonisation objectives in a timely manner.

Empty Homes and Buying Houses

17. How many empty houses does your housing association currently have?

Adra confirmed that there were currently 120 vacant properties. It was noted that this figure remained fairly constant as around 1.5% of the stock was vacant at any one time in Gwynedd. This is encouraged in some cases in order to create opportunities within the housing system e.g. to carry out maintenance.

Grŵp Cynefin reported that there were around 40 vacant properties at any one time across the 7 counties, and that the number could change constantly as properties were re-let or as new properties became vacant.

North Wales Housing reported that 9 properties were currently vacant, which was helpful for the re-letting process.

Clwyd Alyn noted that they did not currently have any vacant properties.

18. What is your usual timetable for bringing an empty house back into use?

Background information was provided in terms of age and profile of local authority housing noting that the stock was usually old and therefore there was more spending on them (Adra and Cartrefi Conwy in North Wales). It was noted that the average tenancy was over 12 years, so spending was needed to ensure sustainable tenancies.

It was assured that the standard of Adra empty houses was high. It was noted that capital works were being carried out during the period the houses were vacant if required, including a new kitchen, a new bathroom, rewiring and carpeting of all vacant properties. It was assured that they made sure to paint all vacant properties as well. It was noted that every property averaged £13k of expenditure when it became vacant. It was noted that this meant spending £20k+ on several properties to ensure quality housing, and customer satisfaction levels were confirmed to be extremely high. It was believed that this sustained tenancies that were sustainable.

It was confirmed that an average of 100 days was the usual timetable for Adra to bring an empty house back into use. It was acknowledged that this was a long time, but for legitimate reasons in order to sustain tenants. It was highlighted that tenants did not want to have work completed at their property once they moved in. It was noted that the timeline depended on the condition of the property, compliance work, availability of materials and contractors.

Grŵp Cynefin noted that the normal timetable was an average of 60 days and that reducing this was a priority for the association.

North Wales Housing reported that the average was 69 days, and that they were also trying to complete any appropriate decarbonisation works possible during this timeframe in order to minimise the impact on the tenants after they moved in.

It was noted that Clwyd Alyn's timetable was 33 days.

19. Have houses been disposed of during the last year?

It was noted that houses were not often disposed of due to property shortages and housing demand, but it was highlighted that this sometimes happened if there was a valid reason to do so, such as if it was not possible to reach EPC C level. Adra noted that no houses had been disposed of in 2026 and 1 house had been disposed of in 2025. It was confirmed that 3 properties were currently on the market. It was reinforced that disposal would be the last step for any housing association, and the money from any property that had been disposed of would go directly towards the construction of a new house.

Grŵp Cynefin confirmed that one had been disposed of in the last year and that 2 were presently on the market. North Wales Housing and Clwyd Alyn reported that they had not disposed of any properties.

20. Have you bought former Council houses in the last 3 years, and are there plans to buy more?

Adra confirmed that they had bought back 12 properties over the last 3 years. It was noted that the TACP grant enabled this and the local authority would prioritise how the money was spent. It was noted that the Council itself had bought back some houses. Adra noted that they had also bought back around 15 leased properties, over the past decade. It was confirmed that there were now only 50 lease properties left across the county. It was assured that the main priority to deal with the homelessness crisis was the construction of new housing. It was noted that it can be challenging to purchase old Council houses due to the requirements for them to reach EPC C.

Grŵp Cynefin, North Wales Housing and Clwyd Alyn reported that they had not purchased anything in the last 3 years.

Communication and complaints

21. Councillors receive a number of complaints from residents that there is an inconsistency in responding to complaints. Can you present data regarding the complaints of residents including the type of complaints, e.g. the house condition, repair work, emergency work received, from which area and a response time-schedule?

Adra noted that they received about 90,000 calls annually from customers, explaining that it was inevitable that a percentage of these turned into complaints due to the volume of demand.

An overview of the complaints received was given;

- When the housing associations had not done something (maintenance mostly due to the nature of the work).
- When they had not followed a policy or guideline.
- Quality of work or response.

The complaints were further detailed stating the figures;

Repair Complaints: 94 (out of 32,000 work requests).

Audit Complaints: 60 (out of 3,000 audits).

Bro Complaints: 25 (114 cases monthly).

New Building Complaints: 16 (180 new homes last year).

Other: 27

An overview of the number of complaints received was given by area, stating;

Bangor: 34 (1300 houses). 14%

Caernarfon 26 (1,100 houses). 10%

Dolgellau 13 (160 houses). 5%

Pwllheli 9 (400 houses). 4%

Tywyn 6 (160 houses). 3%.

It was reported that 250 official complaints had been received in line with their Formal Complaints Policy in 2025-26. These were acknowledged within 5 working days and were responded to and dealt with within 10 working days. It was noted that a Member of the Senior Management Team dealt with the case if the tenant was not happy with the response, noting that around 17% of complaints reached this stage. It was confirmed that the ombudsman would then deal with the case if the tenant was still unhappy with the solution. It was noted that 26 complaints had reached the ombudsman (Adra) and 21 complaints had not been investigated because they had not followed Adra's complaints procedure. In 5 cases Adra's original decision had been upheld.

Grŵp Cynefin noted that complaints were handled by the Manager of the department, with the response assessed by the Senior Complaints Officer before being shared. Information on the complaints in the first quarter of this year was provided by Grŵp Cynefin, noting that there had been 11 complaints from tenants in Gwynedd and that a decision stated that there were grounds for 5 complaints but not the other 6. It was noted that complaints had arisen in relation to renovations, neighbourhoods, landscaping services and rent collection. It was noted that communication was a constant theme within the complaints and the need to provide updates on services and timetables was recognised. The plan to work on mapping the journey of Grŵp Cynefin's customers was detailed, which included creating standards of service in conjunction with tenants.

It was noted that they acknowledged receipt of complaints within 5 working days, investigated and responded to them within 10 working days.

North Wales Housing and Clwyd Alyn detailed their processes, referring to the two-stage complaints systems. It was explained that the processes were quite similar for all housing associations. It was explained that they scrutinised the complaints data in order to try to identify any ongoing problems in relevant areas, any themes and ultimately to improve the delivery of the service.

22. Councillors receive concerns about anti-social behaviour in some housing estates. Have you, as a housing association, noticed a recent increase in anti-social behaviour?

It was assured that over 90% of Adra tenants saw their home as a safe place to live, and that over 85% were happy with the neighbourhood. It was noted that these figures were high compared to the rest of Wales. It was reiterated that residents lived happily in our communities and were fortunate to live in a place where community spirit remained strong in many of our communities.

It was recognised that anti-social behaviour existed in areas which were noted to have increased somewhat due to the increase in the housing stock. It was noted that the number of interventions taking place by community officers had increased and the types of anti-social behaviour that had been observed were detailed, including threats, noise nuisance, the condition of property and drugs. It was noted that there had been an increase in the presence of the local officers on the ground to try to deal with this. It was recognised that this posed challenges for the future. It was noted that the

housing associations worked closely with partners such as Social Services, Police, Probation Service and Gisda, to maintain their tenancies and resolve any disputes.

Consideration had been given to what was happening with the release of tenants who had earlier committed crimes from prison back to communities including Gwynedd. The Homelessness and Lettings Wales Act (2026) which had not yet come into force, was referred to, but it would mean that housing associations would tackle homelessness sooner, and in some cases this could cause further challenges in our communities.

It was noted that the numbers of more intense cases had increased, such as assaults or violent incidents within families. It was reiterated that this had created major challenges for housing associations and multi-agency agencies. It was noted that they sought to promote good relationships between tenants to assist in creating a happy, peaceful and healthy and thriving community. It was noted that they were trying to deal with cases promptly and trying to promote preventive work.

There was a discussion about the interventions regarding anti-social causes and councillors were encouraged to contact the housing associations regularly in order to try to resolve problems promptly. The need for communication was emphasised and any further discussions with Councillors were welcomed. The housing associations were urged to tackle the discontent from the public and try to better screen individuals in order to try to ensure less anti-social behaviour.

23. What are the arrangements for dealing with queries from councillors when a designated contact officer is on leave?

It was confirmed that Adra had a dedicated member of staff who dealt with councillors' queries in order to ensure a consistent and timely response across the organisation. It was noted that arrangements were in place if the member of staff was on leave (short or extended). It was noted that the officers providing this service provided a great service and positive feedback would often be received from councillors.

Reference was made to the work done by attending the Area Forums and that this was a good way to provide details to councillors and update councillors on specific housing issues by area. They stressed that they were happy to attend again if further information was required. It was agreed that it would be advantageous to do this in the future to discuss things such as new developments/allocations policy/how we deal with anti-social behaviour.

24. When a tenant moves into residential care or becomes a long-term hospital patient, what process and timescales are used to assess the likelihood that they will return to their social housing tenancy, and how long are properties typically left unoccupied before a decision is made on their future use?

It was confirmed that each tenant's occupancy agreement included a clause requiring the tenant to notify Adra if the property was vacant for 28 days or more. It was noted that they assessed every case individually following this in a sensitive and compassionate manner. It was noted that the main consideration was whether the

tenant had a realistic intention to return. It was noted that housing benefit (pension) could be paid for 12 months; and Universal credit (up to 6 months) where there was an intention to return to the property. It was ensured that officers kept in touch with the tenant or representative and worked with the Family/Social Services/BCUHB to assess the individuals' needs before making any final decision.

It was explained that if they moved into residential care, they were expected to give 4 weeks' notice. It was noted that the association took possession of properties in certain circumstances such as if the rent payment had expired, if there was no intention to return on the basis of failure to occupy as a primary home and rent arrears. Everyone was assured that they handled every situation individually, sensitively and fairly.

The associations were praised for their work and thanked for their time in answering the questions.

DECISION

- 1. To note the answers provided by the Housing Associations and thank them for their willingness to answer the questions.**
- 2. To receive written answers in advance from the Housing Associations in the future and to ask supplementary questions during the scrutiny session.**

6. NORTH WALES POPULATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2027

The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being. It was noted that this work was a significant part of the regional work that was underway via the Regional Partnership Board, with six local authorities and the health board working together on this. It was noted that the assessment provided an evidence base, to be used for the planning of health, care and well-being services across north Wales over the coming years. It was noted that it was a statutory document, required to be carried out under the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014. It was noted that the assessment highlighted future challenges, which were escalated in the Llechen Lân document and referred to the ageing population and the increasing demand for care. Reference was also made to the increase in mental health conditions, neurodiverse conditions, increased pressure on unpaid carers and an increase in homelessness. It was noted that the assessment was based on work and data over the last five years and assessed the care and support needs of priority groups in the population which include children and young people, people with physical and learning disabilities, mental health, neurodivergence and carers in need of support. It was noted that it provided an evidence base to support organisations and services across the area as well as strategic planning cycles. All were reminded that the document before the Committee was a draft assessment, and members' input would be required, as part of the consultation process to stimulate any further amendments, before submitting a final version to the Government by the end of April.

The Commissioning, Contracts and Projects Manager elaborated on the assessment, noting that this was the third Population Needs Assessment, which built on work that had been developed because of the previous assessments. It was explained that the regional dementia strategy and disability strategy derived from the previous

assessments and fed into the current work. It was noted that the population needs assessment contributed to the Council's strategic planning cycles and supported the corporate priorities of all councils relating to the health and social care needs of the population.

There was an opportunity for Members to ask questions and comment;

It was asked what kind of work had been done to ensure that there were no differences in service provision between urban and rural areas and that the support provided was consistent across the areas? Attention was drawn to the importance of consistency in provision for all the county's residents. It was recognised that a weakness in the assessment was the lack of a specific overview of the provision available across different areas of the county. Reference was made to specific data from the regional board in the report which contained a little information about the different areas within the county. It was trusted that more work could be done on this and they would re-visit this.

In recognising that there were differences between the needs of different counties, a member asked how could we find out what were the specific needs of Gwynedd? It was asked how the provision could be tailored to the specific demand and needs in each area to ensure that the areas received a specific service to target demand?

It was noted that work was taking place on various areas, and it was confirmed that a piece of work was just underway with the housing department to target adult accommodation needs in Gwynedd. It was ensured that the needs assessment was used to make funding decisions and to prioritise plans as needed. It was noted that the assessment provided an evidence base for the decisions and supported the need to satisfy needs by making use of the funding and grants. It was ensured that it was possible to refer to the assessment that would be used purposefully across various departments as a basis for decisions.

In response to an enquiry, assurance was given that the assessment was based on the care and support to meet the needs of the population. It was noted that health needs were not an integral part of this, although the Health Board had been involved in the work. It was highlighted that the needs of residential care, accommodation and support in the community were covered in this assessment, and it was suggested that this should be highlighted further in the assessment title to ensure that it was clearer.

In reference to the section that provided information about mental health needs, it was asked whether there was any consideration given to drug use included in this? It was emphasised that drugs were causing increasing problems in local communities and that this needed to be addressed to be able to avoid further problems and needs because of drug misuse. It was asked whether it was possible to increase the support and provision available to people living in the community with experience of substance misuse. It was confirmed that this would be touched upon in the assessment, but it was possible to add more specifically on this in the assessment. A member suggested that investment should be made in informing children about the danger of drug misuse as part of the preventive work to try and prevent issues arising in the future.

With reference to the support schemes in place, it was recognised that these did not reach all individuals in need who needed the provision. The fact that many people

relied on unpaid carers had been recognised, with the pressure on unpaid carers increasing. It was considered how support could be provided to unpaid carers to facilitate them to provide care to their neighbours without increasing stress and pressure. The important work and contribution of unpaid carers to the community was recognised. It was explained that work was underway across departments and the third sector to evaluate the support available to carers. It was explained that this support was often dependent on grants and that departments were trying to plan ahead on how to deliver a specific service for the benefit of unpaid carers of all ages going forward. It was recognised that more needed to be done and that a plan was in place to increase provision.

A Member expressed that he did not feel that there was a great deal of new information in the needs assessment that had not been produced before. It was felt that the assessment reflected the challenges already identified in reports such as Llechen Lân. It was asked whether there were any specific new findings or considerations highlighted in the assessment? In response, it was recognised that many of the needs identified were similar to the challenges already raised by previous work, due to the nature of the assessment and the population needs in society. There was concern that the situation was worse than anticipated and was getting worse sooner due to a lack of provision to cope with the increased demand for services.

It was reported that the population was ageing and that problems were increasing, for a variety of reasons. Growth was envisaged in the older population, and the demand for services would increase. Reference was made to a British report when explaining that there was an increase in demand for a service to support individuals with emerging mental health conditions, as well as people with neurodiversity needs.

A Member asked how much collaboration had taken place with the Education Department as part of the population needs assessment. Frustration was expressed that many children did not have access to education, and it was noted that more needed to be done to ensure that children received the right education.

The support available to parents who were carers of children with additional learning needs or mental health conditions was considered. It was noted that they often pleaded for help and they really needed more support. The need for the Council to provide better support to parents and to pay more attention to this was emphasised.

A Member asked what the Council's definition of learning disability was, and dissatisfaction was expressed that it was not comprehensive enough. The comments were acknowledged.

Concern and discontent were expressed with the care and health provision across the county, noting that residents were struggling to see a GP and to get an ambulance promptly. Emphasis was placed on the importance of preventive work and maintaining a healthy and fit life and the efforts made by Byw'n Iach to run activities for people of all ages who benefitted from the sessions were praised.

A suggestion was expressed that the figure should be changed considering the definition of 'older people' from the age of 65 to 68, to match the state pension age.

Reference was made to the financial challenges to care and support work, and the ongoing challenges in attracting workers to jobs in the care sector. It was explained that it was a priority to try and attract people to stay in Gwynedd and to promote careers in the sector, noting that proactive work was proceeding via the Care Academy in Gwynedd. It was confirmed that a great deal of work was underway to try and attract families to stay in Gwynedd, to add to the care provision.

When discussing the palliative care available in Gwynedd, the nurses who provided the care were praised, but it was noted that there was not enough provision available to meet the demand across the county. More work on the end-of-life care was welcomed in the assessment, to identify people's end-of-life needs. The frustration was acknowledged and the comments were accepted. Members were reminded that the population needs assessment was a report that reflected the situation and did not offer all the answers. It was assured that plans would be underway to address the priorities outlined in the report. It was noted that the report would be submitted to the Welsh Government in April 2027 and there would be a period of five years to implement the priorities. It was assured that the Council continued to lobby the Government for more funding, but it was acknowledged that the financial position limited the work that could successfully proceed.

Reference was made to the figure in the report which stated that 70% of people who committed suicide in Gwynedd were not known to the mental health services. Concern was expressed about this stating that addressing this should be prioritised as part of the preventive work. The Cabinet was congratulated on passing the recent Suicide Prevention Strategy and it was hoped that there would be a reference to this added in the report.

It was noted that the Housing Department and the Education Department should collaborate on this assessment and use the information outlined to support their strategies and plans. It was agreed that the assessment reflected the problems in an accessible manner, and the assessment should be seen to be integrated to influence the policies in place across the Council's departments. Dissatisfaction was expressed that schools across the county were closing and the importance of children for the county's future was emphasised. It was recognised that this was a key part of preventive work, and assurance was given that work was progressing for future investment. The need to look at the care needs assessment in its entirety was emphasised to try to promote cross-departmental provision.

7. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES' DEPARTMENT AND THE ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPARTMENT'S COMPLAINTS, ENQUIRIES AND EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE PROCEDURE FOR 2025-26.

The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families. It was noted that it was a statutory, annual report, in accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure Regulations and the Comments Procedure Regulations. The importance of this report was emphasised in communicating how the Council investigates and dealt with complaints within the Children and Supporting Families and Adults, Health and

Well-being Departments. It was assured that the Council took complaints and queries seriously and acted on them effectively. It was reported that the department had fostered an open culture in welcoming feedback or complaints, that the departments were learning from this and were able to resolve the complaints and problems at local levels, before cases increased. It was acknowledged that challenges remained in terms of capacity and the increased demand on the services, but it was trusted that the complaints level and the lack of investigations by the Ombudsman reflected the fact that both departments were proactive and responsive to complaints and queries immediately and that continuous improvement was a priority.

An overview of the responsive staff structure was given in terms of the Departments' Comments and Complaints procedures, noting that the departments' Customer Care officers were under the management of the Assistant Heads of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. Information was provided on the number of complaints received by the departments during the year, and the reasons for them along with solutions.

Members were given the opportunity to comment and ask questions;

The praise contained in this report was commended and staff were thanked for their work in dealing with complaints in such a difficult and sensitive area. All the staff of these departments were thanked, acknowledging that the recent period had not been an easy one to work in the department. The carers in the care homes and residential homes were praised, and pride was expressed in the number of thanks featured in the report. They were proud that a great deal of the care was done through the medium of Welsh, which was encouraging to see.

Referring to the number of informal enquiries and complaints, it was acknowledged that many of these were resolved immediately without people having to proceed with a formal complaint. It was asked if there was a record of these kept as good practice to identify themes should they arise? It was confirmed that the statutory arrangements sought to encourage departments to deal with complaints and informal enquiries over the telephone to try and reduce the workload and ensure that complaints were resolved promptly and efficiently. However, it was confirmed that informal enquiries were being recorded to try and identify any patterns that arose. It was noted that officers then report on this quarterly to each department, and this was discussed regularly at Management Team meetings to see if any issues arose. Committee Members expressed a desire to see the informal complaints that were recorded to get a taste of what arose and understand any patterns that also arose.

With reference to the appendix containing examples of complaints, it was asked how the department interpreted the lessons to be learnt from the complaints, and why some specific cases had been identified without a lesson to be learnt? It was asked how the department looked beyond the individual case identified and considered any system changes? It was confirmed that this was being noted as there was nothing specific to state or perhaps nothing concrete to put in place because of the complaint that had arisen. It was ensured that everyone received feedback on the complaint that arose, and that efforts were being made to ensure that no such complaint arose again. It was ensured that the service sought to work with service users to avoid escalating complaints and to continually improve services.

It was asked, how confident was the department that residents were happy with the service provision and that the services meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd? It was asked how confident was the department that the low number of complaints was a fair reflection of the situation, rather than residents not being aware of the correct processes of how to raise a complaint? It was admitted that this was a difficult question to answer due to its nature, because it was not possible to fully understand the reason for the low number of complaints. It was expressed that it was encouraging that, on the one hand, there are not many complaints coming to light, but it was recognised that challenges and barriers remained and it was not possible to confirm that every resident was always happy with the care provided by the Council. It was ensured that the departments continued to promote the complaints and enquiries process and encouraged residents to voice their views and collaborate with the department to improve provision. A Member expressed that there was room for Councillors to empower residents to contact the department and raise a complaint and to give thanks where appropriate, to get a better idea of the services provided by the Council.

It was asked how often a complaint, or series of complaints, about a particular provider or service lead to wider action, such as an additional review or monitoring, rather than being considered as an individual complaint. It was recognised that complaints were made by individuals about their own personal experience, and their dissatisfaction with the service that had been provided. It was confirmed that the communications officer was working very closely with the department and would draw the attention of wider services if it was suitable to do so. It was ensured that any safeguarding issues were referred to the designated Officers and the Monitoring Officer and would result in the department opening a safeguarding issue regarding the particular provision. It was noted that patterns and themes were being monitored and fed into this, as officers identified cases where care provision had failed. It was assured that an investigation would be carried out, and the case would be duly escalated. Improvements would be considered together with the individual complaint.

There was a discussion about the recommendations from the Social Services Complaints Task and Finish Group.

With reference to recommendation (a) it was asked whether the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being corresponded with the Welsh Government to express concern that complaint handling guidance had not been updated since 2014. It was accepted that work had commenced on this by Customer Care Officers through the All-Wales Complaints Officers' Group and this was welcomed. However, a desire was expressed for the Cabinet Members to send a letter the Government in line with the original recommendation to maximise the voice of the Committee Members. The Cabinet Members gave assurance that they would write a letter to the Government escalating the issue and requesting an update.

A Member expressed frustration at the content of the report with reference to recommendation 15.8(d). It was noted that the answer did not address the need for carers to make complaints on behalf of service users, and that more attention was needed to address this. The comment was accepted and it was assured that the departments would reconsider the point and come back to the Councillor.

A Member expressed concern about the lack of capacity within the role of the Customer Care Officer, Children and Family Support Department, and that the significant number of bulky information requests received meant that it had not been possible to add anything new to the work plan. It was asked how the work pressure could be reduced and if another customer care post could be funded as a means of increasing capacity to deal with this? It was reported that consideration would be given to this.

DECISION

- 1. To accept and note the report, noting the wish to have the relevant Cabinet Member act on the recommendations received in the Complaints Task and Finish Group and to provide an update to the committee.**
- 2. To ask Cabinet Members to consider whether additional resources could be made available to reduce the workload of customer care officers.**

8. PERFORMANCE CHALLENGE MEETINGS

There was a discussion regarding the nomination of two representatives from the Care Scrutiny Committee to attend internal meetings challenging the Council's performance in the field of Housing and Property, in line with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Forum. It was noted that the performance challenge meetings took place four times a year, and committee members would be expected to attend the meeting, listen to the discussion and report back to committee members.

DECISION

It was decided to nominate the following two delegates to attend housing and property performance challenge meetings.

- 1. Councillor Geraint Wyn Parry**
- 2. Councillor Jina Gwyrfai**

Meeting:	Care Scrutiny Committee
Date:	5 November 2026
Title:	Update on the Progress of the Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Nia Jeffreys – Council Leader
Contact Officer:	Dafydd Gibbard - Chief Executive
Reason for Scrutiny:	The item has been included on the scrutiny work programme following the committees' previous consideration in January 2026 and as part of the need to scrutinise the progress of the Response Plan.

1. Why it needs scrutiny

- 1.1. *Our Bravery Brought Justice* (Child Practice Review Report by North Wales Safeguarding Board) was published on 4 November, 2025.
- 1.2. Prior to that, the Council had adopted its original Response Plan in January 2025 and following the publication of *Our Bravery Brought Justice* a revamped Response Plan was submitted to the Response Board on 8 December, the Care Scrutiny Committee on 13 January 2026, the Governance and Audit Committee on 15 January 2026, the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2026 and the Full Council on 5 February.
- 1.3. Following input from the above Committees the Cabinet adopted the final Plan, on 10 March 2026.
- 1.4. This report is presented to provide an update on the progress of the Response Plan. It is recognised that delivering the Response Plan involves more than completing individual tasks. Further work continues on more long-term matters related to culture change, measuring impact and embedding improvements sustainably. In any programme of significant change such as this, elements such as embedding culture are ones that will need to continue for a significant period of time and will need to be continually revisited over the coming years.
- 1.5. The report also sets out the actions taken in response to members' comments and recommendations during the forward scrutiny, provides an overview of progress made across the work-streams and outlines the next steps.

- 1.6. The purpose of the scrutiny is to enable members to consider and challenge the progress made, how the work has been influenced by the committees' previous comments and recommendations, and what the arrangements are to continue to ensure progress.

2. What exactly needs scrutiny?

2.1. The Committee is asked to:

- a) Note and scrutinise the progress made in delivering the Response Plan.
- b) Consider the response to the comments and recommendations submitted by the Scrutiny Committees in January 2026.
- c) Offer any further comments on the work that is underway.
- ch) Note the suggestion regarding the future scrutiny arrangements of the Response Plan.

3. Progress update

- 3.1. Since the publication of the *Our Bravery Brought Justice* report in November last year, significant progress has been made across all themes of the Response Plan's work programme.
- 3.2. Following the publication of the report the Council stated clearly that we would implement the recommendations in full.
- 3.3. *Our Bravery Brought Justice* made 27 specific recommendations and placed the responsibility for taking action on various local and national organisations. The report emphasised not only the need to improve arrangements locally, but also the need to learn the lessons and improve nationally if we are to give the best chance of preventing such horrific crimes in the future. The recommendations and the responsibility for taking action can be summarised as follows:

Recommendation for whom?	Number
Cyngor Gwynedd	1
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	1
Regional Safeguarding Board / Regulators	4
All Organisations / Local Authorities	8
Welsh Government	13

- 3.4. Although there was only one recommendation specifically for Cyngor Gwynedd, we stated clearly that we would act on all possible recommendations. Whilst it was not possible for us to act on a recommendation to the Health Board (1), we were able, and indeed needed, to ensure that we were ahead in terms of the recommendations that had been designated for "All Local Authorities" and also to try to do everything within our power to deliver the Regional and National recommendations, whilst accepting that we would not be able to fully deliver these until other organisations had carried out their work.
- 3.5. In addition to this, it was also made clear that our Response Plan would go further than the specific recommendations set out in Our Bravery Brought Justice. We went through the body of the report with a fine comb identifying every opportunity for us to learn, thereby strengthening our arrangements and the safeguarding culture. We had also commissioned a number of independent investigations and specific recommendations had stemmed from these and it was therefore important that they were included in our Response Plan.
- 3.6. Therefore, the Response Plan consists of a total of 55 work-streams, and these can be summarised as follows:

WORK-STREAMS	QUANTITY
OBBJ Recommendations (to Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	9
OBBJ Recommendations (National/Regional)	17
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	29

- 3.7. In order to carry out this enormous work, a detailed work programme was developed consisting of over 200 individual actions and tasks. It was agreed to give the highest possible priority to delivering the work. A Theme Leader was identified to correspond to each theme within Our Bravery Brought Justice and in setting a budget for 2026/27 the Council decided to invest an additional £600,000 of revenue budget into areas of work related to Safeguarding. In due course other Authorities will need to invest similar amounts, if they are to incorporate everything that was in Our Bravery Brought Justice into their working arrangements.
- 3.8. One year later the delivery and progress across all work-streams in the Response Plan can be summarised as follows:

WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Incorporated permanently (in Gwynedd)	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	9	8	1	0
OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	17	9	1	7
TOTAL OBBJ RECOMMENDATIONS	26	17	2	7
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	29	26	2	1
TOTAL OF ALL RESPONSE BOARD WORK-STREAMS	55	43	4	8

- 3.9. As can be seen from the table, 43 out of all 55 work-streams have now been delivered and/or incorporated as ongoing arrangements and activities within the Council's services.
- 3.10. 8 out of the 9 Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations that had been designated to Cyngor Gwynedd (or all Councils) have been delivered with the remaining one in the pipeline and scheduled for completion before Christmas.
- 3.11. 9 of the 17 Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations designated to Regional and National organisations have been delivered in Gwynedd. 3 of these have been delivered by those organisations, with the other 6 delivered by the Council itself. The remaining 8 recommendations are dependent on factors beyond the direct control of the Council, as they are regional and/or national matters that are dependent on implementation by those organisations.
- 3.12. A further 4 work-streams are underway and nearing completion, with the timetable to complete these before Christmas.

- 3.13. We will therefore have completed all work-streams that are within our control as a Council by the end of 2026.
- 3.14. In addition, the vast majority of recommendations received from the scrutiny committees, the Governance and Audit Committee and the full Council have now been fully implemented, with 28 of the 30 completed. The remaining two recommendations are in the pipeline, with the progress and impact of which detailed in part 5 of this report.
- 3.15. It is recognised that delivering the Response Plan involves more than completing individual tasks. Further work continues on more long-term matters related to culture change, measuring impact and embedding improvements sustainably. In any programme of significant change such as this, elements such as embedding culture are ones that will need to continue for a significant period of time and will need to be continually revisited over the coming years. This is detailed in part 6 of this report.
- 3.16. The Response Board has monitored progress across each of the work themes and has established thematic reporting arrangements to enable detailed attention to progress, risks, actions and measuring impact. These arrangements have matured further since the last reporting period and provide greater certainty about the delivery of the work programme. This, and the work of the Ministerial Assurance board, is detailed in part 7 of this report.
- 3.17. In response to feedback and requests from the Scrutiny Committees and others, this year further progress has been made in strengthening transparency and accountability by publishing the Response Board papers on the Council's website and developing more accessible materials. This includes a version of the Response Plan for children and families, along with infographics, to make key information easier to understand to a wider audience. (See **Appendices 3, 4 and 5**)
- 3.18. Members will be aware of the commitment to commission further investigations into certain areas. These were commissioned by Cabinet on 19 May 2026 and a copy of that report can be seen at **appendix 7**. All of these have been commissioned and have followed/are following the timetable agreed at the time.

4. What has been achieved per Response Plan theme?

- 4.1. The Our Bravery Brought Justice report was divided into 6 Themes, and as set out in 3.7 above, the Council identified an individual Theme Leader to accompany each of these Themes and lead on the delivery of all the resulting work-streams.

4.2. The Themes, and the Theme Leaders, are as follows:

Theme	Leader
Theme 1: Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims	Gwern ap Rhisiart, Head of Education
Theme 2: Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children	Sharron Williams Carter, Head of Children and Supporting Families Department
Theme 3: Training and Policies	Ian Jones, Head of Corporate Services
Theme 4: School Governance	Alison Halliday, Assistant Head of School Support
Theme 5: Restrictive Practices	Llion Williams, Safeguarding and Well-being Quality Leader
Theme 6: Crisis Planning and Crisis Response	Catrin Love, Assistant Head of Corporate Services

4.3. To provide more detail on the progress made, please see below a summary of the main developments under each of the themes of the Response Plan.

4.4. Theme 1 – The Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims

THEME 1 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	6	6	-	-
OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	1	-	-	1
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	2	2	-	-
TOTAL	9	8	-	1

4.4.1. All recommendations under Theme 1 that are within the Council's control have now been completed or incorporated into ongoing arrangements that are established and operational.

4.4.2. Key developments include:

- Developing the Voice of the Child Strategy from an early draft to a comprehensive strategy with four specific appendices. It will be submitted to Cabinet in October to be formalised.
- Extensive consultation and engagement with the Youth Forum throughout the period.
- Ensuring that all schools now have access to an electronic system to record concerns and changes in behaviour.
- Creating a work programme for trauma-informed and compassionate training, and children's rights training for the workforce.
- Continuing to support victims through regular engagement, ISVA support and interventions tailored to the needs of individuals and families. This is an ongoing area of work that provides long-term support.
- Ensuring that all children named as part of a referral have the opportunity to have a conversation with a social worker so that their voice can be heard.

4.4.3. The only remaining recommendation* under this theme is one that depends on national curriculum changes by the Welsh Government, and is therefore outside the Council's direct control.

**Recommendation 8 OBBJ: That the Welsh Government develop the curriculum to ensure pupils have the knowledge to understand grooming behaviour by adults and know how to report this safely to an adult*

We cannot act until the national curriculum has been adapted

4.5. Theme 2 - Managing Allegations and Concerns About Adults Working with Children

THEME 2 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	1	1	-	-

OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	6	4	-	2
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	8	7	-	1
TOTAL	15	12	-	3

4.5.1. All recommendations under Theme 2 that are within the Council's control have now been completed or incorporated into ongoing arrangements that are established and operational.

4.5.2. Key developments include:

- Developing and implement a new Quality Assurance Framework across the Children's Department.
- Ensuring that information on historical claims is considered as part of the Part 5 threshold assessment process.
- Holding a successful pilot of *Beam Notes* (formerly Magic Notes). Beam Notes has now been incorporated as part of wider developments within Social Services recording arrangements. Training was provided to the entire workforce, with a particular emphasis on the proper recording of safeguarding matters.
- Reviewing the arrangements for the transfer and sharing of information in relation to safeguarding and employment matters.
- Providing additional funding to the Children's Department, enabling the creation and filling of new posts to strengthen the capacity of the service.
- Carrying out an audit of Part 5 referrals, reviewing historical referrals to ensure that concerns have been addressed and dealt with appropriately.

4.5.3. The remaining recommendations* under this theme are subject to national changes and reviews, as well as the results of the referral form pilot. Although preparatory work and a number of tasks have been completed internally, it has not been possible to implement all the proposed changes until decisions are made at a national level.

**Recommendation 10 OBBJ: That the Welsh Government ensure that the review of Section 5 procedures is informed by this Review and takes into account what has been learnt from it*

There are inconsistencies between the new Part 5 procedures and the OBBJ recommendations, and Cyngor Gwynedd has raised the issue with the Welsh Government.

**Recommendation 15 OBBJ: That the Welsh Government consider requiring schools to develop a 'Adult Conduct of Concern Policy' (known as the 'Low-level Concerns Policy' in England), and consider providing guidance on safe working practices.*

We are awaiting guidance from the Welsh Government.

Cyngor Gwynedd has consistently raised this issue through the Ministerial Assurance Group.

**Further Response Plan Work-stream: Ensure that the public is aware of the referral procedure, and that the referral form for professionals is accessible and simple to complete.*

As the referral form has been adopted on a regional basis, any changes require the agreement and support of partners across the region.

4.6. Theme 3: Training and Policies

THEME 3 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	2	1	1	-
OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	5	2	1	2
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	10	9	1	-
TOTAL	17	12	3	2

4.6.1. Three-quarters of the recommendations under Theme 3 that are within the Council's control have now been completed or incorporated into ongoing arrangements that are established and operational.

4.6.2. The two remaining work-streams are underway and relate to the roll-out of the NSPCC grooming training module across the whole workforce and the completion of the establishment of appropriate training levels across the workforce, with development work already underway through the Safeguarding Operational Group.

4.6.3. Key developments include:

- The Council formally adopted the Whistleblowing Policy, with further work underway to promote awareness of the policy amongst the workforce.
- Introducing mandatory training on "Whistleblowing" for the workforce.
- Developing bespoke safeguarding training in the form of a video for frontline staff.
- Reviewing and strengthening the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.
- Increasing the percentage of the workforce who completed the safeguarding e-module from 36.4% to 77.8% over the year, although it should be noted that a change in the reporting method contributed in part to this increase.
- Completing an internal audit of workforce awareness of the Council's safeguarding procedures, with a view to repeating the exercise before the end of the year in order to measure further progress.

4.6.4. The remaining recommendation under this theme depends on the Welsh Government's work to develop a national training resource based on the findings of Our Bravery Brought Justice, for use across schools and other agencies working with children.

4.7. Theme 4: School Governance

4.7.1. Progress under this theme has been largely dependent on the Welsh Government's review of school governance arrangements. Despite this, significant work has been carried out locally to strengthen internal arrangements and support developments in the field in the interim.

4.7.2. The Council has maintained an ongoing dialogue with the Welsh Government regarding the need for necessary changes to the national arrangements, and has ensured that local views and experiences are reflected by contributing to the consultation.

THEME 4 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	-	-	-	-
OBBJ Recommendations	3	2	-	1

(Regional and National)

Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	4	4	-	-
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TOTAL	7	6	-	1
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4.7.3. The key developments under Theme 4 include:

- Strengthening the capacity of the governance service by doubling the size of the team from two to four members of staff.
- Piloting the GovernorHub platform with a sample of schools to support communication, governance and information sharing.
- Introducing a new questionnaire to assess governors' confidence in their role as critical peers and to inform the future development of training
- Establishing a regular forum to support engagement and sharing of good practice among governors.
- Raising concerns about the status and role of governors to the Welsh Government, contributing to the national debate on reforming governance arrangements.
- Providing a comprehensive training programme and revised training for Safeguarding Designated Governors and Chairs of Governors.

4.8. Theme 5: Restrictive Practices

4.8.1. Theme 5 has progressed significantly beyond the original scope of the Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendation, which focused on school events filming arrangements*. This particular recommendation could not be delivered as it relied on national action by the Welsh Government.

**Recommendation 25 OBBJ: That the Welsh Government publish an appendix to the 2022 Framework guidance for reducing restrictive practices involving adults filming events and provide guidance on the retention period of such videos*

The Council is awaiting any further guidance or revisions from the Welsh Government.

4.8.2. Nevertheless, the work-stream was used as an opportunity to strengthen wider arrangements that support the safety and well-being of children and young people in relation to restrictive practices.

THEME 5 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond
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			of the year	the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	-	-	-	-
OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	1	-	-	1
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	5	5	-	-
TOTAL	6	5	-	1

4.8.3. The key developments under Theme 5 include:

- Strengthening school monitoring arrangements to ensure consistent adoption and implementation of the Regional Policy, with all schools visited having adopted the model policy.
- Undertaking a comprehensive external evaluation of the Reasonable Force Policy and Arrangements, informing a programme of further work to strengthen the existing arrangements.
- Establishing an internal group made up of representatives from the Safeguarding and Well-being, Education and Inclusion services to oversee this area, monitoring the implementation of existing arrangements and driving further improvements.

4.9. Theme 6: Crisis Planning and Crisis Response

THEME 6 WORK-STREAMS	Number of Recommendations	Completed / Permanently incorporated	Underway and on track to be completed by the end of the year	Number which will not have been delivered or are beyond the Council's control
OBBJ Recommendations (Cyngor Gwynedd or all organisations)	-	-	-	-
OBBJ Recommendations (Regional and National)	1	1	-	-
Work-streams Beyond OBBJ Recommendations	-	-	-	-

TOTAL	1	1	-	-
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4.9.1. The key developments under Theme 6 include:

- Developing and refining a Crisis Plan in consultation with schools and key partners, ensuring that it reflects the needs of schools of different sizes.
- Preparing a collaboration agreement with North Wales Police, establishing a more flexible model for a multi-agency response, including the possibility of seconding a social worker when required.
- Preparing an awareness raising programme to be delivered during the autumn term 2026 to ensure a consistent understanding of the relevant arrangements and responsibilities.

4.9.2. The focus of Theme 6 has now shifted to monitoring the implementation of the arrangements and ensuring consistent understanding across schools. To avoid duplication and integration of this work with existing processes, this will be incorporated as part of the regular Health and Safety visits to schools.

4.10. Theme 7: Ysgol Friars

4.10.1. In addition to the 6 themes in Our Bravery Brought Justice, another theme has been added to our Response Plan in order to support and stabilise Ysgol Friars.

4.10.2. Significant work has been done to stabilise arrangements at Ysgol Friars. A strong emphasis has been placed on the well-being of pupils and staff by widening access to counselling services, establishing bespoke well-being spaces and strengthening the support available to pupils with emotional and well-being needs. Additional investment from the Council, combined with grant funding from the Welsh Government, has enabled the school to further strengthen this provision and begin to deliver trauma-informed training to staff.

4.10.3. In terms of leadership and governance, a new governing body and management team are now in place. The appointment of a permanent Headteacher and the implementation of a clear plan in response to the Estyn inspection have provided a solid foundation for continuous improvement.

4.10.4. The school continues to play a full part in the work of the Programme Board, contributing openly and constructively and demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the improvement programme.

- 4.11. Appendix 2 includes the full suite of Programme Board progress reports, providing further details on the implementation and progress against each theme in the period since January.

5. What changes have been made as a result of scrutiny?

- 5.1. The comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committees have led to 28 definite changes to the work of the Response Board. These include reforming the Response Plan, strengthening safeguarding and quality assurance arrangements, extending the scope of further inspections and reviews to test the effectiveness of arrangements, developing new training and resources, improving the accessibility of information for children and the public, and increasing transparency through wider publication of information and reports.
- 5.2. There are two remaining scrutiny recommendations in the pipeline, mainly relating to the development of measuring the more long-term impact of the plan (see part 6 below).
- 5.3. A detailed response to the comments and recommendations submitted through the Scrutiny Committees is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.4. Attention is also drawn to **Appendices 1a** which include work commissioned or developed directly as a result of requests made by Members during scrutiny sessions

6. Measuring impact and culture change

- 6.1 In trying to achieve change, and embedding that change across all parts of a large and broad organisation such as a Local Authority, some elements of change are easier than others to implement and their impact measured.
- 6.2 As can be seen in parts 3 and 4 above, most of the tasks and actions that needed to be focused on have now been completed. Staff resources clearly had to be prioritised and allocated to achieving that as a matter of urgency; our priority was to ensure that we responded to the recommendations contained in the report, as well as the improvements that were needed to our working arrangements.
- 6.3 We have now started to move from delivery to the implementation phase of the new arrangements, and as a result, measuring what a difference this has all made/will make to ensure that our safeguarding arrangements are to the highest possible standard.

- 6.4 We have a cache of anecdotal evidence showing that the change in our Safeguarding arrangements is now leading to a change of culture across the organisation. Safeguarding and challenging are being discussed more naturally across the organisation in departments beyond those which deal with the day-to-day work of child protection. We see this in management team meetings across the council, in performance challenge meetings and in informal situations in our offices.
- 6.5 While formal arrangements to measure impact over time are not yet fully established, there are a number of sources of information available that provide an initial picture of the current situation and provide a baseline for measuring future progress. These include:
- A questionnaire to Governing Bodies to gauge members' level of confidence in carrying out their responsibilities and to identify what additional support would help them to act more effectively as critical friends.
 - Independent research by Dr Ceryl Davies, Bangor University, as part of the Scrutiny Investigation into safeguarding arrangements in schools has provided insight into children and young people's awareness of processes to raise concerns, highlighting strengths and areas for development.
 - An internal audit of staff awareness has provided a picture of staff's understanding of the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures, helping to identify areas where further support or communication is needed.
 - A staff experience questionnaire of the Section 5 referral process distributed to a sample of staff who have made a referral in order to understand their experience of the process and identify opportunities to improve guidance and support.
- 6.6 Together, these activities provide an important baseline and offer a picture of the current situation. However, these measures will need to be tracked over time in order to be able to demonstrate change and evaluate the impact of the work more robustly.
- 6.7 Therefore, we have developed impact measures across each of the themes, as follows:

What is being
measured?

How will we measure impact?

