

CYNGOR GWYNEDD - Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet



Title of item:	Complaints and Service Improvement Report Quarter 1 2025/26
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Llio Elenid Owen
Relevant officer:	Catrin Love, Deputy Head of Corporate Services
Date of meeting:	15 September 2026

1. Decision Sought

The Cabinet is asked to approve the report and offer any relevant comments or suggestions about the Council's performance in dealing with complaints in an appropriate and timely manner.

2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council's performance in relation to dealing with complaints and improving services, highlighting successes, challenges, and developments. This is to ensure that the Cabinet is satisfied with the performance over the periods in question.

An analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is submitted, which is a measure of the Council's performance in this context for the period 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026, together with comparative information about the previous years.

3. Introduction and Rationale

3.1 Background

The Council's 'Complaints and Service Improvement Arrangements' was introduced in 2015, drawn up under the supervision of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. It corresponds with Welsh Government guidelines and is therefore in line with the complaints procedures of other public bodies.

The Cabinet adopted the procedure with the aim of bringing specific benefits to the citizen by focusing on the solution instead of the process and allow Officers to deal with complaints quicker.

The ownership for responding to complaints sits within the individual Departments, but the role of coordinating and offering guidance has been transferred to the Customer Contact team, Corporate Services Department, following the resignation of the Service Improvement Officer.

The complaints page on the Council's website has been amended to help customers understand the difference between a complaint and a failure to provide a service. Additional work will be done during the year to further develop the information and guidelines.

It should be noted that this procedure does not apply to Social Services users, as they have a separate statutory procedure. Schools also implement their own complaints procedures.

3.2 Responding to Complaints - An explanation of the terminology that is used

3.2.1 Resolving Informal Complaints

Complainant informally contacts the Customer Contact Team or relevant Service to resolve the concern.

3.2.2 Investigating Formal Complaints

Complainant submits a formal complaint through the complaints procedure. An investigation is carried out by an officer in the relevant Department, who is sufficiently senior and independent from the source of the complaint.

3.2.3 Complaint to the Ombudsman

The complainant could go to the Ombudsman if they are not satisfied with the Council's formal response.

After looking at the complaint, the Ombudsman may decide on one of the following:

- *No Investigation* - where the Ombudsman is satisfied with the way the authority has dealt with the matter and feels that there is no need for a further investigation. It could also be a matter beyond its jurisdiction.
- *Premature* - if the Ombudsman is of the opinion that the authority has not yet had an opportunity to consider the matter.
- *Hold a further investigation* - where the Ombudsman feels that further investigation is needed, to assess how the authority has dealt with the matter.
- *Settlement* - where there is an agreement with the complainant and they accept the resolution.

4. Frequency of the Report

The Annual Report for 2025/2026 is submitted to the Cabinet, along with the Annual Letter of the Ombudsman.

'Live' data is available to Heads of Department, the Senior Leadership Team and the Cabinet at any time upon request.

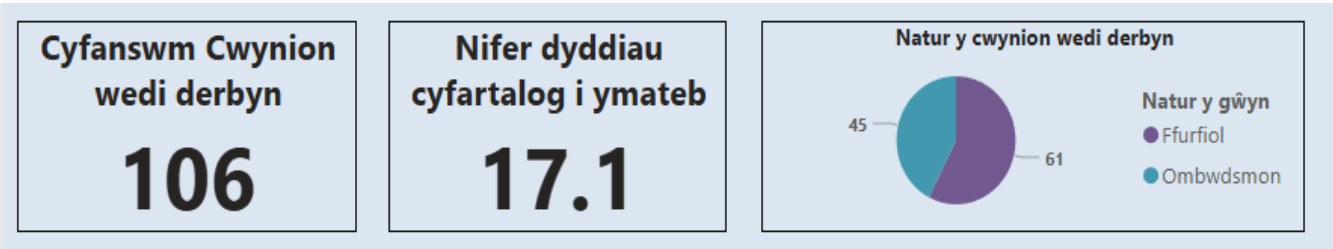
This report summarises the developments for the period 01/04/2025 - 31/03/2026, focusing on Valid Formal Complaints and complaints submitted to the Ombudsman.

