

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Date of Meeting : 7 July 2026
Cabinet Member : Cllr Craig ab Iago
Relevant Officer : Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services
Title of Item : Update to Cyngor Gwynedd Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

1. Decision Sought

- i. That Cabinet approve the modifications to the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and adopt Gwynedd Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30 (V.2).
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2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

- i. The Council adopted the Climate-and-Nature-Emergency-Plan.pdf following a meeting of the Cabinet on 8 March 2022. "Responding to the climate change crisis" is also one of the Council's 8 Improvement Priorities within The Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28.
- ii. During 2025/26 the Council has been reviewing our Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (CNEP/the Plan) to ensure it remains current and fit for purpose.
- iii. Modifications were made to the Plan following a public consultation; receiving comments from the Climate and Nature Board; and receiving comments from the Communities Scrutiny Committee.
- iv. The reviewed plan (Appendix 1) is submitted to Cabinet in order to consider the adaptations made and to accept, or not, those modifications.

3. Background

- i. The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (the Plan/CNEP) outlines how we as a Council will adapt our way of working and delivering services in order to reduce our carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption capacity. It offers examples of projects we will be pursuing, their outline costs and the timeline for their completion.
- ii. The Plan became operational in April 2022 and the 3 annual reports evaluating the Plan's performance can be seen [here](#).

- iii. It was recognised from the outset that the current Plan focuses on the Council's internal operations, in order to contribute to the Welsh Government's target for the collective public sector to reach net zero. But when Gwynedd Council's Cabinet adopted the current Plan on 8 March 2022, it was stated that 'Phase 1' would be planning how to decarbonise the Council's own operations, and that 'Phase 2' would be planning how to support Gwynedd communities to reduce carbon emissions across the county as well as providing more information on how to respond to flood risk.
- iv. Phase 1, namely the implementation of the current Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, has been in place since April 2022, and will be ongoing work as far as we can see. In order to reach Phase 2 the Council's Climate and Nature Board decided that the Plan needed to be reviewed, and the residents of Gwynedd consulted on its content, in order to draw up a new work programme for the coming years up to 2030.

4. Public Consultation

- i. As a first step the original Plan was reviewed by the Council's Climate and Nature Board (a board of elected members and Council officers), and some updates were suggested.
- ii. The Board looked specifically at the list of projects in chapters 8-14 to see if some of those projects needed to be modified or removed, or new ones added. Based on the Board's new proposals a public consultation was carried out between 12 June and 31 July 2025 to seek views on:
 - Do residents think climate change is important, and should it be a priority for the Council?
 - Content of the current Plan
 - Proposals on changes to existing projects and the addition of new projects
 - What can Gwynedd Council do to support Gwynedd residents to reduce carbon emissions?

- iii. Response to the public consultation

The results of the consultation can be found in Appendix 2, but briefly the results show:

- 84% of respondents believe climate change is important to them
- 83% of respondents believe that Gwynedd Council should be taking action on climate change
- The majority of respondents agreed that the current Plan was understandable, with a clear vision and timetable, and that the aim was ambitious enough (between 56-75% agreed with the various statements)
- A majority (52%) disagreed that the Council is doing enough to support residents to adopt sustainable living and working habits
- The majority of respondents agreed that 10 new projects should be added to the Scheme (support for individual projects ranging between 59% and 79%)
- The projects with the highest percentages supported were 'continuing to implement Gwynedd Council's Flood Strategy' (79.5%), and 'working with community organisations to produce and distribute renewable energy' (78.8%)

- The projects with the highest percentages of disagreement were 'developing and implementing Gwynedd Council's Charging Strategy to develop the Council's public charging network and for the Council's fleet (21.2% disagree but 71.2% agree) and 'researching and measuring blue carbon absorption on our coastline (20.5% disagree but 59.6% agree)
 - The topic of climate change placed as a top priority was 'reducing household fuel poverty' (63.3%)
 - The additional benefit that follows from the highest scoring climate change action was 'access to public transport'.
- iv. Given the results of the consultation, some key points stand out –
- there is support for Gwynedd Council to be active in the area of climate change;
 - there is support for the proposed changes to the CNEP;
 - the Council needs to be doing more to help residents adopt sustainable living and working practices