Timeline

To what extent children and young people feel that their voice is heard and taken into account in decision-making.	Through the Voice of Children and Young People Questionnaire, measuring the extent to which children and young people feel that their views are heard and taken into account, that they can influence decisions, and that they know where to go for help when needed.	Annually, with the questionnaire being conducted in secondary schools one year and primary schools the following year.
Victim support	Gathering feedback from victims through support officers and IDVAs, asking if they are getting the support they need and if there are areas that could be improved.	Every 6 months
Employee experience of making part 5 referrals to Children's Services.	Through a follow-up questionnaire to the referral process, including questions about the experience of the process, any obstacles faced, and whether they would be willing to make a referral again in the future.	The pilot questionnaire has been sent to individuals who have made part 5 referrals between January and September 2026.
Staff confidence, awareness and understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.	By repeating an internal audit of staff's awareness and understanding of safeguarding procedures, and measuring their confidence to identify and act on safeguarding concerns.	Annually
Confidence of staff to raise concerns and use Whistleblowing arrangements.	Through the Staff Voice Questionnaire, measuring staff confidence levels to raise concerns and awareness of the support and arrangements available. Results will be compared with the previous survey where possible.	Next round of staff voice
The confidence and ability of governors to fulfil their role as effective critical friends.	By repeating the governors' self-assessment questionnaire annually and comparing the results with the baseline collected before summer 2026. This will measure changes in governors' confidence in challenging, scrutinising and holding school leaders to account.	Annually

The effectiveness of school arrangements in relation to restrictive practices.	Through monthly monitoring arrangements by an internal group that reviews trends, incident data and the quality of records, including consideration of the voice of the child and the follow-up actions taken.	Monthly
Understanding and implementation of the Crisis Plan in schools.	Assess staff understanding through feedback at the end of training workshops, and then check the implementation of the arrangements through monitoring visits to schools.	Workshops in October 2026, with ongoing monitoring through school visits.

6.8 As many of the things that have been achieved so far have not been in place for a long time, they need to be implemented for some time before it can be measured whether they are really effective or not. As themes are scrutinised in the future we will be able to focus more on showing evidence of the impact over a period of time. This is what the Response Board has emphasised from the outset and this is what the Ministerial Assurance Group is likely to focus on over the next period as well.

6.9 In addition to the above measures, we have developed a brief, assisted by the Chair of the Response Board, to commission a series of Focus Groups between now and Christmas. This work will build on the approach used as part of the previous scrutiny investigation. This will include focus groups with a sample of:

- School Governors to assess their confidence to fulfil their role as critical friends and to understand their experience of the new support, training and arrangements.
- The Council's workforce to assess their confidence in safeguarding and raising concerns, and their views on the changes made to the existing arrangements.
- Elected Members to examine their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities, Whistleblowing and their confidence in the Council's arrangements.
- Inclusion Service staff in terms of their confidence in decision-making and responding in accordance with the Restrictive Practices Policy.
- Parents to understand their perceptions of safety, communication and the support available to children and families.
- Children and young people, building on work already undertaken through the Safeguarding in Schools Scrutiny Investigation.

- 6.10 The Focus Groups' conclusions will allow us to receive an honest and open view of our current situation, and will also help feed into the Chief Executive-led review of work culture.

7. How does the Response Board ensure progress?

- 7.1. The Response Board accepts and challenges **regular progress reports** on each of the work themes. This approach has enabled the Board to focus on specific areas in greater detail, monitor progress against actions, consider risks and barriers to delivery, and provide regular opportunities for Board members to further question, challenge and advise.
- 7.2. While significant progress has been made in delivering the actions committed to, the Board has recognised the need to strengthen the arrangements for measuring and evaluating the impact of the work. As a result, further work is underway to:
- develop impact measurement arrangements;
 - use focus groups to gather stakeholder perspectives;
 - develop criteria for the transfer of work to normal business arrangements;
 - ensure that progress and supporting documents are publicly available.
- 7.3. The independent Chair of the Board, Professor Sally Holland, assesses progress by presenting a **quarterly report to Cabinet**. In her recent reports, she has noted that the Board's reporting and scrutiny arrangements have matured, providing a clearer picture of progress and enabling a higher level of challenge, assurance and oversight. However, she also stresses the need to strengthen impact and outcomes measurement in order to understand the difference that the changes make in practice.
- 7.4. The **Welsh Government Ministerial Assurance Board** provides a further layer of assurance and oversight. This two-way relationship enables the Response Board to share progress and learning, whilst also keeping track of relevant national developments and changes to ensure that Gwynedd's work continues to fit into the wider context.
- 7.5. In a Written Statement in March 2026, Lynne Neagle, former Cabinet Secretary for Education, acknowledged the positive and constructive collaboration between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Ministerial Assurance Group:

"I would like to place on record my thanks to Councillor Jeffreys and her team for their constructive co-operation and engagement throughout the work of the Assurance Group. Their willingness to consider challenges and show progress has been central to this process."

- 7.6. The arrangements of the Ministerial Assurance Group have continued under the new Government, with the first formal meeting between representatives of the Board and the Welsh Government taking place in July 2026. This gives confidence that the positive relationship and two-way assurance arrangements established to date continue to support supervision and learning at a national and local level.

8. What is the timescale for doing this?

- 8.1. The Response Board does not consider that the work will cease when individual actions have been completed.
- 8.2. While good progress has been made in delivering the actions set out in the Response Plan, the focus is now shifting towards ensuring that the changes are sustainably embedded in practice, influence organisational culture and lead to better outcomes for children and young people.
- 8.3. Work over the next period will focus on:
- Monitoring the impact of the delivery.
 - Focus groups with stakeholders.
 - Continuing to report publicly on progress.
 - Completing the remaining activities within each theme.

**9. What difficulties and challenges have they faced, and how have they overcome them?
Are there barriers to delivery?**

- 9.1. As already noted, significant progress has been made in delivering the Response Plan. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that the work has not been straightforward. The broad nature of the plan, the size of the organisation, and the need to operate across a number of services and partners have meant that a number of practical challenges have arisen along the way.
- 9.2. One of the challenges was to turn some of the recommendations into practical arrangements that work in real situations. For example, when strengthening the voice of the child in safeguarding arrangements, there have been cases where parents did not wish their children to be interviewed, particularly where the child is a witness rather than the child who is at the centre of the concern.
- 9.3. The size and complexity of the Council has also been a factor. In an organisation with over 5,000 staff and a very wide range of services, ensuring that changes are consistently understood, implemented and incorporated is time-consuming. This is particularly true in relation to frontline staff who do not have regular access to computers or digital devices. In response to this, a dedicated officer has been

appointed to strengthen communication, support access to information and promote training opportunities.

- 9.4. Challenges have also arisen because some of the workflows are dependent on decisions or actions by other bodies. This includes elements that require regional or national change, such as Welsh Government guidance or action by other partners. Where the Council is unable to act fully on its own, we have tried to do as much as is reasonably within our control, including putting temporary arrangements in place until any national/regional change has been introduced whilst raising issues through the appropriate forums and continuing to press for progress.
- 9.5. Staff capacity and resources have also been a challenge. Implementing the recommendations of *Our Bravery Brought Justice*, together with the additional workstreams identified by the Council, has resulted in significant work for a number of services in addition to their usual responsibilities. This work was the priority and as a result, some activities have had to be prioritised at times, and additional capacity has had to be invested. The Council has already committed over £500,000 of an additional annual revenue budget to strengthen safeguarding and support this work.
- 9.6. In addition, some of the training packages or resources referred to in the recommendations were not readily available to be bought. It was therefore necessary to develop new content, adapt materials and ensure that they were relevant in the Gwynedd context. This has taken more time than expected in some areas, but it has also resulted in more bespoke and workforce-friendly materials.
- 9.7. While these are real challenges, they have not prevented the Response Plan from moving forward. Rather, they have influenced the way the work is scheduled, prioritised and delivered. Currently, there is nothing internal preventing the Council from completing the work under its control by the end of 2026. The main remaining risks relate to issues that are beyond the Council's direct control, and the Response Board will continue to monitor them, escalate them where necessary, and put mitigation arrangements in place where possible.

10. Future scrutiny arrangements

- 10.1. The Response Plan's work programme is a substantial one and therefore as we approach the completion of the individual actions the activity will be incorporated into normal business arrangements, and therefore in the future it is recommended to adopt a more thematic approach to scrutiny. Rather than presenting all the themes to each scrutiny committee, it is recommended:
- That each theme be allocated to the most relevant scrutiny committee.
 - That all themes are subject to detailed scrutiny with a focus on ensuring that the new arrangements are successfully incorporated into day-to-day work and that there is no future slippage.

- That cross-cutting or strategic matters are reported to more than one committee as required.
- That these arrangements enable members to focus on the most relevant matters and to offer a more detailed challenge.

10.2. This approach would ensure that the governance arrangements of the Response Plan are both robust and effective. It would also enable the committees to spend more time scrutinising specific themes in detail, strengthening the challenge and assurance provided.

10.3. In line with the areas of scrutiny of the individual Committees, the following is recommended:

Theme	Committee
Theme 1: The Voice of the Child	Education and Economy Committee (Education Portfolio)
Theme 2: Managing allegations and concerns	Care Scrutiny Committee (Children and Safeguarding Portfolio)
Theme 3: Training and Policies	Education and Economy Committee (Corporate Services Portfolio)
Theme 4: School Governance	Education and Economy Committee (Education Portfolio)
Theme 5: Restrictive Practices	Education and Economy Committee (Education Portfolio)
Theme 6: Crisis Arrangements	Education and Economy Committee (Corporate Services Portfolio)

11. Consultation

11.1. The report has been prepared on the basis of discussions and preparatory work across the Leadership Team, Response Plan theme leaders and relevant officers. The work also reflects comments received from the scrutiny committees in January 2026.

11.2. The report will be presented to the Response Board for discussion at its next meeting. The Chair's most recent assessment of progress is set out in her latest report to Cabinet (**appendix 6**), with a further report due in November, providing an additional opportunity to reflect on progress.

11.3. Further work is underway to involve stakeholders through focus groups, building on the approach used as part of the previous scrutiny investigation.

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

The Five Ways of Working	How the Response Plan contributes
Involvement	Focus group work and the voice of the child work provide an opportunity for stakeholders, children and young people to contribute to the way progress is measured and understood.
Collaboration	The Response Board brings together relevant services and includes collaboration between Education, Social Services, Human Resources, Democracy and Corporate services as well as a number of external Agencies.
Prevention	The work focuses on preventing failures from happening again by strengthening safeguarding, training, recording, governance and arrangements for raising concerns.
Long-term	The plan has been amended to emphasise sustainable change and long-term support rather than just short-term steps.
Integration	The actions link to the Council's policies, training, school arrangements, governance work and wider assurance arrangements.

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

13.1. The Response Plan is directly concerned with safeguarding children and young people, ensuring their voices are heard, and improving access to information and support. As the Work Programme develops the Board will continue to consider the accessibility of information for children, young people, families and victims and address the impact on people who face disadvantage or barriers to accessing support.

14. Next Steps

Next Step	Description	Proposed timeframe
Develop impact measures	Continue to work with theme leaders to define how impact will be demonstrated in practice.	October 2026 onwards / to be confirmed by the Response Board
Hold focus groups	Use focus groups with stakeholders to test and challenge the progress and impact of the work.	October 2026 onwards / to be confirmed by the Response Board
Review thematic progress	Continue to submit theme-by-theme progress reports to the Response Board.	October 2026 onwards / to be confirmed by the Response Board

Arrange future scrutiny	Agree a thematic scrutiny programme in which each theme will be scrutinised at least once a year by the most relevant committee.	October 2026 onwards / to be confirmed by the Response Board
Continue to publish information	Ensure that accessible and public materials continue to be updated as work progresses.	October 2026 onwards / to be confirmed by the Response Board

APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1:** A response table to all the recommendations from the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Care Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee.
 - **Appendix 1a:** Trauma-informed and Children's Rights Work Programme
- **Appendix 2:** Thematic progress reports (February – July 2026)
- **Appendix 3:** New Response Plan website: [Our Bravery Brought Justice: Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan](#)
- **Appendix 4:** Infographic "What's changed?"
- **Appendix 5:** Response Plan for Children and Families: [Response Plan](#)
- **Appendix 6:** Quarterly Reports of the Chair of the Response Board
- **Appendix 7:** [Cabinet Report - Commissioning Investigations](#)
- **Appendix 8:** Our Bravery Brought Justice Progress against Recommendations

OTHER DOCUMENTS:

- **Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan:** [Response Plan](#)

APPENDIX 1 - A response table to all the recommendations from the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee, the Care Scrutiny Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee.

Committee	Recommendation / Comment	Progress Made	Status
Care Scrutiny	Report on progress towards Child-Friendly and Trauma-Informed status	A separate work programme was developed in this area and an update was presented to the Leadership Team. Details of the Work Programme are provided in Appendix 1a .	Completed
Care Scrutiny	Ensure that external female safeguarding information and contact details are available in schools	The Safeguarding and Well-being Team's phone number has been included rather than the contact details of a designated individual. Team members offer anyone who contacts the service the choice of speaking with a male or female.	Completed
Care Scrutiny	Pay more attention to the voice of the family as well as the voice of the child	Included within the development of the Voice of the Child Strategy and the wider work of the workstreams.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Develop measurable arrangements to show how the voice of the child influences decisions	Measuring impact is now part of the Voice of the Child Strategy. Further work to develop impact measures for the Board is ongoing.	Underway
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure long-term support for victims	The Response Plan has been reviewed to place more emphasis on long-term support and change. This aligns with the Welsh Government's National 10 Year Strategy.	Completed. This is ongoing work.
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure that safeguarding information is accessible and child-friendly	Annual assurance visits have confirmed that safeguarding information is visible and accessible in all schools visited.	Completed

Education and Economy Scrutiny	Strengthen arrangements for managing allegations and concerns about adults	The collaboration between Education and Children has been strengthened. Multi-agency arrangements are now a key part of the process.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Consider incidents that do not directly involve children	An audit of the transferable risks, employment procedures and requirements under Part 5 was carried out.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure an appropriate transition between HR and Part 5 processes	The audit confirmed that these arrangements had operated appropriately in the cases reviewed.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Extend the Part 5 audit period	The scope of the audit was extended back to 2020 and findings were presented to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Gather evidence of change and impact	The Board has prioritised the development of impact measurement arrangements and further work in this area will take place over the coming weeks.	Underway
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure a rapid corporate response to systemic concerns	The matter has been included within the governance and assurance arrangements of the Response Board.	Completed. This is ongoing work.
Full Council	Share safeguarding referral forms more widely	It was confirmed that this arrangement was already in place and the work programme has been updated to reflect that.	Completed

Care Scrutiny	Report on the implementation of the Whistleblowing Policy	This area has been included within the Theme 3 progress reports.	Completed
Care Scrutiny	Deliver training on grooming	A bespoke training package has been developed with the NSPCC for staff, elected members and schools. It will be available from autumn 2026 onwards.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure that grooming is given specific attention in training	The new training focuses on this matter, including learning and awareness of the Finkelhor Model to strengthen understanding and practice in this respect.	Completed
Governance and Audit	Update on the Whistleblowing Policy and Safeguarding Policy	Both policies have been formally adopted by the Council and Cabinet.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Address unconscious bias	Training in this area is already available, and further content is being added to school training.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure clear arrangements for employees who raise safeguarding concerns.	Reporting arrangements are included in the Safeguarding Policy and on the intranet.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Regularly review safeguarding records	A new Quality Assurance Framework has been developed and quality capacity within the Children's Department has been strengthened.	Completed
Care Scrutiny	Raise concerns about the role of governors with the Welsh Government	A formal letter has been sent to the Welsh Government and regular discussions have taken place with officers, including through the Ministerial Assurance Group.	Completed

Education and Economy Scrutiny	Develop training for Designated Safeguarding Governors	The training has been adapted to include a greater emphasis on challenge and safeguarding assurance.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure a proper understanding of the use of Reasonable Force	The theme has been expanded and included in the Board's work programme. The original recommendation focused solely on filming incidents.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Strengthen communication and clarity of roles in an emergency	An Emergency Plan has been developed with the Schools. An ongoing training programme will be developed to accompany the Plan.	Completed
Care Scrutiny	Include a greater emphasis on children's well-being within the theme of Ysgol Friars	The wording of the Response Plan has been amended.	Completed
Governance and Audit	Produce a more accessible and easy-to-read summary	A bespoke website, a child-friendly version and public infographics have been developed.	Completed
Governance and Audit	Receive regular updates on progress	Arrangements have been put in place to report regularly to the relevant scrutiny committees.	Completed
Full Council	Publication of a simpler and more accessible version of the Plan	A website, a child-friendly version and infographics have been developed.	Completed
Education and Economy Scrutiny	Ensure a clear overview of the work streams	The Board now receives thematic reports by work stream.	Completed

**Education and
Economy
Scrutiny**

Ensure greater transparency

The Response Plan Programme Board's papers are now publicly available.

Completed

APPENDIX 1a: Cyngor Gwynedd's journey to become a child-friendly, caring and trauma-informed Council.

The trauma-informed and child-friendly areas of work have gained momentum within the Council over the past few years, particularly following the publication of the Our Bravery Brought Justice report. Following a request from the Scrutiny Committee in January, this paper provides an update on the progress to date and outlines the next steps for developing this agenda across the Council.

1. Trauma-Informed Work in Gwynedd

1.1. Mapping work and understanding the current situation

- 1.1.1. The mapping and engagement work carried out across the Council's departments shows that levels of awareness, confidence, learning needs, training provision and barriers vary significantly between services.
- 1.1.2. Trauma-informed work has already developed strongly in some areas of the Council, particularly in Social Services, the Homelessness Service, the Early Years and within schools and teams in the Education Department. These services have invested in specialist training, including diploma-level training and Trauma-Informed Schools training programmes.
- 1.1.3. In developing the work programme, models, training and good practice from other organisations have been reviewed. There is no single solution or single approach that will achieve this vision, so the programme includes a range of courses of action that complement each other and will continue to evolve as we learn and develop.

1.2. Setting up a tiered training programme

- 1.2.1. A tiered training programme is planned to be developed which aligns with the National Trauma Aware Framework for Wales, and builds on existing arrangements across the Council to take the agenda forward.
- 1.2.2. Our approach to workforce development recognises that different levels of knowledge and skills are required according to the role and responsibilities of staff. At the bottom of the framework is compassionate practice providing the foundation for all, reflecting the Council's values and linking directly to our Learning and Development Framework.
- 1.2.3. Moving through the layers, the framework provides opportunities to develop more specialist knowledge and competencies, including trauma-informed practice where appropriate. This approach emphasises the importance of understanding people's experiences and circumstances without rushing to label individuals or situations as being trauma-related. Rather, the aim is to build the confidence of staff to respond in a compassionate, curious and considerate way, seeing the individual first and focusing on their strengths, needs and unique experiences.

1.2.4. The table below explains the tiers involved:

What?	How?
Tier 1: Senior leadership and understanding	Further training is commissioned for specific groups such as Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers and Cabinet Members. This will strengthen their understanding of the impact of trauma and the implications for service leadership, decision making and policy development. In addition, shorter awareness sessions will be offered to managers through the Managers Network, drawing on the expertise of Early Years officers.
Tier 2: Raising general awareness	A corporate e-learning module, <i>"An Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma-Informed Practice"</i> , is now available to staff and councillors via the E-learning Portal. It aims to provide a basic understanding of trauma, ACEs, and the impact that adverse experiences can have on individuals throughout their lives. To date, over 300 individuals have completed this training.
Tier 3: Compassionate skills for frontline staff	The third tier will focus on staff who work directly with residents and service users on a day-to-day basis. The aim is to give staff the tools and confidence to respond in a positive, empathetic and supportive way to people facing challenges or trauma. (Compassionate Service Delivery)
Tier 4: Specialist trauma training	The proposal does not interfere with the good work already taking place within services with specialist requirements. Services such as Social Services, Homelessness, Early Years and schools will continue to organise and commission the training best suited to their specific needs, building on the strong foundations already in place.

1.3. Culture

- 1.3.1. Initial discussions have begun with Bangor University to explore good practice that supports the creation of the environment and culture needed to deliver services in a compassionate way. This work will inform training development, policy reviews, and the way procedures and processes are interpreted and implemented across the organisation.
- 1.3.2. The Learning and Development Service will review the current Learning and Development Framework to ensure that it aligns with the Council's values and provides a solid foundation for the development of compassionate practice across all services.
- 1.3.3. As a further sign of commitment to leading by example, the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families is completing a Trauma-Informed Practice Diploma, supporting the promotion of a trauma-informed understanding and culture across the organisation.

1.4. Monitoring and Learning

- 1.4.1. It is planned to re-run the mapping questionnaire with Gwynedd Heads of Department and School Headteachers in November 2026 in order to assess the extent to which the desired principles and behaviours are embedded across the organisation, and to use the findings to inform further work.

1.5. Work Programme

Action	By when?
A trauma-informed Virtual Reality (VR) workshop and training was held in June 2025.	June 2025
A questionnaire sent out to Heads of Department to understand Council Departments' awareness of trauma-informed working.	November 2025
Discussed and planned potential options for trauma-informed training with the Learning and Development Service.	December 2025
Introduced an E-module Training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma-Informed Practice.	March 2026
Prepared a work programme to present to the Leadership Team.	March 2026
Submitted a Cabinet Report stating the corporate commitment setting out the ambition to develop the Council as a child-friendly, caring and trauma-informed organisation.	May 2026
Training sessions held Collaborative Conversations have been held for frontline staff who work directly with residents and service users.	May 2026
Explored how the Council's policies, procedures and processes can be reviewed through a trauma-informed lens.	July 2026
Conducted a trauma-informed training session using VR for Cabinet Members and the Corporate Management Team.	October 2026
Hosting a trauma-informed training session using VR for the Assistant Heads' Forum.	November 2026
Awareness-raising session on Trauma-Informed Practice in the Managers' Network (requesting a presentation from the Early Years Unit).	November 2026
Re-assessing the level of Departmental awareness by circulating a further questionnaire to Heads of Department.	December 2026
Scoping and commissioning the work of policy proofing and developing a more detailed work programme following the feedback of the Departmental questionnaire for Year 2.	March 2027

2. Gwynedd Child-Friendly Work

2.1. As members will be aware, ensuring that the voice of children and young people is heard and considered is central to the work of the Response Plan Programme Board. A solid foundation has already been set through the work of the Youth Forum and the development of the Children and Young People's Voice Strategy, which provides a clear direction for this area of work.

2.2. This workstream is intended to build on existing work and support Council departments to understand their role in promoting children's rights and ensure that the voice of children and young people is given due consideration in the development of policies, services and decisions.

2.3. Mapping Work

2.3.1. Research has been completed into the various accreditation schemes in place in other areas. While UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities and Communities accreditation has been considered, that scheme is not currently available. As a result, it is intended to adopt the principles of *The Right Way*, which is promoted by the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

2.3.2. This approach provides a practical framework for embedding children's rights into policy, practice and decision-making across the organisation, without the need for a formal accreditation process.

2.4. Familiarising with "The Right Way" Training

2.4.1. To support this, a training programme is being developed. Work has already started through sessions for Heads held through the Response Plan Programme Board and the Public Services Board. In addition, an e-learning module on Children's Rights is available on the E-learning Portal to raise awareness and a basic understanding across the workforce.

2.4.2. The next step will be to work with the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales and use *The Right Way* framework to carry out a self-assessment in three services. This will provide a basic understanding of the level of awareness and understanding of Children's Rights across those services and inform further steps to strengthen practice.

2.4.3. In order to strengthen capacity and ensure the ability to maintain the momentum of this work in the longer term, it is planned to appoint an additional resource to support in equality. It is expected that this will increase the ability to co-ordinate, support and develop the Children's Rights agenda across the Council, complementing the arrangements already in place.

2.5. Work Programme

Child-friendly Outcome	By when?
Desktop Research for UNICEF's "Child-friendly Cities" accreditation	December 2025
"Children's Rights" Workshop held for Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Chairs and the Management Team	February 2026
Prepared a work programme to present to the Leadership Team	March 2026
Corresponded with the Welsh Government in relation to a request for funding to hold a second "Children's Rights" workshop in conjunction with the Public Services Board	March 2026
A second "Children's Rights" workshop held in conjunction with the Public Services Board	March 2026
Submitted a Cabinet Report stating the corporate commitment setting out the ambition to develop the Council as a child-friendly, caring and trauma-informed organisation	May 2026
Held a "The Right Way in Action" workshop in conjunction with the Public Services Board	July 2026
Self-assessment in three Services in terms of awareness and understanding of "Children's Rights" using the "The Right Way" Framework	October 2026
Holding a "children's rights" session at the Managers' Network	November 2026

3. Progress and Next Steps

- 3.1. The work programmes are now under the care of the Supporting People Working Group, which is a cross-departmental working group that brings together officers from a range of services to support, co-ordinate and monitor the work. The Supporting People Working Group will continue to take responsibility for overseeing the progress of both work streams, providing a constructive challenge and appropriate support to ensure that the principles of Children's Rights and compassionate practice are increasingly embedded in the Council's culture, arrangements and practices.
- 3.2. In addition, the working group already oversees the Gafael Llaw pilot and the Collaborative Conversations programme, ensuring coherence between the different pieces of work and learning opportunities across the whole programme.
- 3.3. This is recognised as being an area that is still developing. As a result, the work programme will evolve over time as we learn from our own experiences, evaluate the impact of the activities and take into account good practice and new developments.

Our Bravery Brought Justice - Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan

Progress Report

02.03.2026

Theme 1 - Voice of the Child and Supporting Victims <i>Reporting Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart</i>	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that children are listened to, and that they are believed and taken seriously. • Give a voice to children and young people in processes that have been planned to keep them safe. • Do everything within our ability to support the victims and survivors.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge and scrutinise the progress - Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial discussion has been held on creating a practical action plan which states the priorities, responsibilities and clear timeframes to incorporate a culture which is child-focused across all services - by April 2026. The discussion has led to the intention of introducing a Voice of Children and Young People Strategy in an attempt to capture everything in one co-ordinated plan. • The strategy will highlight 5 main things; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The voice of Children and Young People in the safeguarding procedure ○ The voice of Children and Young People in education ○ The voice of Children and Young People across Council Services ○ Influence on Corporate Processes ○ Impact • Draft strategy drawn up and discussion with the Youth Forum has been arranged to ensure the voice of children and young people in the strategy itself. • The Children's Service has presented an initial draft of a voice of the child policy • The Education Department has commenced the work of drawing up guidance of the very best practice in terms of the voice of learners within education, drawing on national best practice and guidance. • A workshop with Sally Holland and the Children's Commissioner team has been held with representatives of the Youth Forum, service heads, Cabinet members and representatives of scrutiny committees present.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every primary school is now using an electronic recording system to note incidents of concern with those who did not have a system (5 small schools) now using Bromcom. • Cross-departmental work has been undertaken to identify appropriate training in Grooming for Council and school staff. A cross-departmental panel has considered packs from two national providers. • Contact has been made with the boys who had been identified in the report as victims. Assistance has been offered to them. 		
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quite a lot going on, and therefore there is a risk of us duplicating work. Creating a Strategy will ensure coherence and consistency. Also a focus on impact so that we do not do anything without considering the impact from the very beginning. • A wish for us to move to be a Child-Friendly Authority. This has now been removed from this theme but is going ahead under the guidance of the Children's Services. 		
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intention is to develop a charter on listening to the voice of the child and child-friendly versions of the strategy with a completion date of by April 2026.. • Implement training for staff to identify and document behavioural changes in children which could be a sign of grooming or abuse - by March 2026. • Supporting the victims of trauma and tailor support to align with the needs of the individual - Ongoing • Introduce the new Bromcom system across all Gwynedd schools, alongside a training and awareness raising campaign - by September 2027 • Include the County Youth Forum and seek approval in terms of the content of our Voice of Children and Young People Strategy -March 2026 		
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we are able to hear the voice and opinion of specific cohorts of children and young people who are harder to hear. Have had new resources to target this work. • Awaiting further guidance: • Regional and national guidance on grooming training 		
7. Communication Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
8. Timelines:	CPR - 1 (1)	Listen to the voice of the child	April 2026
	CPR - 2 (2)	Systems / measures / reporting - the voice of the child	April 2026
	CPR - 3 (3)	Training - identify change in behaviour	March 2026
	CPR - 4 (4)	Recording - change in behaviour	September 2027
	CPR - 6 (5)	Speak with the child - Part 5	
	CPR - 7 (6)	Contact outside school (reporting concerns)	January 2026

	CPR - 8 (7)	Curriculum changes	September 2026
	CPR - 9 (8) RP - A4 RP - A1	Supporting the victims	Ongoing
	RP- A5 (9)	Compensation claims	Ongoing
	NEWYDD – 1 (10)	Embed a culture of listening to the voice and experiences of children / young people	March 2026

Theme 2 - Managing Allegations and Concerns about Adults working with Children
Reporting Officer: Dylan Owen

1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect children by ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and acted upon quickly. Ensure that Part 5 arrangements support a consistent and robust multi-agency response to allegations and concerns about adults working with children.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge and scrutinise the progress - Offer any further guidance on the next steps. <p>Specific guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight risk in terms of speaking with every child who is the subject of a P5 referral. Ensure agreement on the decision regarding the work on Low-Level Concerns Policies (No. 14). Draw attention to the fact that some of the recommendations in the work programme have been merged, as they are a part of the quality assurance and audit programme work of the Children's Department. Also draw attention to the fact that recommendations stemming from the ESTYN / CIW report (November 2025) have been added to the work programme.

<p>3. Progress to date:</p>	<p><u>Part 5 referrals:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion and strategy meetings templates have been adapted and they are being used to ensure that previous safeguarding information is being checked. • A social worker speaks with <u>every</u> child that is the subject of Part 5. • Threshold decisions are not made by only one person (Referrals Team Leader / LADO and/or DOS every time). • The referral form for professional adults has been highlighted on the website. It can be seen here: Child abuse. We have asked about the arrangements and timeframe for the proposed national changes to the referral form. There are also plans to look at how MOSAIC could support creating a digital form when the system goes live in the autumn. • A decision has been made to trial the use of Magic Notes during the strategy meetings. Piloting to begin in the next month after confirming with the company. <p><u>Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Government funding has been used to recruit and appoint an additional officer for the safeguarding team. The officer will begin before the end of February. <p><u>Quality Assurance Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial draft of the Framework was prepared and presented to the Ministerial Assurance Group. • The intention is to present the draft to the Board meeting on 25.2.26.
<p>4. Challenges faced:</p>	<p><u>Speak with Children who are the subject of a P5 Referral</u> Some parents feel very uncomfortable about a social worker speaking with their child and, consequently, refuse permission. Such complaints are logged and will be monitored continually. Initial discussions have also been held with a legal expert in order to review the rights of parents and children in accordance with safeguarding procedures.</p> <p><u>Low-level Concerns Policy.</u> Following the last Response Board meeting and the need for guidance from Welsh Government on the "Low-level Concerns Policy" matter, and we have now received confirmation: <i>That the Government is giving consideration to introducing a Concerns Policy regarding the Behaviour of Adults (similar to the Low-level Concerns Policy in England) in schools, as part of the work to review the guidance on school staff disciplinary and dismissal procedures. This will be done alongside Keeping Learners Safe, the intention is to consult on it following the Senedd elections.</i></p> <p>During a meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 4 February the options that could be considered to be carried out internally were discussed.</p>

	<p>In terms of creating a Low-level Concerns Policy, following confirmation from Welsh Government of its intentions, the Council will not implement or proceed with new arrangements until the relevant guidance is published by Welsh Government.</p> <p>In terms of reviewing the internal central list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IT service (via the Head of Corporate Services) will make arrangements to provide access to the Children's Department Safeguarding Officer to the names on the current staff database, which has not been used since COVID. As this list is not being used for any checking purposes, there is no basis to keep the data. • The Children's Department Safeguarding Officer will check and cross-reference the individual records on the list in order to ensure that all relevant information is transferred to WCCIS. They will also check if any relevant safeguarding records involve the Adults Department, and these will be passed on to the appropriate team as and when necessary. • Social Services are currently preparing to transfer to a new data capture system (MOSAIC) which will allow us to see immediately if there are previous allegations/referrals and check that against the name and details of the person. • With two new systems being introduced (MOSAIC and the new Human Resources system) it is possible that further solutions will come in terms flagging matters, automation and case management. Those discussions will continue to be held between the Head of Corporate Services, Children's Department Safeguarding Officer and the IT Service. • In terms of informal concerns, the favoured approach is to bring every concern in to a formal process. Rather than holding informal discussions, every concern, including low-level concerns, will be logged on the new MOSAIC system in order to ensure that a clear record is available. Systems such as Magic Notes may also assist to simplify this process. • The Data Protection Officer will also review the guidance created back in 2013 in terms of defining concerns. <p>The decision therefore is to ask for the Board's agreement to close the recommendation formally until system / technology developments are in place (October 2026).</p>
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March/April - Appoint DOS/Quality Assurance Officer • October - transfer to the MOSAIC system
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate bid has already been submitted in order to implement the recommendations in Theme 2. <p>Risk: <u>Recruitment risk</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A corporate bid was submitted for several new jobs in order to increase the capacity in the Children's Department. As recruitment for social work posts is challenging within the current climate, it is possible that alternative methods will have to be considered in order to fill the roles and decide on creative ways of recruiting.		
7. Communication Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any support for recruitment and raising awareness of the new jobs would be appreciated.		
8. Timelines:	CPR –11 (11)	Listen to the voice of the child	Completed - monitoring
	CPR - 14 (12)	RSB scrutinising - managing allegations	To be confirmed - Regional Safeguardig Board
	RP- B5 (13)	Estyn Inspections - safeguarding arrangements	Completed - monitoring
	CPR - 15 RP- C2 RP - C2a (14)	Low-level Concerns	Oct 25 - April 26
	CPR - 12 (15)	Decisions in consultation	To be confirmed - some delay in terms of contact with the Police
	CPR – 5 (16)	Consider safeguarding information on the record of the child when assessing risk	Completed - need to put monitoring arrangements in place
	NEW- 2 NEW - 3 (17)	Part 5 implementation arrangements	Ongoing - appointing to post March / April
	NEW- 4 (18)	Part 5 referral form	Short-term - highlight the form - completed Long term - digital form - October 2026 onwards
	NEW- 5 (19)	A transparent and open culture of dealing with referrals	Ongoing
	CPR – 10 (20)	Lessons to be learned / Part 5 - Welsh Government	To be confirmed - awaiting a copy from WG
	CPR 16 (21)	10 year strategy - Welsh Government	Beginning of March 2026

	RP- B2 (22)	Establish a Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Service	Ongoing
	NEW- 8 (23)	Improve relationship with schools - referrals procedure	Ongoing
	NEW- 9 (24)	Communication between children/education departments	Ongoing
	NEW- 10 (25)	Record Strategy Discussions	Pilot Magic Notes - March 2026 Appointing to post March / April

Theme 3 - Training and Policies Reporting Officer: Ian Jones	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff are trained to "think the unthinkable" and understand that "it could happen here".
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We ask the Board to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>Whistleblowing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cabinet approved the Whistleblowing Policy for Staff at its meeting on 20 January. The policy will be adopted formally as part of the Council's Constitution by the Full Council i March, 2026. The Cabinet asked for urgent work in terms of developing a similar policy for Members as well, and that work has started. As a result of this decision, we will proceed to introduce a draft work programme for communicating and raising awareness amongst all Council staff regarding the content of the Policy. We will present the work programme to the Whistleblowing Task Group at its next meeting. Every school has received a request to adopt a Whistleblowing Policy provided by Welsh Government and we will monitor this into the future. <p>Safeguarding Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Internal Audit was completed on Mandatory Training arrangements within the Council and the actions of that report will be adopted by the Task Group. Work to analyse the training needs of various cohorts of staff in relation to Safeguarding is underway. Work on developing a series of video clips has started in order to assist with the task of reaching every cohort of staff with appropriate messages. That work has

	<p>included making contact with many other councils and organisations in the public sector across Wales in order to identify good practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of staff who have completed the mandatory training is 75.7% currently. <p>Scrutiny Investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A slippage in the timetable but the final report is expected in the near future. 		
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A request by the Cabinet to develop a similar procedure for Whistleblowing for Members is likely to have a short-term impact on the Task Group's work programme. Access to IT systems for front-line staff continues to be a specific challenge. 		
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting the amended Whistleblowing Policy - Cabinet (January 26), Full Council (March 26) and implement the Policy (April 26) A clear communication plan for all Council staff, ensuring that it meets the needs of front-line teams - March 2026. Sub-group to develop and produce practical equipment to reiterate and promote the importance of safeguarding training across the Council - February 2026. Add training on keeping records of safeguarding in addition to the current e-module with the agreement of the SCW - Completed. Scrutiny Investigation Report (Safeguarding Arrangements) - February 2026 Further review of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy - April 2026 		
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The appointment of the Human Resources Advisory Service Manager to a post with another Council will have a short-term impact on the resources available for the Whistleblowing Task Group. Recruitment and appointment process has begun and a new manager is expected to be appointed in February. 		
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
8. Timelines:	CPR - 17 (29)	WG Review (Training)	To be confirmed by WG
	CPR - 18 (30)	Grooming Training	To be confirmed
	CPR - 19 (31)	Assurance of this for the Safeguarding Board.	To be confirmed (see CPR-18)
	CPR - 20 (32)	Whistleblowing Policy	April 2026
	CPR - 13 (33)	LADO Officers Training/supervision	to be confirmed
	CPR - 24 (34)	DSP/Supervision by social workers	to be confirmed

	RP- C2 (35)	Training on keeping safeguarding records.	December 2025
	RP- B1b (36)	Departmental Safeguarding/VAWDASV Training	Ongoing
	RP- B2 (37)	Schools safeguarding training package	Complete
	RP- C2d (38)	Mandatory safeguarding training - safeguarding decisions	Ongoing
	NEWYDD - 11 (39)	"Advanced" Safeguarding Training	to be confirmed
	RP- B1 (40)	Review Safeguarding Policy	April 2026
	RP- B2 (41)	Review Safeguarding Policy (Schools)	to be confirmed
	RP- B1a (42)	Internal audit - safeguarding arrangements	June 2026
	RP- B1c (43)	Monitoring DBS compliance	Complete
	RP- B5 (44)	Monitor safeguarding arrangements in Schools	Complete
	RP- B6 (45)	Scrutiny Investigation - safeguarding	December 2025

Theme 4 - Governance Reporting Officer: Alison Halliday	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that school governors understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. • Ensure that systems are in place which measure the wider health and culture of schools.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge and scrutinise the progress - Offer any further guidance on the next steps. <p>Specific guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timeframes are a risk at present - it is anticipated that the Welsh Government review will take between 6 and 9 months. Can we proceed more swiftly with some of the recommendations? How?
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory safeguarding training in place for every Chair and Safeguarding Designated Governor in schools. • Make it mandatory for Governors to complete basic safeguarding training • A new governor handbook has been shared with all governors and on the Gwynedd website • Start to collate information to assess the school's situation including health and wider culture • Meetings with neighbouring authorities to identify best practices in terms of clerking and effective and efficient governance arrangements. • Investigate a dashboard to capture all governance information and data in one convenient and manageable place.

4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependencies - awaiting further guidance from WG following its review of governance arrangements within schools
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower the governance arrangements of our schools by ensuring that all Governing Bodies receive professional and high quality clerking support. Consider holding a professional clerk pilot for those schools who do not have a clerk by March 2026. Review and amend the training programme for Chairs and Governing Bodies in order to respond to current needs. This will include training such as grooming and unconscious bias in line with local requirement. Ensure training for heads on the basics of effective governance with a continued focus on developing the role of the body as a Critical Friend by establishing a culture of honesty and transparency as central themes. Future Leaders programme / prospective Heads have received a presentation January 2026. New Heads Programme to be introduced by March 2026. Education Department to develop and circulate a standing agenda for Gwynedd school governing bodies, which will focus on safeguarding and well-being matters, as well as providing appropriate data to help them to assess the schools' situation by March 2026. The work of reviewing and amending meeting agenda will have been completed by January 2026. Training for Clerks and new procedure in place by March 2026. Respond promptly to and implement all the recommendations of the Welsh Government Review of governance arrangements in schools in Wales - timetable to be specified in accordance with the review Appoint an additional governance support officer to support schools with all aspects of governance and complaints by April 2026. Job description and person specification confirmed January 2026.
6. Risks / Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources: RP-Ch7 (51)- An additional officer will be required to support 94 governing bodies. We currently have one officer. We have received a grant from WG which will allow us to appoint an additional officer. Resources: CPR-22 (47) - We will require resources to create a dashboard which will facilitate the collection of such data. Resources: (46.10) Additional resources will be required to establish a professional clerking model.
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

8. Timelines:	CPR - 21 (46)	Governors' Responsibilities	to be confirmed by WG
	CPR - 22 (47)	Dashboard	to be confirmed by WG
	CPR - 23 (48)	Accurate minutes	May 2026
	NEWYDD-12 (49)	Investigation and prevention procedure	June 2026 / Ongoing
	RP- C3 (50)	ICP Recommendations	Ongoing
	RP- Ch7 (51)	Training	Ongoing
	RP- Ch6 (52)	Compare arrangements	May 2026

Theme 5 - Restrictive Practices Reporting Officer: Llion Williams	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update guidelines on filming restraint in the past by adults, and how filming records should be kept.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The offender's actions were contrary to the Schools Policy by filming cases - this is not standard practice. During Quality Assurance visits we always look at the restrictive practice policy to ensure that it aligns with the exemplar policy provided. Training is provided free of charge via the inclusion team Pupil suspension records highlight training requirements in schools - the inclusion team contact and support schools in addition to the ongoing training schedule. Appoint an additional Safeguarding and Well-being Officer to the Team in order to be able to carry out the annual quality visits A company is commissioned to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the current policy against national guidelines and statutory requirements Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the policy, identifying good practices, gaps and risks in terms of compliance and restorative practice. Recommend practical improvement steps which ensure full compliance and integrate restorative approaches and conversations. Recommend clear implementation arrangements with roles, accountability and restorative approach embedded in daily practice. Evaluate the training plan for staff in policy requirements and restorative conversations. Establish clear reporting arrangements for incidents, concerns and outcomes of restorative conversations.

	<div>7. Implement firm monitoring and intervention arrangements</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Education/Safeguarding/ALN Working Group has been set up to lead and facilitate the actions that will stem from the evaluation.																				
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welsh Government to implement the recommendation of publishing an appendix to the Framework Guidance in order to reduce restrictive practices.• Ensure that all schools are able to release staff in order to keep training current• Staff appointments and movements mean that the situation in terms of training varies during the year - department and schools capacity to keep current																				
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a Working Group to lead and facilitate action - December 2025• Establish a brief to evaluate the policy and current arrangements - December 2025• Identify and commission an external company to evaluate policy, training arrangements, school support, pupil support, compliance monitoring methods - January 2026• Establish an action plan following the evaluation – March 2026• Establish and implement monitoring and compliance with policy procedure - March 2026• Review strategy and training plan - Tbc• Strengthen the reporting and monitoring of school reports data arrangements - Tbc																				
6. Risks / Resources:	<div>Risks:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The process of commissioning and completing the work to evaluate the policy and arrangements take longer than expected• Ongoing compliance of schools <div>Resources:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources and a system will be required to record 53.5 - collaborating with the IT Department to establish a system/Power App to keep data																				
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•																				
8. Timelines:	<table><tr><td>CPR 25 (53)</td><td>Appendix to guidance - WG</td><td>Waiting for the Government</td></tr><tr><td>53.1</td><td>Establish a sub-group - investigating</td><td>December - Completed</td></tr><tr><td>53.2</td><td>Review the Policy</td><td>January 2026</td></tr><tr><td>53.3</td><td>Adopt the policy</td><td>February and annually</td></tr><tr><td>53.4</td><td>Provide training</td><td>February 2026</td></tr><tr><td>53.5</td><td>Monitoring</td><td>March 2026 and annually</td></tr></table>	CPR 25 (53)	Appendix to guidance - WG	Waiting for the Government	53.1	Establish a sub-group - investigating	December - Completed	53.2	Review the Policy	January 2026	53.3	Adopt the policy	February and annually	53.4	Provide training	February 2026	53.5	Monitoring	March 2026 and annually		
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Reporting Officer: Catrin Love	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a clear, strategic and co-ordinated plan is in place in an emergency
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge and scrutinise progress - Offer any comment or guidance, and guidance specifically on point 26d
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project group established. • Have stepped back of the original intention in order to have a better understanding of the current situation and guidance. • Key conversation has already taken place with a Detective Inspector from the Police's arrest team which has significantly improved understanding and changed the course of the content. Decision not to speak to the staff at the School. • Understand which formal Information Sharing protocols are in place in within safeguarding and emergency planning in order to establish whether this is a matter of raising awareness of them or that new agreements need to be created. WASPI agreements are in place within Safeguarding and for specific aspects of Emergency Planning and the ICO have clear guidance in terms of sharing information in an emergency therefore no need for a new guidance. • An early draft of a Strategic and operational Crisis Plan is in place. • Discussions have been held with the Policy on seconding a Social Worker to the Police in a serious safeguarding case. Favour having a flexible response in order to have the most appropriate arrangements for every individual case. That could be joint victim liaison teams (Police and Social Workers), it could be an open access arrangement for the Police or a formal secondment.
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing what is already in place in the fields that overlap here - safeguarding, safety and emergency. • Tie all the documents already in place into one simple and concise document which addresses health and safety, safeguarding, emergency and information. • This is a requirement on all Councils by now as a result of the Government's letter to leaders and therefore there are questions around having standard templates / documents across North Wales counties. It is a statutory requirement but there is no national guidance. • It will be challenging to reach everyone in all schools and the initial work of mapping the training process has started to eliminate any delays once the Plan has been approved.