The figures for the period from 01/04/2025 to 31/03/2026, are noted below -

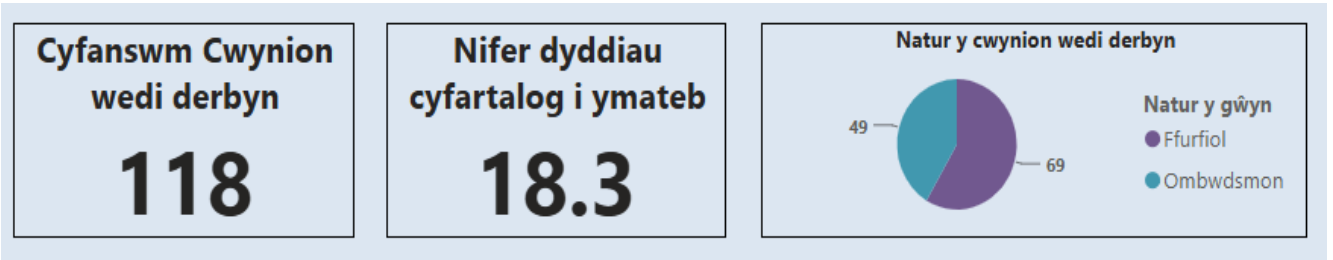
- 69 Valid Formal Complaints between 01/04/2025 and 31/03/2026
- 49 Ombudsman Complaints between 01/04/2025 and 31/03/2026
- 33 No Investigation; 8 No Investigation - Premature; 7 - Settlement; 1 - closed)

5. Quantitative Data

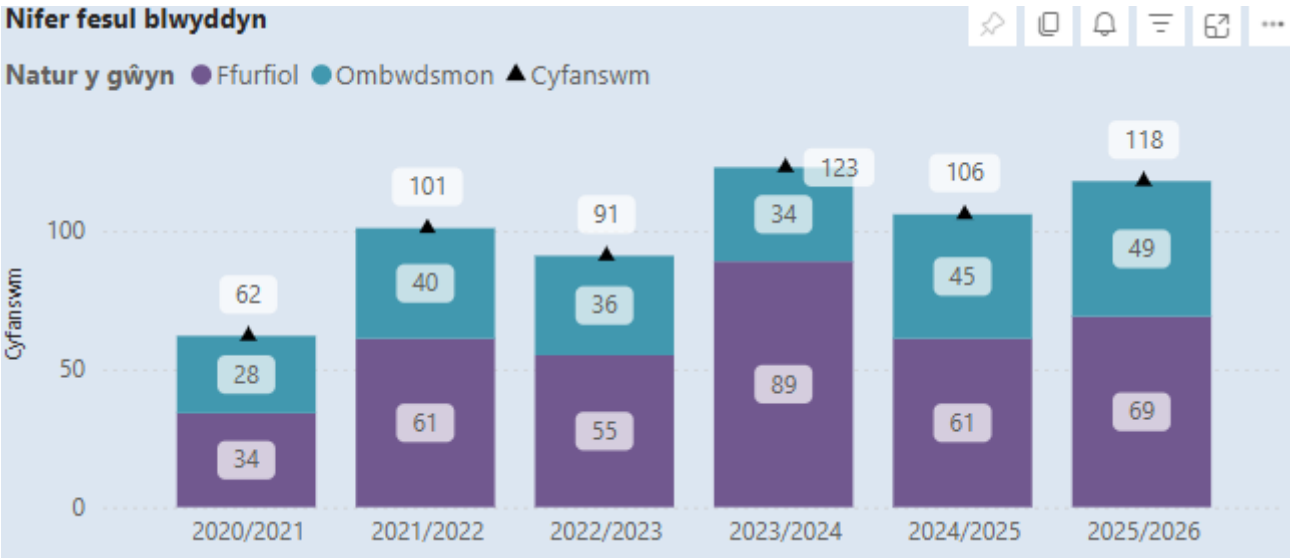
5.1 Number of Complaints:
2024/25 Quarter 1- 4