5. Modifications to the Plan

- i. On 18 September 2025 the Council's Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2024/25, and then on 22 January 2026 the Communities Scrutiny Committee also considered the new draft of the Plan post consultation. In both these meetings they discussed the ambition of the original Plan, namely "Gwynedd Council will be net zero carbon and ecologically positive by 2030", and their recommendation was "that the Council's ambition to be net zero carbon by 2030 needs to be revisited and a realistic target for reducing carbon emissions should be considered".
- ii. This is an extremely challenging ambition, especially because there are so many factors affecting it which are beyond the control of the Council.
- iii. One key factor is how the electricity generated and distributed through the National Grid is generated. The British government has announced their plan to ensure that 95% of Britain's electricity needs are generated through renewable means by 2030 - [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan - GOV.UK](#) . If this plan is realised then it will directly lead to a significant reduction in Gwynedd Council's carbon emissions, particularly as we move towards a fleet of electric vehicles and electrify heat. Indeed, we depend on the British and Welsh governments to realise such national plans if we are to realise the ambition of net zero.
- iv. In the meantime, through the current projects of our Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, we as a Council are preparing to be ready to make the most of net zero energy provision. We are investing significantly in reducing Scope 1 emissions, which are the areas over which we have control, and have been doing so for over 15 years. Continuing to implement the projects described in the 'Buildings and Energy' and 'Mobility and Transport' chapters will primarily put us in the strongest possible position to take advantage of renewable energy electricity when it comes.
- v. Over the last 3 years by far the highest proportion (almost three-quarters) of the Council's carbon emissions comes from our expenditure on third party contracts. That is, the carbon is measured on the basis of the monetary value of the services and goods we purchase through our procurement arrangements. We work together and support our suppliers to move towards less polluting approaches, and in some cases we have data that is more accurate than spend data, but generally the more we spend the greater our carbon emissions. If we continue to have to calculate the carbon

emissions of the purchase of services and goods, and without being able to accurately measure or influence these emissions, it will be almost impossible for us to act as a net zero council.

- vi. In order to realise the projects in the Scheme we have estimated the cost to be between £400-700m. This level of funding is not currently available to the Council, and we do not anticipate that it will be available to us in time to be able to realise the ambition of net zero by 2030.
- vii. The Council's ambition remains firm, which is to continue to reduce carbon emissions urgently. However, recognising that the Welsh Government is in the process of reviewing its national net zero target and associated carbon budgets, the Council will need to consider its implementation in order to align with the revised national framework once it is confirmed. We intend to act consistently with the Welsh Government's intentions, while at the same time enabling the Council to continue to deliver meaningful emission reductions without delay.

6. Project Review

- i. As noted above, the first step taken in reviewing the Plan was to review the lists of projects in chapters 8 to 14. It is reasonable that some projects need to be adapted in order to respond to a changing world, or that some other projects have reached the end of their life and are therefore 'archived'.
- ii. **Archived Projects:**
 - 1. Increasing our carbon 'credit' by installing solar farms to produce energy that the Council can use or sell
 - 2. Electrification of building heating systems to reduce carbon emissions
 - 3. Installing EC ventilation fans in buildings to reduce the energy required to run them compared to normal fans
 - 4. Installing individual room heating regulations to reduce the energy required to heat a building
 - 5. Upgrading street lights and traffic signs to reduce energy use
 - 6. Maximising the benefits of implementing our energy and heating policies
 - 7. Identify the steps we need to take to protect nature's habitats and biodiversity for the future
 - 8. Protecting Nature's Valuable Habitats
- iii. Further details on the reason for archiving these projects can be found in section 15 of the Plan, but in a nutshell the most common reason is because a number of projects have been combined as they work towards the same goal. This means that the work is ongoing but that there is no need to describe the work as two separate projects.
- iv. **New Projects**
 - 1. Review the potential for use of heat networks across Gwynedd, dependent on feasibility studies
 - 2. Working with community organisations to produce and distribute renewable energy for the benefit of Gwynedd communities

3. Developing and encouraging active travel in Gwynedd's school catchment area
 4. Implementing Gwynedd Council's Waste Strategy
 5. Developing a Climate and Nature Adaptation Strategy
 6. Gwynedd Council staff to implement the Sustainable Procurement Guidance to reduce carbon emissions through the supply chain
 7. Provide market support, particularly to local providers, to take action that will reduce their emissions or increase carbon absorption levels
 8. Recognising the carbon capture value of our landfill sites
 9. Recognising the value of 'blue carbon' absorption on our coast
 10. Implementing Gwynedd Council's Flood Strategy
- v. Further details on each of the above projects can be found in chapters 8-14 of the Plan, with information on the reason for their inclusion, costs, timetable and potential carbon savings.

