

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Report for Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting

Date of meeting: 11 November 2025

Cabinet Member: Councillor Llio Elenid Owen
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

Relevant Officer: Vera Jones
Democracy and Language Manager

Title of Item: Welsh Government Consultation on Extending the duty on Local Authorities to broadcast meetings.

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

Adopt the draft response to the questions in the Welsh Government Consultation on extending the duty on Local Authorities to broadcast meetings (as noted in Appendix A), in order to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

2.1. The Welsh Government has launched a formal consultation seeking views on whether the statutory duty to broadcast local authority meetings should be extended, beyond the full council meetings which are already subject to the duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

2.2. Currently, only full Council meetings are required to be broadcast. The consultation seeks views on extending the duty to include other committees, and there are financial and resource implications for the Council deriving from the decision.

2.3 Due to the far reaching implication which could arise from a decision to extend the requirements to broadcast, the Cabinet is asked for political guidance on Cyngor Gwynedd's response to the consultation.

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Welsh Government has launched a formal consultation seeking views on whether the statutory duty to broadcast local authority meetings should be extended, beyond the full council meetings which are already subject to the duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. A copy of the full consultation can be accessed through the following link:

[Consultation on extending the duty on local authorities to broadcast meetings \[HTML\] | GOV. WALES](#)

- 3.2 Currently, only full Council meetings are required to be broadcast, but a number of authorities are streaming other meetings voluntarily. Cyngor Gwynedd broadcasts the following meetings:
- Full Council
 - Cabinet
 - Planning
 - Scrutiny (the three Scrutiny committees)
- 3.3 It should be noted that the above meetings are also hybrid (multi-venue) meetings in Gwynedd. Should the requirement to broadcast committees be extended, those meetings would not be required to be hybrid meetings. However, the work of preparing and running the webcast would be equivalent to holding a multi-venue meeting.

Objectives of the Consultation

- 3.4 The consultation seeks views on:
- whether the **duty should be extended to include other committees** such as the Cabinet, Scrutiny and Planning Committees;
 - whether **similar duties should be imposed on Fire and Rescue Authorities and National Park Authorities**;
 - what the **retention period** should be for recordings of broadcast meetings;
 - the **costs, impact and practicality** for local authorities.
- 3.5 The Welsh Ministers' proposal is to require the following statutory committee meetings of the principal councils to be broadcast:
- Democratic Services Committees, *
 - Governance and Audit, *
 - Licensing*
 - Planning,
 - Overview and Scrutiny,
 - and Standards, *
 - also Cabinet meetings

- 3.6 Note that * above indicates the additional requirements to the current practice that would affect Cyngor Gwynedd. These meetings would not be required to be hybrid meetings, but officers would have to be on location in the chambers for the webcasting, and the 'set-up' work and resources for running the meetings would be similar to the hosting of a hybrid meeting that is broadcast.
- 3.7 Evidently there are specific resource implications in extending the provision further, particularly as current technology for webcasting in Cyngor Gwynedd is on very weak footing as it is based on analogue provision from different companies, and is therefore vulnerable to failure. The upgrading of the chambers, adequate and specialist staffing resources, costs of broadcast licences etc must be taken into account when considering the response.
- 3.8 It is noted that there is no standard system for webcasting committee meetings in Wales, with each authority having developed their own systems individually in order to webcast and hold hybrid meetings. There is no standard system for webcasting virtual meetings in Wales either. Due to the fragile position across the country, it is noted that a standard flexible technical solution is required for the whole of Wales, lead by the government of Wales, in order for all authorities and corporate joint committees to benefit easily from the technology.

National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

- 3.9 The report also consults on whether the duty to broadcast should be extended to National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities. While it is considered that it is a matter for those public bodies to respond, the principle of ensuring transparency to the public is equally applicable to these bodies as to local authorities. Note that the consultation does not extend to including the duty to broadcast Joint Corporate Committees.

Retention Periods

- 3.10 The consultation notes that the 2021 Act states that in relation to the broadcasting of full meetings of principal councils, a recording of the broadcast must be available electronically for a specified period after the meeting. The term 'specified period' has not been defined in law and therefore it is a matter for all principal councils to determine. Practices vary across Wales. The Welsh Minister is seeking views regarding the retention period of meeting recordings, and asks whether the period should be the same as the retention period for electronic minutes of meetings, i.e. six years.
- 3.11 The website states that the retention period for recordings of Cyngor Gwynedd committees is 6 months and that a copy is available upon request outside this period. The recordings are live on the website for

almost 12 months, and there is a specific cost to the authority for accessing any recording outside this period.

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

4.1 The deadline for responses is 28 November 2025.

5 ANY CONSULTATIONS HELD BEFORE RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

5.1 The draft response to the consultation was presented to the Democratic Services Committee for their comments on 4 November 2025. The views of the committee Members will be presented verbally to the Cabinet meeting.

5.2 Statutory Officers

Head of Finance:

“The draft response presented here unequivocally highlights the concern about the additional resources that might be necessary if the duty on local authorities to broadcast meetings were to be extended. I support the decision sought.”

Monitoring Officer:

The in-depth consultation is on extending the statutory necessity to broadcast a democratic meeting of the Council. As can be seen from the report, the Council is already acting beyond legal requirement and is broadcasting a range of meetings. However, by imposing a legal requirement on the webcast of all relevant meetings, which is to be welcomed, it also means that the resources need to be provided meet the duty continuously. The response gives appropriate attention to the need to address the need for resources but also for effective systems to meet the demand.