5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation (end of March 2026) • Mapping training and preparing training resources (Summer 2026 school term) • School staff training (To be confirmed) 		
6. Risks / Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the work of mapping the training has been completed the resources required will become clearer however a bid for additional resources has been submitted. 		
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		
8. Timelines:	CPR - 26a (54)	Review the strategic serious incidents plan	Draft Plan by 31/1/26 Consultation period 31/3/26 Training Programme Summer Term 2026 Recommendation for the Board to agree in order to complete the action.
	CPR - 26b (55)	Official protocol - information sharing	Completed
	CPR – 26c (56)	Plan in place / rapid support steps	Completed
	CPR - 26d (57)	Move a social worker to work on secondment with the Police	April 2026

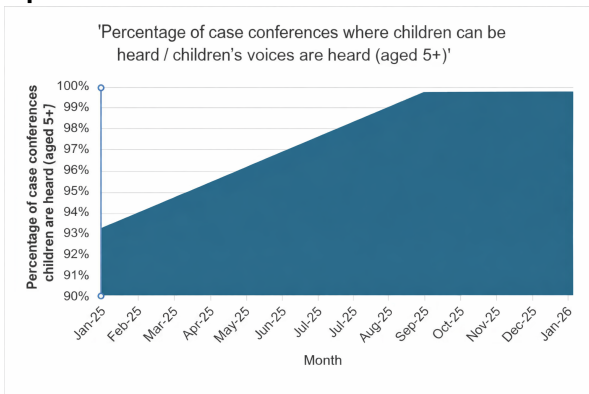
***Our Bravery Brought Justice - Cyngor Gwynedd's
Response Plan
Progress Report***

27.04.2026

THEME 1 - VOICE OF THE CHILD AND SUPPORTING VICTIMS	
Reporting Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that children are listened to, and that they are believed and taken seriously. • Give a voice to children and young people in processes that have been planned to keep them safe. • Do everything within our ability to support the victims and survivors.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge and scrutinise the progress • Offer any further guidance on the next steps
3. Progress to date:	<p><u>The Voice of the Child Strategy</u></p> <p>A draft Voice of the Child Strategy has been completed. Observations have been received on the content by the members of the recovery board and have been incorporated in the current version.</p> <p>Work has been done to draw up some appendices, but not all. The appendix on the voice of children and young people in education is ready for discussion with the Children and Young People Forum, Education Strategic Groups and Gwynedd Governors Forum.</p> <p>There is work to be done to amend the current guidance of the Children's Services so that it becomes a natural part of the Strategy as a whole; the current content is wholly appropriate, but its format needs to be amended so that it reads as one. The content needs to be discussed with the Children and Young People Forum. This may be a task for the Engagement Coordinator that is currently in the process of being appointed.</p> <p><u>Recording</u></p> <p>Every school has the ability to record changes in the behaviour of children digitally on the Bromcom system or one of the previous systems, such as MyConcern.</p> <p><u>Trauma Informed and Child Friendly</u></p> <p>A work programme has been prepared which looks at:</p> <p>a) developing Gwynedd as a child-friendly county, placing the rights of children at the heart of decisions; b) moving towards being trauma-informed, kind and empathic organisations.</p> <p>The programme focuses on long-term changes and developing culture by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A corporate and specialist training programme;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy and procedure checks; - Self-assessments; - Monitoring and evaluating impact. <p>The Action Plan and its delivery continues under the Caring Gwynedd Priority Area, and the Supporting People Cross-departmental Working Group (instead of directly to the Board), in order to embed the whole-Council approach to the themes. The work programme can be seen in Appendix 1 (Additional Papers).</p> <p><u>Contact Outside School</u></p> <p>Quality checking visits continue to check that there are contact numbers that children can use if they wish to contact external agencies.</p> <p>This is a part of the continuous monitoring cycle of the safeguarding and well-being team.</p> <p>There has been no example where the team has not seen appropriate alternative contact details at any school.</p>
4. Challenges faced:	<p>One of the main challenges is the increasing demand on our Children and Young People Forum. Although they are more than able to consider and give their opinions, they also have their own priorities and this in itself places pressure on them.</p> <p>It appears that everyone wishes to hear the views of the forum on a broad range of fields, and we need to consider that they have exams, for example, and that it is not acceptable to take them out of their lessons all the time. It is something that needs to be considered moving forward, and officers will consider an annual programme with the Forum during their next meetings.</p> <p>As a result, we will delay the completion of work on the strategy until the end of June, beginning of July, as the examination period will have drawn to a close by then.</p>
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine the content of the current guidance of the Children's Services to correspond with the strategy's format. • Commence the work of considering corporate changes to ensure the voice of the child. • Draw up a realistic timetable for consulting with the Children and Young People Forum, considering the increasing demand on them as representatives.
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>The availability of our Children and Young People Forum, particularly over the examination period.</p>
7. Communication Considerations	

8. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable
	1	1	The Voice of the Child Strategy	July 2026
	6	1	Contact outside school (reporting concerns)	To be confirmed
	4	2	System for recording a change in behaviour	September 2027
	8	2	Support for victims	Ongoing
	10	2	Walking on the corporate culture: Trauma-informed and The Right Way (Children's Rights)	Long-term work programme
	2	3	Systems / measures / reporting - the voice of the child	To be confirmed
	7	4	Welsh Government to implement changes to the National Curriculum	WG noted September 2026
	5	5	Social Worker to speak with every child	Completed - monitoring
	9	5	Compensation claims	Ongoing
	3	Combined with number 30 (Theme 3)	Training - identify change in behaviour / grooming	See: Number 30 Theme 3
Grey = Completed or unable to implement as we are waiting for a national / regional change				
Measures (Impact)				
Regular opportunities for victims / survivors to provide feedback to Cyngor Gwynedd about the quality and sufficiency of the support	Update: The intention is to discuss with the advocates during April. A verbal update could be provided if this has not happened by the time the papers have been shared with Board members.			Timetable: Board Meeting April 2026 (verbal)
Confidence and experience of safeguarding in schools	Update: A Youth Forum has been developed and a questionnaire has been circulated to gather the views of young people about their confidence and the experience of safeguarding within schools. 1291 young people across the County have responded. The responses show that over 80% pupils noted that they were able to speak with someone at the school if support is needed, 14% were not able to speak with someone at the school and 6% did not respond.			Timetable: Annual - results Feb / March

	75% noted that they knew where to go for support, 6% were uncertain, 15% did not respond and 4% did not know where to go for support.																													
Health and Well-being of Gwynedd Schools (School Life)	<p>Update:</p> <p>The Report on the results of the <i>Survey on the Health in Schools Research Network (SHRN): Improve the health and welfare of learners</i> has not been published by Public Health Wales yet.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Delay from reporting as the SHRN report has not yet been published.</p> <p>July 2026 Board</p>																												
Percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child (5+ years old) were heard	<p>Update:</p> <div><p>'Percentage of case conferences where children can be heard / children's voices are heard (aged 5+)'</p><table><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Percentage of case conferences children are heard (aged 5+)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Jan-25</td><td>93%</td></tr><tr><td>Feb-25</td><td>94%</td></tr><tr><td>Mar-25</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Apr-25</td><td>96%</td></tr><tr><td>May-25</td><td>97%</td></tr><tr><td>Jun-25</td><td>98%</td></tr><tr><td>Jul-25</td><td>98.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Aug-25</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Sep-25</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Oct-25</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Nov-25</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Dec-25</td><td>99%</td></tr><tr><td>Jan-26</td><td>99%</td></tr></tbody></table></div>	Month	Percentage of case conferences children are heard (aged 5+)	Jan-25	93%	Feb-25	94%	Mar-25	95%	Apr-25	96%	May-25	97%	Jun-25	98%	Jul-25	98.5%	Aug-25	99%	Sep-25	99%	Oct-25	99%	Nov-25	99%	Dec-25	99%	Jan-26	99%	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>This is a measure that it reported regularly to the Children's Performance Challenge meeting.</p> <p>The next Performance Challenge meeting will be held in May.</p>
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Percentage of part 5 referrals where a social worker has made a proactive effort to visit and listen to the voice of the child (5+yrs)	<p>Update:</p> <p>Number of children seen during the assessment (Dec-Jan) = 97%</p> <p>Three children not seen during assessment</p> <p>The reasons for this include children not wanting to leave their bedroom/not wishing to be a part of the assessment.</p> <p>There was one case where a parent refused a visit, telephone assessment only. A strategy discussion was held and escalated to Strategy 47 for access without parental consent.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>This is a measure that it reported regularly to the Children's Performance Challenge meeting.</p> <p>The next Performance Challenge meeting will be held in May.</p>																												
Outputs to date																														



A social worker makes a proactive effort to hear the voice of every child subject to a Safeguarding Referral (Section 5)



All schools display information about an independent person that pupils can talk to if they have safeguarding concerns.



A special role has been appointed to help develop the Gwynedd Youth Forum.



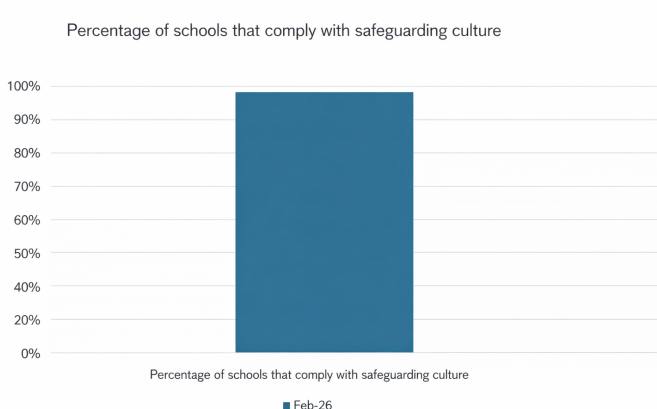
The Council works together with partners in order to offer ongoing support to the victims.



All schools have access to an electronic data management system so that changes in a child's behavior can be recorded.

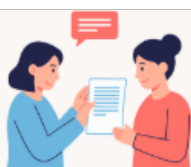
THEME 2 - MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS ABOUT ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN Reporting Officer(s): Dylan Owen / Sharron Carter Williams	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect children by ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and acted upon quickly. Ensure that Part 5 arrangements support a consistent and robust multi-agency response to allegations and concerns about adults working with children.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Quality Assurance Framework has been completed (copy for information included in the pack). The Magic Notes pilot has been commenced, with positive results thus far, as staff note that it facilitates their work. An application was submitted to be a part of a national pilot to trial the new national referral form. We are waiting to hear if the application has been successful.
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the initial meeting with the Police was positive in terms of establishing a TEAMS channel, they have currently refused the request, noting that the current arrangements work effectively. Further contact will be made to explain the situation further. With the funding for additional posts confirmed, the Department will move to advertise them. However, as recruiting social workers is already a challenge, there is an actual risk that these roles cannot be filled.
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up conversations to hold with the Police (April 2026) Appoint to the DOS/Quality Assurance Post (May/June 2026) Evaluate the Magic Notes Pilot (July 2026)
6. Risks / Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the funding for additional posts now confirmed, the Department will move to advertise them. However, as recruiting social workers is already a challenge, there is an actual risk that these roles cannot be filled.
7. Communication Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work will be needed to raise the awareness of the Children's Department workforce about the new Quality Assurance Framework. A challenge is expected in wording the recruitment to additional posts. A further public and internal campaign will need to be considered as required.

8. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable
	15	1	Safeguarding (Part 5) decisions being made on a multi-agency basis, and not by the LADO alone	Delay – awaiting discussions with the Police
	17	1	Part 5 and Quality Assurance Framework implementation arrangements	Framework completed
	23	1	Improve the relationship between the children's teams and schools	Ongoing
	24	1	Strengthen collaboration / Communication between the Children and Education Departments	Ongoing
	25	1	Quality of Strategy Discussions recording (Part 5)	July - 2026
	18	2	Ensure that the Part 5 referral form will be easy to find and easy to use.	Oct-2026
	14	4	Welsh Government to develop a Low-level Concerns Policy	Awaiting implementation by WG
	11	4	Welsh Government to note that the Voice of the Child needs to be heard following the Part 5 referral	Awaiting a copy from WG
	12	4	Regional Safeguarding Board to scrutinise the Welsh Government's arrangements for dealing with allegations	Awaiting confirmation from the RSB
	20	4	Welsh Government to review the Part 5 procedures	Awaiting a copy from WG
	21	4	Welsh Government to publish the 10-Year Strategy on Preventing the Sexual Abuse of Children	Published
	13	5	Collaborate with schools on any safeguarding issues that arise following the ESTYN inspections	Ongoing
	16	5	Consider historical safeguarding information on a child's records	Completed
	19	5	A transparent and open culture of dealing with referrals	Ongoing
	22	5	Establish a Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Service	Continuous Review
Grey = Completed or unable to implement as we are waiting for a national / regional change				
Measures (Impact)				
Staff confidence and experiences of Part 5 referrals and dealing with	Update: We are considering whether something can be done as part of the internal investigation of the awareness of the safeguarding workforce (internal audit), seeking the		Timetable: October 2026 Board.	

low-level concerns	views of an individual who has experience of making a safeguarding referral or conduct a joint inspection with the Safeguarding and Well-being Team.	We are delaying before conducting an internal audit on the workforce's awareness in order to give time for the materials produced by the Corporate Safeguarding Promoter to take root.
Attendance of the Chair of Governors or deputy at a Part 5 strategy meeting if there is an allegation about a member of a school's workforce.	<p>Update:</p> <p>Our intention is to try and report on this per quarter.</p> <p>Please note, however, that this cannot be done by using the current data system and some manual administrative work will have to be done in order to calculate it.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Aiming to start reporting on this measure to the Board in July 2026</p>
Estyn inspection reports : numbers who comply with safeguarding culture	<p>Update:</p>  <p>Percentage of schools that comply with safeguarding culture</p> <p>Percentage of schools that comply with safeguarding culture</p> <p>■ Feb-26</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Reported quarterly</p>
Outputs to date		



The **form for referring allegations of abuse** is easier to find on the Council's website and on the Schools' "hub" website.



No **safeguarding decisions** are made by **one employee** alone.



Historical information on a child's record is checked each time a Safeguarding Referral is made (Section 5).



Historical information is also checked on the **record of the professional adult** who is the subject of a Section 5 enquiry.



"Magic Notes" is being **piloted** to facilitate the recording of safeguarding meetings (Section 5).

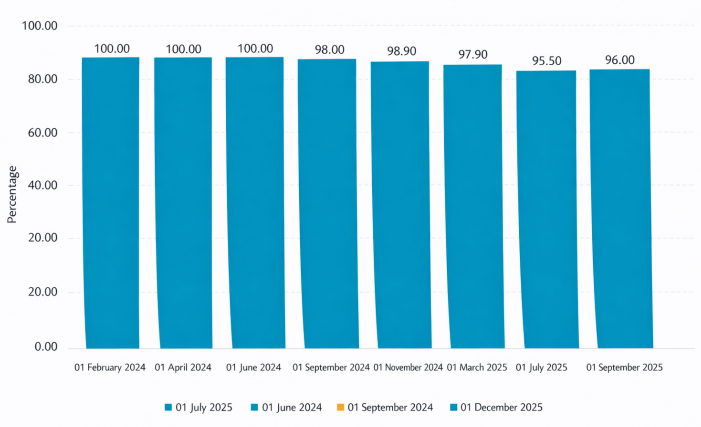


The **Quality Assurance Framework** has been **completed** to help ensure the Children's Department works effectively and consistently.

THEME 3 - TRAINING AND POLICIES Reporting Officer: Ian Jones	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff are trained to "think the unthinkable" and understand that "it could happen here".
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p><u>Whistleblowing Policy</u> The amended Whistleblowing Policy was adopted by the Full Council in March 2026, and work is afoot to raise awareness of the policy across the Council. We have also committed that relevant officers attend specialist training from the Protect organisation during the coming months (exact dates to be confirmed).</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Training</u> Progress has also been made in terms of converting Safeguarding training into video presentations so that they can be introduced to frontline staff across the Council. Work has also commenced on mapping the training needs of staff beyond the basic module so that they can support staff in the workplace. Group F training has also been carried out by an External Expert for the Council's Members.</p> <p><u>Grooming Training</u> The NSPCC will be commissioned to prepare the grooming training pack. The training will include two parts: 1. An on-line class for up to 5000 for officers across the Council, raising awareness of the signs of grooming, and how to respond, etc. The training will also be available to elected members and school Governors. 2. Face-to-face training for 20 officers (5 sessions booked, therefore 100 officers in total). This is specific for front-line workers; Social Workers, Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Persons in Schools and Headteachers. The aim is to start the sessions in June. There was some delay as a result of the need for bilingual materials.</p>
4. Challenges faced:	<p>Access to all Council staff to the Council's IT systems remains a challenge. However, a financial bid has recently been approved to facilitate the work, and a further work is in place to realise the ambition.</p>
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<p><u>Whistleblowing Policy</u> April – July 2026 > Raise awareness of the Whistleblowing policy amongst Council staff. April - December 2026 > Attend training sessions April - September 2026 > Introduce sessions to frontline staff on Safeguarding July 2026 - Complete mapping work on the training needs of Managers and Team Leaders</p>
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Work priorities continue to be challenging as a result of the Council's broader work programmes.</p>

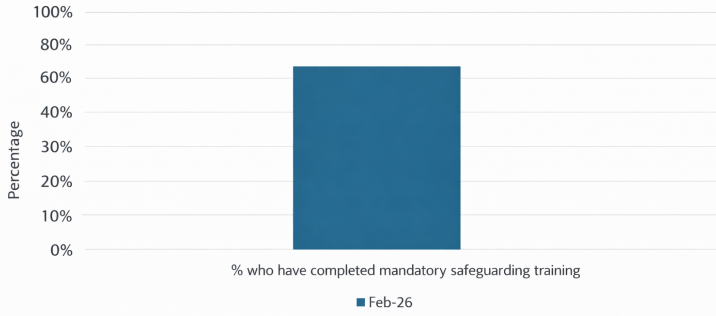
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Internal communication messages to be prepared in terms of Whistleblowing and Safeguarding matters			
8. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable
	32	1	Whistleblowing Policy	April 2026
	35	1	Training on keeping safeguarding records	April 2026
	45	1	Safeguarding Scrutiny Investigation	To be confirmed
	30	2	Grooming Training	To be confirmed
	38	2	Safeguarding Training - higher levels and training	To be confirmed
	34	3	Supervision of Designated Safeguarding Persons by social workers	To be confirmed
	29	4	Welsh Government to Commission a Training Resource	To be confirmed by WG
	31	4	Assurance for the Regional Safeguarding Board of the grooming training that will be held	To be confirmed
	33	4	Regional Safeguarding Boards have assurances that the LADO has received training	To be confirmed by the RSB
	36	5	Departmental Safeguarding/VAWDASV Training	Completed - ongoing monitoring
	37	5	Review the schools safeguarding training package	Ongoing
	40	5	Review the Corporate Safeguarding Policy every two years	Ongoing
	41	5	Review the Safeguarding Policy (Schools) every year	Ongoing
	42	5	Internal audit: The workforce's awareness of safeguarding	July 2026
	43	5	Monitoring DBS compliance	Ongoing
	44	5	Visits to monitor safeguarding arrangements in schools (Safeguarding and Welfare Team)	Ongoing
	39	Combined with number 38	"Advanced" Safeguarding Training	Combined with number 38
Grey = Completed or unable to implement as we are waiting for a national / regional change				
Measures (Impact)				

<div>DBS rates for staff</div>	<div><div>Percentage of staff who have not renewed their DBS in a timely manner</div><div>Blwyddyn 2024-2025 2025-2026</div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></div><div>1.2%</div></div><div><div></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Compliance with school safeguarding policies	<p>Metric: % of schools that have received a monitoring visit and are compliant at good or better with safeguarding requirements</p>  <table><thead><tr><th>Date</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>01 February 2024</td><td>100.00</td></tr><tr><td>01 April 2024</td><td>100.00</td></tr><tr><td>01 June 2024</td><td>100.00</td></tr><tr><td>01 September 2024</td><td>98.00</td></tr><tr><td>01 November 2024</td><td>98.90</td></tr><tr><td>01 March 2025</td><td>97.90</td></tr><tr><td>01 July 2025</td><td>95.50</td></tr><tr><td>01 September 2025</td><td>96.00</td></tr></tbody></table>	Date	Percentage	01 February 2024	100.00	01 April 2024	100.00	01 June 2024	100.00	01 September 2024	98.00	01 November 2024	98.90	01 March 2025	97.90	01 July 2025	95.50	01 September 2025	96.00	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>This is a measure that it reported regularly to the Education Performance Challenge arrangements.</p> <p>The next meeting is in May, and it will be possible to report on the data of the last 4 months at the July Board.</p>
Date	Percentage																			
01 February 2024	100.00																			
01 April 2024	100.00																			
01 June 2024	100.00																			
01 September 2024	98.00																			
01 November 2024	98.90																			
01 March 2025	97.90																			
01 July 2025	95.50																			
01 September 2025	96.00																			
% staff completed training on sex offenders and grooming	<p>Update:</p> <p>As a result of the delay to secure bilingual materials, the data will now be collected from June onwards.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>The intention is to start reporting on this data at the Board's meeting in July 2026.</p>																		
Staff and members' confidence in the Council's Whistleblowing arrangements	<p>Update:</p> <p>Further work is needed between April and July in order to raise awareness of the in-house arrangements.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Aiming to start reporting on this measure to the Board in September 2026.</p>																		
Outputs to date																				
<div><div><p>The Council has added information about "grooming" to the safeguarding training that is presented to all schools.</p></div><div><p>We are now looking at how many staff have completed Safeguarding training as part of the performance monitoring arrangements of each Department.</p></div><div><p>The Cabinet has adopted a new Whistleblowing Policy for Council staff.</p></div><div><p>Appointed a Corporate Safeguarding Champion to raise awareness of safeguarding across the Council.</p></div><div><p>A new Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team was established in 2024.</p></div><div><p>The Education Safeguarding and Welfare Team visits each school once a year to check that the correct rules are being followed.</p></div><div><p>The capacity of the Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team was increased - 4 members of staff now work for the team.</p></div><div><p>A video has been produced to deliver safeguarding training to frontline staff.</p></div></div>																				

THEME 4 - GOVERNANCE	
Reporting Officer: Alison Halliday	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that school governors understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. • Ensure that systems are in place which measure the wider health and culture of schools.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Challenge and scrutinise the progress – Offer any further guidance on the next steps
3. Progress to date:	<p><u>Safeguarding Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory safeguarding training in place for every Chair and Safeguarding Designated Governor in schools • Basic Safeguarding Training is mandatory for every Governor • A new Governor Handbook has been shared with all Governors and on the Gwynedd website <p><u>Appointment of a Governance Support Officer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Governance Support Officer has been appointed and will commence in the role in May 2026 <p><u>Effective Governance as a Critical Friend</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every leadership development programme in the authority gives purposive attention to the importance of effective governance with the need to foster a culture of honesty and transparency to ensure that governing bodies implement their role as a critical friend. • New headteachers and headteachers in charge, along with participants from the primary and secondary future leaders, have now received this training. <p><u>Training for Clerks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting agendas have been amended to ensure a specific and purposeful focus on the voice of the child, well-being and safeguarding. These programmes have been shared with the Authority's clerks of school governing bodies in April 2026 <p><u>Welsh Government</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have attended meetings with the Welsh Government to gain more information and updates regarding the review. A Welsh Government Representative will attend the next meeting of the Gwynedd Governance Forum to share an update and receive input on the governance challenges of smaller and rural schools. <p><u>Professional Clerk</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting job evaluations.
4. Challenges faced:	Dependencies - awaiting further guidance from Welsh Government following its review of governance arrangements within schools.

5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Induction of the new Governance Support Officer to their role - May 2026 onwards• Ensuring a comprehensive training programme for Governing Bodies June 2026 onwards• Appointment of a Professional Clerk to meet the demand and needs of schools for a clerk• Prompt response and implementation of all recommendations in the Welsh Government Review of governance arrangements. September 2026 onwards• Continue discussions with the Governance Hub company to respond to the need for a dashboard to capture all data and information in a convenient location.• Draw up a questionnaire for governors to measure the impact of training on the culture and their confidence as a critical friend of the school June - July 2026• Implement any findings, empowering a training programme for governing bodies																																
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapt the Authority's mandatory training in terms of governance before receiving national guidance following the review• The authority unable to meet the needs and demands of schools for a governing clerk from September onwards. <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (Number 46) - Additional resources will be required to establish a professional clerking model.																																
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information will need to be shared with Governors, including a comprehensive training programme.• We will appoint a Professional Clerk to meet the demand and needs of schools.																																
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Measures (Impact)						
% of school governing bodies reporting that all members have completed mandatory training	<p>Safeguarding - % of Gwynedd Governors who have completed mandatory safeguarding training</p>  <table><tr><th>Month</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Feb-26</td><td>65%</td></tr></table>	Month	Percentage	Feb-26	65%	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>This information is collected once a year during the Autumn Term by means of the Annual Safeguarding Questionnaire.</p>
Month	Percentage					
Feb-26	65%					
The Governing Body's confidence in their ability to be a Critical Friend of the school.	<p>Update:</p> <p>To be introduced in September 2026.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Information being collected before the end of the Summer term in order to be able to report to the Board at the beginning of the new term (September 2026).</p>				
Outputs to date						
 <p>A new Governor's Handbook has been created and shared with all Gwynedd School Governors.</p>	 <p>A new Officer has been appointed to support School Governors.</p>	 <p>A training program for clerks is available to all School Governing bodies.</p>				

THEME 5 - RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES	
Reporting Officer: Llion Williams	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update guidelines on filming physical restraint by adults, and how filming records should be kept.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An external company has been commissioned to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the current policy against national guidelines Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the policy. Recommend practical improvement steps which ensure full compliance and integrate restorative approaches and conversations. Recommend clear implementation arrangements with roles, accountability and restorative approach embedded in daily practice. Evaluate the training plan for staff in policy requirements and restorative conversations. Establish clear reporting arrangements for incidents, concerns and outcomes of restorative conversations. Number of associated policies shared to facilitate the evaluation Meeting held between the Headteacher of the Camu i'r Copa Referral Unit, Inclusion Manager and the officer who completes evaluation work to explain the implementation arrangements of the policy and the current training plan. Final steps are completed in the evaluation work before the report is submitted. After this, an action plan will be drawn up, and the implementation will respond to the findings. Scrutiny of the restrictive practice / early intervention policy has been added to the quality visits of the Safeguarding and Well-being Team since the end of February 2026 - Every school that has received a visit so far has adopted the lead policy of the Education Department The policy adoption / review date will be a part of the annual safeguarding questionnaire to Schools (Circulated annually in October) The Regional Safeguarding Group is developing an additional clause in the Regional policy to give guidance to schools on filming physical restraint by adults - this is not recommended in accordance with GDPR regulations and relevant legislation. The clause is in the process of being verified by the legal department of the lead County.
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing up and implementing improvements following the external consultation, subject to the company's completion timetable Current training data includes the schools of Anglesey and other agencies - There will be a need to develop and adapt the method of monitoring the need and numbers of staff who need/have been trained.
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an action plan following the evaluation - March 2026 Establish and implement monitoring and compliance with policy procedure - March 2026 Review the training strategy and plan - To be confirmed following the evaluation feedback

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the reporting and monitoring of school reports data arrangements - To be confirmed following the evaluation feedback 																														
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of commissioning and completing the work to evaluate the policy and arrangements take longer than expected Ongoing compliance of schools <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources and a system will be required to record 53.5 - collaborating with the IT Department to establish a system/Power App to keep data 																														
7. Communication Considerations:	-																														
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Measures (Impact)																															
% of school staff completing training on restrictive practices	<p>Update:</p> <p>Over 300 staff in 85 Gwynedd schools have received training over the past 3 years. This includes refresher training. The training programme is being managed and monitored by the inclusion team.</p> <p>Currently, training is being held based on need, applications or recommendations by the inclusion service. It is expected that this procedure will be refined following the findings of the evaluation. Further work needs to be completed in order to collect the data more effectively.</p>		<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Refine the collection arrangements following the evaluation by the external company</p>																												
% of schools complying with the restrictive practice model policy.	<p>Update:</p> <p>Scrutiny of the restrictive practice / early intervention policy has been added to the quality visits of the Safeguarding and Well-being Team since the end of February 2026 - Every school that</p>		<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Data being collected through the annual safeguarding</p>																												

	<p>has received a visit so far has adopted the lead policy of the Education Department</p> <p>Every school that has responded to the annual safeguarding questionnaire (October 2025), confirming that they have adopted the lead policy of the Education Department.</p>	questionnaire / visits of the Safeguarding and Well-being Team
Quality of Safeguarding – Policy compliance, level of training, reporting and evaluation processes are carried out during the annual visits.	<p>Update:</p> <p>During the new cycle of Safeguarding quality visits, the 29 schools that have received a visit confirm that they have adopted and that they comply with the Education Department's lead policy (100%).</p> <p>The adaptations, following the external evaluation, that will be implemented in the reporting procedure will become an additional part of the quality check visits</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>This aspect is being added to Quality of Safeguarding visits from the beginning of February 2026.</p>
Reporting on the following two measures in performance challenge meetings: - Number of reports of use of restrictive practices by schools. - % of reports that have received the child's voice as part of the report	<p>Update:</p> <p>These actions are subject to the recommendations deriving from the external evaluation.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Awaiting the results of the external company's evaluation.</p>
Outputs to date		
No restrictive practices infographic at present.		

THEME 6 - CRISIS PLANNING AND CRISIS RESPONSE	
Reporting Officer: Catrin Love	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a clear, strategic and co-ordinated plan is in place in a crisis situation
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenge and scrutinise the progress - Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>A consultative process has been held with specific schools that were involved with events on the day of the arrest at the school, in order to gain a better understanding.</p> <p>A draft Crisis Plan is in place which has incorporated all recommendations in the CPR report.</p> <p>Draft submitted to a small cohort of School Headteachers (mix of small and larger schools and Secondary schools), with several observations received.</p> <p>A draft of a collaboration agreement with the Police has been completed following discussions. It establishes a flexible framework for working together, which may at times include secondements, as well as an open-door approach and collaboration with victim contact teams.</p>
4. Challenges faced:	<p>The needs and ability of schools are different, subject to their size. First draft version identifying 7 key roles in schools in a crisis but, in practice, there are only 7 members of staff in total in a small school.</p> <p>Headteachers feel that there are too many documents and procedures relating to crisis in schools, with a request made to reconcile documents and incorporate them into a single document, e.g. fire / lockdown / safeguarding / crisis procedures.</p> <p>Need to adapt the original proposal in terms of communicating the Plan with the schools, Headteachers do not feel that a short presentation in a Business Meeting is sufficient.</p>
5. Next steps / key milestones :	<p>Re-introduce the Crisis Plan to the same cohort of School Headteachers, with their original comments incorporated within it. April 2026</p> <p>Agree on the communication and training method of every school May 2026</p> <p>Share collaboration agreements with the Police for comments, with the intention of adopting it formally. April 2026</p>
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Risks</p> <p>A suggestion that national guidance are to follow in this field which may change the content.</p>

	Resources Budget for an additional resource has been approved and in the process of advertising a post.			
7. Communication Considerations:	Need to communicate with school Governors Need to include broader sites than schools alone, e.g. leisure centres, residential homes, etc.			
8. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable
	54	2	Review the strategic serious incidents plan	Consultation period 31/3/26. Training Programme <i>Summer Term 2026</i>
	56	5	Plan in force which sets out steps to obtain swift support during a traumatic event	June 2026
	55	5	Official protocol to share information	Completed
	57	2	Arrange a secondment for a social worker to work with the Police (in accordance with the need)	Completed
	Grey = Completed or unable to implement as we are waiting for a national / regional change			
Measures (Impact)				
Number of schools / staff / Governors in each school who have received Emergency / Crisis Plan training.	Timetable: Training to be scheduled		Update: Reporting on this continues to be premature as there is a need to update and consult on the Plan before putting appropriate training in place.	
Number of satisfactory emergency plans on the Council's sites	Timetable: A programme of annual inspections to commence from September 2026.		Update: Reporting on this continues to be premature as there is a need to offer appropriate training and for it to be in place before establishing a monitoring programme.	
Outputs to date				



There is an **agreement to collaborate with the Police in an emergency**. This may involve a social worker being seconded to work with the Police for a period of time.

Theme 7 - Ysgol Friars

Reporting Officer: Margaret Davies

1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Ysgol Friars
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>Review the Governing Body's ability to implement the recommendations that will result from the CPR, realistically assessing what steps are beyond its capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance arrangements for wellbeing and safeguarding continue to strengthen. Governors demonstrate confidence in evaluating the wellbeing and safeguarding report, and a structured programme of support and challenge meetings between the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and the Safeguarding Governor takes place each term. There is clear evidence of a developing data pack, shaped in response to governor feedback—for example, termly attendance comparisons—which is improving the quality of strategic oversight. The termly report to GB provides governors with data in relation to safeguarding referrals, child protection and looked after children The school has established a wellbeing sub-committee that meets regularly to share information on high level data, patterns and actions/ responses school is taking on concerns The governing body scrutinises the safeguarding policies prior to ratification at full GB meeting. These are ratified annually. The school is working closely with local authority named safeguarding officers and an external specialist. The local authority is supporting the Governors as they develop their critical friend role. Safeguarding SER is now completed annually and presented to full Governing Body The governing body have been briefed on the potential recommendations from the Child Practice Review and will be working closely with school leaders to ensure that all

	<p>recommendations pertinent to school have been completed in a timely manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority's Safeguarding Officer continues to attend the governing body and Wellbeing and Safeguarding sub-committee to provide constructive support and challenge, and ensure regular feedback to the Authority regarding progress against the recommendations, and strengthen the working relationship between the school and the Authority. • The Safeguarding Lead meets with the Head/Designated Safeguarding Lead every three weeks and attends Governing Body meetings. <p>Strengthen training and support for governors in the areas of safeguarding, strategic accountability, and performance monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All governors have completed the NSPCC training, • A special meeting of the Governing Body was held on 1 December to focus on Safeguarding as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-evaluation form for Safeguarding and Child Protection – Estyn ○ Local Authority Audit ○ Comfortable Environment Protocol: Pre and Post Bereavement Support Protocol for Ysgol Friars Pupils ○ Safeguarding Training - Staff and Governors ○ Programme Board - Child Practice Review Outcome ○ Role and responsibilities of the Well-being and Safeguarding Sub-Committee <p>Support the interim Headteacher, Deputy and the two new Assistant Headteachers as they develop as a strong management team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SIA visited during the CPR publication and in preparation for the Estyn inspection. SIA continues to visit as needed during the year to discuss improvements to the school • 'Safe space' - half termly sessions have been arranged for all members of the leadership team by 'trauma informed schools'. • There is monthly supervision of the Designated Person by an independent consultant to support pressure on DSP at this time. • Cross-School collaboration – the school is continuing to work the A55 alliance which focus on literacy skills, and also with Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Ysgol Brynrefail and Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen in relation to the Gwynedd. A formal agreement has been developed between four schools and the first focus is inclusion.
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	<p>Support the recruitment and transition to a permanent Headteacher during 2026, reassuring staff and parents that robust arrangements are in place Cyngor Gwynedd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Headteacher appointed for 1 September 2026 start. <p>Strengthen middle leadership and ensure that school management processes are operational and transparent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Governors have been appointed and ‘School Guidance for Supportive Visits by Governors’ has been adopted by the Governing Body. Meetings have taken place with the faculties and are ongoing. General overview record form following a supportive visit to the school by a member of the Governing Body is sent to the Headteacher and Head of Faculty. • A first round of quality assurance has been completed, and a report of whole school-findings has been presented to the Governing Body. Whole school areas for further improvement have been included in the Schools Development Plan. • The Governing Body has adopted the PDR Policy. There has been a pause in national leadership development programmes this year, but they will be starting in September. The PL needs of staff currently being collated following their initial PDR meetings. <p>Pupil Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and governors place a high value on pupil voice, and this commitment is increasingly evident in the school’s developing structures and processes. A designated governor now attends school council meetings regularly, providing an effective link between pupils and the governing body and ensuring that learners’ perspectives inform strategic discussions. Head pupils meet routinely with the headteacher to raise important issues, and this dialogue is beginning to shape aspects of school development in a meaningful way. As a result, pupils feel that their views are listened to and that they can influence change within the school. However, leaders recognise that pupil voice is stronger at whole-school level than within tutor groups and year groups, where opportunities for consultation and participation remain inconsistent. Strengthening these layers of pupil voice, alongside establishing purposeful sub-committees to support the wide-ranging work of the school council, is therefore a clear next step. Initial training planned with the Children’s Commissioner for Wales is a timely and positive development that is expected to further enhance pupils’ confidence, advocacy skills, and the overall impact of pupil voice across the school community.
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Review and strengthen counselling and emotional support arrangements, ensuring sustainable and high quality provision for children and young people.

Wellbeing centre

- A 'Wellbeing centre report' was presented to Governing body in March 2026. There are currently 4 school based counsellors and a total of 53 students have been referred in this period (01/09/25-31/01/26) (KS3-31 students, KS4-10 students, KS5-12 students). Meetings with the school counselling team, DSP and Safeguarding Officer happen on a half termly basis. Initial meetings focused on the referral process, improving communication of appointments, improving communication between school-based counsellors and safeguarding team. Additional support sessions from the school-based counsellors have been agreed where there have been possible 'trigger' days. So far these have been on the:
 - Release of the CPR report
 - GCSE Maths results day
 - Don't steal my future workshop day (RASASC)

The rooms in the wellbeing centre are used regularly by a number of additional support services:

The School Nursing Service is based in the Centre and offers support and advice to children, young people and their families or carers to help ensure that they reach their full potential during their school aged years and beyond. Confidential advice and support can be offered for a wide range of issues.

Be' Di'r Sgôr - The Gwynedd and Anglesey Young People's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Service. The service is available to any young person up to the age of 25 who is or has been affected by drugs or alcohol, directly or through someone else. They work confidentially with young people to offer one to one support and advice, drop-in sessions in the community, education and prevention resources, and Guidance for families and professionals. Two members of the team have set up a weekly clinic at Ysgol Friars. This work includes:

- Holding targeted one to one or group sessions with pupils
- Offering advice and support sessions to staff, if it is useful

CAMHS Hub - Every month, there is a meeting of the CAMHS hub. This is early intervention prevention and promotion services. The purpose of the hub is:

- To provide advice, guidance and support to the multidisciplinary school environment.
- To upskill those working around the child within the school setting.
- To identify mental health difficulties, refer and intervene early within the school environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase awareness and knowledge of child mental health, and how to influence and foster resilience. • To enable the education system to positively influence mental health <p><u>Multi-agency work- Supporting attendance</u> - The wellbeing centre is also being used to support students in returning to school following lengthy periods of absence. Agencies who are supporting students with long term absences have started to schedule sessions in the wellbeing centre to bridge the gap between home and school. This is currently taking place with two student in Year 9 who have not attending school this academic year. The wellbeing centre is also used for meetings with social workers, support workers, police interviews and parent meetings.</p> <p>Support staff to build a culture of safety, trust and respect, providing additional training where necessary.</p> <p>Since 2023, the school reviewed its training model for safeguarding and child protection. In line with Gwynedd County Council, the school is compliant with the Group A, B and C training. We will continue to review this training model based on feedback from staff and local authority officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May, all Senior Leaders have completed the NSPCC Group C Designated persons training. New members of the senior leadership team have completed the training in September 2025 • In addition, the safeguarding officer has also completed their Group C training • In addition, the designated safeguarding person has attended Group C training facilitated by Gwynedd County Council • In September 2025, the senior leadership team have commissioned an independent trainer to facilitate Group B training to all staff during INSET day. This was a comprehensive training package that meets requirements of Group B training. • The school have also commissioned the independent trainer to work closely with our new designated safeguarding person to support, challenge and improve our safeguarding and child protection arrangements. This is an ongoing support Service for our DSP and safeguarding team on a monthly basis. • In addition, all staff have completed the online Group A training, Prevent and Violence against Women training which are online training modules • The school maintains records and ensures that all staff are appropriately trained child protection and safeguarding, prevent and sexual violence • All staff are aware of different levels aware of children's needs and aware on how to respond to their needs in different situations.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has moved towards a designated safeguarding team that can respond in an appropriate and timely manner to ensure that support is available at the time of need and referrals are made in a timely manner. • As of June 2025, all new staff are provided with safeguarding training as part of their induction. This is facilitated by our designated safeguarding person. • The local authority designated safeguarding lead meets with the school safeguarding team monthly to discuss trends and support. <p>Training for safeguarding and child protection is a priority at Ysgol Friars. The school is compliant with the local authority policy in providing Group A and Group B training. Designated and deputy designated persons are trained to Group C.</p> <p>This team approach ensures that there are robust arrangements in place to provide guidance to staff and liaises with Gwynedd County Council to ensure that we are up-to-date and compliant.</p> <p>To carry out regular safeguarding audits and provide ongoing assurance to the Authority and the Programme Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estyn's safeguarding self-evaluation and Gwynedd audit presented to governors. • A school audit is in place and feeds into the action plan. • LA safeguarding visit completed • Termly reports are presented to governors in relation to child protection / safeguarding and staff roles. <p>Communication and Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental communication remains an area for development. Plans for the creation of dedicated focus groups next term provide a clear route forward and offer the potential for more meaningful parental engagement in safeguarding and wellbeing conversations.
4. Challenges faced:	<p>Continue to clerk the Governing Body until sustainable arrangements are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has advertised three time for the role of the Clerk to the Governing Body but have been unsuccessful in appointing. The school will re-advertise again in the coming weeks following the publication of the Estyn Report. In the meantime, the current clerk continues to work closely with the Project Lead. <p>Strengthen training and support for governors in the areas of safeguarding, strategic accountability, and performance monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting to hear how compulsory training will change nationally before detailing further.

