

COMMITTEE	Care Scrutiny Committee
DATE	17 September 2026
TITLE	North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2027 Draft Report
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Dilwyn Morgan Councillor Menna Trenholme
PURPOSE	To submit the draft report for scrutiny

1 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To present the draft North Wales Population Needs Assessment for the attention of the members of the Care Scrutiny Committee during the public consultation period between August and October 2026. (Appendix attached).
- 1.2 The draft report has also been presented to the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) prior to public consultation between August and October 2026. Following the consultation period, the report will then be updated and shared for approval with the RPB, six local authorities and health board. The report must be published in April 2027 on the RPB website.
- 1.3 The needs assessment is created in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014.

2. The decision sought

- 2.1 The committee is asked to submit its comments on the draft needs assessment as part of the consultation

3. Details of the North Wales Population Needs Assessment 2027

- 3.1 Regional Partnership Boards (RPBs) must complete a Population Needs Assessment (PNA) of care and support needs under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The report must assess the care and support needs of priority population groups including children and young people, older people, people with physical and learning disabilities, mental health, neurodivergence and carers who need support.
- 3.2 While the PNA is a statutory requirement to inform the Area Plan, this is not the main reason for undertaking the work. The PNA is a vital document that provides an evidence base to support organisations and services across the region as well as strategic planning cycles. This underpins the integration of services and supports partnership arrangements.
- 3.3 The PNA is based on a wide range of different kinds of evidence including data, research evidence and the wisdom and experience of people who provide and use social care. To check the findings the report is consulted on widely.

- 3.4 There are other related needs assessments and plans written or under development including the Public Services Board Well-being Assessment. This looks at broader well-being issues including health, climate change, culture and the economy. There are also specific assessments for health care, palliative and end of life care, public health, violence, substance misuse, suicide and self-harm, homelessness and more. We link to these from the assessment. The focus of this assessment is specifically on care and support needs, which helps us avoid duplication and means we can highlight key messages for other assessments about care and support needs
- 3.5 The PNA will provide the basis for additional work, such as the Market Stability Report (MSR) which will include more detail about how we will work with providers to commission the care and support needed to meet the needs identified in the assessment, and set regional priorities for collaborative working.
- 3.6 This is the third PNA the Regional Partnership Board has produced so the process has matured. While it is still important to check our assumptions, few of the findings are now new or surprising. The 2027 assessment builds on regional work taken place in the previous five years, for example, the regional dementia strategy and learning disability strategy were both informed by the previous needs assessment and are now part of the evidence base informing this assessment.
- 3.7 The latest guidance from Welsh Government about the assessments has asked for a shorter and simpler assessment focusing on a smaller number of priorities where collective action is needed. All the detailed information is available in background papers to support service planning on the Regional Partnership Board website. These reports provide detailed charts and tables, data sources, and they explain any issues with data quality or availability. The data is available at a range of geographies including Public Service Board and health board areas (West, Central and East), local authority, Primary Care Clusters and smaller geographies where available. There are systems now in place to update the assessment as new data becomes available. This provides access to up-to-date figures to inform any future work as well as local planning.

4 Impact assessment

- 4.1 For each of the population groups the equality profile, information on protected characteristics, the socio-economic duty have been considered to inform the assessment. Equalities and human rights literature searches have also been carried out and have been considered to inform the assessment. This information is threaded throughout the report and its supporting background data and research rather than being published as a separate Equality Impact Assessment. This decision was made following discussions with Welsh Government officers.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 The RPB fund a project manager to support the development of the PNA. Associated costs, such as translation, were also funded by the partnership.

- 5.2 There has been a cost to the local authorities and BCUHB in staff time and resource to support the project. This includes staff to carry out engagement work with the public, staff and elected members, and staff to support the analysis and writing of the report.
- 5.3 The regional and local priorities identified in the PNA may require some level of investment at either regional or local level. This will be explored further as part of the development of local and regional plans.

6 Governance and risk

- 6.1 There is a risk that it will not be possible for the needs assessment to gain approval from the RPB, all six councils and the health board in time to publish by the statutory deadline of April 2027. To mitigate this risk, the project team have completed the draft report in plenty of time for a consultation and approval process. Steering group members are liaising with committee administrators to make sure the report is scheduled at the appropriate meetings. These dates have been shared with the project team so they can make sure the final report is completed in time.

7 Consultation and engagement

- 7.1 The North Wales Regional Partnership Board set up a regional steering group to complete the work including members from each North Wales local authority and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB). The members are responsible for providing local data and engagement findings for the report. The steering group has collated initial feedback from their organisations and commented on the draft report, but further feedback will be gathered during the consultation period. The lead officers for the PNA attend the North Wales Insight Partnership and Well-being Assessments North Wales Data Group to coordinate data collection and analyse with the Public Service Board Well-being Assessment.
- 7.2 Engagement for the PNA includes a questionnaire open to people who provide and use services, including unpaid carers, about their experiences of care and support in North Wales. This is providing rich qualitative data to inform the PNA. In addition to the survey we also collated and used evidence from consultation and engagement activities carried out throughout the region by partners. These findings are available on the RPB engagement database, which is an ongoing project to improve the coordination of engagement activities across the region and enable better use of the findings. A full consultation report will also be published with the main report.

8. How does the assessment contribute to Council's priorities?

- 8.1 The population needs assessment contributes to regional and local level strategic planning cycles, consequently this will support all local authorities' corporate priorities relating to the health and social care needs of the population.
- 8.2 There is overlap between the population needs assessment and the Well-being Assessment which has been prepared by the Public Service Board in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, and information is shared where necessary.

9 Recommendation

- 9.1 That the committee offers its observations on the draft needs assessment as part of the consultation.