2025/26 Quarter 1- 4

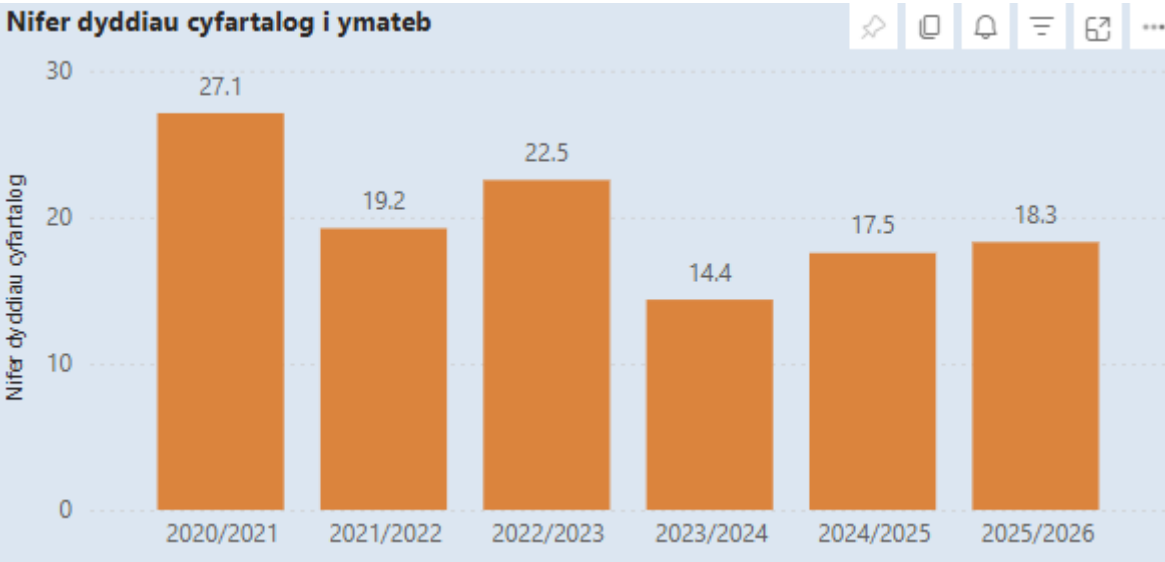


5.2 Number of Complaints: Position Over Time since 2020-21



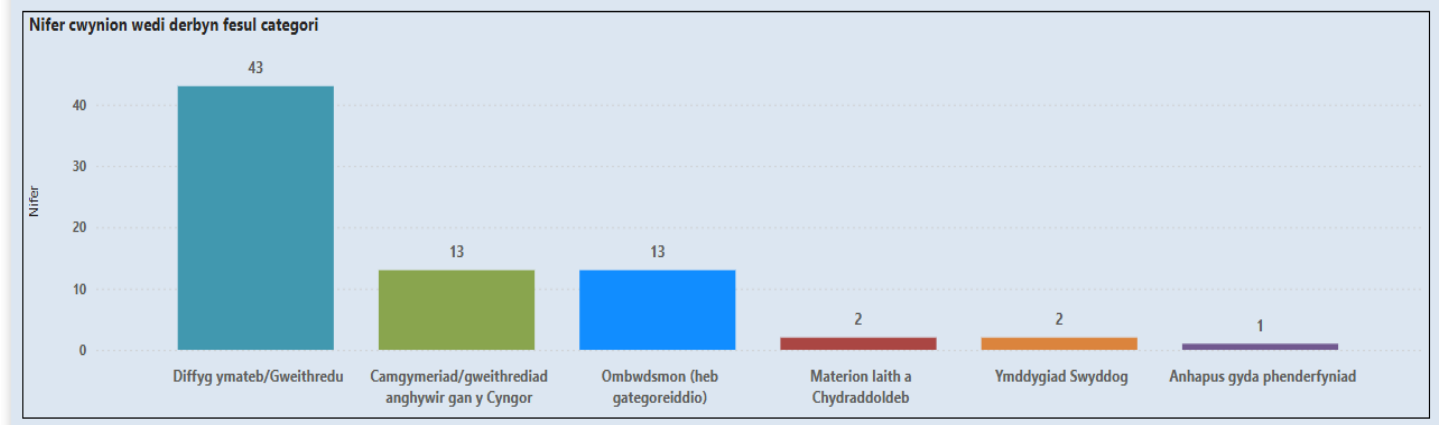
Natur y gŵyn	Ffurfiol		Ombwdsmon		Cyfanswm	
Adran	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau	Nifer	Nifer dyddiau
☒	2	22.5			2	22.5
Priffyrdd	2	22.5			2	22.5
☒ Addysg	2	56.0	5	14.6	7	26.4
Addysg	2	56.0	5	14.6	7	26.4
☒ Amgylchedd	17	19.4	20	3.6	37	10.8
Cynllunio	7	38.7	9	1.1	16	17.6
Gwastraff	5	3.4	1	2.0	6	3.2
GYC	2	5.0	5	3.4	7	3.9
Llwybrau			2	7.5	2	7.5
Parcio a Gwaith Stryd			1	27.0	1	27.0
Rheolaeth Adeiladu			1	0.0	1	0.0
Trafnidiaeth	2	10.5			2	10.5
Trwyddedu	1	10.0	1	0.0	2	5.0
☒ Cyllid	27	20.2	7	11.3	34	18.4
Cyllid	4	10.3	1	0.0	5	8.2
Refeniw	23	21.9	6	13.2	29	20.1
☒ Economi a Chymuned	3	16.3			3	16.3
Economi a Chymuned	1	6.0			1	6.0
Hamdden	1	14.0			1	14.0
Morwrol a Pharciau	1	29.0			1	29.0
☒ Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol	3	15.0	1	0.0	4	11.3
Cofrestru	1	38.0			1	38.0
Cyswllt Cwsmer	1	0.0	1	0.0	2	0.0
Gwas Corff	1	7.0			1	7.0