5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further embed pupil voice by working closely with the children's commissioner's team • To ensure that recommendations in our Estyn report are incorporated into whole school planning • To further develop our graduated response to social emotional and challenging behaviour
6. Risks / Resources:	<p>Ensure that the role of the temporary additional Safeguarding Officer is effectively integrated, with a clear framework in terms of accountability and oversight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and staffing committee to consider the future following receipt of next year's budget.
7. Communication Considerations	<p>Communication and Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental communication remains an area for development.
8. Timelines:	

Our Bravery Brought Justice - Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan

Progress Report

15.07.2026

THEME 1 - VOICE OF THE CHILD AND SUPPORTING VICTIMS	
Reporting Officer: Gwern ap Rhisiart	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that children are listened to, and that they are believed and taken seriously. Give a voice to children and young people in processes that have been planned to keep them safe. Do everything within our ability to support the victims and survivors.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps
3. Progress to date:	<p>The Voice of the Child Strategy</p> <p>A Voice of the Child Strategy has now been fully drawn up in draft form, with the following specific appendices developed to support the strategy as a whole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Voice of the Child in Children Services The Voice of the Learner in Education The Voice of Children and Young People Forums The Voice of the Child Strategic Integration and Governance <p>The strategy and appendices set a clearer procedure on how the voice of children and young people is heard, recorded and used to steer decisions and integrated into the Council's governance arrangements. (copy shared with Board for information)</p> <p>A full day has been arranged for 16 July to go through the whole strategy with the Children and Young People's Forum. This will give them an appropriate opportunity to consider the strategy and appendices in detail, to discuss the content and consider the proposed arrangements before proceeding to the next steps. The Forum's feedback will be an important part of the process of refining the strategy before its final approval and embedment across relevant services.</p> <p>We have advertised twice and have interviewed twice for the Engagement Officer post. Unfortunately, we failed to appoint and we have now advertised for the third time. We will use the Council's communication team to promote the role through our social media websites.</p> <p>Recording</p> <p>There has been no significant change in terms of recording arrangements since the previous report, but positive progress has been made in ensuring that all schools now have access to an electronic system to record relevant matters. Therefore, every school now has the ability to record changes in behaviour, concerns or relevant information digitally, either on Bromcom or current systems such as MyConcern.</p>

	<p>It is important to note that the majority of schools still use MyConcern, but all schools have now got access to a suitable electronic system. This gives a more consistent basis for recording work and reduces the risk of relying on paper arrangements or inconsistent processes.</p> <p>Trauma-informed and Child Friendly The Trauma-informed e-modules are now live on the learning portal, providing the basic knowledge for all staff and councillors. Work is also underway to arrange training sessions for Cabinet Members, Department Heads and Assistant Department Heads, while the Cabinet Member for Children completes a Diploma in trauma-informed practice.</p> <p>Progress is also continuing on the work of Children's Rights across the Council, which includes collaborating with the Highways Service to develop a more child-friendly method of engagement when planning playing fields. There is a need to prepare and support every department to incorporate children's rights in their day-to-day work and develop a stronger corporate awareness of these principles - there is an e-module training (via the Welsh Government's hub) and it is intended to arrange sessions on children's rights for managers and teams in the autumn.</p> <p>Contact Outside School Quality checking visits continue to check that contact numbers and appropriate information are available for children to use if they wish to contact external agencies or ask for support outside school. This is a part of the continuous monitoring cycle of the Safeguarding and Well-being Team. Since the last meeting, no example has arisen where the information available to learners has been found to be inadequate or inappropriate.</p>
<p>4. Challenges faced:</p>	<p>One of the main challenges in taking this work forward is the increasing demand on the Children and Young People's Forum. While Forum members are fully capable of considering, challenging and giving opinions on important areas, it is necessary to recognise that they also have their own priorities and pressures, including school commitments, exams and other activities. It is clear that an increasing number of areas of work wish to have input from the Forum, and this is something that will need to be carefully managed. It is not appropriate to continually pull young people out of lessons, and bringing together young people from across Gwynedd to one setting is also a significant practical challenge.</p> <p>Another challenge that needs to be recognised is the concern that the priorities of the Youth Forum could be pushed aside due to the Department's agenda and the requirements of the Response Plan. While this work requires clear and purposeful input from children and young people, it is also important that this does not mean that their priorities are lost or downgraded. The balance that needs to be struck is that the Forum can meaningfully contribute to the priorities of the Response Plan, but also remain a space where young people can raise the issues that matter most to them.</p> <p>A date has now been scheduled for a meeting with the Forum on 16 July, when there will be an opportunity to go through the complete strategy and associated appendices. This will give the young people appropriate time to consider the content in a meaningful way. It also needs to be recognised that the end of the school year period brings a natural change in the membership of the Forum, as some young people leave education or move on to a new era.</p>

	<p>In addition, the Department's ability to devote the necessary time and capacity to this work remains a challenge, given the many strategic and practical priorities currently in place. However, work continues to progress, and officers will consider a more structured annual programme with the Forum to ensure that their input is carefully planned and used effectively.</p> <p>Moving forward, it will be necessary to ensure that the Forum's work programme gives sufficient space to the young people's own priorities, whilst also ensuring that their voice contributes directly to the improvement work that is part of the Response Plan. This will help maintain the credibility of the Forum, reduce pressure on members, and ensure that the arrangements remain meaningful and fair for the young people involved. With this in mind, the completion of work on the strategy will be timed following the session with the Forum on 16 July, so that the feedback from the young people can be appropriately incorporated before moving on to the next stages.</p> <p>Another challenge will be recruiting for the Engagement Officer post. We are now starting the process for the third time. This is a reflection on a lack of suitable people out there to do the work.</p>
<p>5. Next steps / key milestones:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a full session with the Children and Young People's Forum on 16 July to discuss the Voice of the Child Strategy and associated appendices in their entirety, giving the young people an adequate opportunity to consider the content and offer meaningful feedback. • Incorporate the Forum's feedback into the final strategy and appendices, ensuring that young people's views are clearly reflected before proceeding to formal approval. • Complete and refine the specific appendices for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Voice of the Child in Children Services; ○ The Voice of the Learner in Education; ○ The Voice of Children and Young People Forums; ○ The Voice of the Child Strategic Integration and Governance. • Develop an annual work programme with the Youth Forum, to ensure an appropriate balance between the young people's own priorities and the need to receive their input on the priorities of the Recovery Plan. • Consider practical and sustainable arrangements for engaging with young people from across Gwynedd, including travel challenges, meeting timing, and natural changes to Forum membership at the end of the school year. • Continue to strengthen corporate arrangements for the child's voice, ensuring that the strategy influences relevant decision-making processes, governance arrangements and service plans. • Confirm the recording arrangements across schools, noting that all schools now have access to an electronic system, while continuing to monitor the consistent and effective use of systems such as MyConcern and Bromcom. • Continue the monitoring cycle through quality check visits, including checking that appropriate information is available to learners about how to contact external agencies or get support outside of school. • Appointment of Engagement Officer.

6. Risks / Resources:	<p>The main risks are the availability and capacity of the Children and Young People Forum, especially considering exam pressures, travel distances and the natural change in the Forum's membership at the end of a school year.</p> <p>There is also a risk that the priorities of the Youth Forum are pushed aside by the requirements of the Response Plan, along with the challenge of ensuring sufficient capacity within the Department to move the work forward.</p>																																											
7. Communication Considerations	<p>A clear communication plan will be required when publishing the strategy, ensuring that children and young people see where their input has influenced the work.</p> <p>An accessible and child-friendly version will be required, along with clear messages for schools, governors, services and partners. It will also be important to manage expectations and clearly show how the voice of children and young people leads to action.</p>																																											
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Regular opportunities for victims / survivors to provide feedback to Cyngor Gwynedd about the quality and sufficiency of the support	<p>Update: Continue meetings with the advocates of victims, with continuous discussions about the level of support available, or required, this includes the needs of the family as well as the individual. Four out of five of the victims are in contact with either ISVAs or social services.</p> <p>Conversations are now taking place on an individual level with the ISVA's to tailor bespoke support packages. In addition, one-to-one contact with one of the victims takes place, either on a face-to-face basis or on Teams based on the wishes of the individual; again, in order to discuss needs on an individual and family level.</p> <p>One of the largest challenges is identifying specialist services / interventions for victims in a therapeutic field in the area. There is an agreement to map the availability of therapeutic services locally / across the region.</p>	<p>Timetable: Board Meeting July 2026</p>
Confidence and experience of safeguarding in schools	<p>Update: The Youth Forum developed a questionnaire to gather the views of young people about their confidence and the experience of safeguarding within schools, with 1,291 responses across the county.</p> <p>The responses showed that over 80% of pupils noted that they were able to speak with someone at the school if support is needed, while 14% said that they could not and 6% did not respond.</p> <p>Also, 75% noted that they knew where to go for support, 6% were uncertain, 4% did not know and 15% did not respond.</p> <p><u>Scrutiny and Safeguarding Committee Report</u> The report shows that there is a solid foundation of confidence and safeguarding experience in Gwynedd schools, with staff and governors taking their responsibilities seriously, but that consistency of training, clarity of reporting pathways, and everyone's confidence to act immediately when there is any concern need to be strengthened.</p>	<p>Timetable: Annual Review (March)</p> <p>Reported to the Board in April 2026.</p> <p>July 2026 Update: Scrutiny Committee Report</p>
Health and Well-being of Gwynedd Schools (School Life)	<p>Update: The Report on the results of the <i>Survey on Health in Schools Research Network (SHRN): Improve the health and welfare of learners</i> for Secondary Schools has not yet been published by Public Health Wales.</p> <p>After receiving the results, they will be analysed by the department's data officers.</p>	<p>Timetable: October 2026 Board</p>

Percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child (5+ years old) were heard	Update: Percentage of case conferences where the child's voice/opinion was heard (aged 5+) - 96%	Timetable: Data for April – June 2026
Percentage of section 5 referrals where a social worker has made a proactive effort to visit and listen to the voice of the child (5+yrs)	Update: Percentage of section 5 referrals where a social care worker has made a proactive effort to visit and listen to the child's voice (aged 5+) - 90%	Timetable: Data for January – June 2026

Outputs to date



A social worker makes a proactive effort to hear the voice of every child subject to a Safeguarding Referral (Section 5)



All schools display information about an independent person that pupils can talk to if they have safeguarding concerns.



A special role has been appointed to help develop the Gwynedd Youth Forum.



The Council works together with partners in order to offer ongoing support to the victims.



All schools have access to an electronic data management system so that changes in a child's behavior can be recorded.

THEME 2 - MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AND CONCERNS ABOUT ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN Reporting Officer: Dylan Owen / Sharron Williams Carter	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect children by ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and acted upon quickly. Ensure that Section 5 arrangements support a consistent and robust multi-agency response to allegations and concerns about adults working with children.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>WCCIS form changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCCIS forms to receive referrals were changed to ensure that broader, historical and associated information is checked. WCCIS forms to decide on the actions of a referral were changed to ensure that a multi-officer and multi-agency discussion is held where appropriate. <p>Referral Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was ensured that the referral form and referral methods were clear on our corporate website and on the intranet. A request was made to trial the new national referral form. (<i>See the Briefing Paper that explains the changes in detail</i>) <p>Multi-agency Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was ensured that multi-officer and multi-agency conversations and discussions are held to agree on actions following the receipt of referrals. Discussions were held with partners to ensure regular and consistent collaboration and co-production systems. It was agreed to implement a direct contact system to discuss referrals on a consistent and regular basis and this is in place with applications made to agencies to nominate a link for section 5 meetings. This will develop the relationship and expertise in the field and ensure consistency when following processes and making decisions. See attached paper; (<i>See the Briefing Paper that explains the changes in detail</i>) <p>Recording Safeguarding Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional training on recording safeguarding matters was prepared for the social services workforce (adults and children) as part of the presenting and training system on Beam notes (previously Magic Notes), which will be implemented at the beginning of July. <p>Quality Assurance Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new Quality Assurance Framework was developed for the Children's Department in its entirety and it has now been implemented; Additional funding was secured for the admissions team for a DOS/Quality Assurance post. These jobs were advertised and there were recent appointments with start dates in the jobs soon; <p>Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of appointing a head of Children's Department for a year, there was a domino effect and now several posts have been filled across the Department at all levels of the organisation;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions were held with the Training Unit and the University on the Department's ability to recruit adequate social workers in light of the increased demand and additional funding. It was agreed that the Department would create additional trainee posts working with the Training Unit to ensure support for the prospective trainee; It was agreed to fund and create a workforce planning job with internal funding (not new funding) to collaborate with the Human Resources Department to develop a plan and implement it; <p>Collaboration with the Education Department</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First joint meetings were held between school headteachers and senior managers of the Council's Children's Department; Management Team (Education and Children Departments) meetings were held on a joint basis for some months and the Assistant Head responsible for the education welfare service will regularly join the Children's Management Team; <p>Responding to requests from the Education Scrutiny Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the request of the Education Scrutiny Committee, a Section 5 inspection was carried out looking at multiple referrals for individuals back to 2020, considering whether those issues were appropriately implemented and if those issues needed to be revisited. That inspection will be reported to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel in early July; At the request of the Education Scrutiny Committee, an inspection was carried out on arrangements to consider transferable risks from Human Resources and Discipline matters of the education workforce to a Section 5 referral. That inspection will be reported to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel in early July.
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was uneasiness in parts of the Children's Department that could mitigate the risk appetite due to the resentful atmosphere seen publicly on social media in general, but that situation seemed to gradually improve; Similarly, the new management appointments meant that many new officers were gaining their first experiences of managing and leading on higher levels; Our use of Beam was challenged by the Police and the Health Board, with both organisations stating that they would not be involved in meetings if Beam was used in them. Clearer guidance is expected on this.
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National communication was received on the new operating systems that will be implemented for Section 5 matters. There will be a need to work to ensure that the Council systems correspond and meet the need of the new statutory guidance; Using Beam, it is intended to enable the recording of strategy discussions (Section 5) automatically, with the need to check accuracy only by the LADO. This enables the development of a consistent and quality systematic recording system; It is noted that the Quality Assurance Framework and Section 5 operating systems are coloured grey to show their completion in the table on the next page, but it will be necessary to check that these issues remain operational and effective over time. It is intended to revisit to consider that in 6 months (14 January 2027) with the Children's Department management team to check and provide further assurance of the lasting effects.

6. Risks / Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While work is underway on workforce planning and creating apprenticeship jobs, there are recognised recruitment challenges that can lead to some positive growth. • There is concern about the intentions of a television production company that has expressed an interest in the story surrounding Friars School and the <i>Our Courage</i> Brought Justice report. The Council is seeking to establish further details about this.
7. Communication Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the press narrative on other historical cases suggesting shortcomings in the Council's safeguarding methods, a plan will be required to give public assurance, especially through the work of the Response Board, external inspectors and collaboration with the Government on providing assurance of effective services. • The possible intentions of the television production company could reignite public attention and create challenges for the Council, as well as affect workforce confidence in its safeguarding work.

8. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable	
	18	1	Ensure that the Section 5 referral form will be easy to find and easy to use.	To be confirmed	
	25	1	Quality of Strategy Discussion recording (Part 5)	September-2026	
	14	3	Welsh Government to develop a Low-level Concerns Policy	Awaiting implementation by WG	
	11	3	Welsh Government to note that the Voice of the Child needs to be heard following the Section 5 referral	Awaiting a copy from WG	
	12	3	Regional Safeguarding Board to scrutinise arrangements for dealing with Welsh Government allegations	Awaiting confirmation from the RSB	
	20	3	Welsh Government to review the Section 5 procedures	Awaiting a copy from WG	
	21	3	Welsh Government to publish the 10-Year Strategy on preventing the sexual abuse of children	Published	
	13	4	Collaborate with schools on any safeguarding issues that arise following the ESTYN inspections	Ongoing	
	15	4	Safeguarding (Section 5) decisions being made on a multi-agency basis, and not by the LADO alone	Arrangements being implemented and refined	
	16	4	Consider historical safeguarding information on a child's records	Completed	
	17	4	Section 5 and Quality Assurance Framework implementation arrangements	Framework completed	
	19	4	A transparent and open culture of dealing with referrals	Ongoing	
	22	4	Establish a Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Service	Continuous Review	
	23	4	Improve the relationship between the children's teams and schools	Ongoing	
	24	4	Strengthen collaboration / Communication between the Children and Education Departments	Ongoing	
Gray = Delay until a national / regional change is implemented Green = Completed (monitoring)					
Measures (Impact)					

Staff confidence and experiences of Section 5 referrals and dealing with safeguarding concerns	<p>Update:</p> <p>We are considering whether something can be done as part of the internal investigation of the awareness of the safeguarding workforce (internal audit).</p> <p>We are delaying before conducting an internal audit on the workforce's awareness in order to give time for the materials produced by the Corporate Safeguarding Promoter to take root.</p> <p>The application is being submitted to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel in July for consideration.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Awaiting the decision of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.</p> <p>To be reported by the Board meeting in October 2026.</p>
Attendance of the Chair of Governors or deputy at a Section 5 strategy meeting if there is an allegation about a member of a school's workforce.	<p>Update:</p> <p>This is regularly monitored as part of the Section 5 Strategy meetings.</p> <p>There are challenges in terms of reporting on the data through the current system (WCCIS), and there is currently a need to undertake manual administrative work to count the information. Further work is ongoing to examine ways of simplifying the process and facilitating the work of data reporting in future.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>October 2026 Board.</p>
Estyn inspection reports: numbers who comply with safeguarding culture	<p>Update:</p> <p>18/19 schools comply with safeguarding culture according to ESTYN findings - one school needs to follow Safeguarding recruitment arrangements more accurately</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Reported quarterly</p>

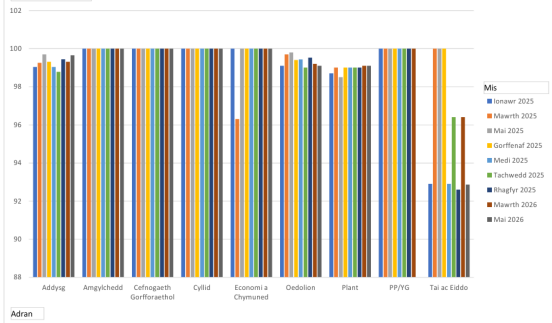
Outputs to date

 <p>Managers from the Children's and Education Departments meet regularly to strengthen collaboration.</p>	 <p>No safeguarding decisions are made by one employee alone.</p>	 <p>Historical information and records are checked each time a Safeguarding Referral is made (Section 5).</p>	 <p>The form for referring allegations of abuse is easier to find on the Council's website and on the Schools' "hub" website.</p>
 <p>"Magic Notes" is being piloted to facilitate the recording of safeguarding meetings (Section 5).</p>	 <p>The Quality Assurance Framework has been completed to help ensure the Children's Department works effectively and consistently.</p>	 <p>We have appointed a Quality Assurance Manager to ensure that the correct procedures are followed in the Children's Department.</p>	

THEME 3 - TRAINING AND POLICIES Reporting Officer: Ian Jones	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that staff are trained to "think the unthinkable" and understand that "it could happen here".
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>Safeguarding Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of Council staff who have completed the mandatory Safeguarding training - 76.6% The collective training for workers (via video) who do not have access to the Council's digital system has commenced. The feedback has been very positive with a positive response in terms of the form of the training and the discussion among staff has been very good. 67 workers have received the training in this format so far. The new intranet site is also up and running in terms of promoting and offering guidance and if you have access to the site, here is the link for your convenience: Safeguarding - It's everyone's responsibility. A video has also been produced to promote that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in the workforce. A copy of the video can be viewed as an attachment. The work of identifying cohorts of staff who require the specialist training on Safeguarding continues and is being monitored by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel. <p>Review of the Safeguarding Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cabinet adopted a revised Safeguarding Policy at its meeting on 7 July, following a comprehensive review undertaken between January and June 2026: Safeguarding Policy (June 2026). The Policy was strengthened by making the process for raising safeguarding concerns more prominent at the beginning of the document, clarifying roles, responsibilities and accountability at all levels, and introducing clearer safeguarding responsibilities when commissioning services. New governance measures were introduced to strengthen oversight, including monitoring safeguarding training completion rates through the Performance Challenge process, establishing safeguarding as a standing agenda item for the Corporate Management Team and departmental management teams, and continuing the annual reporting arrangements to the Care Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Full Council. <p>Grooming Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following several questions raised at the Board meeting in April, a briefing note has been prepared to explain the scope of the grooming training and to provide a clearer timetable for delivery. (See the Briefing Paper that explains the changes in detail) <p>Whistle-blowing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new Whistle-blowing Policy has now been adopted by the Council and a further amendment was approved by the Full Council on 2 July. This

	<p>was done in order to extend the reportable complaints to include complaints about sexual harassment in light of a legislation change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new E-module in terms of the policy has now been developed and it is anticipated that we will release it to all Council staff before the end of July. In addition, approximately 120 Council managers have received a presentation on the new policy as part of the recent managers' network meetings. • As a result of the collaboration with the Protect organisation, specialist training on whistle-blowing will be introduced in October this year and it is anticipated that this will lead to further similar sessions in future. • For information alone, the Whistle-blowing Policy for Members was also adopted by the Full Council at its meeting on 2 July.
4. Challenges faced:	The Safeguarding Promotion Officer had to be absent from work recently due to surgery, therefore, there was a slippage of a few weeks in terms of presenting the video to others. This is expected to change soon so that the momentum can continue.
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to hold collective training sessions on safeguarding for staff who do not have access to the Council's digital systems. 2. Complete and introduce a new E-module on the Whistle-blowing Policy for all Council staff. 3. Identify alternative ways in terms of presenting the Whistle-blowing training for those staff who do not have access to the Council's digital systems.
4. Risks / Resources:	
5. Communication Considerations:	

6. Timelines:	Number	Priority	What?	Timetable
	32	1	Whistle-blowing Policy	Completed
	35	1	Training on keeping safeguarding records	September 2026
	30	1	Grooming Training	September 2026
	38	1	Safeguarding Training - higher levels and training	To be confirmed
	34	2	Supervision of Designated Safeguarding Persons by social workers	To be confirmed
	29	3	Welsh Government to Commission a Training Resource	To be confirmed by WG
	31	3	Assurance for the Regional Safeguarding Board of the grooming training that will be held	To be confirmed
	33	3	Regional Safeguarding Boards have assurances that the LADO has received training	To be confirmed by the RSB
	36	4	Departmental safeguarding/VAWDASV training level	Completed - ongoing monitoring
	37	4	Review the schools safeguarding training package	Ongoing
	40	4	Review the Corporate Safeguarding Policy every two years	Ongoing
	41	4	Review the Safeguarding Policy (Schools) every year	Ongoing
	42	4	Internal audit: The workforce's awareness of safeguarding	Completed
	43	4	Monitor DBS compliance	Ongoing
	44	4	Visits to monitor safeguarding arrangements in schools (Safeguarding and Welfare Team)	Ongoing
	45	4	Safeguarding Scrutiny Investigation	Completed
	Gray = Delay until a national / regional change is implemented			
	Green = Completed (monitoring)			
Measures (Impact)				

<p>DBS rates for staff</p>	<p>Siem o Carran DBS (%)</p>  <p>Update: Compliance rates remain high across the departments, with every department higher than 90%. The main reasons for any DBS that has not been renewed include maternity leave, long-term sickness leave and waiting for the renewal process to be completed.</p>	<p>Timetable: This is a measure that is reported regularly to the Corporate Performance Challenge meeting.</p> <p>The figures per department are also scrutinised through the Safeguarding Operational Group.</p>
<p>Completing mandatory safeguarding training</p>	<p>Update: 76.6% of all Council staff have now completed the Safeguarding training.</p> <p>67 workers have received the training in video form so far.</p>	<p>Timetable: This data is scrutinised at the Safeguarding Operational Group.</p> <p>The data is now also included in the performance challenge of every Department.</p>
<p>Number and percentage of school quality check visits</p>	<p>Update: Since January 2026, until the end of May 2026, 52 schools (55%) have received a quality monitoring visit. 13 other visits have been arranged for the summer term.</p> <p>This means that 65 schools (70%) will have received a monitoring visit in a term in two school terms from the calendar year. The remaining 29 schools will receive a visit in the 14 school weeks between September and December.</p> <p>The Service is on track to visit every school at least once in a calendar year. As well as the monitoring visits, the service holds additional support visits in response to requests or need.</p>	<p>Timetable: This is a measure that is reported regularly to the Education Performance Challenge arrangements.</p>

Compliance with school safeguarding policies	Update: The Education Department provides a model policy for schools annually. The annual Safeguarding survey confirms that every school has adopted the model safeguarding policy. In addition, annual quality visits verify that the policy has been adopted and that it has not been changed.	Timetable: This is a measure that is reported regularly to the Education Performance Challenge arrangements.
% of staff completed training on sex offenders and grooming	Update: As a result of the delay to secure bilingual materials, the data will now be collected from September 2026 onwards.	Timetable: The intention is to start reporting on this data at the Board's meeting in October 2026.
Staff and members' confidence in the Council's Whistleblowing arrangements	Update: Further work is needed between April and July in order to raise awareness of the in-house arrangements.	Timetable: Aiming to start reporting on this measure to the Board in September 2026.

Outputs to date



The Council has added information about "grooming" to the safeguarding training that is presented to all schools.



We are now looking at how many staff have completed Safeguarding training as part of the performance monitoring arrangements of each Department.



The Cabinet has adopted a new Whistleblowing Policy for Council staff.



Appointed a Corporate Safeguarding Champion to raise awareness of safeguarding across the Council.



A new Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team was established in 2024.



The Education Safeguarding and Welfare Team visits each school once a year to check that the correct rules are being followed.



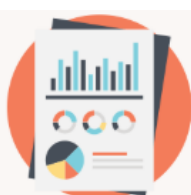
The capacity of the Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team was increased - 4 members of staff now work for the team.



A video has been produced to deliver safeguarding training to frontline staff.



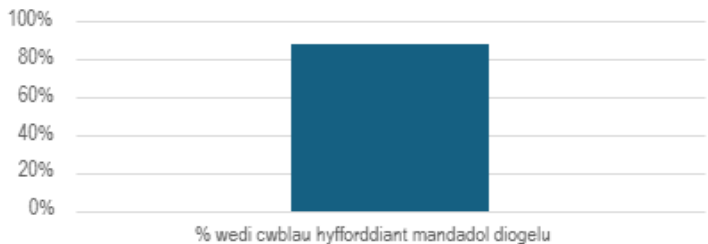
The Council has adopted a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy.



The Scrutiny Investigation into safeguarding in schools has been completed. We will look at implementing its recommendations.

THEME 4 - GOVERNANCE Reporting Officer: Alison Halliday	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that school governors understand their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe. • Ensure that systems are in place which measure the wider health and culture of schools.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Challenge and scrutinise the progress – Offer any further guidance on the next steps
3. Progress to date:	<p>Governance Support Officer The Governance Support Officer has now commenced in her post and has familiarised with her new duties successfully. The officer has attended several meetings with similar officers on a regional and national basis, and has also created a questionnaire to gather the opinions of governing bodies about their confidence when carrying out their role as a critical friend and further training needs.</p> <p>Questionnaire for Gwynedd School Governors A questionnaire to measure the impact of training on the culture and confidence of members to act as a critical friend has been distributed. To date, we have received 23 responses, which is equivalent to 26% of our governing bodies. Early findings offer a useful insight into the running of bodies and has been the basis of creating a draft training programme to meet needs and empower our governing bodies from September 2026 onwards.</p> <p>Safeguarding Training for Governors Mandatory Safeguarding training for Chairs and Designated Safeguarding Governors who failed to attend during the year is held on 7 July.</p> <p>Training for Clerks Training was presented to clerks at the end of April 2026. 23 clerks attended the training which represents 46% of our governing bodies. Positive feedback was received from 19 clerks. We will hold the training again at the beginning of September 2026. We intend to establish a Clerks Forum to meet every term and regularly share good practice.</p> <p>Governance Review - Welsh Government The Education Department has offered comments formally to the review. A Welsh Government representative will attend the Gwynedd Governors Forum on 8 July to gather opinions and input on the governance challenges of smaller and rural schools.</p>
4. Challenges faced:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependence - awaiting further guidance from the Welsh Government following its review of governance arrangements within schools. • Lack of representation from every governing body on the clerking training. • The professional clerk post had been re-advertised due to a lack of interest.

5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appoint a professional clerk to add capacity to the Governance Support Department and to ensure that we meet the demand for clerks from amongst our schools. By September 2026.• Analyse the data from the Governors Survey to report on the confidence of our Governing Bodies when carrying out their role as a Critical Friend at our meeting in September 2026. Use the findings to steer our training programme for Governors for 2026-27.• Draw up a comprehensive Training programme for Governing Bodies that ensures that new Chairs and Vice-chairs complete mandatory training within statutory deadlines, namely 6 months from commencing in their role.• Establish a Clerks Forum to ensure that regular training is offered to clerks and an opportunity to regularly share good practice. September 2026 onwards• Establish a Chairs Forum to share regular updates about specific aspects e.g. policies.																																
6. Risks / Resources:	Risk <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapt the Authority's arrangements in terms of excessive governance before receiving national guidance following the review.• Failure to appoint to the role of professional clerk and, as a result, failure to meet the needs and requirements of schools for a clerk from September onwards.• Overload our governors with training. It must be ensured that our training programme has been rationalised over time.																																
7. Communication Considerations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any change in our expectations will need to be communicated clearly and unambiguously so that the Chair and governors understand that there is a deadline to complete any mandatory training.																																
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<p>% of school governing bodies reporting that all members have completed mandatory training</p>	<p>Diogelu - % Llywodraethwyr Gwynedd wedi cwblhau'r hyfforddiant mandadol diogelu</p>  <p>The chart is a bar graph with a vertical axis labeled from 0% to 100% in increments of 20%. A single blue bar extends to the 100% mark. Below the bar, the text reads '% wedi cwblhau hyfforddiant mandadol diogelu'.</p>	<p>Timetable: Reported Annually - This information is collected during the Autumn Term by means of the Annual Safeguarding Questionnaire.</p>
<p>The Governing Body's confidence in their ability to be a Critical Friend of the school.</p>	<p>Update: To be introduced in September 2026.</p>	<p>Timetable: Information being collected before the end of the summer term in order to be able to report to the Board at the beginning of the new term (September 2026).</p>
<p>Outputs to date</p>		
 <p>A new Governor's Handbook has been created and shared with all Gwynedd School Governors.</p>	 <p>A new Officer has been appointed to support School Governors.</p>	 <p>A training program for clerks is available to all School Governing bodies.</p>

THEME 5 - RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES	
Reporting Officer: Llion Williams	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the early intervention training policy and structure and update guidance to schools about filming physical intervention.
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>An external company has been commissioned to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the current policy against national guidelines Analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the policy. Recommend practical improvement steps which ensure full compliance and integrate restorative approaches and conversations. Recommend clear implementation arrangements with roles, accountability and restorative approach embedded in daily practice. Evaluate the training plan for staff in policy requirements and restorative conversations. Establish clear reporting arrangements for incidents, concerns and outcomes of restorative conversations. <p>The findings of the external evaluation noted:</p> <p>The review confirms that the Authority has a sound policy basis, based on the principles of human rights, prevention and a pupil-focused approach. The current model policy corresponds appropriately with the Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework (Wales, 2022), and effectively reflects the statutory duties noted in relevant legislation. However, although the policy basis is strong, the review reaches a consistent conclusion, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that the lack of operational system development, monitoring and evaluation limits the effectiveness of the existing arrangements. This identifies the need to shift the strategic focus from further policy development to strengthening the system of implementation and accountability that underpins its operation. <p>Legislative Framework and Policy</p> <p>Current arrangements include several substantial strengths, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear commitment to human rights principles, dignity and well-being of pupils strong emphasis on prevention, de-escalation and early intervention firm understanding of the legal framework regarding the use of reasonable force <p>The reviews have noted several key gaps that hinder effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance; Roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms are not clearly defined across the system. Using Data; Although data is gathered, it is not analysed or used systematically to steer strategic decisions. Consistency of Practice; There is variation between schools in terms of interpreting and implementing the policy. Training; There is no authority-wide framework to ensure continued competence or to monitor training. Quality of Recording; There is a lack of clarity in some records regarding the rationale and risk of harm that justifies the use of force.

	<p>Action:</p> <p>The evidence shows that the matters highlighted mainly involve the implementation of systems rather than shortcomings in the policy itself. Practically, this means that the strategic challenge includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shifting from a policy-focused approach to an implementation-focused approach • converting theoretical principles into regular and measurable practice • ensuring that every school operates within general and consistent expectations <p>The strategic response seeks to establish an integrated system of implementation that enables the Education Department to monitor, challenge and improve practice in a systematic manner.</p> <p>Action Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Supervision A clear Governance structure will be established that defines roles and responsibilities on a School, Authority and Strategic level. • Using Data A central data system has been developed to enable the Education Department to collect and analyse information from each School in a consistent manner to be able to identify patterns and trends, identify inconsistencies between Schools and target training and support and any further preventive work. A working group has been established which includes representation from the Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Inclusion Team to analyse and evaluate the reports on a monthly basis. In addition to the early intervention data, cross-referencing will occur with Health and Safety reports and school exclusions. • Amending the Policy The current policy will be updated to strengthen operational elements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clarity on Governance and monitoring pathways ○ specific requirements for logic and risk recording ○ clear guidance on thresholds for intervention specific guidance on recording (including prohibiting the use of personal devices) • Workforce Training and Development An Education Department training strategy will be established, based on a three-level model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ awareness level for each staff member ○ practice level for key staff ○ specialist level for leaders and trainers An action plan has been drawn up by the working group with clear actions, outcomes, completion timetable and responsibilities with the principle of implementing in three steps: <p>Short Term: amending policy, establishing Governance structures Medium Term: developing a data system and implementing training Long Term: evaluating impact and ensuring consistency across the Authority</p>
<p>4. Challenges faced:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A slippage in the timetable to complete the external evaluation has led to the extension of the implementation timetable. • The need to report on incidents via the HS11 system and to the Education Department is a risk that one report is submitted instead of two. Reporting

	requirements and method for the Education Department has been mitigated to respond to this.																														
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an action plan following the evaluation - March 2026 Establish and implement monitoring and compliance with policy procedure - March 2026 Review the training strategy and plan - Operational by September 2026. Strengthen the reporting and monitoring of school reports data arrangements - June 2026 																														
6. Risks / Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools' continuous compliance - Monitoring system established to respond to this 																														
7. Communication Considerations:	-																														
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% of school staff completing training on restrictive practices	<p>Update: Over 300 staff in 85 Gwynedd schools have received training over the past 3 years. This includes refresher training. The training programme is being managed and monitored by the inclusion team.</p> <p>Currently, training is being held on the grounds of need, applications or recommendations by the inclusion service. It is expected that this procedure will be refined following the findings of the evaluation. Further work needs to be completed in order to collect the data more effectively.</p> <p>The new training strategy will be operational from September 2026 onwards. In addition, it will be included in the annual safeguarding training and Safeguarding Designated Person (Group C) training.</p>		<p>Timetable: Refine the collection arrangements following the evaluation by the external company September 2026</p>																												

<p>% of schools complying with the restrictive practice model policy.</p>	<p>Update:</p> <p>Every school that has responded to the annual safeguarding questionnaire (October 2025) confirm that they have adopted the lead policy of the Education Department.</p> <p>During the new cycle of Safeguarding quality visits, the 62 schools (66% of Gwynedd schools have received a visit so far) confirm that they have adopted and that they comply with the Education Department's lead policy (100%).</p> <p>The Safeguarding Quality Visits verify that the school has adopted the Education Department's model policy and a discussion is held about implementation and compliance. It will be possible to report on this data when the new reporting method is implemented in September 2026</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Data being collected through the annual safeguarding questionnaire / visits of the Safeguarding and Welfare Team and the reporting system.</p>
<p>Reporting on the following two measures in performance challenge meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of reports of use of restrictive practices by schools. - % of reports that have received the child's voice as part of the report 	<p>Update:</p> <p>As part of the response strategy, a system has been established for the Safeguarding, Health and Safety Team and the Inclusion Team to evaluate reports on a monthly basis. This data will be reported to the Assistant Head of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion and then discussed at the Education Management Team meetings.</p>	<p>Timetable:</p> <p>Operational from September 2026 onwards</p>

Outputs to date



The standard **Restrictive Practices Policy** has been adopted by all schools in Gwynedd.



An **independent review of restrictive practices** has been completed, with some recommendations identified

THEME 6 - CRISIS PLANNING AND CRISIS RESPONSE																								
Reporting Officer: Catrin Love																								
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure that a clear, strategic and co-ordinated plan is in place in an emergency																							
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	We ask the Board to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">Challenge and scrutinise the progressOffer any further guidance on the next steps.																							
3. Progress to date:	<p>A final (operational) Crisis Plan is in place. This follows a consultation with a group of School Headteachers and Trade Unions to include Education Unions. All comments have been incorporated. The Plan is ready to be shared and communicated with schools and governors with a plan in place to do so at the beginning of September. This is in order to reach new Headteachers/new Chairs of Governors at the start of the new term rather than at the end of this term when there is a natural turnover.</p> <p>Work is being undertaken to review our strategic arrangements to correspond with this to ensure that all elements have been included within the Strategic Emergency Plan that already exists.</p>																							
4. Challenges faced:																								
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Present the Plan to schools in September and then consult with school Headteachers on the exact level of support they will need.As a minimum, this is likely to include a series of workshops with school leaders.Engage with chairs of Governors (via the Chairs forum) to present the Plan and ensure that all bodies are aware of the Plan's importance.Ensure that arrangements fit into wider monitoring arrangements in moving forward e.g. annual safeguarding questionnaire along with health and safety site checks etc.																							
6. Risks / Resources:	Additional resource approved and arrangements underway for appointment to temporary post																							
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8. Timelines:	<table><tr><th>Number</th><th>Priority</th><th>What?</th><th>Timetable</th></tr><tr><td>54</td><td>2</td><td>Review the strategic serious incidents plan</td><td>Consultation period 31/3/26. Training Programme <i>Summer Term 2026</i></td></tr><tr><td>57</td><td>2</td><td>Arrange a secondment for a social worker to work with the Police (in accordance with the need)</td><td>September 2026</td></tr><tr><td>55</td><td>5</td><td>Official protocol to share information</td><td>Completed</td></tr><tr><td>56</td><td>5</td><td>Plan in force which sets out steps to obtain swift support during a traumatic event</td><td>Completed</td></tr></table> <p>Gray = Delay until a national / regional change is implemented</p> <p>Green = Completed (monitoring)</p>				Number	Priority	What?	Timetable	54	2	Review the strategic serious incidents plan	Consultation period 31/3/26. Training Programme <i>Summer Term 2026</i>	57	2	Arrange a secondment for a social worker to work with the Police (in accordance with the need)	September 2026	55	5	Official protocol to share information	Completed	56	5	Plan in force which sets out steps to obtain swift support during a traumatic event	Completed
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Measures (Impact)		
Number of schools / staff / Governors in each school who have received Emergency / Crisis Plan training.	Timetable: Training to be scheduled Training expected in September 2026	Update: Reporting on this continues to be premature as there is a need to update and consult on the Plan before putting appropriate training in place.
Number of satisfactory emergency plans on the Council's sites	Timetable: A programme of annual inspections to commence from September 2026.	Update: Reporting on this continues to be premature as there is a need to offer appropriate training and for it to be in place before establishing a monitoring programme.
Outputs to date		
<div>  <p>There is an agreement to collaborate with the Police in an emergency. This may involve a social worker being seconded to work with the Police for a period of time.</p> </div>		

Our Bravery Brought Justice - Cyngor Gwynedd's Response Plan

Progress Report

15.07.2026

Theme 7 - Ysgol Friars Reporting Officer: Margaret Davies	
1. Theme Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Ysgol Friars
2. Guidance sought from the Board:	<p>We ask the Board to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge and scrutinise the progress Offer any further guidance on the next steps.
3. Progress to date:	<p>Review the Governing Body's ability to implement the recommendations that will result from the CPR, realistically assessing what steps are beyond its capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance arrangements for wellbeing and safeguarding continue to strengthen. Governors demonstrate confidence in evaluating the wellbeing and safeguarding report, and a structured programme of support and challenge meetings between the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and the Safeguarding Governor takes place each term. There is clear evidence of a developing data pack, shaped in response to governor feedback—for example, termly attendance comparisons—which is improving the quality of strategic oversight. The termly report to GB continues to provide governors with data in relation to safeguarding referrals, child protection and looked after children The school has established a wellbeing sub-committee that meets regularly to share information on high level data, patterns and actions/ responses school is taking on concerns The governing body scrutinises the safeguarding policies prior to ratification at full GB meeting. These are ratified annually. The school is working closely with local authority named safeguarding officers and an external specialist. The local authority is supporting the Governors as they develop their critical friend role. Safeguarding SER is now completed annually and presented to full Governing Body The governing body have been briefed on the potential recommendations from the Child Practice Review and will be working closely with school leaders to ensure that all recommendations pertinent to school have been completed in a timely manner

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Authority's Safeguarding Officer continues to attend the governing body and Wellbeing and Safeguarding sub-committee to provide constructive support and challenge, and ensure regular feedback to the Authority regarding progress against the recommendations, and strengthen the working relationship between the school and the Authority. • The Safeguarding Lead meets with the Head/Designated Safeguarding Lead every three weeks and attends Governing Body meetings. <p>Strengthen training and support for governors in the areas of safeguarding, strategic accountability, and performance monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All governors have completed the NSPCC training, • A special meeting of the Governing Body was held on 1 December to focus on Safeguarding as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Self-evaluation form for Safeguarding and Child Protection – Estyn ○ Local Authority Audit ○ Comfortable Environment Protocol: Pre and Post Bereavement Support Protocol for Ysgol Friars Pupils ○ Safeguarding Training - Staff and Governors ○ Programme Board - Child Practice Review Outcome ○ Role and responsibilities of the Well-being and Safeguarding Sub-Committee • The termly report to GB continues to provide governors with data in relation to safeguarding referrals, child protection and looked after children <p>Support the interim Headteacher, Deputy and the two new Assistant Headteachers as they develop as a strong management team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SIA visited during the CPR publication and in preparation for the Estyn inspection. SIA continues to visit as needed during the year to discuss improvements to the school. • 'Safe space' - half termly sessions have been arranged for all members of the leadership team by 'trauma informed schools'. • There is monthly supervision of the Designated Person by an independent consultant to support pressure on DSP at this time. • Cross-School collaboration – the school is continuing to work the A55 alliance which focus on literacy skills, and also with Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Ysgol Brynrefail and Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen in relation to the Gwynedd. A formal agreement has been developed between four schools and the first focus is inclusion.
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	<p>Support the recruitment and transition to a permanent Headteacher during 2026, reassuring staff and parents that robust arrangements are in place Cynfor Gwynedd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Headteacher appointed for 1 September 2026 start. <p>Strengthen middle leadership and ensure that school management processes are operational and transparent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Governors have been appointed and 'School Guidance for Supportive Visits by Governors' has been adopted by the Governing Body. Meetings have taken place with the faculties and are ongoing. General overview record form following a supportive visit to the school by a member of the Governing Body is sent to the Headteacher and Head of Faculty. • A first round of quality assurance has been completed, and a report of whole school-findings has been presented to the Governing Body. Whole school areas for further improvement have been included in the Schools Development Plan. • The Governing Body has adopted the PDR Policy. There has been a pause in national leadership development programmes this year, but they will be starting in September. The PL needs of staff currently being collated following their initial PDR meetings. <p>Pupil Voice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders and governors place a high value on pupil voice, and this commitment is increasingly evident in the school's developing structures and processes. A designated governor now attends school council meetings regularly, providing an effective link between pupils and the governing body and ensuring that learners' perspectives inform strategic discussions. Head pupils meet routinely with the headteacher to raise important issues, and this dialogue is beginning to shape aspects of school development in a meaningful way. As a result, pupils feel that their views are listened to and that they can influence change within the school. However, leaders recognise that pupil voice is stronger at whole-school level than within tutor groups and year groups, where opportunities for consultation and participation remain inconsistent. Strengthening these layers of pupil voice, alongside establishing purposeful sub-committees to support the wide-ranging work of the school council, is therefore a clear next step. Initial training planned with the Children's Commissioner for Wales is a timely and positive development that is expected to further enhance pupils' confidence, advocacy skills, and the overall impact of pupil voice across the school community.
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Review and strengthen counselling and emotional support arrangements, ensuring sustainable and high quality provision for children and young people.

