

Self-assessment 2025–26 (part of the 2025–26 Annual Report)

Purpose of the presentation

To give members of the Governance and Audit Committee the opportunity to consider our main strengths and risks before we complete our Self-assessment.

▶ Strengths/achievements based on:

- ▶ Annual performance report and our Self-assessment
- ▶ Feedback from Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn
- ▶ Matters arising through the Performance Challenge and Support process

▶ Risks/challenges based on:

- ▶ Key risks in the corporate risk register
- ▶ Feedback from Audit Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and Estyn
- ▶ Other matters we have identified and included in the Council Plan
- ▶ Matters arising through the performance Challenge and Support process

Background

- ❖ Not every risk/strength is listed in this presentation – **these are the main ones.**
- ❖ A large number of our strengths and risks will be included in other parts of the annual report, particularly where they relate to Council Plan projects and our day-to-day work. To avoid repetition, we do not (usually) list them in the Self-assessment as well.
- ❖ ‘Efficient Gwynedd’ is much more corporate in nature, as many of the strengths and weaknesses shown here are organisational.

A Caring Gwynedd

“Supporting Gwynedd residents to live full and safe lives in our communities”



Strengths/Achievements

- ❖ New Head of Adults Department is a social worker and offers an opportunity to professionalise and reconsider the Department's systems and operating structures.
- ❖ Increase in appropriate use of direct payments and strengths-based practice, and developments in extra-care housing.
- ❖ Use of technology and alternative ways of delivering services.
- ❖ Collaboration with health organisations, the police and the third sector to support good outcomes for people has strengthened significantly.
- ❖ Strategic planning – Llechen Lân has been published and is about to be updated. i-Llechen children's services and the housing needs assessment are under way.
- ❖ Gwynedd Care Academy is thriving and exciting.
- ❖ Review of services for disabled children about to be published to enable developments to be considered.

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*“Supporting
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to live full and safe
lives in our
communities”*



Risks/Challenges

- ❖ Demographic trends, as identified by Llechen Lân, leading to a shortage of the required workforce and increasing demand/costs; this will also apply in future.
- ❖ Our ability to provide home, residential and nursing care because of the intensity of needs and workforce shortages. Llechen Lân implementation recommendations have been adopted to counter these challenges.
- ❖ Importance of multidisciplinary collaboration to ensure high-quality services and manage costs effectively. Continuing to strengthen work with partners such as health, police, the third sector and care providers is essential.
- ❖ Workforce planning challenges could mean we cannot provide the best services for Gwynedd residents.
- ❖ DoLS challenges — and challenges in filling posts to implement those procedures.

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Risks/Challenges

- ❖ If Business, Commissioning and Care Monitoring services are not effective and efficient, there is a risk to the safety of individuals and staff, as well as a risk that we do not provide quality services to Gwynedd residents.
- ❖ Unable to obtain mental health assessments outside working hours, leaving individuals at risk and facing mental health distress without appropriate support.
- ❖ Implementing Mosaic and Magic Notes — major fundamental risk — and lack of support for some months.
- ❖ National developments to eliminate profit from services provided for children.
- ❖ Wage competition from neighbouring regional counties.

Tomorrow's Gwynedd

*“Giving our children
and young people
the best possible
start in life”*



Strengths/Achievements

- ❖ Inspection outcomes for primary and secondary schools are generally strong.
- ❖ Support for meeting learners' needs/Welsh-language provision — including the Immersion Education system.
- ❖ New Language Policy out for consultation.
- ❖ Schools Strategy 2026–2036 in place.
- ❖ Education Transport Policy — currently being developed.
- ❖ New Inclusion arrangements in place and the new Gwynedd ALN service being established.
- ❖ Strengthening the voice of the child in social services procedures and through the county youth forum.
- ❖ Capital schemes developing well — Ein Harglwyddes on site; Tryfan, Hiracl and Bontnewydd at planning stages.
- ❖ Enthusiastic and eager children's social services workforce in an extremely challenging situation.
- ❖ Opportunity to ensure our school safeguarding arrangements meet the highest standards and deliver our Response Plan to the Our Bravery Brought Justice report.