☒ Oedolion, Iechyd a Llesiant			5	16.0	5	16.0
Gwas Cymd			5	16.0	5	16.0
☒ Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd	1	46.0	6	4.0	7	10.0
Gwas Cymd			3	6.7	3	6.7
Plant	1	46.0	3	1.3	4	12.5
☒ Priffyrdd, Peirianeg a YGC	1	15.0			1	15.0
Priffyrdd	1	15.0			1	15.0
☒ Tai ac Eiddo	11	46.4	5	22.2	16	38.8
Cyfanswm	69	24.9	49	8.9	118	18.3

5.3 Response Time over Period since 2020-21

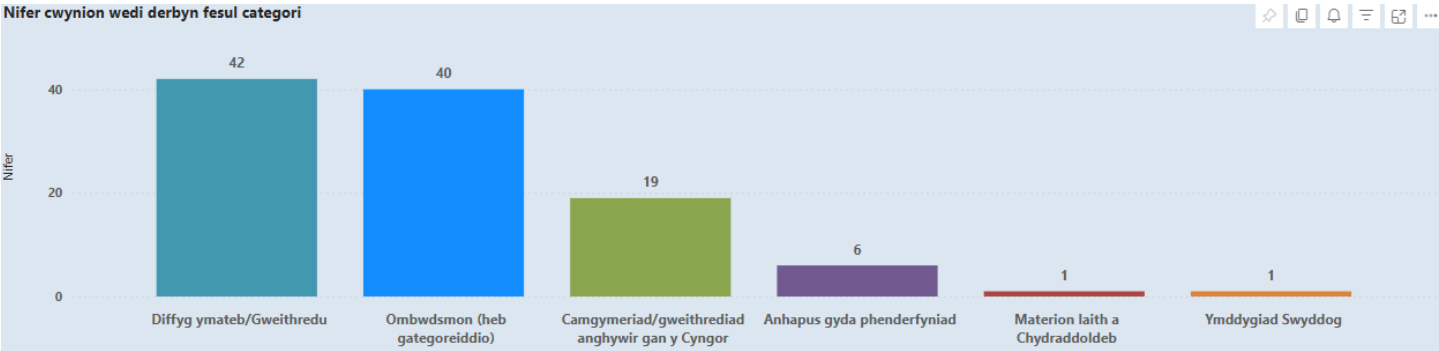


6. Analysis of the Complaints

Per Category Year 2024/25 Quarter 1 - 4



Per Category Year 2025/26 Quarter 1 - 4



Analysis per Department

We have reviewed the previous approach of providing detailed information about complaints because of the risk that a high level of detail could unintentionally lead to the identification or disclosure of individual cases. While sharing information can support learning activities, performance monitoring and service improvement, it is important to ensure that the information presented is proportionate and does not compromise the confidentiality of individuals.