Wellbeing centre

The School Based Counselling (SBC) team is based in the Wellbeing centre and offers:

- An opportunity to speak to an independent person
- Help to deal with emotional problems
- Help to develop self-awareness
- Help to understand and deal with negative emotions
- A source of personal empowerment and resourcefulness

There are currently 5 school-based counsellors, and a total of 60 students have been referred during the period 31.01.26 – 06.07.26.

- KS3-40 students
- KS4-12 students
- KS5- 8 students

During the exam period there have been drop in sessions available after morning exam sessions for students who require additional support.

Meetings with the school based counselling team

The Schools Safeguarding officer is the link between the service and school. A phone has been installed in the wellbeing centre so that absences can be communicated and there will be a check in with students to determine reason of absence by the Safeguarding officer. Actions since last report:

- Self-referral process
- GCSE and AS/A level key dates for counsellor to be on site.
- Exam student check in sessions for students after exams.
- Continued dialogue about the services that can be offered apart from 1-2-1 sessions.
- DSP to continue to promote the Counselling Service during year group morning assembly.
- Feedback from SBC Team meeting shared.

The rooms in the wellbeing centre are used regularly by a number of additional support services as follows:

The School Nursing Service is based in the Centre and offers support and advice to children, young people and their families or carers to help ensure that they reach their full potential during their school aged years and beyond. Confidential advice and support can be offered for a wide range of issues.

Be' Di'r Sgôr - The Gwynedd and Anglesey Young People's Drug and Alcohol Abuse Service. The service is available to any young person up to the age of 25 who is or has been affected by drugs or alcohol, directly or through someone else. They work

	<p>confidentially with young people to offer one to one support and advice, drop-in sessions in the community, education and prevention resources, and Guidance for families and professionals. Two members of the team have set up a weekly clinic at Ysgol Friars. This work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding targeted one to one or group sessions with pupils • Offering advice and support sessions to staff, if it is useful <p>Development of CAMHS Hub</p> <p>This has developed into fortnightly meetings focusing on a multi-agency approach to supporting young people. This is early intervention prevention and promotion services to identify mental health difficulties, refer and intervene early within the school environment. The attendees to the hub can be any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral staff • ALNCO • Heads of year • Family engagement workers • Educational welfare officers • School nursing • Youth service <p>School counselling service are also now invited to join these meetings. Action for Children have attended all CAMHS hub meetings and this has led to several referrals to support some of our young carers at Ysgol Friars. The development of the CAMHS hub has led to further conversations about supporting mental health within the pastoral team. CAMHS early intervention team have offered MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) training for all of the pastoral team and this has taken place during July.</p> <p><u>Multi-agency work- Supporting attendance</u> - The wellbeing centre is also being used to support students in returning to school following lengthy periods of absence. Agencies who are supporting students with long term absences have started to schedule sessions in the wellbeing centre to bridge the gap between home and school. This is currently taking place with two student in Year 9 who have not attending school this academic year. The wellbeing centre is also used for meetings with social workers, support workers, police interviews and parent meetings.</p> <p>New services using the wellbeing centre:</p> <p>Intuitive Thinking</p> <p>The aim is to provide credible skills which enable people to become truly independent. The service “empower people through education to take back control of their lives”, using a unique</p>
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	<p>approach to developing knowledge and thinking tools. They see people's lived experience as an asset, a place where people draw experience, knowledge, strength and skills and properly redirected become highly resourceful problem solving tools. They work effectively across sectors including criminal justice, drugs and alcohol, employment, domestic abuse and homelessness.</p> <p>Communication and interaction team</p> <p>The team provides specialist advisory support and training for children and adults with speech, language, and social communication difficulties. The wellbeing centre is also used for meetings with social workers, support workers, police interviews and parent meetings.</p> <p>Support staff to build a culture of safety, trust and respect, providing additional training where necessary.</p> <p>Strengthening safeguarding and child protection processes at Ysgol Friars continues to be a priority, ensuring all adults understand and fulfil their responsibilities, and that pupils feel safe, supported and confident their voices are heard.</p> <p>Since 2023, the school reviewed its training model for safeguarding and child protection. In line with Gwynedd Council, the school is compliant with the Group A, B and C training.</p> <p>Specialist safeguarding training completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group C compliant Safeguarding Training - Gwynedd DSP Training - HSB (Harmful Sexualised Behaviours) - Brook training delivered by Tim Emrallt - Adult at Risk Safeguarding Training (Introduction) - BCUHB WEST Child & Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) School In-Reach Service - Youth Mental Health First Aid training - NSPCC training course Masterclass: Tackling misogyny <p>We will continue to review this training model based on feedback from staff and local authority officers.</p> <p>The school have also commissioned an independent trainer to work closely with our designated safeguarding person to support, challenge and improve our safeguarding and child protection arrangements. This is an ongoing support Service for our DSP and safeguarding team on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The school maintains records and ensures that all staff are appropriately trained child protection and safeguarding, prevent and sexual violence. All staff are aware of different levels aware of</p>
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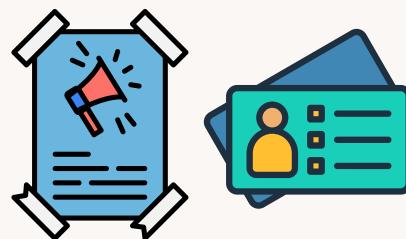
	<p>children's needs and aware on how to respond to their needs in different situations.</p> <p>The school has moved towards a designated safeguarding team that can respond in an appropriate and timely manner to ensure that support is available at the time of need and referrals are made in a timely manner.</p> <p>As of June 2025, all new staff are provided with safeguarding training as part of their induction. This is facilitated by our designated safeguarding person.</p> <p>The local authority designated safeguarding lead meets with the school safeguarding team monthly to discuss trends and support.</p> <p>Training for safeguarding and child protection is a priority at Ysgol Friars. The school is compliant with the local authority policy in providing Group A and Group B training. Designated and deputy designated persons are trained to Group C.</p> <p>This team approach ensures that there are robust arrangements in place to provide guidance to staff and liaises with Gwynedd County Council to ensure that we are up-to-date and compliant.</p> <p>To carry out regular safeguarding audits and provide ongoing assurance to the Authority and the Programme Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estyn's safeguarding self-evaluation and Gwynedd audit presented to governors. • A school audit is in place and feeds into the action plan. • LA safeguarding visit completed • Termly reports are presented to governors in relation to child protection / safeguarding and staff roles. <p>Communication and Transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental communication remains an area for development. Plans for the creation of dedicated focus groups next term provide a clear route forward and offer the potential for more meaningful parental engagement in safeguarding and wellbeing conversations.
4. Challenges faced:	<p>Continue to clerk the Governing Body until sustainable arrangements are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has advertised numerous times for the role of the Clerk to the Governing Body but have been unsuccessful in appointing. Moving forward, the school has committed to the Local Authority's SLA for the provision of a Clerk to Governors service. <p>Strengthen training and support for governors in the areas of safeguarding, strategic accountability, and performance monitoring.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting to hear how compulsory training will change nationally before detailing further in line with the findings of Welsh Government Review of School Governing Bodies.
5. Next steps / key milestones:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To further embed pupil voice by working closely with the children's commissioner's team • To ensure that recommendations in our Estyn report are incorporated into whole school planning • To further develop our graduated response to social emotional and challenging behaviour
6. Risks / Resources:	Ensure that the role of the temporary additional Safeguarding Officer is effectively integrated, with a clear framework in terms of accountability and oversight.
7. Communication Considerations	Communication and Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental communication remains an area for development.
8. Timelines:	

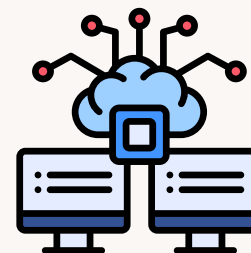
Voice of the Child



A social worker makes a proactive effort to hear the voice of every child subject to a Safeguarding Referral (Section 5)



All schools display information about an independent person that pupils can talk to if they have safeguarding concerns.



All schools have access to an electronic data management system so that changes in a child's behavior can be recorded.



The Council works together with partners in order to offer ongoing support to the victims.



The Council has developed a **Children's Voice Strategy**.



The Council now has a programme of work in place to **embed children's rights** across the Council.



A special role has been appointed to help develop the Gwynedd Youth Forum.



The Council has an **extra member of staff** to listen to more children and young people, including children in care and disabled children.

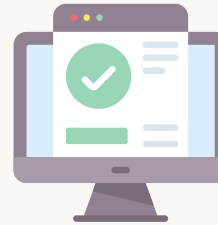
Part 5 Safeguarding Arrangements (Concerns about Practitioners and Those in a Position of Trust)



No safeguarding decisions are made by one employee alone.



Historical information and records are checked each time a Safeguarding Referral is made (Section 5).



The form for referring allegations of abuse is easier to find on the Council's website and on the Schools' "hub" website.



The Council, the Police and other services are now working better together to keep children and young people safe.



"Magic Notes" is being piloted to facilitate the recording of safeguarding meetings (Section 5).



The Quality Assurance Framework has been completed to help ensure the Children's Department works effectively and consistently.



We have appointed a Quality Assurance Manager to ensure that the correct procedures are followed in the Children's Department.



Managers from the Children's and Education Departments meet regularly to strengthen collaboration.

Corporate Arrangements, Policy and Training



We are now looking at **how many staff have completed Safeguarding training as part of the performance monitoring arrangements** of each Department.



Appointed a **Corporate Safeguarding Champion** to raise awareness of safeguarding across the Council.



A video has been produced to deliver safeguarding training to frontline staff.



The Council has adopted a revised **Corporate Safeguarding Policy**.



The Council has worked with the NSPCC to create **specific training on recognising the signs of grooming**.



The Council has adopted a **new Whistleblowing Guide** for Gwynedd Councillors.



The Cabinet has adopted a **new Whistleblowing Policy** for Council staff.



The Council has introduced **training on the Whistleblowing Policy** for all Gwynedd staff and Councillors.

What has changed so far following the *Our Bravery Brought Justice* report?

September 2026

School Safeguarding and Wellbeing



A new **Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team** was established in 2024.



The **Education Safeguarding and Welfare Team** visits each school once a year to check that the correct rules are being followed.



The **capacity of the Education Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team** was increased in March 2026 - 4 members of staff now work for the team.



The **Scrutiny Investigation into safeguarding in schools** has been completed. We will look at implementing its recommendations.

Stabilising the School

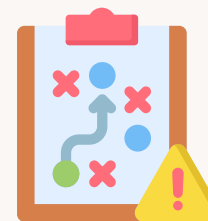


There is a **new Headteacher and Leadership Team** at Ysgol Friars.

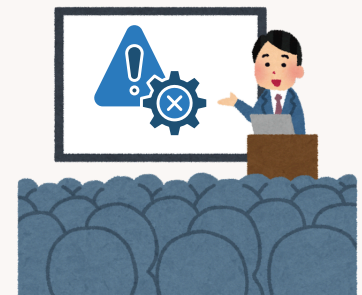
Crisis Plan



There is an **agreement to collaborate with the Police in an emergency**. This may involve a social worker being seconded to work with the Police for a period of time.



A new **School Emergency Plan** is now in place to help schools know what to do in an emergency.



The Council is providing an **Emergency Plan training workshop** for every school.

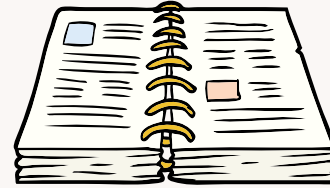
School Governance



A new **Officer** has been **appointed** to support School Governors.



Chairs and Governors with responsibility for safeguarding **receive additional training** to support them in their role.



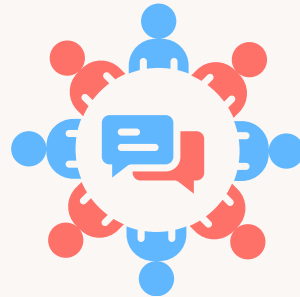
A new **Governor's Handbook** has been created and shared with all Gwynedd School Governors.



A **Professional Clerk** is now in place to support School Governors.



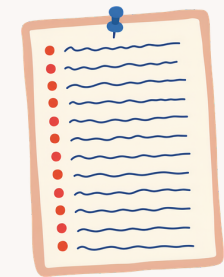
The Council is piloting GovernorHub to support School Governors by providing them with clear information about the **health and wellbeing** of their school.



Clerks' and Chairs' Forums have been established to share good practice and strengthen the support available.



Since September 2026, a **stronger training programme** has been in place for School Governors.



Each Governing Body now receives a **clear list of the important things** they should discuss regularly.

Arferion Cyfyngol



The standard **Restrictive Practices Policy** has been adopted by all schools in Gwynedd.



An **independent review of restrictive practices** has been completed, with some recommendations identified



A group of officers from across the Council meets to **review and monitor cases where restrictive practices are used.**

QUARTERLY REPORT TO CABINET: RESPONSE PLAN PROGRAMME BOARD

PROFESSOR SALLY HOLLAND: CHAIR OF THE RESPONSE BOARD

DATE: 10th March 2026

Introduction

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

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

Current Position

Strategic Phases of Work

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

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

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

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

b. *System-Wide Response and Monitoring –*

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

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

The seven key themes are;

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

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

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

Child-Centred Focus and Victim Engagement

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

Children's Rights and Participation

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

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

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

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

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

Scrutiny and Assurance

Welsh Government

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

Joint safeguarding inspection by Estyn and Care Inspectorate Wales

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

Evolving Role of the Board

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

Triangulating Insight and Engagement

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

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

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

Measuring Impact

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

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

Transparency and Governance

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

Next Steps

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

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

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

Closing Remarks

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

Professor Sally Holland

Chair of the Response Plan Programme Board

23/02/26

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

Progress on the Our Bravery Brought Justice recommendations August 2026

a) Recommendation to Cyngor Gwynedd

Ref / no	The recommendation of the report	Has the Council achieved what was required of us?	Any other matters or relevant barriers
Listen to the voice of the child			
7.	LA1 should consult with pupils to identify the best way to enable them to access an individual/service outside school to report concerns. Contact details should be prominently displayed in all schools.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Council has implemented the recommendation by consulting with children and young people about their experience and their confidence in safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>The Council has strengthened the visibility of safeguarding information in schools, ensuring that contact details and appropriate ways to raise concerns are shown clearly and are accessible for pupils.</p>	

b) Recommendations for every organisation / every Local Authority

Ref / no	The recommendation of the report	Has the Council achieved what was required of us?	Any other matters or relevant barriers
Listen to the voice of the child			
1.	All organisations working with children must ensure that their policies in relation to listening to the voice of the child are revised, implemented in full and reflect what has been learned from this Review.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Council has reviewed and strengthened its arrangements to ensure that the voice of the child steers decisions through the work of the Youth Forum and ensure the participation of children and young people across services.</p> <p>The Voice of the Child Strategy has been developed over the last year, and the Cabinet will be required to formally adopt it in the autumn.</p> <p>In terms of safeguarding, a social worker makes a proactive effort to listen to the voice of every child who is subject to a Part 5 safeguarding referral (see recommendation number 6)</p>	-
2.	Organisations must be able to show evidence to their professional Board and Regulators that they have a process in place for listening to children and that it	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Council has embedded arrangements to listen to the voice of children and young people through formal participation structures, regular engagement through the</p>	-

	is embedded and operational in the organisation.	Youth Forum, and governance arrangements that ensure that children's perspectives are considered when making decisions and are reported through the relevant accountability structures.	
3.	That all agencies ensure that their staff are trained to detect and record a change in a child's behaviour that may indicate that adults are grooming them and/or that they are being abused.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>As a specific training pack on the subject did not already exist, the NSPCC was commissioned to develop a comprehensive training pack.</p> <p>The pack will be presented in two parts: firstly, a webinar to all Council staff to raise awareness of grooming; and secondly, more specialist sessions tailored to specific groups, including social workers and schools' designated safeguarding individuals. The training has started to be used, and the provision will be introduced to all Council staff over the coming months.</p> <p>This pack will also be available for other authorities to use or purchase, ensuring that the investment contributes to improving practice on a wider level.</p>	<p>An 'off the shelf' training pack did not exist, although we contacted several companies and organisations. Consequently, the NSPCC was commissioned to develop a comprehensive training pack.</p> <p>This has led to some delay in developing the pack. However, to ensure that school staff receive the necessary training in the meantime, we adapted the existing safeguarding training to address the main requirements and the key messages about grooming.</p>

4.	In schools, these changes must be recorded on an electronic data management system.	Yes. Every school in Gwynedd now records on an electronic data management system.	-
5.	When a referral is made under Section 5 of the Safeguarding Procedures for Wales, all safeguarding information on the child's record on the data management system must be taken into account when assessing risk and vulnerability.	Yes. The internal recording form has been adapted so that it is a requirement for every agency present at Part 5 meetings to provide and record relevant background information and history.	-
6.	When a referral is made under Wales Safeguarding Procedures Section 5 and is third party, the child who is subject of the referral must be spoken to by children's social care, even where they have not made a disclosure themselves.	Yes. Cyngor Gwynedd has introduced these arrangements.	<p>There were some challenges in implementing this procedure, including occasions where a parent refuses to give consent to speak to the child, and other occasions where the child themselves refuses to engage.</p> <p>In these cases, the child was only named as a witness or a potential witness, instead of an individual that the allegation related to directly. Should the allegation relate to abuse against the child itself, the Council would ensure that the voice and experience of that child were heard as part of the process.</p>

9.	Local Authorities should show evidence of how they support and advocate for victims of trauma, on a case-by-case basis, where their ability to access education has been limited due to their experiences. This would include ensuring that victims have access to further and higher education, and the funding needed to do so, when the requirements for grades and attendance have not been met due to the trauma they have been through.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Cyngor Gwynedd has declared and offered support to any one impacted, offering a support pack to the school community's direct and indirect victims.</p> <p>The Council has also committed to facilitate access to the education of trauma victims when it is restricted due to their experiences and have done so in this specific case.</p>	
Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children - multi-agency response			
18.	That all members of staff, volunteers (including administrative and facilities officers) and school Governors receive training on sex offenders' modus operandi and their methods of grooming using the Finklehor model.	<p>In progress.</p> <p>The "Finklehor model" and methods of grooming from sex offenders have been included in the new training that has been developed by the NSPCC. It will be available to all Council staff (including Governors and Elected Members).</p> <p>This will be provided to all staff over the coming months (see explanation of recommendation 3)</p>	<p>An 'off the shelf' training pack did not exist, although we contacted several companies and organisations. Consequently, the NSPCC was commissioned to develop a comprehensive training pack.</p> <p>This has led to some delay in developing the pack. However, to ensure that school staff receive the necessary training in the meantime, we adapted the existing safeguarding training to address the main requirements and the key messages about grooming.</p>

c) Recommendations for the Regional Safeguarding Board

Ref / no	The recommendation of the report	Has the Council achieved what was required of us?	Any other matters or relevant barriers
Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children - multi-agency response			
13.	Safeguarding Boards are assured that their area's LADO officers receive regular training and supervision.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Board holds professional networks that focus on the Part 5 practice and procedures. Council officers attend and contribute to these to support ongoing improvements in practice and processes.</p>	
14.	Safeguarding Boards receive and scrutinise Local Authority reports on managing allegations at least once a year, and that reporting of the allegations becomes part of the regulatory requirements of Estyn and CIW.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>In accordance with the demand, the Council provides quarterly updates to the Regional Safeguarding Board, which includes information about activity, outcomes and trends that arise about Part 5 matters.</p>	The Council will work with the Safeguarding Board, Estyn and CIW to respond to any further reporting requirements that could arise in the future.
The need for training - think the 'worst possible' and understand that 'it could happen here'			

19.	That assurances are given to Safeguarding Boards that this training [sex offenders and their methods of grooming modus operandi] is delivered to Local Authority Education, Children and Human Resources Services officers, who lead on managing concerns or responding to concerns about adults working with children.	<p>In progress.</p> <p>The "Finklehor model" and methods of grooming from sex offenders have been included in the new training that has been developed by the NSPCC. It will be available to all Council staff (including Governors and Elected Members)</p> <p>This will be provided to all staff, including the officers of Education, Children and Human Resources Services, over the coming months (see explanation of recommendation 3)</p>	<p>An 'off the shelf' training pack did not exist, although we contacted several companies and organisations. Consequently, the NSPCC was commissioned to develop a comprehensive training pack.</p> <p>This has led to some delay in developing the pack. However, to ensure that school staff receive the necessary training in the meantime, we adapted the existing safeguarding training to address the main requirements and the key messages about grooming.</p>
20.	That the Safeguarding Board is reassured that Local Authorities have clear Whistleblowing policies, and that attention is drawn to them and that all staff can use them safely.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Cyngor Gwynedd has adopted a whistleblowing policy in February 2026 and a comprehensive programme to promote amongst managers, team leaders and all staff.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to work with the Safeguarding Board to respond to any requirements about assurance or further reports that could arise in the future.</p>

Ch) Recommendations to the Welsh Government

Ref / no	The recommendation of the report	Has the Council achieved what was required of us?	Any other matters or relevant barriers
Listen to the voice of the child			
8.	That the Welsh Government develops the curriculum to ensure pupils have the knowledge to understand grooming behaviour by adults and know how to report this safely to an adult.	No.	We cannot act until the curriculum has been adapted.
Managing allegations and concerns about adults working with children - multi-agency response			
10.	That the Welsh Government ensures that the review of Section 5 procedures is informed by this Review and takes into account what has been learnt from it.	Yes. Cyngor Gwynedd has introduced new procedures, but as a result of inconsistencies with OBBJ recommendations, the Council goes beyond what is set out in these procedures.	There are inconsistencies between the new Part 5 procedures and the OBBJ recommendations, and Cyngor Gwynedd has raised the issue with the Welsh Government.
11.	The revised procedures state that the voice of the child must be heard, even if the child has not made any disclosure.	Yes. Cyngor Gwynedd has introduced these arrangements.	

12.	That decisions about the threshold for using the procedures are required to be made in a multi-agency meeting and not by the LADO alone, and that previous concerns, complaints and allegations be taken into account.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Robust arrangements have been established with the Police to support the process, and multi-agency meetings are being held.</p> <p>Decisions are not made solely by one officer. The Council has invested in an additional Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS) to strengthen those arrangements.</p>	<p>Although Cyngor Gwynedd has amended its arrangements in accordance with OBBJ recommendations, the new national procedures for Part 5 do not reflect or fully address those changes.</p> <p>The new Guidelines state:</p> <p><i>"the Local Authority's Designated Officer/Designated Officer for Safeguarding is responsible for receiving, responding to, making decisions and monitoring every report in relation to allegations against practitioners/individuals in a position of trust."</i></p> <p>This is a cause for concern to the Council, because the procedures do not acknowledge or reflect the operational model that has been established locally following the OBBJ recommendations.</p>
15.	That the Welsh Government considers requiring schools to develop an 'Adult Conduct of Concern Policy' (known as the 'Low-level Concerns Policy' in England), and consider providing guidance on safe working practices.	<p>No</p> <p>For this to be effective, a national arrangement is required as OBBJ states.</p>	<p>We are awaiting guidance from the Welsh Government.</p> <p>Cyngor Gwynedd has consistently raised this issue through the Ministerial Assurance Group.</p>

16.	The new Strategy (child abuse prevention 10-year strategy) is proven against the findings of this review and that any lessons learned are incorporated into the new strategy.	Yes. The strategy has been published and there is a Group of internal officers ensuring that the strategy's objectives are being implemented.	The new strategy has been published.
The need for training - think the 'worst possible' and understand that 'it could happen here'			
17.	That Welsh Government commissions a training resource based on the findings of this Review, for use by all schools in Wales. It should be adaptable so that other agencies working with children can use it.	No.	We are waiting for the Welsh Government to share the training.
School Governance in Wales			
21.	That the Welsh Government commences a review of governance arrangements in schools across Wales, that clearly outline the responsibilities of Governors to change from focusing primarily on financial management and outcomes to a situation where safeguarding, health and well-being are accepted as the appropriate foundation to learn and thrive.	Yes. The Council has taken many steps to strengthen the support available to schools' governing bodies. An additional Governors' Support Officer has been appointed, as well as a Professional Clerk, to provide more support, guidance and an appropriate challenge to governors in carrying out their responsibilities.	Cyngor Gwynedd raises the need for a review of school governance arrangements regularly with the Welsh Government. The review is underway. The Welsh Government is expected to publish the result of the review in the autumn.

		<p>The Council has raised its concerns regarding the existing procedures with the Welsh Government and has called for a review of the arrangements, drawing attention to the challenges and the shortcomings noted during their implementation.</p> <p>In addition, a questionnaire has been distributed to each governing body to establish a baseline of their development needs and to note the fields where more support or training is required.</p> <p>The results of this work will steer a comprehensive training programme which will be introduced from September 2026 onwards.</p>	
22.	<p>That the Welsh Government commences a review of governance arrangements in schools across Wales, which supports the development and implementation of an easy-to-understand dashboard which provides simple information about the health and wider culture of the school.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Council has set a clear expectation that every governing body follows a standing agenda as a basic requirement. This ensures that key matters, including safeguarding, health and well-being, are considered regularly and consistently, providing the minimum level of assurance and supervision across every school.</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd raises the need for a review of school governance arrangements regularly with the Welsh Government.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is expected to publish the result of the review in the autumn.</p>

		<p>This guidance will be submitted annually as a point of order from now on.</p> <p>The Council has started to pilot a <i>Governor Hub</i> dashboard with 10 schools from September onwards. (An easy-to-understand dashboard to keep all the documentation and training of Governing Bodies in one accessible central place).</p>	
23.	<p>That the Welsh Government commences a review of governance arrangements in schools across Wales, asking the Governors to keep correct records about decisions made in relation to safeguarding matters and report on them to the Local Authority, especially when the decision made does not follow the Local Authority's guidelines.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Work has been done to improve the support and resources available to clerks, acknowledging their key role in ensuring that decisions and discussions are recorded correctly and comprehensively.</p> <p>The Council has appointed a central officer to act as a clerk in many schools when that support is required for specific schools.</p> <p>A programme of bespoke training has been introduced to clerks to strengthen their understanding of their role and responsibilities. A Clerks Forum will be established early in September to share good practices and provide ongoing support to every clerk.</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd raises the need for a review of school governance arrangements regularly with the Welsh Government.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is expected to publish the result of the review in the autumn.</p>

24.	That the Welsh Government undertakes a review of governance arrangements in schools across Wales, which ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Persons and their deputies are subject to external supervision by qualified Social Workers from the relevant local authority.	<p>In progress.</p> <p>Funding has been allocated to strengthen the provision of support and supervision for Designated Safeguarding Individuals and their deputies.</p> <p>Currently, discussions are ongoing about the most suitable model to achieve this, considering options such as commissioning external provision.</p>	<p>Cyngor Gwynedd raises the need for a review of school governance arrangements regularly with the Welsh Government.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is expected to publish the result of the review in the autumn.</p>
Restrictive Practices			
25.	That the Welsh Government publishes an appendix to the 2022 Framework guidance for reducing restrictive practices involving adults filming events and provides guidance on the retention period of such videos.	<p>Yes, but awaiting guidance from the Welsh Government.</p> <p>It is a requirement for every school to adopt the relevant Regional Policy, and the Schools Safeguarding and Well-being Team are conducting regular checks and monitoring to ensure that these arrangements are implemented appropriately.</p> <p>In addition, the Council has commissioned an external review of the use of restrictive practices across schools, including reviewing policies, procedures and the training provided. The findings of this review will steer an action plan to further strengthen arrangements.</p>	<p>The Council is awaiting any further guidance or revisions from the Welsh Government.</p>

Emergency Management			
26.	<p>That the Welsh Government ensures that each Local Authority has a strategic serious incidents plan which sets out the procedures to be followed in order to respond in an immediate and collective multi-agency manner.</p> <p>a. That the plan includes arrangements for caring for the victim, protecting evidence and managing the alleged offender</p> <p>b. That the plan includes an official protocol for sharing information with other Local Authorities that may be affected</p> <p>c. That a strategic plan is in place to have easy-to-access on-site support for children and adults in institutions where there has been a significant traumatic incident</p> <p>d. In a serious incident such as this, consider moving a social worker to work on secondment with the Police investigations team to ensure that the evidence and information are considered from a safeguarding as well as a criminal perspective</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>An Emergency Response Plan has been developed in collaboration with schools to ensure a quick and coordinated response to serious incidents.</p> <p>In addition, the Council has extended its collaboration with regional partners through WASPI arrangements to strengthen information sharing protocols and ensure regular discussions with the Police and other partners.</p> <p>Positive discussions have also been held with the Police about the arrangements of working together in exceptional circumstances, including secondments or appropriate staffing arrangements if required.</p>	

d)Recommendations for the Safeguarding Partners

Ref / no	The recommendation of the report	Has the Council achieved what was required of us?	Any other matters or relevant barriers
Recommendations for the Safeguarding Partners			
27.	<p>That the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board</p> <p>a. Considers sharing anonymous CAMHS information with Local Authorities to note places with a high demand and thematic concerns</p> <p>b. Gives assurances to the Regional Child Safeguarding Board that professional health workers seek safeguarding advice when a child comes to an appointment with a third party, without parental consent</p>	<p>The recommendation does not ask for any actions from the Council at this time.</p>	<p>These are recommendations that have been specifically referred to the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. No actions have currently been requested by the Local Authority, but we would continue to monitor any developments or responses arising from these recommendations.</p>

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	05/11/2026
TITLE	Performance Report from the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
REASON FOR SCRUTINY	To provide assurance that the Cabinet Member has a grip on the department's performance matters.
AUTHOR	Mari Wynne Jones
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr. Dilwyn Morgan

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

In order for Committee Members to be satisfied that I, the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing have a grip on performance issues within the department.

2. Background / Context

2.1 Background / Introduction

The purpose of the report is to update you on what has been achieved in the area I am responsible for as Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing. This includes outlining the latest with the promises in the Council's Plan; the day-to-day work of the Department; as well as keeping you updated on any external audits that have taken place during the period.

We are operating on the Council's Plan 2023-28, and I will report on the progress of the projects during the first months of year 4 of the plan (2026-27). All issues have been the subject of discussion and have been scrutinised by me in a performance challenge and support meeting. We know that there are significant challenges facing the department as highlighted in the Llechen Lân report. In the context of these challenges, I know the department is working diligently to make progress in very difficult circumstances, and I am satisfied with the performance of the department.

2.2 Reasoning and justification

Performance of the Council's Plan Pledges – Year 4 (2025-26)

2.2.1 Below is a summary of the progress of the projects, as well as any issues of concern. I will give some examples, but I am not referring to all workflows as the projects are very broad. Full details can be found in appendix 1.

Project 1 - Modernising our care resources to meet future needs

2.2.2 The aim of the project is to ensure that our care homes are up to modern standards and that a wide range of accommodation options are available to support individuals to continue to live independently with a little support. It is vital that we understand the need across the county and can identify which locations to prioritise for different developments. The department has commissioned work from Housing LIN outlining the demand for care accommodation and the report will be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting in November. It is likely that an internal board will be established to lead the joint work between the Department for Adults and the Department of Housing and Property, and I hope that a timetable for implementation will be available soon.

2.2.3 In addition to the Housing LIN report, a report has also been commissioned by C4 Projects to develop potential options for investment to upgrade all of our internal homes to modern standards. We have received the potential plans for 6 of the homes and the remainder are expected very soon. Following receipt of this work, the department will actively consider the way forward per home.

2.2.4 Meanwhile, a new dementia unit offering specialist provision for men at Plas Hedd (Bangor) has been open since April, and a supported living property for 3 people with learning disabilities is ready in Pwllheli. The Pwllheli Extra Care Housing development on the Penrhos site will be ready by the end of the year and residents will move in during January 2027.

2.2.5 It is important for me to highlight the change in plans for the Canolfan Lleu project. In the Council's Plan it originally stated an intention to open Extra Care Housing units on this site. Unfortunately, the project has now changed and these units are no longer part of the plans, with the Health Board focusing solely on a Health Centre.

Project 2 - Using more technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care

2.2.6 A Promoting Independence Services Team has now been established and a Team Leader has been appointed. They will lead on a wide-ranging programme of work including the promotion of support options for Living Well and the use of Direct Payments.

2.2.7 The work already started continues under the leadership of the new team and we continue to see a steady increase in the use of telecare equipment. The team has also taken responsibility for addressing the ongoing challenges in direct payments, including ensuring sufficient options of digital accounts for people and increasing the options available through Direct Payments whilst promoting micro companies and improving access to the information available about them.

2.2.8 In addition, an interim Moving with Dignity Officer has been appointed and in post since September. This officer will lead on collaboration with hospitals, social work teams and care providers to pilot opportunities to reduce the need for significant care packages by maximising the use of adaptations, equipment or effective movement and treatment techniques. Success in this area will enhance the dignity and privacy of the individual whilst also freeing up care capacity for others who are waiting.

Project 3 – Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families

2.2.5 The aim of the project is to ensure prompt and easy support for individuals and their families. That includes recognising the value of unpaid carers and supporting them appropriately and ensuring timely and effective home care.

2.2.10 There are many workstreams currently underway to ensure more resources to evaluate the needs of patients in hospital and to speed up care and discharge decisions, with dedicated resource from each team now responsible for assessing hospital cases.

2.2.11 Unfortunately the programme of work to reduce domiciliary care waiting lists remains challenging and as you can see in the data in the second part of this report, the increase in demand is difficult to manage (see 2.2.20). In addition, all the work done so far to speed up assessments and hospital discharges can result in more people being added to the waiting list sooner. Work has been ongoing in some specific areas with the City of Bangor now resolved but other areas continue to need more attention. Work is also happening to review the delivery model as the current provider agreements are due to expire in a year's time. Engagement with providers, internal teams and individuals and families is ongoing, but changes are naturally being made to the model in trying to find solutions to the challenges faced in some areas.

Project 4 – Working with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community

2.2.12 We now recognise that work to adapt the arrangements of our Information, Advice and Support service will not take place in conjunction with Health for practical reasons, but work is underway internally. The department is currently confirming a new model with staff and planning the relevant system and processes. Eventually, the department will have one telephone number for contacting adult social services. The aim is to reduce confusion and ensure clarity on points of contact for the public, ensuring they get to the right place sooner.

2.2.13 We are experiencing obstacles in attempting to establish GP Surgery Cluster meetings in some areas of Arfon, and despite the efforts of the department's teams, we are unlikely to be able to achieve this in full. We are however looking at alternative options to ensure close and appropriate collaboration with the GP surgeries.

Project 5 - Developing training and work opportunities for individuals in need of support

2.2.14 I am delighted to have had the opportunity to visit the newly refurbished Dolfeurig centre, which is a truly brilliant resource for individuals with learning disabilities in the Meirionnydd area and across the county. Work continues to develop the community services within the centre. The centre will open very soon.

2.2.15 The work opportunities project is also continuing to progress, with a new co-ordinator appointed to lead the work following the departure of the previous co-ordinator. More about this project in paragraph 2.2.22.

Project 6 – Llechen Lân

2.2.16 A report to update Llechen Lân data has been submitted to this committee in July and the work programme is ongoing.

The Department's day-to-day work - performance and measures

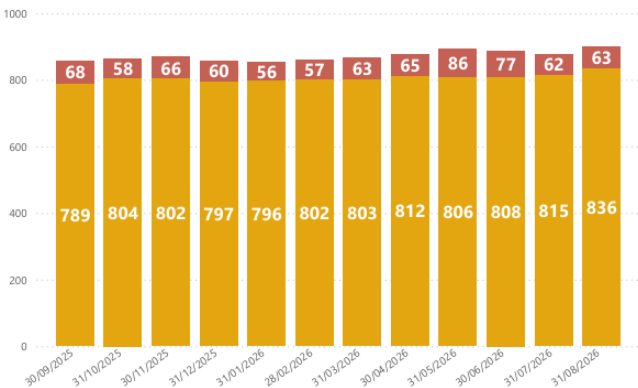
2.2.17 There are several measures by the department and full details can be found in appendix 2. Yet again, I will refer below to those that specifically cause concern or are subject to congratulations.

2.2.18 The **DoLS** waiting list data was not received by the department this time. It was explained that we are still waiting for guidance to confirm the new criteria following the High Court ruling, and that in the meantime it is not possible for us to confirm with certainty how many individuals are on the waiting list (as we have no clarity on who meets the new criteria). In the meantime, cases continue to be scrutinised and discussed, and multi-factor assessments are being carried out in conjunction with the Legal Department to consider individual situations against the new criteria. The need for urgent intervention by the Court of Protection is also considered in the interim. In terms of the guidance we are expecting, the national group for Head of Adults Services are regularly pressing the Government for suitable guidance and documents.

2.2.19 Within the **Older People, Physical and Sensory Disabilities Service** there has been an increase in the number waiting for an assessment as a result of staffing instability in some teams. At the end of August 2026, 22 individuals had been waiting over 91 days for a care needs assessment. Since, an appointment has been made to fill a therapist post over a secondment period and an appointment to fill a social worker position, and these workers are expected to start shortly. Given these challenges, the delivery of this service remains very high with between 120 and 150 assessments per month being carried out.

2.2.20 Since I reported last time, the department has adjusted its measure for the **domiciliary care** waiting list. The main reason for this is that it is inevitable that it will take some time to make arrangements with a provider for a new care package. In order to be able to look at the picture correctly and understand the real situation, it was decided that the measure would count those who have been waiting for more than 28 days for a package. At the end of August there were

Number of people on the waiting list longer than 28 days (red) and the number of people receiving home care (yellow)



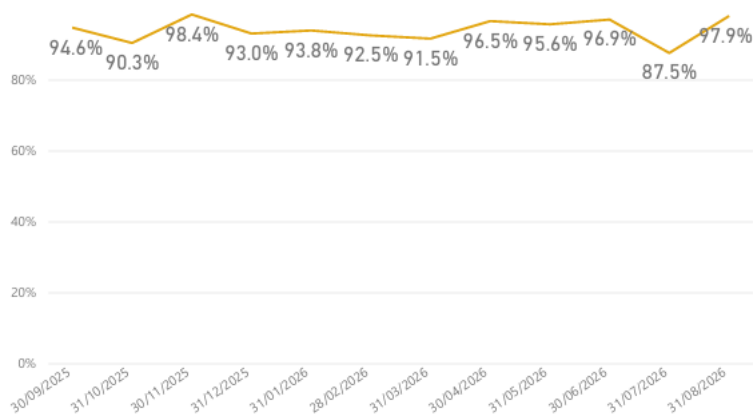
63 on that waiting list, with 24 of those having been waiting for more than 90 days – most of these individuals are in the Tywyn and Dyffryn Nantlle areas where the difficulties have proven challenging to resolve for some time. We also see from the figures in the graph that there has been a significant increase in demand for domiciliary care and that the Council is now providing packages for 836 individuals across the county. I think it is important to recognise this noticeable increase in demand when considering the waiting lists, but I have asked the department for a meeting to discuss the domiciliary care situation in general to ensure that we fully understand what is happening in this area and how the efforts to reduce the use of traditional services and maximise alternative opportunities are progressing.

2.2.21 I noted at the last meeting that one issue of concern to me is that only 71 (4%) of all assessments in the last year were **carer assessments**. That was an average of 6 assessments per month. It is therefore good to note that 45 carer assessments were carried out between the 1st June and the 31st August this year, and a further 40 'joint' assessments were carried out (an assessment that discusses the needs of the individual and the carer jointly). According to the department's data there are 2,380 unpaid carers receiving support from Carers Outreach, and I have asked the department for a further conversation to understand exactly what that support looks like.

2.2.22 In the **Learning Disabilities** service the numbers involved in the work opportunities project remain stable with 135 individuals involved in the project and 62 in paid employment. This service is dependent on grant funding and therefore the department is naturally concerned about the future of this vital project. We have received confirmation from the Government that a source of funding will be available to replace the existing grants, but to date we have not received any details to enable us to understand whether that source will be comparable and open to the same conditions as existing grants. We are also working regionally on ensuring sustainability for this service on a more permanent basis.

2.2.23 In my last report, I noted that we had seen a reduction in the department's ability to complete **adult protection enquiries** within the statutory 7-day timeframe. This was due to several things, including a loss of resource in the team and the continuously increasing complexity of cases, with the requirement to discuss complex cases with all relevant stakeholders within 7 days

The percentage of adult protection inquiries completed within the statutory time frame (7 working days)



proving to be a challenge. I also noted that a new Safeguarding Officer was initially appointed in July, but unfortunately DBS confirmation processes are unusually slow at present and therefore we have experienced delays in confirming a start date. However, we can confirm that the new officer will take up post in December. In times of understaffing in the safeguarding team, the social work teams continue to support with the investigation of

referrals, and they are to be congratulated on their ability to complete 98% of enquiries within 7 days. However, these teams are the same ones trying to respond to increasing requests for assessments and organising care in a situation of lack of provision and so naturally additional safeguarding work can have an impact on their ability to carry out their day-to-day work.

2.2.24 From the point of view of our internal residential homes, the bed rate has decreased slightly following the imposition of an embargo on new entrances to one home following an investigation under the escalating concerns process. A professional group has been set up to oversee the implementation, and the embargo has now been lifted, but the escalating concerns process continues to ensure we are fully satisfied with the progress.

Financial Situation

2.2.25 A fiscal review was carried out in August 2026, which projects the department's budget deficit to be £2.3m by the end of the financial year. Most of this deficit sits within the budget of the older people and physical disabilities service and is proof of the lack of adequate resources available for the department to respond to the demand for care amongst an ageing population.

2.2.26 There is also a significant shortfall within the provider services as I have previously reported. The last time I reported this service was responsible for £1m of departmental pressure, mainly on staff overspend and use of agency staff within residential care. I am pleased to note that the department decided to commission an expert report to consider staffing levels, rotas etc across our residential homes and to advise on the necessary staffing levels to run the service efficiently.

2.2.27 The department has been provided with an additional budget for 2026-27 to try and deal with the pressures that remain on the residential side of the Mental Health service. Following the review in August, this service is on track to be able to operate within their budget this year which is encouraging.

2.2.28 The projected overspend reflects the growing demand for adult services and an ageing population, rather than an issue that can be solved through short-term measures. While the Department is reviewing areas such as residential care and the domiciliary care model to ensure more sustainable services to the future, this work will take time. In the meantime, the Department must continue to provide appropriate care and support to individuals who need it.

2.3 External Audits

2.3.1 As a Cabinet Member, I welcome audits for the department as they provide us with feedback on how the department is carrying out its duties and are a vital part of ensuring the quality of care provisions. The department was not subject to external audits at department level in the first months of 2026-27, but we have been audited by Care Inspectorate Wales into several care settings during the period.

2.3.2 Our learning disability home in Caernarfon, Y Frondeg, received an audit at the beginning of the summer, and I am very pleased to note that they were rated 'Excellent' in three out of the 4 areas covered (Well-being, Care and Support, and Leadership and Management). It is extremely encouraging to see such an outcome and a pleasure to see the good work being recognised.

2.3.3 A number of our homes for older people and physical disabilities have also received inspections. Inspections were carried out at Hafod Mawddach (Barmouth), Llys Cadfan (Tywyn) and Cefn Rodyn (Dolgellau) during the autumn term, and earlier this year inspections were carried out at Plas y Don (Pwllheli), Bryn Blodau (Ffestiniog), Plas Hafan (Nefyn), Plas Pengwaith (Llanberis) and Plas Hedd (Bangor). It's good to be able to report that the results of the inspections were positive and, where relevant, have shown progress in areas that had been identified in previous inspections as requiring attention.