6. Communities Scrutiny Committee's Comments

- i. Changes were made to the Plan following the public consultation and further comments from the Climate and Nature Board. A new draft of the Plan was submitted to a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 22 January 2026, and the committee's decisions are set out below:

It was resolved:

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

- That the Committee welcomed the intention to revisit the Council's ambition to be Net Zero Carbon by 2030.
- To recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment that:
 - the successes and work carried out to deliver the Plan should be communicated to the public.
 - the use of open questions in public consultations needed to be increased in order to receive responses that would enrich the information available to inform future direction.
 - consideration should be given to modifying the following wording: "... we will continue to reduce our emissions over the next few decades until we reach the net zero target ' (Page 6, Climate and Nature Emergency Plan, Version 2), in order to be more ambitious in meeting the target.

The comments of the Communities Scrutiny Committee have been considered, and attention has been given to share more information about the Plan's successes, and to make changes to future consultations. See section 5 above for more information on reaching the target of net zero.

7. Measuring Success

- i. We will continue to collect data on Cyngor Gwynedd's annual carbon emissions and submit them to the Welsh Government in accordance with the arrangements in place since 2021.

- ii. Those results are published in annual reports, which can be found [here](#).

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

- i. [An Impact Assessment on the Characteristics of Equality, the Welsh language and the Socio-Economic Duty](#) was produced on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan when it was adopted at the Cabinet meeting on 8 March 2022. An update to the assessment can be found at Appendix 3.

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

- i. Have you included residents / service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult with them?

See 5 above.

- ii. Have you considered collaboration?

Chapters 11 and 12 of the Annual Report cover the work carried out in part by the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, namely a consortium of local organisations led by the Council. A number of other projects in CNEP are carried out in partnership with others, such as active travel projects in collaboration with Public Service Board partners.

The new review of the CNEP lists new projects where it will be absolutely essential to collaborate with community organisations and residents in order to achieve them – eg. 'collaborating with community organisations in order to produce and distribute renewable energy'.

- iii. What has been done or will be done to prevent problems arising or worsening in the future?

One of the basic principles of CNEP is to try to prevent further increases in the average temperature of the planet and to limit global warming to "well below 2oC" in accordance with the United Nations Paris Agreement. Each of the plan's projects seek to stabilise or even reverse the probability that the current situation will lead to further problems in the future.

- iv. How have you considered the long-term and what will people's needs be in coming years?

As noted above, the basis of the CNEP is to seek to prevent global warming problems from getting worse in the future, and while the Council has its own target of net zero carbon by 2030 the Welsh Government has set a target for the whole of Wales to be net zero by 2050. The CNEP therefore also takes into account that changing the habits of Gwynedd's residents and businesses will be long-term work beyond 2030.

- v. To ensure integration have you considered the possible impact on other public bodies?

A large number of CNEP projects are planned or implemented in collaboration with other public bodies or with the voluntary sector and communities. There is ongoing collaboration with other local authorities across north Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh

Government's Energy Service, and Transport for Wales which has resulted in joint planning and commissioning.

A number of local public bodies including Cyngor Gwynedd are members of the Public Services Board and one of the three Well-being Objectives in the Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan 2023-2028 is 'We want to work together to support our services and communities to move towards Net Zero Carbon'.

10. Next Steps and Timetable

- i. Publication of Gwynedd Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30: Version 2.
- ii. Continue to develop projects and business cases and seek funding to support the Plan.

Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

The Climate And Nature Emergency Plan is clearly a key policy document. The Council-wide and community nature of the individual projects and schemes reflects the wide range of this challenge. I am satisfied with the propriety of the decision sought and confirm that the Legal Services will be available to support the governance and legal aspects of these plans.

Chief Finance Officer:

The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan is a vital document that will inform the Council's activities for years to come. Part 5vi of the covering report acknowledges that the level of funding required to complete all projects is not currently available to the Council and is not likely to be during the life of the scheme either. Adopting a prioritization order will be inevitable.

While the Council faces significant financial costs in addressing the significant challenge ahead, there would be significant environmental, social and economic costs of not taking definite action. Work is already underway within the Finance Department, in conjunction with officers from a range of other departments, to review the financial position and identify appropriate sources of funding.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Cyngor Gwynedd Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 – 2029/30: Version 2

Appendix 2 – Results of the public consultation on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan

Appendix 3 - Impact Assessment on the Characteristics of Equality, the Welsh language and the Socio-Economic Duty