Adran/Gwasanaeth	Anhapus gyda phenderfyniad	Camgymeriad/gweithrediad anghywir gan y Cyngor	Diffyg ymateb/ Gweithredu	Materion Iaith a Chydraddoldeb	Ombwdsmon (heb gategoreiddio)	Ymddygiad Swyddog	Cyfanswm
Addysg		3	1		3		7
Addysg		3	1		3		7
Amgylchedd		4	13		18		35
Cynllunio			7		9		16
Gwastraff		3	2		1		6
GYC			2		4		6
Llwybrau					2		2
Parcio a Gwaith Stryd					1		1
Rheolaeth Adeiladu							
Trafnidiaeth			2				2
Trwyddedu		1			1		2
Cyllid	3	10	16		7		36
Cyllid		1	3		1		5
Refeniw	3	9	14		6		32
Economi a Chymuned	2			1			3
Economi a Chymuned	1						1
Hamdden	1						1
Morwrol a Pharciau				1			1
Gwasanaethau Corfforaethol		1	2		1		4
Cofrestru			1				1
Cyswllt Cwsmer		1			1		2
Gwas Corff			1				1
Oedolion, Iechyd a Llesiant					3		3
Gwas Cymd					3		3
Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd			1		4		5
Gwas Cymd					2		2
Plant			1		2		3
Priffyrdd, Peirianneg a YGC			1				1
Priffyrdd			1				1
Tai ac Eiddo	3	3	8		4	1	19
Eiddo			2				2
Tai	3	3	6		4	1	17
Tim Arweinyddiaeth a Chyfreithiol			2				2
Cyfreithiol			2				2
(gwag)			2				2
Priffyrdd			2				2
Prif Gyfanswm	8	21	46	1	40	1	118

7. Main Messages

- It can be seen that the number of Valid Formal Complaints has increased, and those that have gone to the Ombudsman have increased again this year, compared against the same period in 2024/2025.
- The pattern / trend over a longer period shows that the number of Formal Complaints has reduced gradually since 2018/2019, when a substantial increase was seen, but things seem to be relatively stable.
- A change in culture was seen, with most Services receiving complaints in a more positive and constructive way in order to learn from them, with the response time gradually reducing.

8 Next Steps

The intention this year is to conduct an internal review of how we respond to complaints, using the Ombudsman's good practice as grounds for staff training and amending our digital systems. This will enable us to reduce the time it takes for officers to respond to complainants, and to learn lessons in order to continue to improve services.

The new Customer Care training for Managers will refer specifically to the complaints procedure and the expectations on us to respond promptly. The complaints procedure is a core part of the work taking place through the Customer Care Plan. The charter, and the response standards outlined in the new Plan in relation to responding to Members, general correspondence and complaints, will provide a framework and definitive guidance for staff. The hope is that this will reduce the number of complaints about a lack of response or lack of action in the future and will ensure that staff are equipped with the information they need to keep to the response requirements.

The Successes Wall is still growing, and it is very good to see that several messages of Thanks/Praise are being received from the Public, from Members and from Staff. Seeing that their work is appreciated is very helpful in raising staff morale, particularly among front-line staff.

9 Views of the Statutory Officers

Chief Finance Officer:

Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety.

Monitoring Officer:

The complaints process includes provision that the Cabinet receives reports on the Councils Complaints and Service Improvement arrangements from the perspective of maintaining the quality of services. The Governance and Audit Committee has a role in reviewing the effectiveness of the arrangements in accordance with their statutory duties. No observations to add in relation to propriety.