3. Consultations

The report has been created based on the information provided and the content of a recent meeting to challenge and support the performance of the Department for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, with the Director, Head of Department, Assistant Heads and myself attending this meeting.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Council Plan project milestone progress reports

Appendix 2: Departmental Performance Measures

Gwynedd Council Plan 2023-28 – Year 4 Actions (Adults)

Caring Gwynedd: Supporting Gwynedd residents to live full and safe lives in our communities

Overview	What we want to achieve during the FOURTH year 2026-27 (milestones):	An update on milestone progress to date (September 2026)	Milestone likely to be completed by the end of the year? (Ydi / Nac Ydi)	What do you want to achieve in the FIFTH year to complete this project?
Project: Modernising our care resources to meet future needs				
<p>We will modernise our care homes, update our community resources and expand the accommodation options available to Gwynedd residents.</p> <p>Our plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Care Housing - Development of over 100 new units in Penyberth, Frondeg (Caernarfon), Canolfan Lleu (Penygroes) and Dolgellau. • Residential Homes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redevelopment of Plas Gwilym, Penygroes. 	<p>In relation to Extra Care Housing, we will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drawn up a timetable for the work in Caernarfon. - opened a provision at the Penrhos Site, Pwllheli. - decided on a way forward for provision in the Dolgellau area. 	<p>Pwllheli – construction work continues. The TGY development will be ready by the Autumn with a view to filling the units by the end of the year.</p> <p>Due to the work to commission the Housing LIN report, the timetable for other developments will not be clear until we have drawn up an older adults accommodation plan. Report being presented to Cabinet in November with a view to establishing an Independence Promoting Accommodation Board to lead the work in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Property.</p>	<p>No, not fully</p>	<p>We will have a timetable for the county's Extra Care priority plans.</p> <p>Contractor appointed and Penrhos nursing home construction started</p> <p>To draw up a development plan for our residential care provision.</p> <p>Develop an accommodation</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upgrades to Hafod Mawddach and Cefn Rodyn. - Opening of a Dementia Unit at Bryn Blodau and Plas Hedd Homes. - Dementia development planning at Plas Pengwaith - Opening a new nursing and dementia home in Penyberth • Supported Living in the community – a minimum of 6 homes located throughout the county to offer suitable and safe care homes. • Joint commissioning work with the Department of Housing to understand the future demand for care accommodation. 		In addition, it should be noted that there has been a change in the intention for the Canolfan Lleu project. The Health Board is leading and Extra Care is no longer part of the plans, focusing only on a Health Centre.		strategy for individuals living with Disabilities.
	Completion of a full business case for the development of the new Penyberth nursing home.	Have been out to tender for a company to formulate the final business case. The next step is to appoint the successful company.	Yes	
	Produce a full analysis of our residential care delivery model to enable us to consider development options that will ensure the provision meets modern standards, is cost-effective and meets local need.	We have commissioned an external company (C4 Projects) to develop possible options per home. Work is still ongoing, and in addition to the plans received as part of the first phase (Plas Hedd, Bryn Blodau and Llys Cadfan), we have now just received plans for Plas Ogwen, Plas Maesincla and Cefn Rodyn.	Yes	
	Opening of the new Dementia Unit at Plas Hedd. The unit will offer specialist provision for men.	Opened and in operation since April.	Yes - achieved	
	Completed 2 new houses and support.	A house is ready in Pwllheli and will offer a home for 3 people. Development is also due in Dolgellau.	Yes - partially achieved	

	We will have received the Housing LIN report highlighting the accommodation needs of older people in Gwynedd over the next 20 years (to coincide with Llechen Lân). We will have drawn up a work programme/response strategy.	Final report received. Work to formulate a response strategy is underway and will go before Cabinet in November.	Yes	
	Impact on the people of Gwynedd: All of the above work contributes to the department's aim to expand accommodation options for the people of Gwynedd, ensuring that we promote independence with appropriate support within local communities, reducing or delaying the need for care or placement in a care home. This is crucial to ensure that people are able to live their lives safely and in the way they wish.			
Project: Increasing use of technology to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care				
We will enable the people of Gwynedd to live their best life for as long as possible within their local communities. To achieve this, they need to have the knowledge they need to be able to take advantage of community opportunities that would promote their well-being, as well as flexible ways of organising the support they need. Our plans include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">To adopt and promote a community information system, Dewis.	Establish a team to lead on developments promoting independence.	A team has been set up and a Leader has been appointed to lead on the work.	Yes - achieved	Continue with the work programme to expand the use of technology and ensure that we are aware of new developments. To start using and promoting a new system that will replace Dewis Cymru. Continue with the work programme to release care capacity through the use of robotics
	Developing and expanding our use of technology to support us to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">improving and speeding up care need assessment processesimproving the information available about individuals in emergenciesstrengthening community networks available to individuals	BeamNotes has been rolled out to all Adults and Children staff, to enable employees to focus on conversations with individuals. Training has been carried out and staff are making use of the software. Work is underway in collaboration with Adults and Children to identify further templates to be uploaded to the system as a matter of priority. The development of Mosaic continues, and attention will be paid to the availability of information needed in emergencies.	Yes	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Integrating a virtual occupational therapy system, AskSarah, into our websiteDeveloping our use of Technology Enabled Care (TEC)Promoting the use of the Telecare serviceMaking use of robotics to enable independent livingDeveloping our Direct Payments system using a virtual wallet	Ensure that people have more than one choice when they want to manage their direct payments through a 'virtual wallet' or digital account.	Discussions have been held with companies, and we are in the process of analysing the options to be able to introduce more than one digital account option to people.	Yes	and artificial intelligence.
	Start using an online system to enable direct payment recipients to look through the details of employees and micro companies available to support them in our communities.	System being developed by Gwent Council in conjunction with Data Cymru and has been agreed to collaborate and use when available – there has been a delay but Gwent is expected to go live shortly and we will follow up after that.	Yes	
	Conduct an audit to consider whether the use of robotic beds in the community can be expanded to further free up care capacity.	Moving with Dignity Officer in post since mid-September, focusing on one of the Caernarfon CRT sub-areas first.	Yes	
	Impact on the people of Gwynedd: The above work is essential to our aim of promoting independence and living well. In turn, the use of technology and equipment reduces the need for traditional care intervention (and thus reduces dependence and delays decline). Given the prospects outlined in the Llechen Lan report, succeeding in keeping people living independently with such support is vital to ensure the future sustainability of our services.			
Project: Ensure that timely and full support is available to support people to be able to live at home with their families				

<p>To ensure that people can live their lives the way they wish, we must ensure that prompt and easy support is available to individuals and their families.</p> <p>Our plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that we recognise the value of family and unpaid carers by making sure we can easily identify them and offer them full support in caring. • Reducing our waiting lists for new domiciliary care packages, ensuring that no one in Gwynedd waits more than 28 days following a care assessment 	<p>We will have expanded the use of the 'message in a bottle' scheme and ensured that the new Mosaic system can support us with unpaid carers' emergency arrangements.</p>	<p>Message in a bottle - the bottles have been distributed to several partners who are in contact with the public and are now in use out in the community.</p> <p>Mosaic – Construction of adult case management for Mosaic is underway and considerations for recording caregiver issues are being fully considered in that.</p>	Yes	<p>We will have fit for purpose and longer term agreements with our partners in the 3rd sector, ensuring strong community links across the county.</p> <p>In line with the review, we will implement a suitable domiciliary care commissioning and delivery model at the end of the current agreement during 2027/28.</p>
	<p>There will be more assessment workers to evaluate the needs of patients in the hospital and to expedite care and hospital discharge decisions.</p>	<p>Work is underway to prepare with the hope that new arrangements will commence during September.</p>	Yes	
	<p>We will have made recommendations following a review of existing domiciliary care provision, ready for implementation during 2027/28.</p>	<p>Engagement with providers and internal teams has taken place. There is a need to engage with people who are looked after and people who are on the waiting list, and we will be doing this over the coming months. Some changes to the regime/model have already begun to be implemented.</p>	Yes	
	<p>We will have implemented a programme of work to reduce our domiciliary care waiting lists ensuring that no one waits more than 91 days for domiciliary care.</p>	<p>Programme in place. Challenging with waiting lists increasing as more assessments are made. Collaborating with a new provider in the Bangor sub-area and plans are underway for other sub-areas.</p>	Yes	

<p>Impact on the people of Gwynedd:</p> <p>Ensuring appropriate support for unpaid carers will have a direct impact on our demand for care. They do invaluable work supporting their loved ones to live independently and reducing the need for traditional care. Unpaid caring is a significant demand on individuals and their families, and appropriate support is vital to the wellbeing of the carer as well as the individual in need of the care. Ensuring they have the confidence that their loved ones will be cared for in an emergency is essential to reduce anxiety and prevent deterioration.</p> <p>Securing additional support through domiciliary care when needed strengthens individuals' ability to stay at home and live independently in their local community.</p>				
<p>Project: Collaborating with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community</p>				
<p>To ensure that we fully promote the well-being of individuals, it is vital that we are able to change our culture and ensure that we work effectively with the Health Board to deliver comprehensive care and health services for the future.</p> <p>Our plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-locating adult teams with community nurses and health therapists • Develop systems of collaboration as one team around the individual through a Community Resource Team system 	<p>We will have adapted the arrangements of our Information, Advice and Support service to ensure that the process of contacting us is clear, easy and effective.</p>	<p>Work in progress. Currently confirming a new model with staff and planning the technical system. It is hoped that the department will have one telephone number by the end of the calendar year.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>We will have undertaken a review of new Information, Advice and Support arrangements to ensure that it achieves the original aim.</p> <p>Working with Health to remodel the support available to people when leaving hospital, ensuring the best chance of recovering and</p>
	<p>Establish GP Cluster meetings to strengthen close collaboration and regular engagement with GPs in Bangor and Caernarfon.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, obstacles exist to move forward with this work despite efforts by our teams. We are unlikely to be able to fully achieve this.</p>	<p>No</p>	
	<p>Agree regionally on a single purpose and 'Shared Purpose to Shared Delivery' work programme to ensure effective collaboration with the Health Board across North Wales.</p>	<p>A memorandum of understanding and a programme of work in place to move forward with this work under the leadership of the Regional Partnership Board.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working together to align the Community Resource Teams into the Primary Health ClustersDeveloping new collaboration arrangements for community mental health teams	We will have developed a commissioning strategy that ensures that we understand the care and support needs of Gwynedd residents over the next few years and are able to develop a sustainable diverse market to meet the need.	Work is progressing in domiciliary care as well as residential and nursing to try and secure a more sustainable market.	Yes	regaining independence.
	<p>Impact on the people of Gwynedd:</p> <p>These workstreams have a significant impact on our residents, primarily by ensuring that they can easily access suitable and timely support, from assessment to care and following a hospital stay. It also contributes to our efforts in the preventive field to try to reduce hospital periods.</p> <p>The work on our front doors is expected to reduce pressure on staff and enable them to focus on their caseload and assessing in a timely manner.</p> <p>Making more effective use of 3rd sector support will also enable them to provide alternative support to promote good living and early identification of needs. In turn, it is expected that this will reduce pressure on statutory services and allow us to focus our resources on those who need them most.</p>			
Project: Developing training and work opportunities for individuals in need of support				
We will promote training and work opportunities for individuals who need support. Among other schemes, we will improve provision at our Learning Disability Day Centres at Dolfeurig in Dolgellau and Frondeg, Caernarfon.	We will have opened a new hub in Dolfeurig, Dolgellau.	Some delays were experienced as a result of electrical works that needed to be completed, but no further delays are foreseen. The keys are expected to be received soon.	Yes	We will have drawn up and started implementing a programme of work to realise our new community opportunities strategy for learning disabilities in Gwynedd.
	We will, in conjunction with our partners, have developed a community opportunities strategy for learning disabilities in Gwynedd.	A regional plan in place across North Wales. The next step will be to review our strategy in terms of how to support individuals with a learning disability in Gwynedd.	Yes	

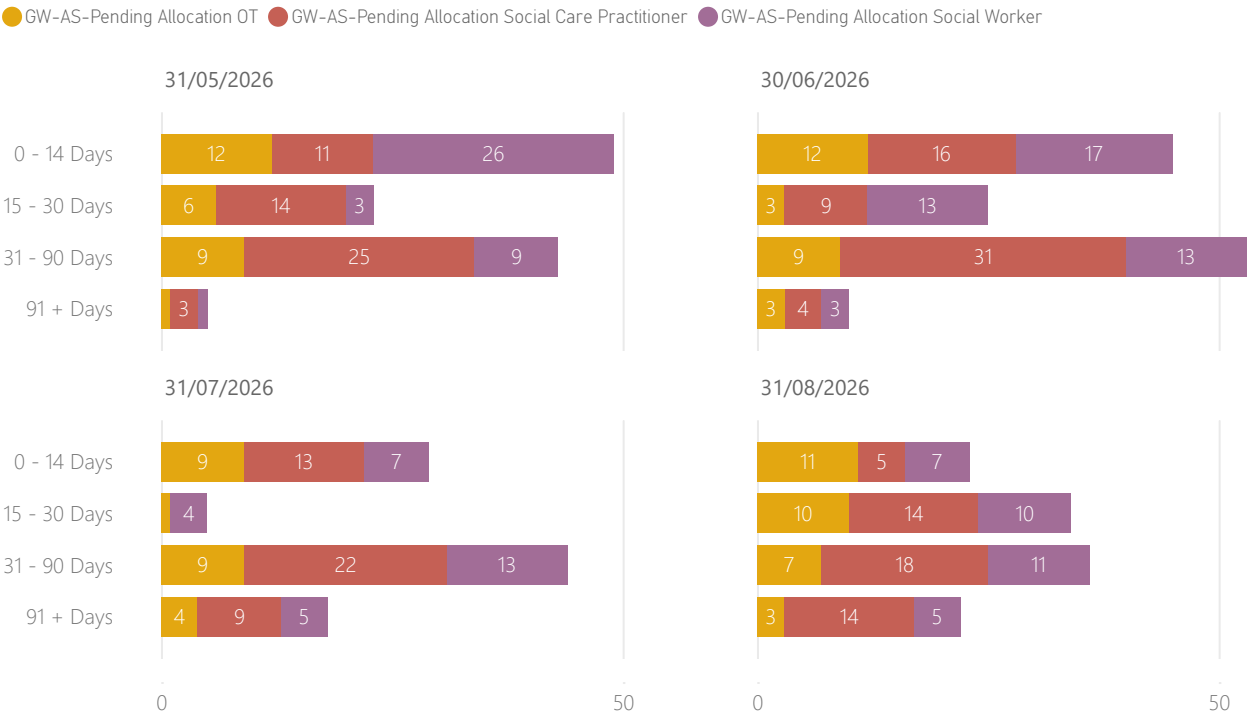
	Create an ethos of 'work first' ensuring that job opportunities, training and practical experience are prioritised over supportive services as part of core support, where appropriate.	Increase in the number of individuals accessing the world of work by promoting this within the teams and in collaboration with colleagues in education and health. Using successful examples to promote the work.	Yes – but it will be an ongoing work	We will have seen a further increase in the number of individuals in employment opportunities.
	Ensure a long-term resource for employment support officers so that this work becomes part of the service's permanent work.	We are working regionally to ensure sustainability for this service when grant funding comes to an end.	Yes	
	Impact on the people of Gwynedd: All these developments contribute to the aim of ensuring that individuals with learning disabilities have opportunities, like everyone else, to contribute fully within their local communities. We know that this is very important from a wellbeing and sense of achievement perspective, and it also promotes independence and provides opportunities to engage with others within the community, reducing the demand for care services.			
Project: Clean Slate				
We will prepare an analysis of the demographics of Gwynedd; the demand for service; and the best practice of adult social services in order to understand and highlight the demand for service and the associated resources that will be needed for the next twenty years.	We will have updated the Adult Clean Slate report and action plan to reflect changes in data/assumptions about demand.	Updated report submitted to the Care Scrutiny Committee in July. Proceeding with the work programme.	Yes	We will have an older adult accommodation scheme in Gwynedd.

	We will have one plan for bringing together all the work of the Department for Adults, Health and Wellbeing and simplifying the workflows.	Not being able to prioritise the work due to capacity and other projects, but is due to happen soon. A draft is in place but now needs to be updated.	Yes	
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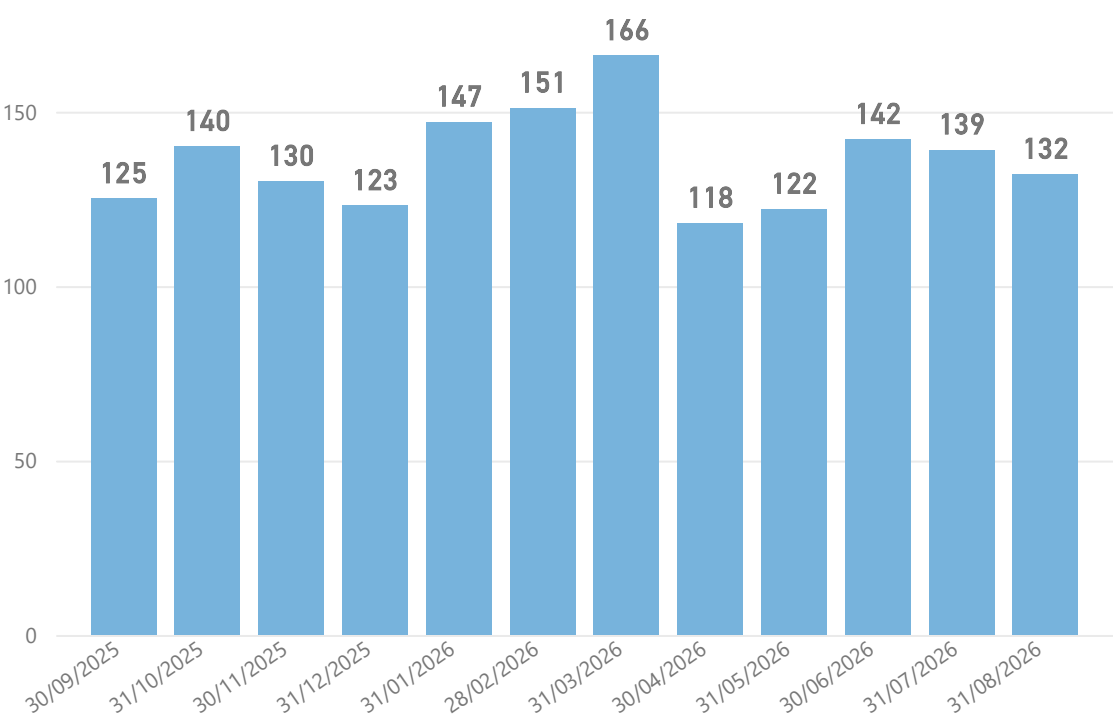
Older People and Physical Disabilities - Sian Edith Jones

Empowering Adults in Gwynedd to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

How long people have been waiting to be allocated to a worker



Number of social care needs assessments during each month



Behind the Performance:

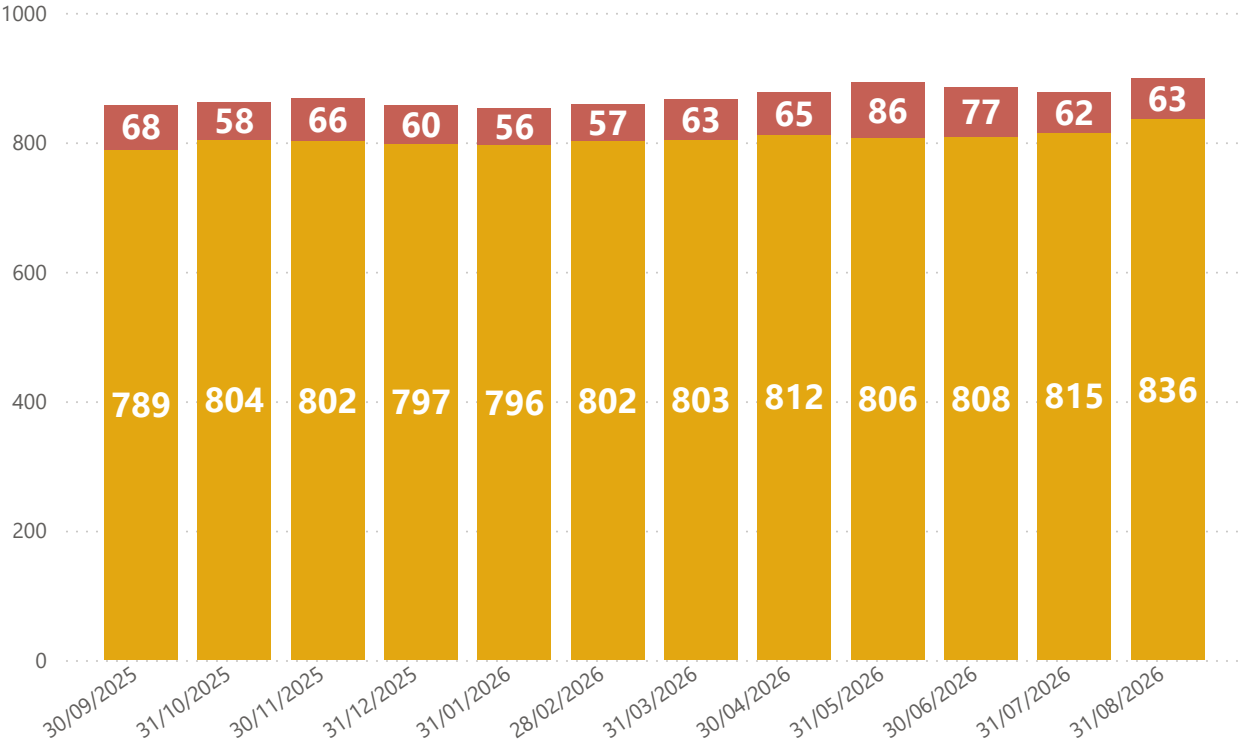
Considering staff absences over the summer period, the number of assessments has remained high. There has been a slight increase in the number of people awaiting assessment during this period, but overall the figures have remained fairly stable across the assessment roles.

The largest increase is in those awaiting assessment by a Social Care Practitioner. As with the previous reporting period, this is because requests for care assessments take priority and therefore requests for equipment adaptations remain on the waiting list for longer. We have also seen a recent increase in those awaiting assessment by an Occupational Therapist as a result of one therapist's secondment to the specialist "Moving with Dignity" post, and delays in recruiting a replacement. We are also hoping to appoint a Social Worker to an empty post in one team. If we are successful in making this appointment, it will be of significant benefit.

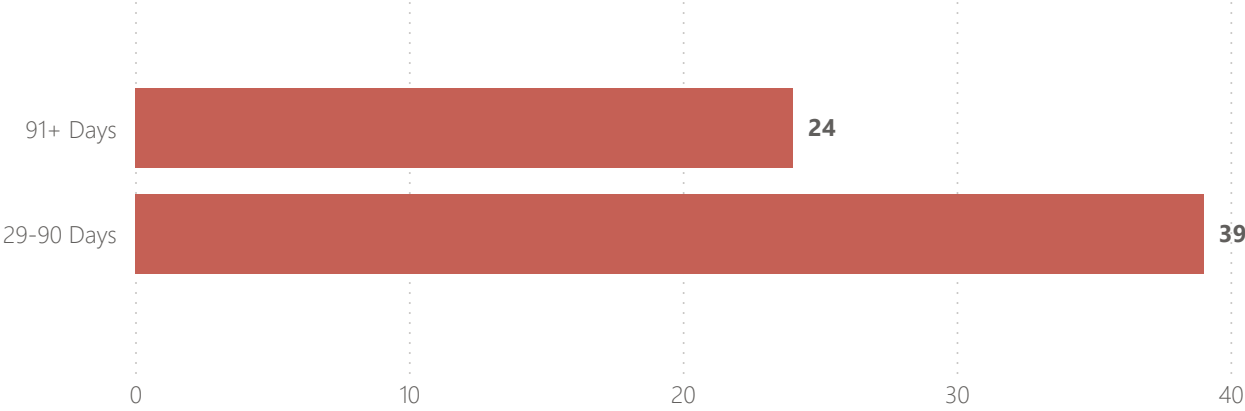
Home Care Waiting Lists - Sian Edith Jones

Empowering Adults in Gwynedd to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

Number of people on the waiting list longer than 28 days (red) and the number of people receiving home care (yellow)



How long individuals have been on the waiting list



Behind the Performance:

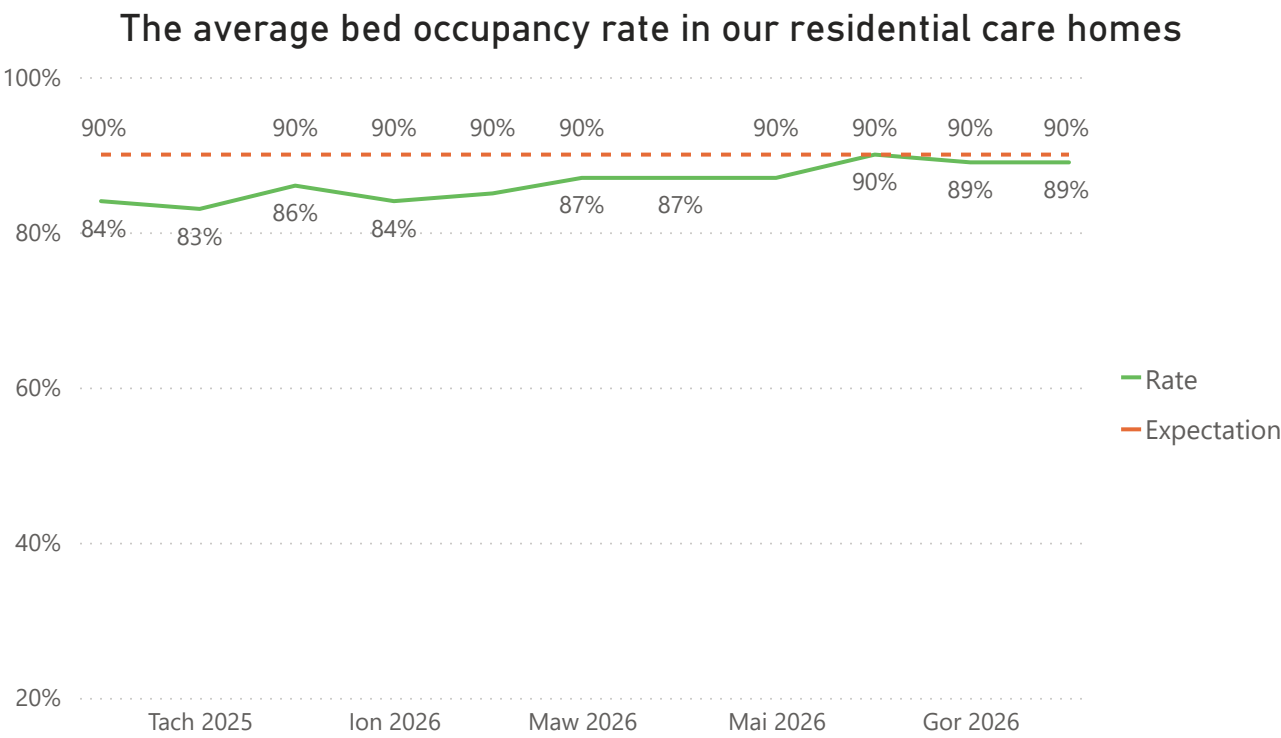
The overall picture is improving. The number of people waiting more than 90 days has fallen significantly over the past three months.

Tywyn and the Nantlle Valley continue to be challenging areas, with the highest numbers of people waiting, although the figures remain lower than they were at the start of the summer. Across the other 14 areas of Gwynedd, an average of just five people are now waiting for a new care package. A new provider has been secured to help in the Bangor City area, and market development work continues in other local sub-areas.

With the summer period having passed, it is possible that teams have not yet had sufficient opportunity to fully review and update the waiting lists. We hope to see a further reduction by the autumn, although it is likely that there will also be an increase in assessments and new demand.

Internal Residential Care Home Provider - Rhion Glyn

Empowering in Adults in Gwynedd to: "Live my life as I want to live it"



Behind the Performance:

The percentage for July and August fell slightly below the target level, but remains higher than the levels seen prior to June 2026.

It was noted in the previous report that work was beginning to review staffing levels and the care needs of residents across our care homes. This work has now commenced at Llys Cadfan, Hafod Mawddach and Plas y Don.

Bryn Blodau - it should be noted that there is currently an embargo on new admissions to Bryn Blodau, as the home is subject to an escalating concerns process.

Staffing Levels and Levels of Needs

These percentages are calculated based on vacant posts and cases where staff members on contracted hours are absent due to long-term sickness (a period of more than 28 days). The information does not include casual staffing levels, short-term sickness absence, or situations where staff have been suspended from work.

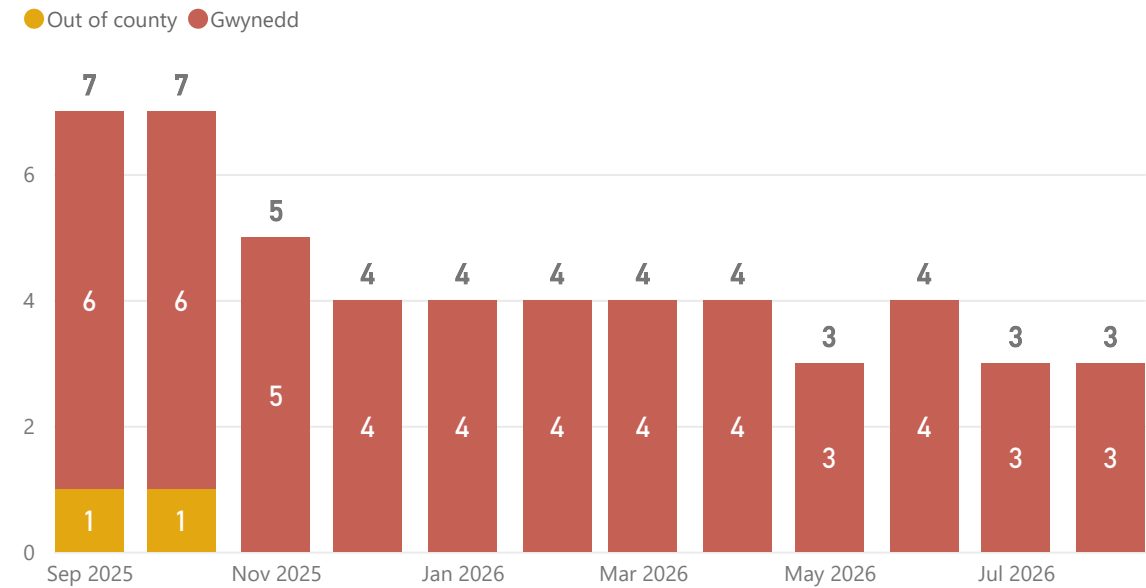
It is pleasing to report that the situation has improved considerably compared with the previous reporting period. At that time, five of the homes were reporting staffing levels of 83% or lower.

	March '25	August '25	October '25	December '25	March '26	June '26	August '26
Plas Hedd	87%	74%	82%	86%	83%	80%	85%
Plas Ogwen	86%	95%	100%	95%	100%	83%	100%
Plas Pengwaith	90%	90%	94%	81%	77%	82%	87%
Plas Maesincla	100%	94%	97%	93%	76%	86%	92%
Plas Gwilym	96%	91%	100%	100%	95%	89%	86%
Plas Hafan	96%	87%	90%	87%	87%	97%	89%
Plas y Don	84%	77%	92%	92%	86%	87%	82%
Bryn Blodau	90%	97%	85%	85%	89%	93%	95%
Cefn Rodyn	97%	92%	100%	90%	97%	81%	93%
Hafod Mawddach	95%	84%	86%	88%	92%	81%	97%
Llys Cadfan	84%	91%	87%	87%	88%	94%	97%

Learning Disabilities - Llinos Rowlands

Empowering Adults in Gwynedd to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

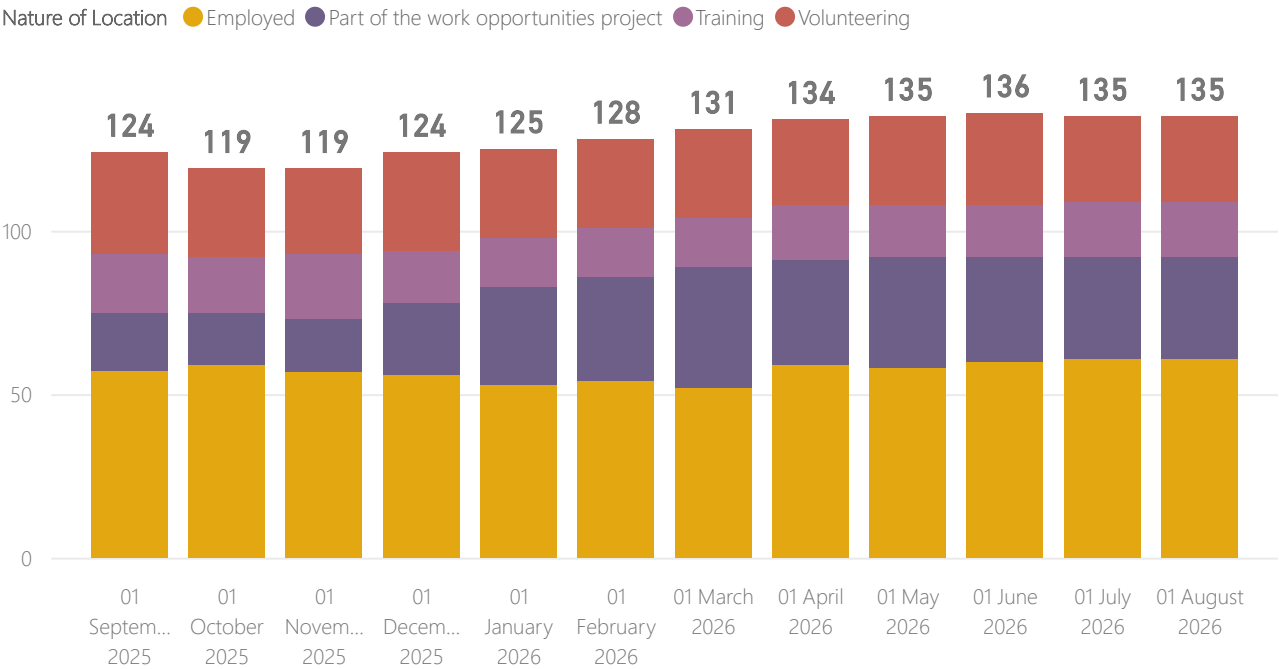
Number of individuals with learning disabilities who have accommodation needs within the next year



Behind the performance:

The number of people waiting for accommodation remains encouragingly low. The service has robust processes in place to identify future needs.

Number of individuals with learning disabilities in work opportunities



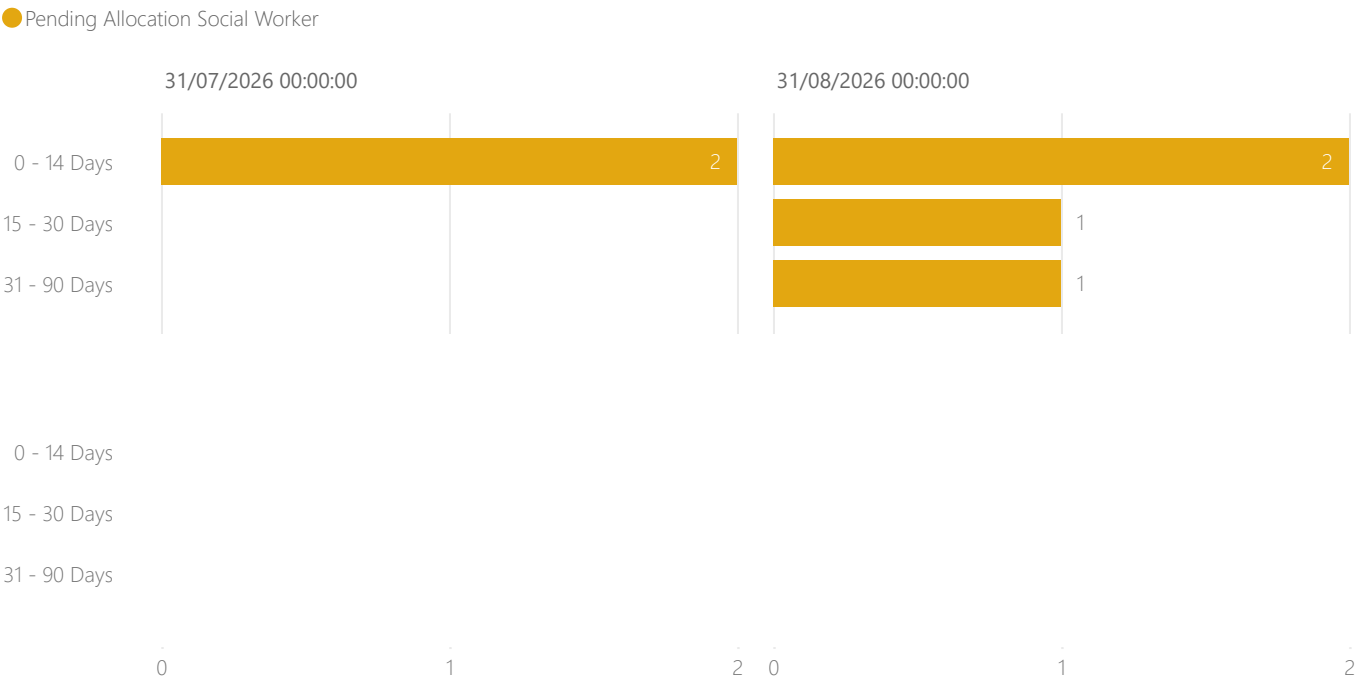
Behind the performance:

The situation has remained stable throughout the summer. It is hoped that more people will move into employment in the coming term.

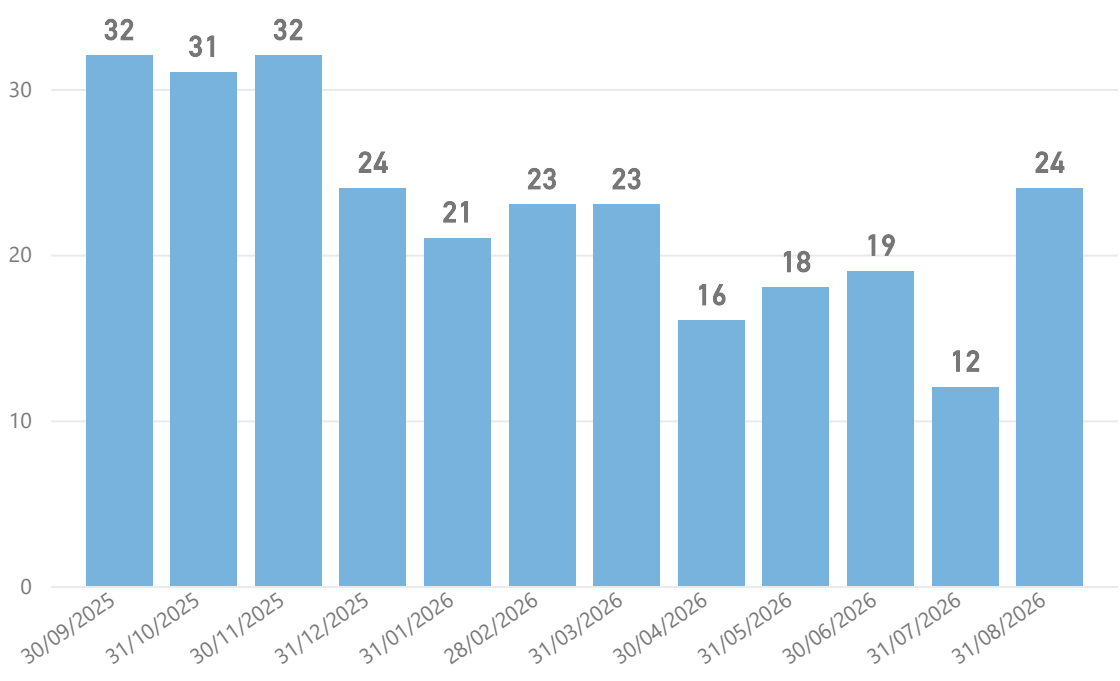
Mental Health - Mannon Trappe

Empowering Adults in Gwynedd to: "Live my life as I want to live it"

How long people have been waiting to be allocated to a worker



Number of social care needs assessment during the month

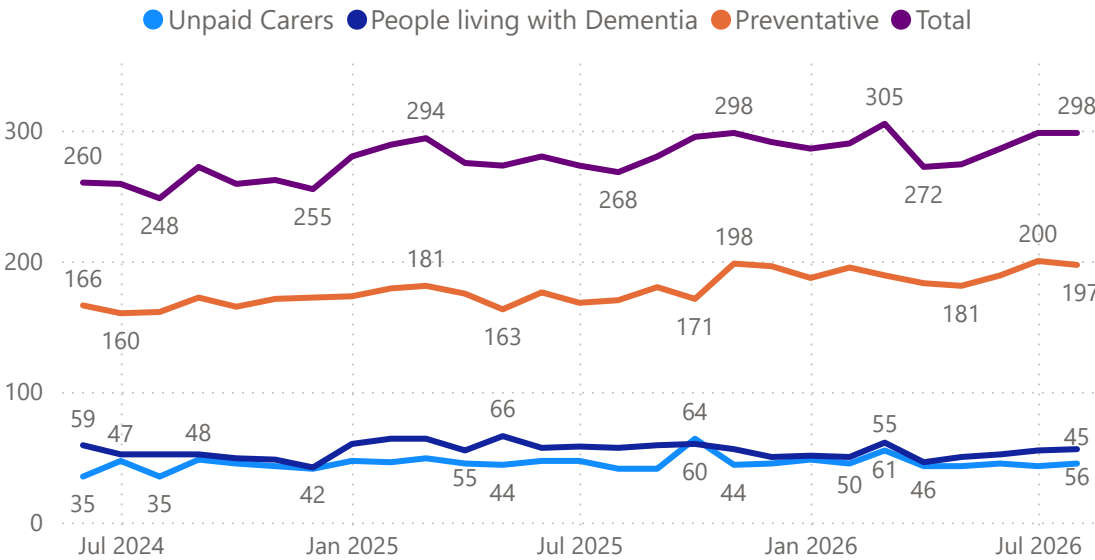


Behind the Performance:

South Gwynedd and Arfon teams currently have one vacant post. In addition, we have experienced some capacity limitations due to various staff absences. Despite this, it appears that a recording error was responsible for the two cases appearing to wait over 15 days to be allocated. We can confirm these individuals were not waiting that long.

During the reporting period, 18 individuals were also assessed under the Mental Health Act. These assessments took a total of 125 hours to complete. Delays, together with the high number of assessments, have been caused by difficulties in securing Section 12 approved doctors and a shortage of available beds in some cases. The Health Service has also changed the process for arranging transport, which has added to the AMHPs workload (Approved Mental Health Practitioners).

