

MEETING	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	16 July 2026
TITLE	Compact: Collaboration Agreement between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector
REASON FOR SCRUTINY	To consider whether the revised Compact provides a robust foundation for a more consistent, effective and collaborative relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector.
AUTHOR	Dylan Owen, Director of Social Services
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr. Dilwyn Morgan, Cabinet Member for Adults

1. Why does it need to be scrutinised?

- 1.1. The Compact establishes a new framework for the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector.
- 1.2. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider whether the proposed arrangements address the inconsistencies identified by the sector and Council officers, and whether they will strengthen collaboration, commissioning and communication for the benefit of Gwynedd's communities.

2. What specifically needs to be scrutinised?

2.1. The Committee is asked to consider:

- *Does the Compact establish clear principles and expectations for the relationship between the Council and the Third Sector?*
- *Do the proposed arrangements address the issues identified by the sector and Council officers?*
- *Does the Compact provide a sound basis for future collaboration?*
- *Are there any further recommendations regarding the implementation and monitoring of the Compact?*

3. Background / Context

- 3.1. Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector have worked in partnership for many years to support residents and communities across the county. The Third Sector includes a wide range of charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and community groups that make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of Gwynedd's residents and provide services that complement the work of the Council.
- 3.2. The previous Compact between the Council and the Third Sector was adopted in 2008 and reviewed in 2013.

- 3.3. Since then, the operating environment has changed significantly, including increasing financial pressures, new legislative requirements, developments in procurement and commissioning, and higher expectations around co-production and social value. As a result, the Compact needs to be renewed to ensure it reflects the current context.
- 3.4. In December 2022, Audit Wales published a national report, [*Missed Opportunity – Social Enterprises*](#), reviewing how local authorities in Wales work with social enterprises and the Third Sector. The report concluded that social enterprises make an important contribution to community wellbeing, but that their potential is not being fully realised by many local authorities. It identified a lack of coordinated strategies, limited understanding of the sector, and missed opportunities to collaborate, commission and procure services in ways that support sector development.
- 3.5. Audit Wales noted that local authorities are in a position to do more to maximise the impact of the Third Sector, secure better value for money, and improve services for people and communities. The report recommended that local authorities develop more strategic engagement arrangements with the sector, strengthen collaboration across departments, and make better use of commissioning and procurement arrangements to support social enterprises and community organisations.
- 3.6. The findings of the report reflect issues raised locally through engagement with Mantell Gwynedd and sector organisations, namely inconsistency in funding arrangements, a lack of corporate coordination, and the need to strengthen collaborative and co-planning arrangements. The revised Compact (Appendix 1) provides an opportunity to respond to these challenges by setting clear principles and expectations for the Council's future relationship with the Third Sector.
- 3.7. The Third Sector Liaison Group arrangements previously facilitated by Cyngor Gwynedd have been on hold for several months. However, it is intended to develop new arrangements that avoid duplication of existing engagement structures, namely the Gwynedd Third Sector Network facilitated by Mantell Gwynedd. This will strengthen the relationship with Mantell Gwynedd and ensure collaboration and co-development going forward.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. The purpose of the consultation process was not simply to develop a document, but to establish a clear set of principles and expectations to guide the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector into the future.
- 4.2. Initial discussions were held with Mantell Gwynedd and Council officers to establish the fundamental principles that should guide the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector. These discussions focused on themes such as trust, transparency, communication, collaboration, co-production and consistency of arrangements across the Council.

4.3. Following the initial work to establish the principles, a six-week engagement period was held on the draft Compact during October and November 2025. The aim was to test the proposed principles and seek wider views from third sector organisations, stakeholders and individuals. The Compact was also presented to the Gwynedd Third Sector Network, facilitated by Mantell Gwynedd, on 10 October 2025, giving a wide range of organisations an opportunity to contribute comments on the content and proposed arrangements.

4.4. Overall, the response to the draft Compact was positive, with many respondents welcoming the intention to establish a clear framework for the relationship between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector. Specific comments included:

- A suggestion to consider a clearer title such as “Partnership Agreement” rather than “Compact”.
- Comments on the design of the document and diagrams to ensure they reflected the principle of placing Gwynedd residents at the centre.
- A view that greater detail was needed in certain sections to explain how the principles would be implemented in practice.
- A suggestion that communication should be emphasised as a two-way process, with responsibility on both sides to listen, share information and collaborate openly.
- Recognition of the importance of referencing the Welsh Government Third Sector Funding Code of Practice and ensuring its principles are reflected in the Compact.
- A number of editorial and wording suggestions to improve the clarity and accuracy of the document.

4.5. The feedback received was used to refine the content of the Compact and ensure it reflects the sector’s needs and priorities.

4.6. Although there have been delays in finalising the Compact due to other corporate priorities and requirements, work has continued in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd and key stakeholders. It is now timely to move forward with adopting the Compact in order to provide an agreed framework for collaboration between the Council and the Third Sector. The Scrutiny Committee’s input forms an important part of this process before the final Compact is presented to Cabinet for consideration and adoption.

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

Have you included residents / service users? If not, when and how do you plan to consult them?

- The Compact has been developed in partnership with Mantell Gwynedd, Third Sector organisations and Council departments.
- A public engagement period was also undertaken in October 2025 and a number of comments were received on the draft Compact.

Have you considered **collaborating**?

- The primary purpose of the Compact is to strengthen collaborative arrangements between the Council and the Third Sector.

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

- Through improved planning, commissioning and communication, the intention is to prevent problems arising from inconsistent arrangements and a lack of coordination.
- The work of the Third Sector is essential in supporting communities, individuals and groups to prevent future problems.

How have you considered the **long-term** and what will people's needs be in years to come?

- The Compact establishes long-term principles for working with the sector in a context of financial challenges and increasing demand for services.

To ensure **integration**, have you considered the potential impact on other public bodies?

- The Compact supports cross-departmental working and contributes to wider wellbeing objectives relating to strong, sustainable and resilient communities.

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

6.1. The Compact is expected to have a positive impact by:

- Strengthening the capacity of community organisations to support Gwynedd residents.
- Promoting fairer access to opportunities and services.
- Supporting the use of the Welsh language through partnership working with local organisations.
- Supporting communities facing socio-economic disadvantage.

6.2. No significant negative impacts have been identified at present. Any further impact assessment requirements will be completed as part of the implementation process.

7. Next Steps

7.1. Following the Scrutiny Committee's comments, we will:

- Consider any recommendations received.
- Finalise the Compact.

- Submit the Compact to Cabinet for adoption.
- Establish appropriate governance and monitoring arrangements.
- Develop an action plan to support implementation of the Compact across the Council.

Appendices

- **The Compact:** Collaboration Agreement between Cyngor Gwynedd and the Third Sector (Draft version)