Risks/Challenges

**Tomorrow's
Gwynedd**
*“Giving our
children and
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- ❖ School safeguarding arrangements to the highest possible standard and delivery of our Response Plan to the Our Bravery Brought Justice report and Estyn & CIW joint review (Nov 2025).
- ❖ Demographics and the effect on the viability of the current schools system.
- ❖ Arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and promoting pupil attendance.
- ❖ Provision for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and ensuring arrangements to monitor and improve quality.
- ❖ Failure to provide Catering and Cleaning services adequately and safely.
- ❖ Challenging position in the Council's children's department leadership at present.



Strengths/Achievements

**A Prosperous
Gwynedd**
**“Strengthening the
economy and
supporting
Gwynedd residents
to earn a decent
wage”**

- ❖ Local Regeneration Plan created for each of the 13 regeneration areas in the county.
- ❖ £2m investment in town centres through the Transforming Towns regeneration programme, including improvements in Bangor city centre, Porthmadog and Pwllheli.
- ❖ £8.2m investment in Gwynedd through the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). More than 130 businesses have received financial support through business grants.
- ❖ Developed the Gwynedd and Eryri Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035 jointly by Cyngor Gwynedd and Snowdonia National Park Authority.
- ❖ Work to establish the Visitor Levy has progressed well.
- ❖ Trawsfynydd Science Park — £20m capital package almost in place and business case completed.
- ❖ Growth Deal — Glynllifon and Bryn Cegin projects awaiting CJC approval this month.

Risks/Challenges

**A Prosperous
Gwynedd**

***“Strengthening the
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- ❖ Implications of the ARFOR programme ending — leading to a possible adjustment to the Council Plan to establish a new “Back to Gwynedd” project.
- ❖ SPF programme ending, with only partial transition arrangements confirmed through new funds (Pride of Place and Local Growth Fund).
- ❖ Significant reduction in funding, flexibility and scope compared with SPF, creating uncertainty about future funding and administration.
- ❖ Bangor city centre — continuing to seek to establish the capital package for the Health Hub.



Strengths/Achievements

**A Homely
Gwynedd**
*“Supporting
Gwynedd residents
to live in suitable
and affordable
homes in their
communities”*

- ❖ Recently reduced the number of people who are homeless (25%) and emergency accommodation costs.
- ❖ Since 2021, the Housing Action Plan has resulted in
 - ❖ 357 empty homes brought back into use
 - ❖ over 500 new social homes (139 in the last year)
 - ❖ 59 houses purchased for letting
 - ❖ Two Tŷ Gwynedd developments (shared equity) on site
- ❖ Substantial capital schemes to provide emergency accommodation — 14 units opened on Bangor High Street, Lle Da (GISDA) completed, and Tŷ Glyn (£4.6m) and Penrallt (£16.6m) developing 90 further units.
- ❖ Penrhos site — attracted additional Welsh Government grant (£7m). Construction work on site. Nursing Home (public sector) business case completed.
- ❖ Small Group Homes — two operational (Morfa Bychan and Deiniolen), and two more under way in Ederm and Cricieth.
- ❖ One Stop Housing Shop established in September 2025 for all housing and accommodation enquiries.
- ❖ Increased the Council Tax Premium on empty homes to 150% for reinvestment mainly in housing.

Risks/Challenges

- ❖ Homelessness remains a challenge — need to continue with ambitious plans.
- ❖ Implementing the Homelessness and Social Housing Bill.
- ❖ Managing expectations and tensions relating to social housing development applications.
- ❖ Arrival of the Building Safety (Wales) Bill and delivery of matters relating to safety of multi-occupancy residential units.
- ❖ Increase in construction costs, availability of contractors and adequate workforce, e.g. smallholdings and Buy-to-Let housing.
- ❖ Use of planning powers as one of our interventions to manage second homes in the county, particularly in the context of Article 4.