Number of individuals who have attended Dementia Actif sessions per month



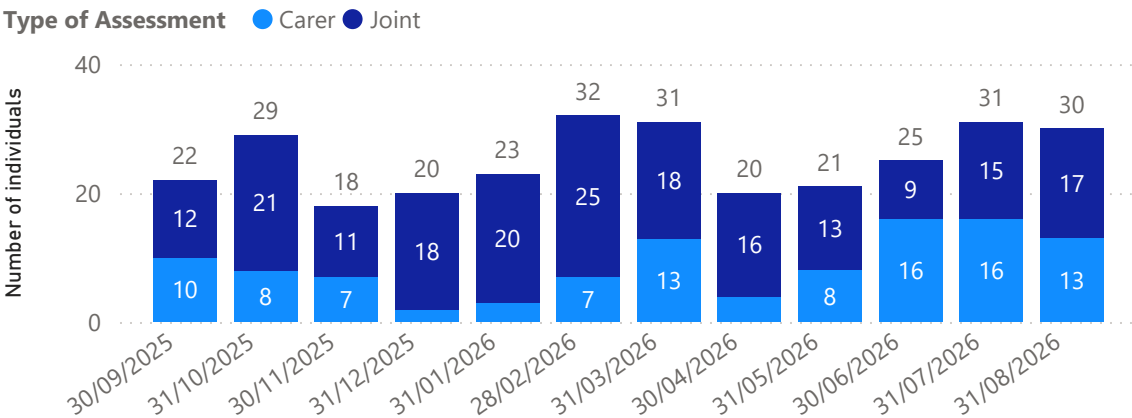
Behind the Performance:

Attendance numbers were somewhat down in the classes during August due to staff holidays. Although we tried to cover the classes, it was not possible to do so every time. A decision was made to close all classes for one week beginning on 10 August. During the last two months, 14 referrals were received from professionals, including the Alzheimer’s Society, falls prevention physiotherapists, and social workers. In addition, 36 self-referrals were received, reflecting a strong level of interest in and demand for the service.

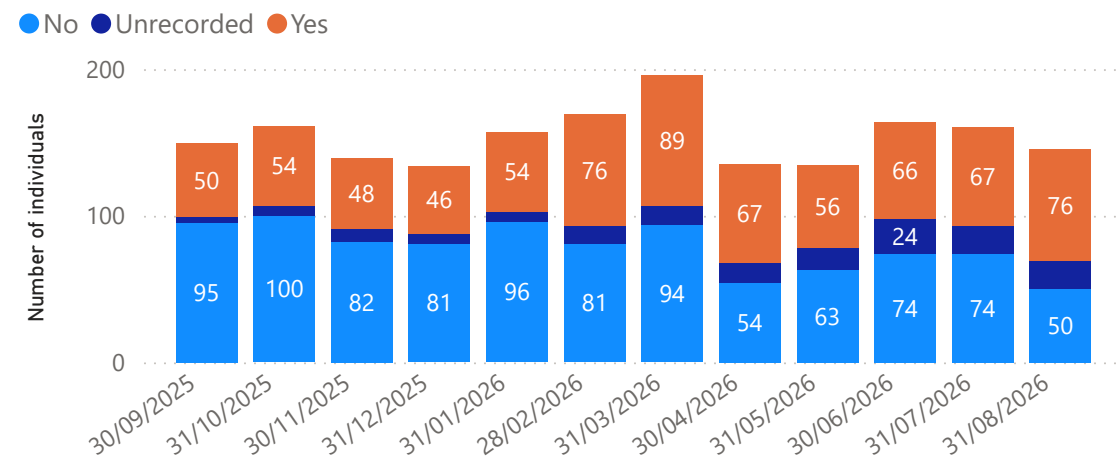
"The Dementia Actif class has made a real difference to me. After attending for over six months, I can raise my right arm much higher than I was able to before. I also have arthritis, and previously I was unable to touch my thumb to each finger. I can now touch each finger individually, which is a major improvement. Thank you to the Dementia Actif team for their support."

Following an online meeting of the Dementia Carers Support Group, one piece of feedback received was: *"I would like to say a huge thank you for your offer of support. It is a great comfort to know that, when things become very difficult, there is someone there to listen and help who has experienced the same worries and challenges."*

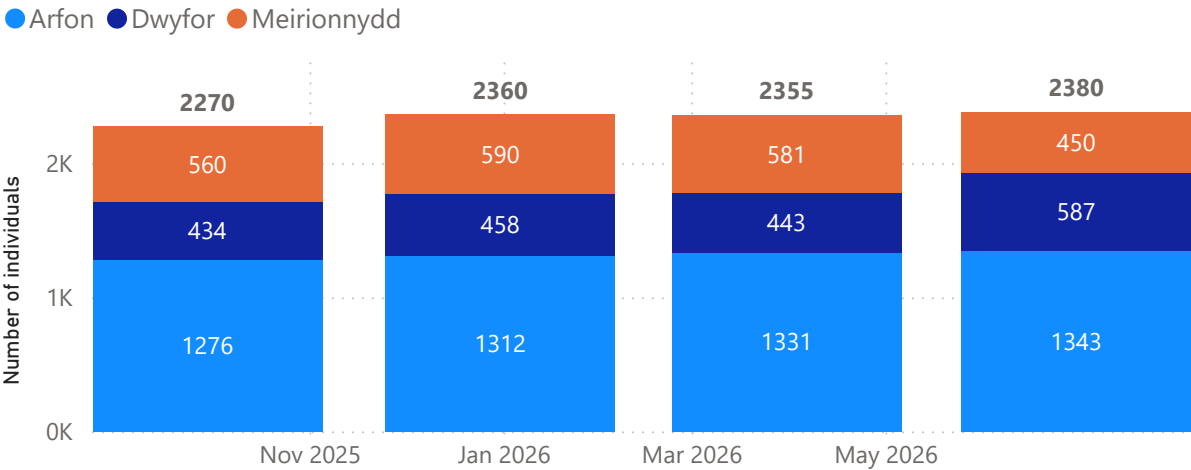
Number of unpaid carers that have received an assessment



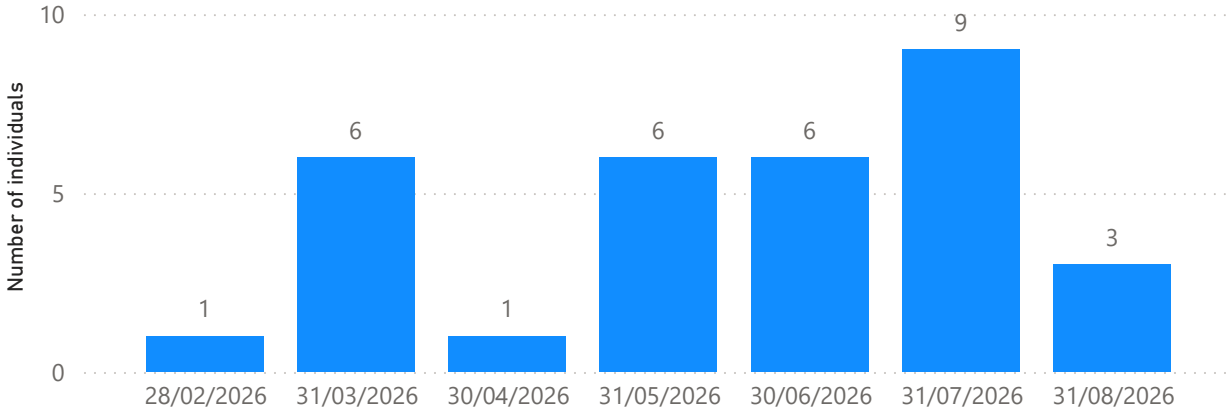
According to the assessment, is there a carer?



Total carers receiving Carers Support



Parent Carers Assessment



Behind the Performance:

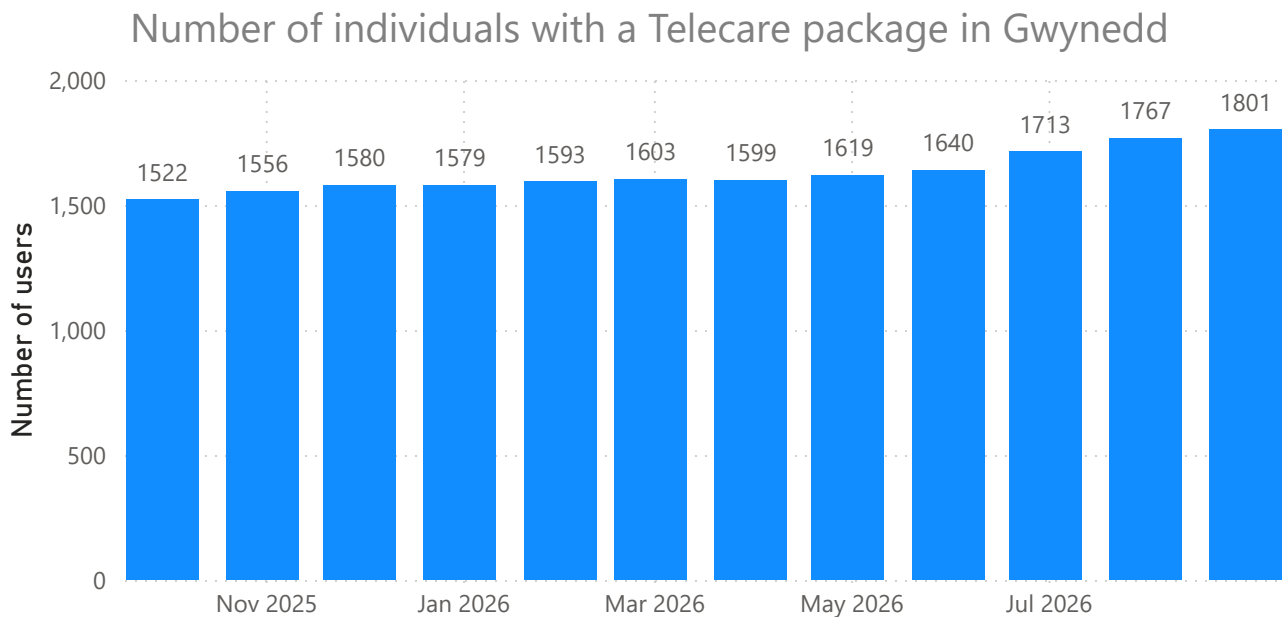
The unpaid carers work programme continues to progress, and the work undertaken so far is showing positive development.

The number of carer-only assessments (that is, assessments carried out with the unpaid carer rather than jointly with the person they care for) has increased. This is largely due to the increase in conversations and assessments with parent carers. A temporary pilot funded through a grant has been supporting this work, specifically assessments with parent carers, and both the figures and feedback suggest that the pilot is working well and having a positive impact. There will need to be further discussion about how we continue to provide this support for parent carers in the future. Discussions have also begun with third-sector organisations regarding the possibility of commissioning them to focus specifically on carrying out assessments with unpaid carers more generally.

Support services continue to move forward, and the number of carers being identified and supported is also increasing. However, it is recognised that future efforts should focus not only on the number of carers supported, but also on feedback and the quality of the support provided.

Promoting Independence Services - Alun Gwilym Williams

Supporting people to live a good life in their community

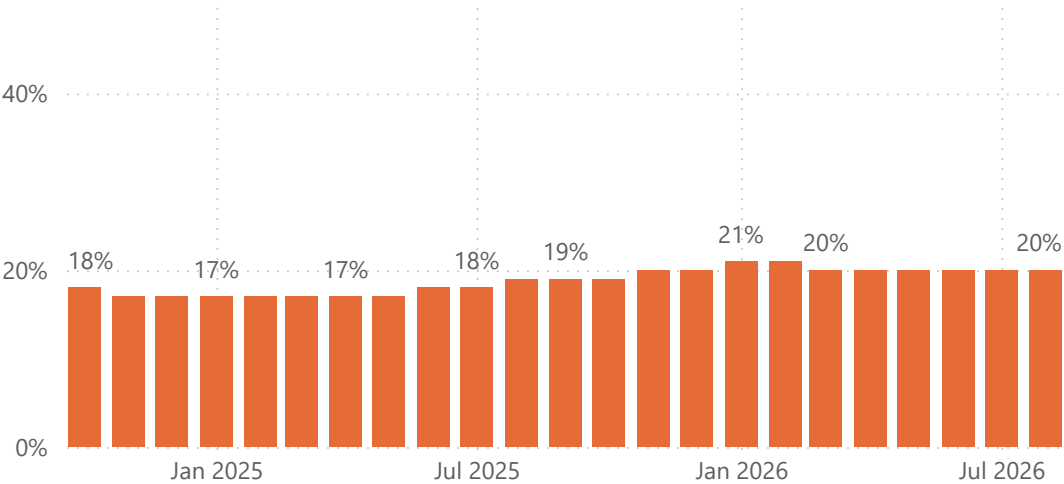


Behind the performance:

The number of individuals with a telecare package in Gwynedd has continued to increase steadily over the year, rising by around 18% from 1,522 in October 2025 to 1,793 in September 2026. This is encouraging and reflects the growing demand for the service, together with the success of our promotional and engagement activities across the county and online.

To respond to this increase in demand, the team continues to develop its capacity and resources to ensure an effective and timely service for users. This includes the appointment of an apprentice to support this area of work over the next two years.

The percentage of people receiving service through direct payments

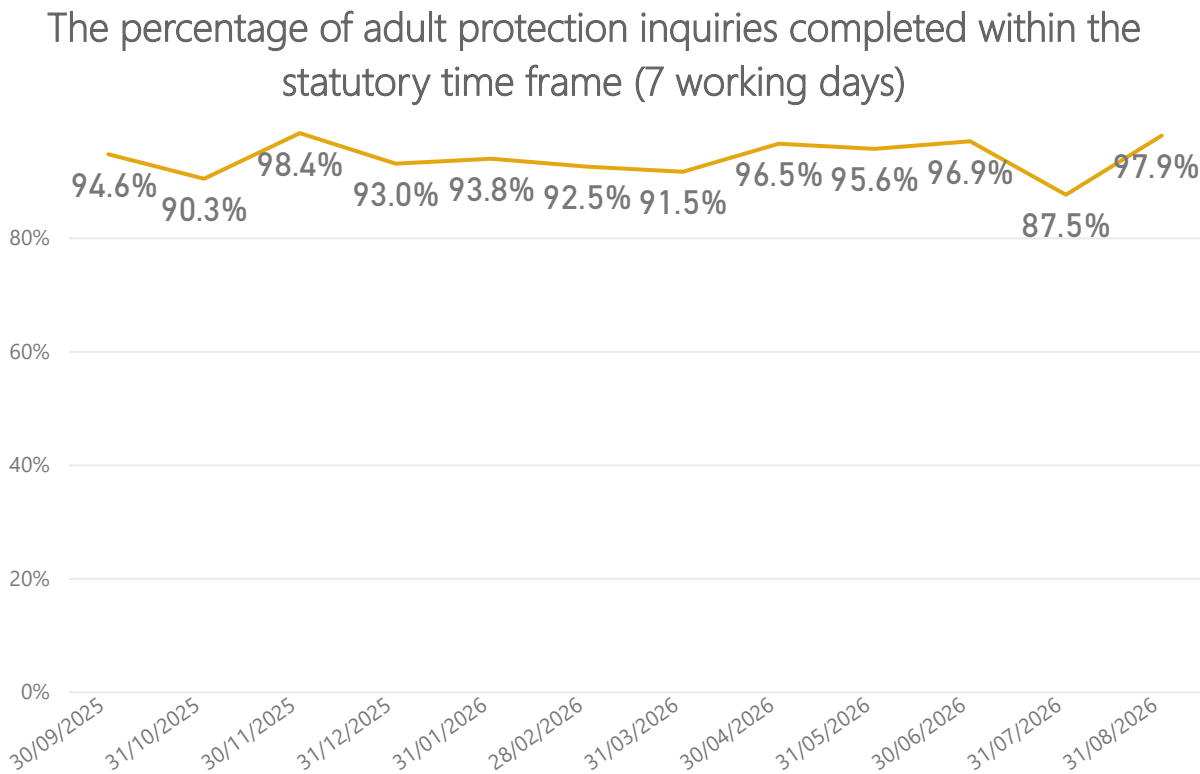
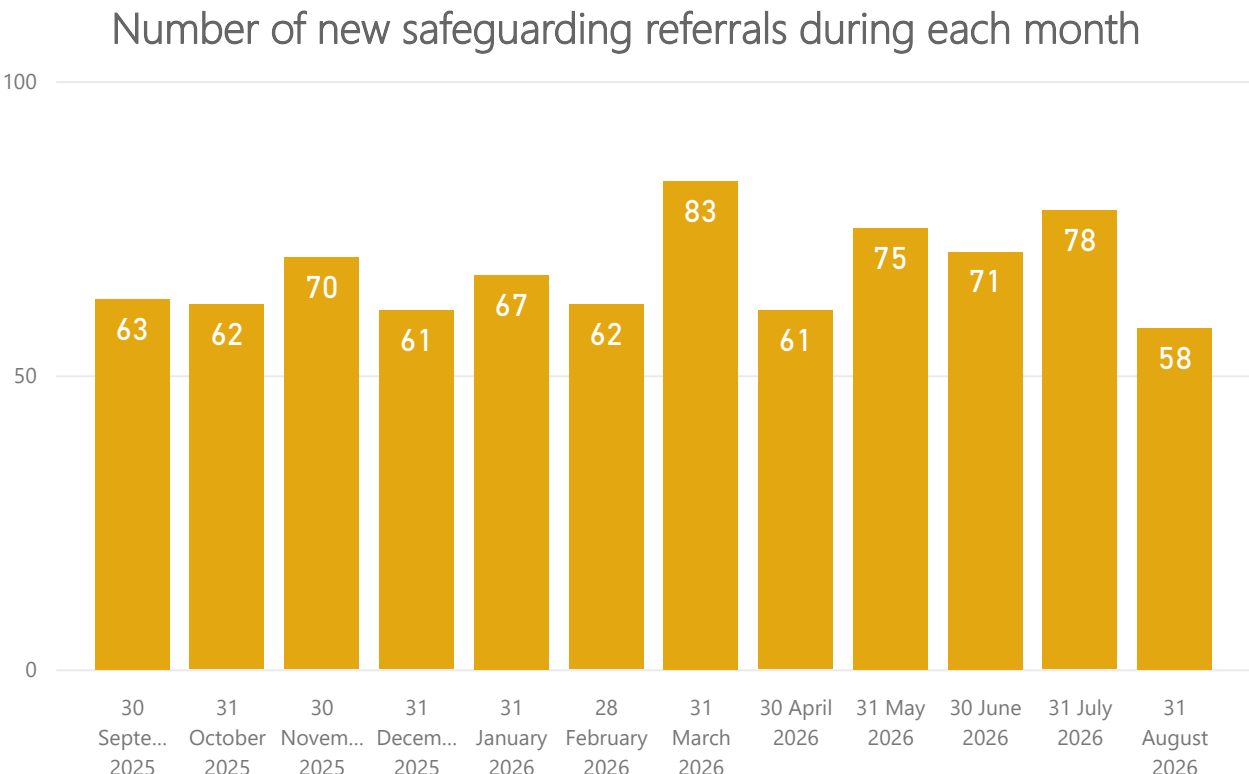
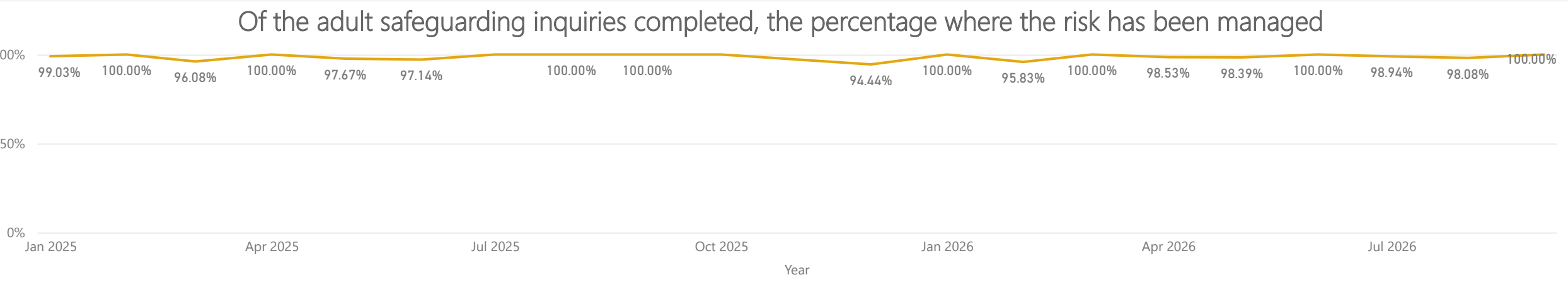


Behind the Performance:

The percentage of adults receiving appropriate services (home care or support) through direct payments has remained stable, with new care packages commencing while others have naturally come to an end. The small care enterprise support programme has continued to develop, with a number of the initial enterprises having completed the training programme delivered by the service in partnership with Menter Môn. We will learn lessons from the first cohort, and a further training programme will begin shortly in order to continue attracting individuals into the sector.

Safeguarding - Mannon Trappe

Protecting adults with care and support need who are at risk of abuse and/or neglect



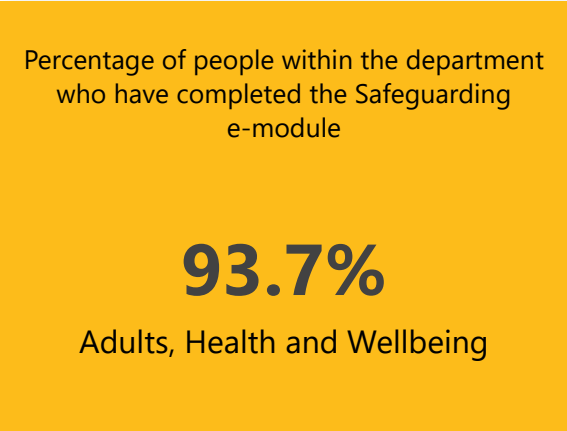
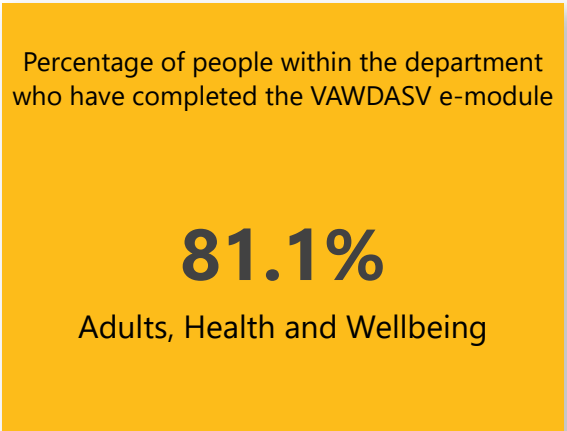
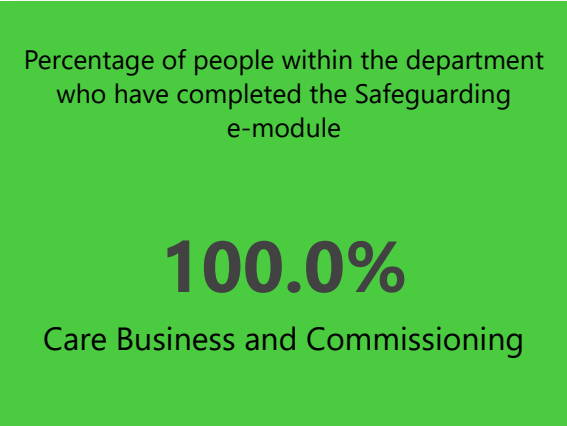
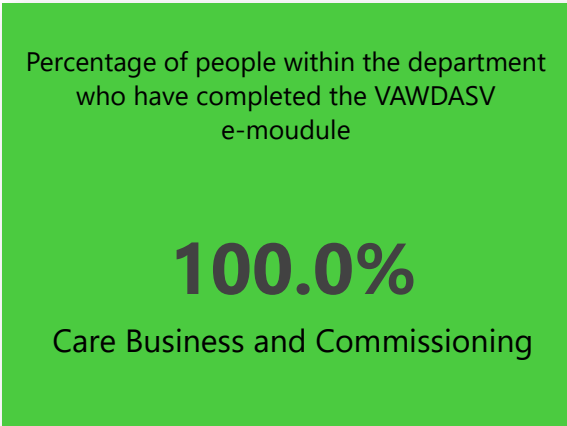
Behind the Performance:

We have now appointed a full-time Safeguarding Officer, although they will not take up their post until October. This appointment will significantly reduce the pressure on the part-time Safeguarding Officer as well as on the local areas.

It can be seen that there has been a significant reduction in the ability to complete Section 126 enquiries within 7 days. This reflects the fact that this work is an additional burden on the Area Leaders' workloads. In addition, staff availability during the holiday period has caused delays to some enquiries.

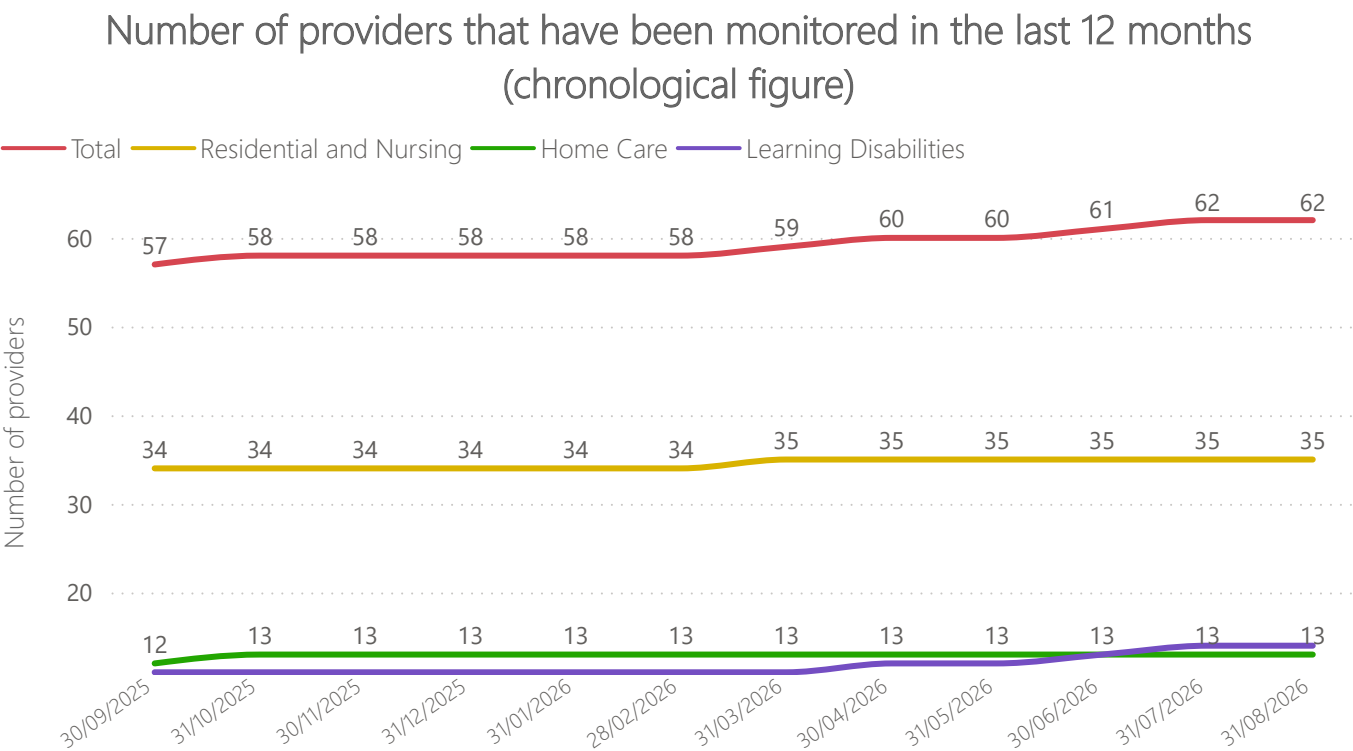
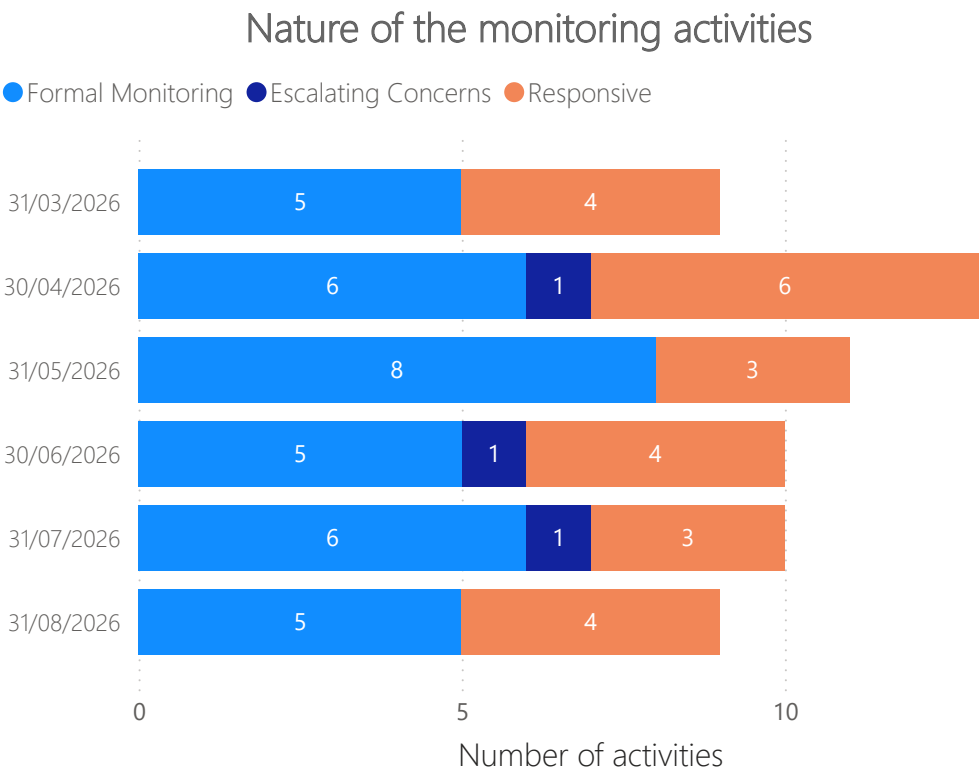
Percentage that have completed the Mandatory Titles (e-learning)

Data last updated
09/09/2026



Quality Assurance - Mannon Trappe

Ensuring that the care being commissioned is safe and of quality



Behind the Performance:

Routine monitoring continued throughout the period. A considerable amount of responsive work was also undertaken during the period as a result of incidents, safeguarding referrals, feedback, and similar matters.

Responsive activity continued during the period, including more intensive work with two specific providers to better understand and address the issues that had arisen. In one case, the concerns originated from commissioners, while in the other they were raised by representatives of service users. Work with one provider has now concluded, following a series of discussions and good collaboration with the provider. Activity with the other provider will continue into the next quarter. Responsive work can be just as valuable as formal monitoring.

One residential care provider came under the Escalating Concerns process during the period, in accordance with the latest guidance. This work will continue into the next reporting period. The provider has demonstrated a good level of cooperation throughout. Another provider exited the Escalating Concerns process during the period, and a positive working relationship has been re-established with the Quality Assurance Team.

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	5th November 2026
TITLE	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
REASON TO SCRUTINISE	For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.
AUTHOR	Sharron Williams Carter, Head of Children and Supporting Families Department
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Menna Trenholme

1. Why it needs scrutiny?

For Committee Members to scrutinise performance matters within the Department.

2. Background / Context

2.1 Background / Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the area for which I am responsible as the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families. This includes outlining the latest regarding the pledges in the Council Plan; the Department's day-to-day work; as well as the latest in terms of the savings scheme and cuts.

We are implementing the Council Plan for 2023-28, and here I report on the progress made up to the end of September 2026, for an autism plan and residential provision for looked after children in small group homes. All matters have been the subject of discussion and have been challenged by me at a performance challenge meeting, and I am satisfied with the performance of the Department.

2.2 Rationale and justification

Performance of Projects in the Council Plan

The Children and Supporting Families Department has two projects in the Council Plan, namely the Autism Plan and a Plan for developing a residential provision for looked after children in small group homes.

Autism Plan

The Gwynedd Autism Plan continues to develop and respond to increasing demand for help and support from autistic individuals, neuro-divergent people and their families. The needs and complexities of autistic individuals and their families are difficult to analyse, especially if there is a cross-section of needs such as trauma, poverty, neuro-divergent parents, Looked After Children, Child protection cases, etc. Therefore, the need for social

workers to be able to consult, discuss cases and seek the direct input of a key worker, who specialises in the field, is proving to be successful in several of cases, and this has contributed towards reducing the level of statutory intervention in several cases, including moving from Child Protection Plans to Care and Support Plans, where appropriate, and several cases were closed following intervention. There is now a short waiting list for direct support from a key worker.

The team is leading on developing and implementing Neuro-developmental Profiling, supporting consistent implementation of this approach across health, education and social care. A multi-agency steering group has been established to ensure quality, consistency and joint-learning. In addition, the team have developed a psycho-educational scaffolding model to support practitioners to interpret and apply profiling information effectively by consulting, reflecting and developing confidence. The process also helps parents and carers to develop a deeper understanding of their child's strengths, needs and experiences, strengthening joint-understanding between families and professionals. Consequently, the work improves the quality of assessments, decision-making and support-planning, whilst strengthening the workforce's ability to effectively meet the needs of neuro-divergent children, young people and families.

The staff training programme has developed substantially over the past two years, moving beyond the e-learning modules to include face-to-face training, consultation, practice communities and continuous support to the workforce. Although we are monitoring the e-learning training completion rates, these figures do not fully reflect the magnitude of the learning, professional development or increased confidence that can be seen across social care services. Awtistiaeth Gwynedd also provide corporate training to managers and team leaders to develop a neuro-inclusive workforce and strengthen understanding of neuro-divergence amongst the workforce. There is increasing evidence of more neuro-inclusive practices and more confidence amongst practitioners and managers when supporting neuro-divergent individuals, families and colleagues. As well as the advantages to the workforce, this work contributes towards improving the way that services are planned and provided, ensuring more accessible, sensitive and effective responses to citizens and families across Gwynedd.

There are groups such as '*Paned a Sgwrs*' for parents and carers, and they have guest speakers attending to discuss specific issues. A high number of parents benefit from the space to discuss and share experiences. Families have a support network and can reach out to each other and share experiences, as well as receiving information, advice and support from services that facilitate the groups.

Clwb Niwro - a club for young people - continues to be successful and provides opportunities for neuro-divergent young people to socialise, develop confidence and support their health and well-being. The provision is presented in partnership with the Youth Service, supporting the work of developing more inclusive services and mainstreaming opportunities for neuro-divergent young people in their local communities. In September, a pilot was launched in Ysgol Ardudwy to support neuro-divergent young people to understand and investigate their identity and neuro-divergence. The learning

from the pilot will drive the development of similar provision in the future, in the hope of extending the model to other catchment areas across Gwynedd.

The Niwro Cymru app, developed by Awtistiaeth Gwynedd, provides information, advice and support to the neuro-divergent community and professionals, and it continues to grow in its use and influence. As a result of the App's success, local authorities across Wales are interested, with Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan now in the early stages of joining the venture, which strengthens its potential as a national resource for neuro-divergent communities.

We trust that there are no direct concerns regarding the plan's implementation at present. However, there is uncertainty regarding the continuation of the service post March 2027, when the current funding ends. As well as the potential impact on service users, there is a risk of losing a specialist team that has been key in leading innovative work in the autism and neuro-divergent field locally, regionally and nationally. Losing this expertise would affect the sustainability of the service and the Council's ability to continue to develop and lead in the field, endangering the substantial progress made over the past few years.

Residential provision for looked after children in small group homes

The Plan for developing residential provision for looked after children in small group homes has now progressed significantly. The home in Morfa Bychan has been operational with two children living there since 2025, and we have received a registration from Care Inspectorate Wales.

The home in Deiniolen is now operational with two children living there since the end of 2025. We are still awaiting registration from Care Inspectorate Wales as a piece of building control work needs to be completed but we hope that the registration will reach us soon.

By now, the home in Criccieth is also operational, with two children living there since the beginning of September and they have settled well. The situation in Criccieth is similar to the situation in Deiniolen. A CIW registration application has been submitted, with some further matters receiving attention as part of the process.

Our fourth house is in Edern, and the development work is nearing completion by the end of October. The Building Regulations process is being completed as part of the registration requirements.

Ensuring a suitable property and completing the necessary adaptation work continues to be a complex process that requires close collaboration between departments and partners. Meeting the regulatory needs and ensuring a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registration is an essential step. We often collaborate with the Housing and Property Department and Building Control to make sure that the houses' registration happens as soon as possible. Another challenge we face is the housing market, as many houses are not suitable for residential provision. This is due to several factors, e.g. location, size of the houses, property cost, refurbishment work to bring the houses up to building control and Care Inspectorate Wales standards.

The Department's day-to-day work

At the end of September, there were 289 looked after children in Gwynedd, which is six additional children compared to this time last year. On a positive note, 3% of children have left care and have returned home. Another positive percentage that should be highlighted is the number of case conferences where the child's voice/opinion (5+ years) was heard. That percentage was 100%, which is higher than at the end of last year. The Out of Hours Team is also doing excellent work ensuring that every call is responded to before the shift ends.

The Youth Justice Service has noted that their new Regional Policy for Out-of-Court Disposals is proving successful, with a substantial improvement in performance and consistency when providing the service; the number coming into the system for the first time is at its lowest level since this measure began.

Over the summer, activity sessions have been very successful in the Early Years Service, with 568 children aged between 0-16 years and 293 families attending 16 Family Fun Sessions across Gwynedd. 510 children and 252 parents attending the Play Trailer sessions, as well as 3 sessions to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Flying Start that were held at Blaenau Ffestiniog, Caernarfon and Maesgeirchen.

Over the summer, the Fostering Service was very proactive with several events at the Eisteddfod, Summer of Fun and recruitment sessions, which corresponded with the work of Eliminating Profit from Care by 2030. In addition, we saw good collaboration since April 2026 to be able to report on returning home interviews after children or young people were identified as missing. 55 children have been identified as missing children over the period, and 164 returning home interviews have been held. The number of interviews is higher than the number of missing children as many of the children go missing on more than one occasion. We have appointed a Team Manager to lead on the work of introducing our new quality assurance framework. This includes our annual audit programme, which supports performance monitoring, noting areas for improvement, and promoting high-quality practice across the service.

This past period has been challenging for the Department, with an increase in the number of referrals reaching us through the Referral Intake Team and due to the complexities of the referrals received, which increases the demand for Strategy Discussions and Part 5 Discussions. Each team has stated that cases are becoming more complex and that more children come under the child protection category, with 136 children now on the Child Protection register. Children remain on the register for longer, with the number of days, on average, now at 308 days. The 16+ Team also continues to report that demand for services is still high, with 247 cases currently open to them at the end of September. The increasing pattern of referrals and complexity of cases here in Gwynedd is cause for concern. We see a clear pattern that the demand on the Children and Supporting Families Department is rising and hence the pressure on our staff. This is a pattern that is seen across children's services in all local authorities.

We must emphasise that we have acknowledged this increasing work pressure on our workforce. In light of the increasing pressure, the department has submitted bids, with

several successful bids made for 2026-2027. This included £320,000 for the operational teams, in line with the new family support statutory requirement and for social care worker posts. £175,000 was received for joint case contributions with Health in the Derwen Service, £75,000 for legal and medical fees of specialist cases relating to court cases, £120,000 for additional workers for the post-care team. There was a £60,000 contribution towards the costs of North Wales Adoption Service. There was a joint bid with adults for additional responsibilities because of new statutory requirements worth £70,790. These bids come to a total of £791,150.

As well as the above bids, an additional bid was submitted following the recommendations of the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' Child Practice Review, which comes to a total of £584,500.

There are several projects in the Children's Department, which are funded through a RIF project and the funding for these projects will finish at the end of March 2027. This is concerning for the Department because the projects over the past 5 years have been essential for the services to thrive to help children, young people and families and have made a difference to the lives of individuals. This concern creates instability amongst our staff and there is potential to lose experienced staff as a result. We are now aware that funding is available for the next 5 years, but as yet there are no assurances that we will be able to continue funding the current projects as they are, although this is our hope as a Service.

Should we succeed with the bids, it provides consistency for services and an opportunity to build on them to give the best to children and families.

External Auditors' Reports

Following the publication of the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' Child Practice Review on 4 November 2025, we as a Department are working closely with the Education Department to fully and promptly respond to the recommendations. The Department provides an update on the recommendations that have emerged from the review to response plan meetings.

No inspections have been carried out in the Service since June, but we had an incredibly busy period at the beginning of this financial year with inspections of the Adoption Service, Derwen Service and Fostering Service.

3. Consultation

The report has been created based on the information and content of a recent meeting to challenge and support the performance of the Children and Supporting Families Department, with the Director, Head of Department, Assistant Heads, Service Managers, Senior Executive Officer and myself attending this meeting.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Progress reports on milestones of projects in the Council Plan

Appendix 2: The Department's Performance Measures

Template for performance challenge and support meetings

Children and Families

Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 - Year 4 Actions

A Caring Gwynedd: Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities.

Department	Project	Overview	What we want to achieve during the FOURTH year 2026-27 (milestones):	What are you going to achieve in the FIFTH year to complete this project?	An update on the progress with the milestones to date, and the impact of this on the people of Gwynedd (21.10.26)	Has the milestone been completed / is it likely to be completed by the end of the financial year (Yes / No)

Cross-departmental - Adults and Children	Llechen Lân	We will prepare an analysis of the demographics of Gwynedd; the demand for service; and adult social services best practices to understand and highlight the demand for service and the associated resources that will be needed for the next twenty years.	<p>Children:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Following the publication of the Llechen Lân report, there will be a need to create a work programme. 2. We will establish a work programme to implement the recommendations deriving from the report. 3. Look at how we provide services and how we can develop the service to provide the necessary provision to families. 4. Work with agencies associated with the report to avoid duplicating work. <p>Adults:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will have updated the Adults Llechen Lân report and action plan to reflect changes in data/assumptions about the demand. 2. We will have one plan to bring together all the work of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department as well as to streamline the work streams. 	<p>Children:</p> <p>The report will be completed during the 26/27 year, we will need to scrutinise the recommendations and create a work programme to implement the findings.</p> <p>Adults:</p> <p>We will have an older adults accommodation plan in Gwynedd.</p>	<p>This is joint work with a review of specialist services. The work programme has commenced to digitise Derwen, this includes how children and young people have access to the service</p> <p>Impact:- A service with a better understanding of the use of the service by families. Children and Young people have a better access to services</p>	Yes
Children and Families	Further develop the residential provision for	We are going to improve the experiences of children looked	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make adaptations to both houses, Cricieth and Edern, to ensure that they meet the CIW requirements. 	During 26/27, we will review the plan in its entirety and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cricieth adaptations have been completed. Awaiting confirmation of the 	Yes

	looked-after children in small group homes	after by the Council who have profound and complex needs, who currently have to leave the county or Wales in order to receive suitable provision. We will develop registered residential homes for small groups of up to two children that will allow them to receive care in Gwynedd, attend local schools and fully participate in the lives of their communities.	<p>2. Receive a CIW registration for three houses; Deiniolen, Cricieth and Edern.</p> <p>3. Place children / young people in Cricieth before summer 2026</p>	<p>further develop it to address the Welsh Government's eliminate profit requirements by 2030. The intention is to look for opportunities to open more homes in accordance with the intention of the Act.</p> <p>In addition, we will complete further work on completing a registration for existing provisions.</p>	<p>CIW registration. Work to complete Edern is underway.</p> <p>Impact:- Not much work left in Edern. No impact on residents.</p> <p>2. Awaiting construction work to finish before sending in a registration application.</p> <p>Impact:- Rhiwen is currently an unregulated setting because children lived there. Process to complete registration is underway.</p> <p>3. All the work has been completed and the children have now moved in and settled well. The Registration Application has been submitted, but some matters</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
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			<p>4. Appoint staff for the house in Edern.</p>		<p>require further attention. Ongoing.</p> <p>Impact:- Stability for the children in a new setting.</p> <p>4. Appoint staff when the refurbishment / construction work has finished.</p> <p>Impact:- Create jobs for the people of Gwynedd.</p>	Yes
			<p>5. We hope to open both houses, namely Cricieth and Edern, and get them up and running.</p>		<p>5. Cricieth home is operational, with Edern to follow before Christmas.</p> <p>Impact :- Four children have a new home</p>	Yes
			<p>6. Place children / young people in Edern before March 2027.</p>		<p>6. There will discussions soon to discuss which children / young people will be placed in Edern to let the children /</p>	

			<p>7. We intend to look for other potential locations within the County.</p>		<p>young people know and voice their views.</p> <p>Impact:- Gather the views of children / young people who will move to the new location.</p> <p>7. This work has already started and need to put in a bid for another house.</p> <p>Impact:- The house will need to be suitable for the children in the community e.g. close to locations such as the leisure centre, school. In addition to looking at the data where the children have originally lived in Gwynedd (Arfon, Meirionnydd and Dwyfor)</p>	Yes
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Children and Families	Autism Plan	Children, young people and adults with autism find it difficult to obtain the specialist support they require. We will therefore improve our provision and make it easier for individuals and their families to transfer between different services.	<p>1. Continue with the training programme for front-line staff. Ensure that staff undertake Level 1 and 2 Autism training and monitor progress. Ensure that specialist posts undertake Level 3 training and the Autism Team also provides bespoke training for Level 4. Introduce a training programme to wider groups within the Council. Introduce and provide training for the ND profile tool jointly with Education and Health.</p> <p>2. Develop the IAA within the council as it is important that the right information is received at the front door regardless of which team you contact (children and adults services).</p>	Funding scheme is coming to an end. Need to consider how to continue building on the existing provision to ensure progression in this important field of work.	<p>1. Work continues to achieve the aim of being a Neuro-inclusive local authority. The numbers that have been trained have significantly increased.</p> <p>Impact:- Raising awareness and the culture change within the social services workplace and wider is starting to become clear. Develop a neuro-inclusive workplace that can respond effectively and confidently to autistic/neurodivergent individuals and families that receive services</p> <p>2. This work is about to start by releasing the neuro app, ensure that the council's website is up-to-date, the next step is to ensure that IAA teams have been sufficiently trained to</p>	No
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			<p>3. Conduct 'Social value through a neuro-positive lens' training to look at the support that social workers can provide for individuals and families, whether they have an autism diagnosis or not. Provide and offer a consultation with the statutory teams and offer support for families directly when the need arises.</p>		<p>be able to provide the right information</p> <p>Impact:- Raise awareness and provide information, advice and necessary advice to the children and adults of Gwynedd. Numbers of IAA contact through the team is high and increasing.</p> <p>3. This work continues. To ensure that every social worker has the knowledge, skills, confidence and the ability to address the needs of adults, children and families. The consultation and direct support work is significantly growing with continuous demand for this provision. The team has established a practice community for children and families preventative services to ensure appropriate support for the</p>	
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			<p>4. Develop the advisory role within the team and continue to build information and educate team members with current issues and the pace that is moving quickly.</p>		<p>workplace and quality assurance of the work.</p> <p>Impact:- Individuals and families have access to timely and specialist support that helps them to manage day-to-day challenges. The knowledge and confidence of the workforce have increased, allowing an earlier and more effective intervention. The quality and consistency of the provision is strengthened by sharing good practices and ongoing professional learning.</p> <p>4. The team continues to gather evidence to develop programmes and resources to</p>	
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			5. Continue to develop Groups based on results for needs set across the county		<p>support the workforce. The team keeps up to date with the latest research, educates and develops its skills in the field to be able to use the information to upskill the workforce.</p> <p>Impact:- The latest information, a skilled workplace, more effective and timely interventions and the ability to give the workforce resources to be able to support autistic/neurodivergent individuals.</p>	Yes
			6. Continue to develop talking shop groups (parent/carers).		<p>5. A young people's group is starting at Ysgol Ardudwy in September, an identity group and for young people to understand autism.</p> <p>Impact:- Young people can engage together, develop an identity and self-confidence with the aim of improving health and well-being and reducing the risk of needing</p>	Yes

			<p>7. Continue to develop a Group to advise on autism with all the stakeholders to develop collaboration.</p>		<p>access to services in the future</p> <p>6. Parents/carers support groups continue to thrive and grow across the county with a high number of parents benefiting from the space to discuss and share experiences.</p> <p>Impact:- Families have a support network and are able to reach out to each other and share experiences. In addition to receiving information, advice and support from services that facilitate the groups.</p> <p>7. A stakeholder group has been established and meets quarterly.</p> <p>Impact:- A core element of the autism code of practice - to look at the autism provision across the county and to develop the gaps. Multi-agency strategic</p>	Yes
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					forum and individuals with lived experience to secure improvements in the quality of life for autistic individuals and their families in Gwynedd.	
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Performance Challenge and Support

Children and Supporting Families
Department

Period: July - September 2026

Exceptions

Purpose: Report on any data or exceptions in performance that are a matter of concern or pride.

Initial Child Protection Conferences on time

35%

Percentage of assessments completed on time

53%

The percentage of children re-referred within 12 months of de-registration

13% (cumulative)

Number of Derwen assessments completed 6 (Q2)

Initial Child Protection Conferences held on time

- 43 conferences
- 15 held following a strategy discussion (Section 47 enquiry)

Percentage of assessments completed on time

- Backlog of cases
- Staffing pressures
- Vacancies
- Sickness absence and leave during the summer period

Percentage of children re-registered within 12 months of de-registration

- The re-registration percentage relates to three families. In two of these cases, the children were placed back on the Child Protection Register due to new concerns that were not part of the original Child Protection Plan.

Number of Derwen assessments completed

- Workload and staffing shortages

Youth Justice Service

Purpose: I want to be safe and happy throughout my life without offending

Number of First Time Entrants
12

Re-offending Rate
25%

Custody Rate
2 (1 x recall)

Number of Caseload
136
Females 40 (29%)

Performance overview:

Full-time Equivalent (FTE) 17-12 (-29%). Re-offending 27.5% - 25% (8, 2, 8, 1.00). Workload 115-136 (an increase of 18%). Females 23%-29% (Only 3 on court orders)

What works?

The Youth Justice Partnership continues to work well on all levels; within the service, there is a collaborative attitude towards providing support for children, families and the community. There is robust joint work with our partners in the local authorities (Children Services and Education), North Wales Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Our Strategic Management Board is effective and knowledgeable and receives support from the Youth Justice Board (YJB). Our Youth Justice Plan was completed and submitted for 2026-27 in June, and in September 2026, we received very positive feedback from the YJB; our Plan is informed and shows a clear vision. Our new Regional Policy to Resolve Matters Outside the Court proves to be a success, with a significant improvement in performance and consistency when providing the service; the number of those who come into contact with the system for the first time is at its lowest level since the measure started, and the re-offending rate is 25%. We have also benefited from recruiting new additional staff for 'Be Di'r Sgôr' and 'Tîm Emrallt' following successful applications for new funding streams. We are continuing to benefit from a team of experienced, stable and committed staff.

Leader: Stephen Wood

Barriers and Risks

The Youth Justice Sector in England and Wales is experiencing a significant change, there are many amendments and Policy changes under the Government's guidance:

- The UK Government's White Paper; Reducing Crimes, Changing Young Lives, Youth Justice White Paper April 2026, a broad amendment of Youth Justice practice in England and Wales. This will include a new role for the Youth Justice Board. (An unknown change).
- A new policy and practice on Knife Crime Possessions, an increasing demand in workload for the Youth Justice Service and the Police. A new practice is being developed/reviewed, and it will be included in the amended version of the RooCR Policy.
- The UK and Welsh Governments are currently in discussions regarding Devolving the Youth Justice Service in Wales with initial steps to transfer some funding responsibilities to the Welsh Government in 2027-28. (Financial weaknesses)
- We are continuing to experience high levels of youth violence in the area, this is a National issue. We are working with our colleagues in the Youth Justice Service, Regional Youth Justice Services, and the YEF to analyse and develop interventions. (Performance pressures)
- The service remains without Speech and Language provision. (Provision gap)

Overall, there are significant pressures in terms of change and financial uncertainty.

We have two boys from Gwynedd who are currently in a young offenders institute, one is the subject of a new sentence from 26 August, and the second has been called back to custody following a failure to comply with licence conditions.

Gwynedd Family Service



Purpose: - Helping me and my family to thrive

Number of children who receive their Flying Start, Childcare for 2 year-olds or the Children Care Offer claim:

1804

Performance overview

Developments

Small Capital Grants - 77 grant applications have been received by childcare providers. An application to the Government for an additional £310,000 has been approved, to ensure that all applications that have been approved by the panel can be funded. Ysgol Ein Harglwyddes Childcare has moved to the new building in September following a capital investment from the Government.

Scheme to extend Childcare for two-year-olds funded by the Welsh Government - open from 8 October with a new online system for parent applications being developed jointly with the IT Department. Confirmation to extend the Flying Start Scheme fully to LSOA North and South Pwllheli.

Following the success of the Mam, Dad a Magu podcast, the Unit has started to film the second series under a new title.

6 CIW/Estyn inspections were published, and from 32 indicators, very encouraging results were received with 9 of an 'excellent' standard, 21 of a 'good' standard and 2 as 'sufficient'. (See above)

Activity sessions over the summer have been very successful - 568 children aged 0-16 and 293 families have attended 16 Fun Sessions for families across Gwynedd; 510 children and 252 parents have attended the Play Trailer sessions; 3 sessions to celebrate 20 years of Flying Start have been held in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Caernarfon and Maesgeirchen.

Feedback - 'Pistyll Community Council, thank you very much for bringing the Play Trailer to Llithfaen. It was great to see so many children from the village and nearby communities taking advantage of this excellent opportunity. A lot of praise was heard by parents, and many expressed their appreciation of seeing this activity being available locally.'

Barriers

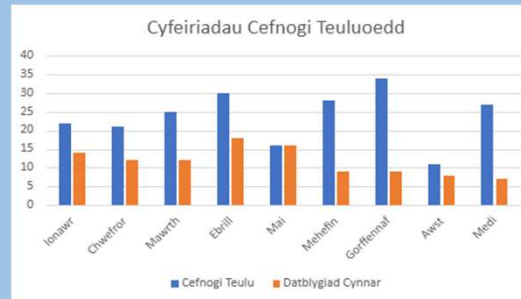
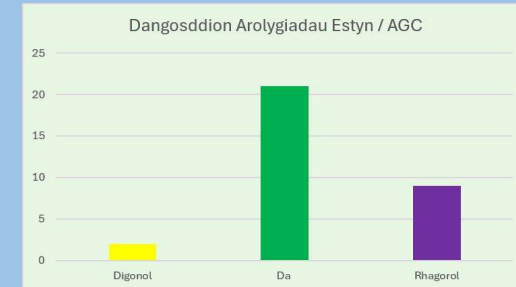
We are currently facing several barriers when trying to address the Welsh Government's plans to extend childcare - lack of clear guidance and guidelines, lack of national communication consistency, lack of locations and sufficient childcare places, lack of a workforce with appropriate qualifications, the ability to share timely information with stakeholders.

The number of referrals continues to increase, as well as the intensity of the cases and the families' level of needs, increasing the pressure that is already on the service.

Risks

Changes from 2028 in the Children and Communities Grant could pose a risk to the existing services that are being funded.

Leader: Sioned Owen



Pwllheli National Play Day

Support Services - Drws y Nant

Purpose: Supervise contact between children and their families and ensure that children are always safe.

Contact Sessions have
been held

1774

Performance overview:

Working

- Have appointed 1 new member of staff recently.
- Professional staff who are eager to provide high-quality services
- Very good training opportunities and the workforce's enthusiasm to achieve more
- To develop the process of referring to a service, a new referral form has been created for the teams.

Barriers and Risks

- Need to develop the communication between teams who receive a service.
- Team under pressure due to an increase in referrals for a service
- Reliance on temporary contracts ('0 hours')

Leader: Kevin Parry

Council Plan Project / Eliminate Profit :- Small Group Homes

Performance Overview: -

Purpose: Having a safe and stable home that focuses on my needs. Being able to receive consistent care and appropriate support within my community, and maintaining connections with my family where appropriate.

- **Golygfa'r Gest, Morfa Bychan** and **Rhiwen, Deiniolen** are operational, and the individuals living there have settled in well.
- **Rhiwen, Deiniolen**: The additional work that was required to ensure compliance with the Building Regulations have been completed. There is a further investigation to be held, and the registration process with **Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)** is progressing.
- **Bryn, Edern**: The development work is nearing completion, with the remaining elements to be completed by the end of the month. The Construction Regulations process is being completed as part of the registration requirements.
- **Gorseddfa, Cricieth**: The work has been completed and the individuals have moved in and settled in successfully. A CIW registration application has been submitted, with some further matters receiving attention as part of the process.
- **Develop an additional home**: Capital grant funding has been secured to purchase a further property. Discussions regarding potential locations have commenced and visits to suitable sites have been arranged.
- **Governing the project**: A **Strategic Group** has been established to provide leadership, supervision and a strategic direction for the home development programme.



Council Plan Project / Eliminate Profit :- Small Group Homes

Project Progress

- Sound progress has been made when implementing the Small Group Homes programme, increasing the capacity of local residential provision for children and young people who require care.
- Many new homes are now operational, providing high-quality settings within Gwynedd and enabling more children to receive care closer to their families, schools and communities.
- Recruitment arrangements, establishing and developing the workforce have continued to support the implementation and sustainability of the new provision.
- Effective partnerships with relevant services and organisations have strengthened the ability to fulfil the care and support needs of children with complex needs.

Key Challenges

- Securing a suitable property and completing the necessary adaptation work continue to be a complex process that requires close collaboration between departments and partners.
- Meeting the regulatory needs and ensuring a Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) registration is an essential step before new provision can be implemented.
- The need to recruit and retain a skilled and experienced workforce continues to be a significant challenge within the children's residential care sector.
- An increase in the number of children receiving care and the complexity of their needs continue to create an additional demand on the service.

Risks

- Any delay in developing, renewing or registering new homes could impact the Council's ability to respond to the demand for local settings.
- There is a risk that a lack of local capacity leads to continuous reliance on independent or out-of-county provision.
- It is important to ensure that local capacity continues to develop to reduce the possibility that children will be placed far from their families, communities and support networks.

Main Outcomes

- The new provision supports linguistic, cultural and social continuation for the children and young people of Gwynedd.
- The Council's ability to fulfil their statutory duties and provide local, sustainable and high-quality care has been strengthened.

Leader: Aled Gibbard / Shelley Williams

Council Plan Project :- Autism Plan July / September

Purpose : Promote autistic individuals and their families to thrive and to live life to their full potential.

Performance Overview

- The Neurodivergent Profile was implemented across services to strengthen an understanding of need and ensure timely and appropriate support.
- Continue to develop a neuro-positive social work practice that is trauma-informed by consulting, developing the workforce and providing specialist support.
- A clear increase in the confidence of professionals in identifying and responding to neurodivergent needs across services.
- More neuro-inclusive preventative work is being implemented by our early intervention teams.
- Stronger multi-agency collaboration between Education, Health and Social Care. A strategic and steering group has been established to ensure collaboration, strengthen the partnership and create clear paths for ND support.
- Increasing evidence of this work in Gwynedd suggests that neuro-positive, trauma-informed practice contributes to better outcomes for families by preventing situations from escalating, supporting effective restoration following periods of emergency, enabling children and families to stay together safely and reducing the need for continuous statutory intervention.

Numbers
accessing the
service
156

Number of new
cases receiving
intervention
42

Barriers

- Retaining experienced and capable staff members who specialise in the ND field. No job security after March 2027 because the RIF grant is coming to an end.
- An increasing demand for a ND specialist service, with a cross-section of complex needs.
- Transferring autistic young people between children and adult services is a significant challenge
- The need and requirement for specialist training across social and corporate services placed pressure on the team's capacity

Number
completing training
Autism/ND
101

"The service is leading the transformation of awareness of autism and neurodiversity to a neuro-positive culture and practice by psycho-educational scaffolding. By strengthening confidence and professional expertise, improving an understanding of need and supporting timely intervention. The team acts as a catalyst for better outcomes for neurodivergent adults, children, young people and families."

Leader: Lucy Hemmings

Gwynedd Families First Grants Programme July - September 2026

National performance measures have been established to inform people how well the programme is performing within local authorities.

Performance Overview:

Leader - Caren Brown

**Number of new referrals
July - September 2026:**
104

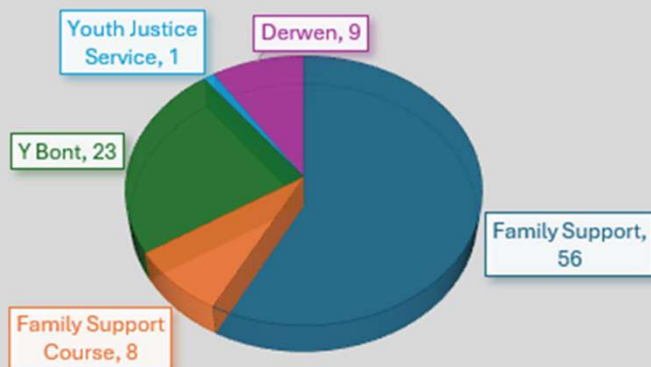
**Number of Family Assessments and
Plans July - September 2026:**
Total number of Assessments: 46
Total Number of Family Plans: 28



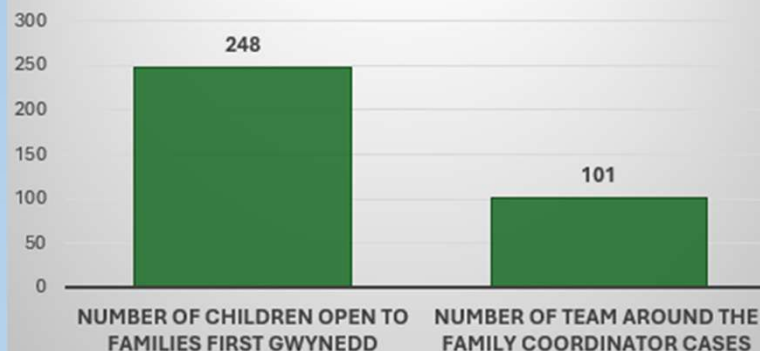
Training

Staff have completed K123, Ask and Act training and Beam Notes training.

**NUMBER OF FAMILIES REFERRED TO
SERVICES JULY-SEPTEMBER 26**



**Families First Cases
July – September 2026**



Quotes/Family Feedback:

"I can't thank you enough for helping me. Honestly. I feel as if there is a bright small light now and before that I couldn't see it at all. I thank you so much."
16/9/2026

Department's Overview - Looked After Children

Purpose: I want you to ensure me that I am kept safe, safeguarded from harm, have a stable life and have every opportunity and help to reach my potential.

Number of Looked-after Children

289 (30/09/26)

Number of Court cases

27 (30/09/26)

Percentage of Looked-after Children who have had three or more placements during the year (cumulative)

3%

Percentage of looked-after children who have returned home (out of care) during the year (cumulative)

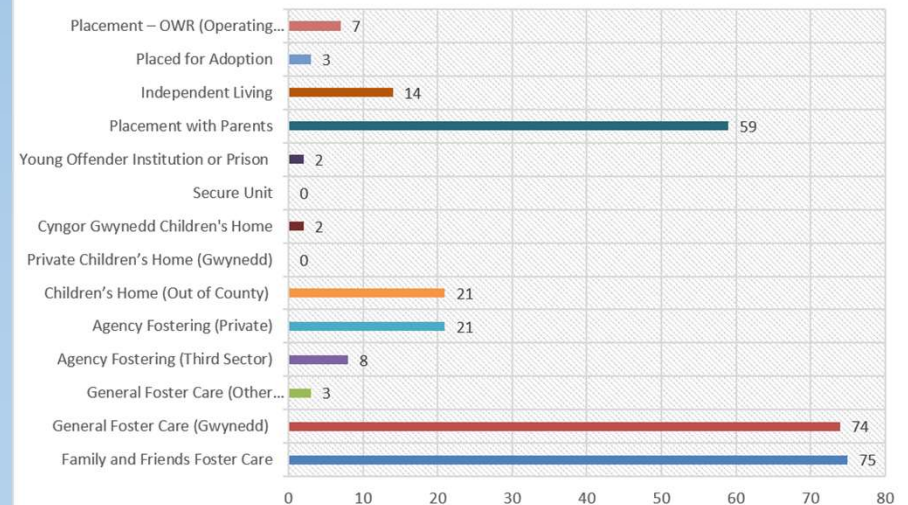
3%

Average Workload

19

Number of children who have entered care
- 4
Percentage seen on time
50%

Placements for Children in Care 30/09/2026



Department's Overview - Child Protection

Percentage of children discussed in initial child protection conference registered (Cumulative)

98%

Percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child (5+ years old) were heard

100%

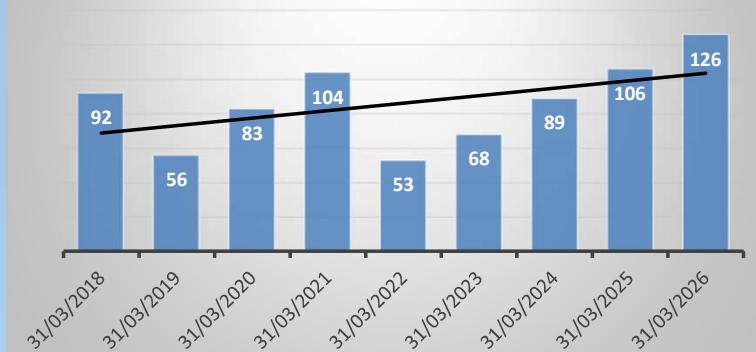
Number of children on the Child Protection Register

136
(30/09/26)

Average number of days the children had been on the child protection register

308

Child Protection Register



Number of registered children
46

What works

It can be seen from the data that the thresholds of conferences are robust and the cases submitted are suitable.

Challenges

- Several applications to be conducted on the days appointed to the areas due to the availability of North Wales Police
- Agencies tend to be reluctant when days and time change
- NWP now joined virtually due to capacity, this does not align with the accessibility and conference ethos
- Summer holidays have just been, therefore it is likely to have an impact on the figures, everyone's availability

Risks

According to a pattern, the applications are likely to increase and the number of children on the register increasing is inevitable. As these are concerning cases, they receive priority, the work that complies with a registration increases the requirements on employees, which will have an impact on their ability to complete other tasks.

Leader - Eiliw Hughes

Part 5 - Child Protection

What is working

- Developing the confidence and skills of the Designated Officer for Safeguarding (DOS) to handle Part 5 cases.
- A positive, ongoing relationship with the Education Department, with regular discussions regarding potential issues.
- An additional review conducted via the Regional Safeguarding Board – the list has now been cleared.
- The appointment of two administrative officers has proven effective; records are being completed more promptly, facilitating the progression or closure of cases.

Barriers

- Referrals are being submitted that do not fall under Part 5, with referrers using the Gwynedd Child Practice Review (CPR) when making the referral. This places additional pressure on us.
- While most agencies respond to requests in a timely manner, there have been recent instances of challenge from one organisation, and significant difficulty in establishing contact with another—even where safeguarding information had already been shared.
- Several long-term cases remain ongoing due to concurrent police investigations; some are historical and complex, others are dependent on IT forensics (which can take up to 3 months), and one is awaiting toxicology results.

Risks

- The risk that cases are mishandled due to external pressures, or that matters more appropriately addressed through disciplinary procedures—or other existing frameworks—are incorrectly entering these processes.

Social Care Worker has proactively tried to visit and listen to the voice of the child (5+ years old)

100%

Keeping Families Together: Admissions Team (Referrals)

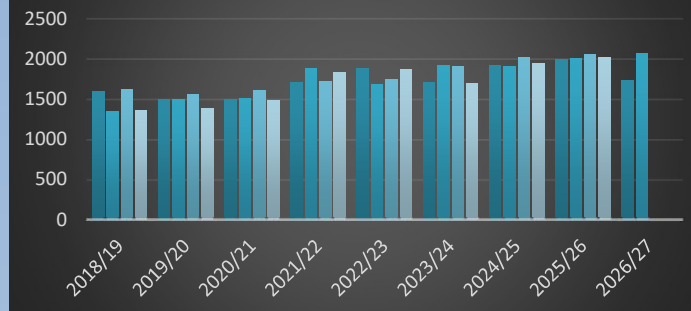
Number of referrals
(Information, Advice
and Support (IAA))

2064

Referrals Source

Police - 1058
Education - 118
Health - 183

New Referrals



Performance Overview:

The Admissions team continue to respond to safeguarding concerns promptly despite the increase in the demand. The service has seen a significant increase in referrals and Strategy Discussions during this reporting period.

What works: Continuous focus on timely screening, analysing thresholds and making safeguarding decisions. Continuous development of front-door practice, information and confidence across referral officers and social workers. Provide supervision and regular management support to referral officers and social workers when reducing the work schedule that has been accumulated. Develop a practice when ensuring that referrals are being referred to the most appropriate service as soon as possible. Review processes consistently to improve capacity and efficiency. Consistent focus on reducing duplication where it can be awarded.

Barriers: An increase in the number and complexity of the referrals being received, thus increasing the demand for Part 5 Discussions and Strategy Discussions. Maintain the team's capacity when responding to a consistently high daily demand.

Risks: Continuous increase in the demand at the front door. Capacity pressures across the team due to increasing referral volumes, the increasing complexity of assessments, an increase in part 5 discussions and strategy discussions. Work schedule has been accumulated into actions and follow-up work where there is a need for enquiries, information gathering and contact with families.

Leader: Jamie Haydon

Keeping Families Together: Admissions Team (Assessments)

Initial Strategy
Discussions
100

Completed
assessments
161

Percentage of
children seen during
assessment
99%

Percentage of
completed
assessments using
the child's voice
100%

Percentage of
assessments
completed on
time
53%

Return Home Interviews

Quarter	Number of Missing Children	Number of Return Interview *(Missing on more than one occasion)
1	30	94
2	25	70

Performance Overview:

What works: Ongoing support, supervision and development of newly-qualified social workers and referral officers. Continue to develop safeguarding referral and front-door information gathering. Support referral officers to develop confidence in providing information, advice and support and state appropriate services as soon as possible. Prioritise safeguarding concerns and statutory responsibilities. Work that has been focused on reducing the backlog of assessment work, timeliness of checks and contact with families. Continue to review processes to improve efficiency, reduce duplication and improve capacity.

Barriers: Significant staffing pressures over the summer period. Increasing referral volumes and work complexity. Substantial time is spent moving referrals and contacts that are not being intervened. Accumulated assessments and follow-up work deriving from a smaller staffing capacity. Significant support, supervision and overview is required for newly-qualified social workers and newly-appointed referral officers. Recruitment and retention challenges, including a reliance on temporary / short-term connections impacting the stability of the service.

Risks: Consistent demand places pressure on capacity. Continue to receive referrals and contacts that do not require statutory involvement that reduces capacity. Delay in completing assessments and follow-up work due to staffing pressures and competitive priorities across several aspects of the service. Staff recruitment and retention difficulties impact stability. Increasing manager supervision calls deriving from pressures on the workforce and the need to support less experienced staff. Risk of work being accumulated where the demand continues to be more than the capacity available.

Reader: Jamie Haydon

Keeping Families Together: Trobwynt

Purpose: I want you to ensure me that I am kept safe, safeguarded from harm, have a stable life and have every opportunity and help to reach my potential.

Performance overview:

What works: Despite periods of sickness within the service, a positive increase has been made with many cases now going through the court. During this quarter, 4 children have left care, with the possibility for 3 or 4 others to do so by December 2026.

Barriers: Due to statutory responsibility pressures and the court requirements, the team sometimes receives referrals that did not fully comply with the purpose of the service and focuses more on completing processes than ensuring a meaningful change. This can reduce the capacity to support cases where there is the biggest possibility to prevent children from coming into care, returning to care or supporting successful stepping down arrangements.

Risks: Ongoing work is being made with teams to promote good practices and ensure a clear understanding of the types of cases where the team could have the most impact, supporting appropriate referrals and better outcomes for children and families.

Percentage of cases where an increase is seen in accordance with the intervention purpose

81%

Number of children open to the team on 30/09/26

65

Foster Wales Gwynedd

July - September

Enquiries = 22

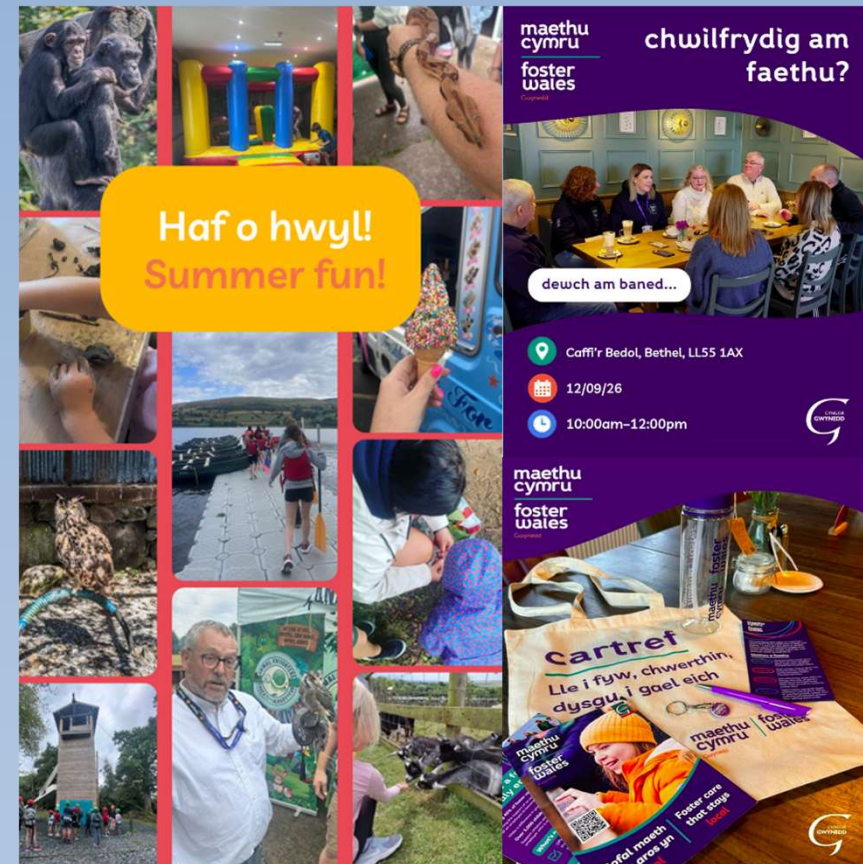
Initial visits = 4

Households approved = 0

Households in assessments = 7

Households who have left = 0

- National Eisteddfod - Llantwd
- Foster Wales National Conference - Llangollen
- Update to the Learning and Development Framework has been launched
- Regional Recruitment Meeting - Llandudno
- Summer of Fun - Weekly events over the summer holidays
- Cuppa with a Carer - Bethel
- Out in the community - recruitment sessions (Ysbyty Gwynedd)
- Members' Hub was now live
- A two-day prepare to foster course jointly between Gwynedd and Môn (AFKA)



Leader: Mel Panther

Keeping Families Together: After-care Team (16+)

Purpose: I want to be independent and get help when I need it.

Team Cases 30/09/26

Care and Support - 38

Category 1 (A young person aged 16 or 17 who is currently looked after by the Children and Supporting Families Department under a statutory or voluntary arrangement and who has been looked after for a period of more than 13 weeks) - 39

Category 2 (A young person aged 16 or 17 who has chosen not to receive further care from the Children and Supporting Families Department under a statutory or voluntary arrangement, but who continues to want support as a care-leaver) - 3

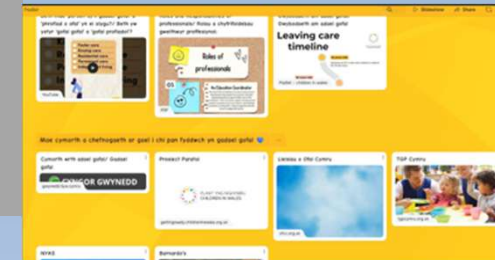
Category 3 (Anyone leaving care who is over the age of 18 and who continues to want support as a care-leaver.) - 167

Percentage of after-care young people who have been homeless (Cumulative)

4%

Number of asylum seekers

4 (16-17 years)
30 (18+)



After-care
Padlet

Performance overview:

What works The team has been able to support 11 after-care young people to go on to University with 1 Asylum Seeker for the first time. Despite the challenges associated with coming to an unfamiliar country under very difficult circumstances, with support, this individual has managed to develop their Language skills and Education, and is now going on to do a degree in Nursing.

Two after-care workers have been developing an information Padlet jointly with Children in Wales which is now live and available to Young People on the internet. The Padlet has information about services, advice and support that is available to Gwynedd young people receiving care. It can be seen here: - <https://padlet.com/ChildreninWales/gwynedd-pxj9y8jf5i42tgs3?lang=cy-GB>

Challenges Seen an increase in the numbers of Asylum Seekers that have come to the service with 3 young people that have been located in recent months. Challenges can arise because many want to live in the main cities and do not want to settle in Gwynedd, and some threaten to go missing etc. until they are placed in the locations that they wish (normally London etc.).

Challenges continue regarding access to a suitable accommodation for young people requiring care, especially where there are complex needs, or they have been seen as homeless deliberately.

Risks There is a risk for after-care young people to become homeless on the street if they need to leave placements, and be seen as homeless deliberately with no other options in place. The Housing Department has a main duty for adults accommodation, but some individuals have no options if they have to leave without provision through challenging behaviour etc. (no home to return to).

Leader: David Owen

DERWEN Service

Purpose: - I want to be accepted as I am and have the same opportunities as any other child.

Number of
assessments
completed
6 (Q2)

Children and Young
People open to the
service
488

New Referrals 29
Internal Referrals 38

30/9/26
Looked-after Children: 11
Children on the Protection
Register:2

Performance overview: The Derwen Support Service provides direct support to approximately 246 children and young people across the county.

What works

The service has recruited two new Social Care Practitioners.

The work of developing Digitising Derwen continues to make good progress, and it proves to be a useful forum to discuss the wider challenges facing the service currently.

The service is working excellently as a multi-disciplinary team. This was recently shown with a court case. The Social Work, Psychology, nursing and Support Services teams work closely, providing a quick and effective response. The way that the teams work alongside each other enables much sooner implementation and decisions.

Barriers

The service completes an ambitious transformation programme in managing high levels of demand and complexity. Significant work is underway to strengthen the capacity of the workforce, develop expertise and improve outcomes for children and families.

The increasing demand for the service confirms the importance of the change that is being implemented, with a clear focus on creating a more sustainable, resilient and effective service.

Risks

Keep the momentum of the transformation programme when ensuring that the service continues to respond effectively to the daily demand.

Recruitment challenges within a competitive national market, meaning that there is a need to invest in developing and retaining talent within the services.

Leader: David Lewis and Manon Fon Owen

Adoption

What works

Working across North Wales.

Barriers

There are 46 children waiting across north Wales.

Staff Sickness.

Not enough people coming forward to be assessed compared to the number of children waiting for an adoption placement.

Risks

Children are waiting longer for an adoption placement with many children being placed outside north Wales.

July 2026 - September 2026

Gwynedd Placement Order = 1

Number of children awaiting a placement = 10

Number of children in a Gwynedd link = 1

Number of Gwynedd children who are placed = 2

Adoption Order = 3

Number of assessed adopters = 1

Performance Overview.
Leader: Stevie Thomas

Out of hours Team / EDT

Purpose: I want timely help to be available for me in a care emergency

Number of calls received by
the emergency duty team

810

Number of calls which have
received a decision within a
shift period

810

Number of calls which have
not received a response
based on the lack of
capacity

100%

Performance overview:

The team has responded to every call promptly. The team has met the statutory requirements under the mental health legislation, and has been focused on safeguarding children in our community.

What works

The team is very experienced now, every staff member has the ability to address child protection cases, safeguarding vulnerable adults and mental health.

Challenges

The biggest challenge is to get access to out-of-hours resources, normally the only resource is the worker itself. There was no support worker available out of hours. There is usually no access to domiciliary care or residential homes because every service is working to capacity.

Another challenge is the lack of GPs dealing with mental health assessments during the day, this is passed on to EDT who has no access to necessary information and does not know the individuals.

Risks

Having to close the EDT service to deal with a situation where resources are not available e.g. caring for children overnight.

Leader: Jane Pearson

Unpaid Carers

PURPOSE : *Identify, acknowledge and support the invaluable work of unpaid carers across Gwynedd*

Young carers with access to Aidii 155 (total for the year)	Young carers support by Action for Children 121	Young carers assessments completed: Action for Children 14	Children receive Support Services as respite to carer parents - Derwen 246
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What works well:

Improve the emotional well-being of children and young people with care responsibilities. During this period, 70% of young carers have said that their mental health has improved, 30% said that it remained the same, 0% said that it had become worse.

An increase in referrals which means that all the work raising awareness and working in partnership with other agencies is making a difference.

The ability to help families financially through our grants, we have helped 11 families in this period. Examples include school uniform for the children, food shopping for the family, a new cooker and shed in the garden for one young carer to have a break.

Arranging an assessment day in our office in Bangor every quarter means that there is an opportunity for children to be assessed sooner, which reduces our waiting list and is a more effective way of saving resources/costs.

Barriers and risks

An increase in referrals means more demand for services and there is no additional funding to recruit more workers.

Gwynedd is a vast area, a lot of workers' time is spent travelling across the county to ensure that the service is inclusive to everyone.

What does this mean to the Service

Need to be innovative and flexible.

Need to make use of digital support

Need to see more children in the schools instead of separate.

Co-ordinator: Sian Griffiths

Feedback from individuals receiving the service:

Feedback from parents:

"My daughter has really enjoyed. And it's so nice to have time just her and me, this would really not have happened without your kind gift!"

"Thank you very much for everything with *****, she has really enjoyed her time with you, the young carers has been really positive for her."

"**** and **** had an absolutely fantastic day today! **** hasn't stopped telling me about all the things that he saw! **** also mentioned that **** made a friend on the trip. A really nice 16-year-old girl who's new to the area. Apparently, they really hit it off. So that is great!!! Thank you so much to you and to everyone who organised this. It's very kind. **** certainly got a lot out of it, from doing something on his own, spending time with his dad and not having to worry about where his sister might be or the day being cut short because she couldn't cope or was too tired. So it was a really great day for him. Thank you."

Feedback from young carers:

"It's helped me get closer with my dad as we could do more stuff together."

"Loved it. It means I get to go out and do things, because we don't normally get to. I've made new friends with other children who has a sister like mine. I look forward to everything I get to do with Young carers."

***Feedback and themes to raise via the Action for Children service*

Workforce Development

PURPOSE : Workforce development

Care Academy

The bid has been submitted to the Cabinet at the start of October, to apply to fund the plan permanently.

With the term of the MA Social Work having just started - 17 first-year students have registered on the course, the highest number in several years. This shows that the 'retainer' plan that runs jointly with Anglesey has managed to allow more prospective social workers for the Gwynedd workforce in the future.

A Working Group has been established to identify the wider needs of the Social Services workforce in Gwynedd, and grant funding will enable us to appoint a project manager to drive this work forward.

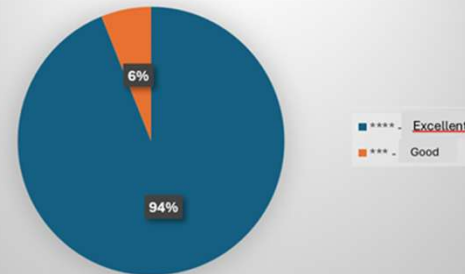
Council Mandatory Training - Children and Supporting Families Department Staff:-

VAWDASV - 80%

Safeguarding - 93%

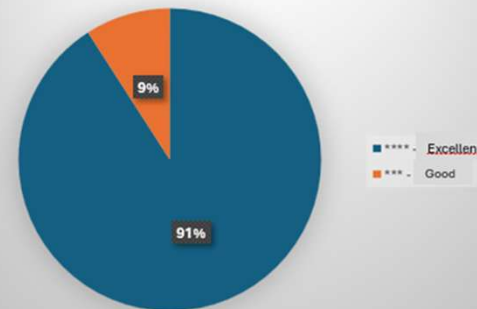
The course achieves its objectives

1st of July 2026 - 30th September 2026

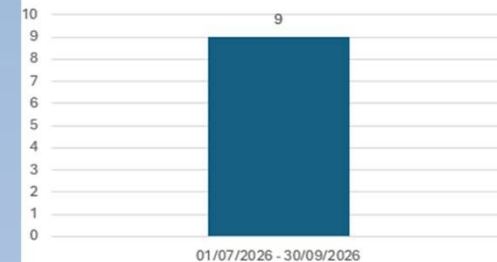


General assessment of the course

1st of July 2026 - 30th September 2026



Individuals referred on to the Adult and Children's teams through the SOS #CallCarers campaign



MEETING	CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	5 November 2026
TITLE	Care Scrutiny Committee Forward Programme
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	To adopt a revised work programme for 2026/27
AUTHOR	Llywela Haf Owain, Senior Scrutiny Adviser

1. A Forward Programme for 2026/27 was adopted at the Committee's meeting on 14 July 2026.
2. The item 'The impact of legislation to remove profit from children's care homes on Cyngor Gwynedd's ability to provide homes for looked-after children ' was scheduled to be discussed at this meeting.
3. A request was received from the Children and Families Department to move the item to the January 21, 2027 meeting, as they had not received all the necessary information from external organisations in time to create a comprehensive plan and report. Following consultation with the Chair, the request to move the item was approved.
4. The following items have already been prioritised by the committee for the 21 January meeting:
 - Housing and Property Department Performance Report
 - Derwen Service
 - Using technology more effectively to improve the ability of Gwynedd residents to access support and care
 - Childcare
5. To ensure that proper attention is given to matters and that scrutiny can add value, it is suggested that the Childcare item be moved from the 21 January meeting to the 11 March 2027 meeting. That would mean that four reports will be submitted to the March meeting.
6. Please see attached as an appendix to the report, a revised work programme for 2026/27.
7. **The Care Scrutiny Committee will be asked to adopt a revised work programme for 2026/27.**

CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PROGRAMME 2026/27

Date	Items	Reason to scrutinise
4/6/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Safeguarding Panel Annual Report 	Pre-scrutiny / Assurance is needed in terms of implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Policy Review 	Pre-scrutiny / Assurance is needed in terms of implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and Supporting Families Performance Report 	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults, Health and Well-being Department Performance Report 	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing and Property Department Performance Report 	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
16/7/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day Care Service 	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of the Complaints Task and Finish Group - Adults, Health and Well-being Department and Children and Supporting Families Department 	Task and Finish Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llechen Lân 	Pre-scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third Sector Compact 	Pre-scrutiny
17/9/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Wales Population Needs Assessment for Care and Support 	Pre-scrutiny
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborating with the Housing Associations 	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Homely Gwynedd

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report 2025-26 - Complaints, Enquiries and Expressions of Gratitude - Children and Supporting Families and the Adults, Health and Well-being Departments 	Assurance in respect of the arrangements for handling complaints in care work
Date	Items	Reason to scrutinise
5/11/26	Adults, Health and Well-being Department Performance Report	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
	Children and Supporting Families Performance Report	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
	Response Plan to the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report	Assurance is needed in terms of implementation
21/1/27	Housing and Property Department Performance Report	Scrutiny of the performance of Council departments
	Derwen Service	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd / Challenges in the field
	Increased use of technology to improve residents' ability to access care and support	Pre-scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd
	The impact of legislation to remove profit from children's care homes on Cyngor Gwynedd's ability to provide homes for looked-after children	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd / To receive assurance that suitable arrangements are in place to continue to offer suitable homes for looked-after children, including those with profound and complex needs.
11/3/27	Childcare	To receive assurances that a suitable service is in place that provides value for money
	Housing and Homelessness Support Strategy	Pre-scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - A Homely Gwynedd
	Housing Action Plan	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Homely Gwynedd

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council's ability to implement a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Plan	Matter on the risk register / Obtain assurances that additional resources provided to improve performance are adequate
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