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Strengths/Achievements

A Welsh Gwynedd
“Ensuring we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community”

- ❖ The Welsh language is a key part of all Council work and any plans that affect Gwynedd residents.
- ❖ The Council has modernised and expanded Welsh immersion provision for children, and intends to increase Welsh-medium education provision in the county further.
- ❖ New Language Strategy in place for 2026–2032 and the Fenter Iaith has been established and is laying the foundations.
- ❖ New Education Language Policy adopted.

Risks/Challenges

A Welsh Gwynedd
“Ensuring we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community”

- ❖ Workforce planning — perceptions about language standards.
- ❖ Welsh-speaking young people moving away.
- ❖ Decline in use of Welsh in the community.

A Green Gwynedd

“Protecting the natural beauty of the county and responding positively to the climate change emergency”

Strengths/Achievements



- ❖ New Waste Strategy being created.
- ❖ Collaboration on significant capital schemes in recycling, with WRAP support.
- ❖ Flood Strategy adopted, highlighting current and future risks from flooding and coastal erosion in the county and how those risks will be managed.
- ❖ 570 people supported to improve their homes and reduce energy use.
- ❖ Continued success in attracting substantial energy grants to reduce carbon emissions from buildings, purchase electric vehicles and carry out nature conservation work (£12.3m between 2019/20 and 2024/25).
- ❖ A number of Active Travel Plan projects delivered during the year.
- ❖ Achieved a 32% reduction in our carbon emissions since 2019.

A Green Gwynedd

“Protecting the natural beauty of the county and responding positively to the climate change emergency”



Risks/Challenges

- ❖ Achieving the national recycling target of 70%.
- ❖ Waste treatment sites need to be modernised, alongside improvements to our recycling centres.
- ❖ Significant risk of inland and coastal flooding that could adversely affect several communities such as Fairbourne.
- ❖ Failure to meet the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan ambition that “Cyngor Gwynedd will be net-zero carbon and ecologically positive by 2030”. This is a practical and financial risk for the Council.
- ❖ Developing a new Local Development Plan — expectations and national changes could lead to delays.
- ❖ Rationalising public transport and its impact on transport in rural areas.
- ❖ Securing dangerous buildings, e.g. Corbett Arms, and acting on building control enforcement matters.

Strengths/Achievements



An Efficient Gwynedd

“Putting Gwynedd residents first by treating them fairly and ensuring the Council performs effectively and efficiently”

- ❖ Revenue budget set with a tax increase below the 5% forecast in the MTFP and without further service cuts.
- ❖ Able to include higher investment in several challenging areas.
- ❖ Reserves remain healthy (£21m) at present — no use of them when setting the budget.
- ❖ Local Partnerships report confirms strong governance arrangements.
- ❖ Performance Challenge arrangements have been developed further.
- ❖ Reviewing the support provided as host/lead body to a number of regional services.
- ❖ Council gathers residents' views in several different ways to improve services — National Residents' Survey.
- ❖ Annual Staff Voice Survey — leading to clear improvements.
- ❖ Awareness and ownership of safeguarding matters has spread across the Council. Review of the Ffordd Gwynedd culture is about to begin.
- ❖ Partnership working remains strong, e.g. CJC, Public Services Board, third sector, visitor economy.

Risks/Challenges

An Efficient Gwynedd
“Putting Gwynedd residents first by treating them fairly and ensuring the Council performs effectively and efficiently”

- ❖ Revenue budget challenges arising from ongoing increases in demand in care, energy costs, general inflation, ALN, demographics, etc.
- ❖ Recruitment difficulties for posts in some front-line areas that can risk service continuity.
- ❖ Developing our arrangements and procedures for assessing and managing corporate risks, ensuring consistency across the organisation.
- ❖ Evolution of the Corporate Joint Committee.
- ❖ Failure of the Council’s systems and threat to data in the event of a cyberattack.
- ❖ Introduction of major new systems such as the Establishment Management System and Mosaic during the year, and review of the Accounting System in 2026–27.
- ❖ Asset Plan remains under pressure but has improved following the move of Maintenance to revenue.
- ❖ Financial forecasts for the next two years and their impact on our Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- ❖ Impact of the 2026 Senedd election.
- ❖ Knock-on effect of the focus on the Response Plan: Our Bravery Brought Justice on our ability to deliver in other areas.