CYNGOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL



Gwynedd Council Plan 2018 - 2023

2022/23 Review



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The Council Leader's Foreword

To follow after the Cabinet meeting



Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn,
Gwynedd Council Leader.

Introduction to the Plan

The Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023 was adopted by the Council in March 2018 and it has been reviewed annually since then. It was produced based on evidence within the well-being assessment conducted by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, and feedback from engagement sessions held with communities, elected members, staff and partners.

The 2022-23 review is the last one for the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23. Following the election in May 2022, we will start the work of developing a new plan for the Council for the period of 2023-28.

In accordance with the requirements of the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act)** the Council has adopted well-being objectives which, simply, summarise the Council's ambition of seeing every community in Gwynedd thriving. This means that the residents of Gwynedd:

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable them to do what they want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment.

These objectives have already been published in our well-being statement, which also explains how they contribute to the national well-being goals set by Welsh Government in the Act. This Plan notes how the Council's work contributes to realising this ambition through a combination of the day-to-day work of the Council's Departments and specific projects which have been identified in order to address those fields for which most of our efforts are needed to develop them. These projects have been summarised under the Improvement Priorities, as they are called. Each one of the improvement priorities contributes to several of our well-being objectives, and the plan notes which ones for each project.

As part of this action we will also give appropriate consideration to the sustainable development principles by considering the long-term, prevention, integration, collaborative working and being inclusive of people of all ages. We will do this by adopting the "Ffordd Gwynedd" approach of working, which focuses on placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do. The plan refers to several examples where we take a preventative approach, include the people of Gwynedd by consulting and collaborating with our communities and where we consider the needs of the future.

There are also examples where we co-operate and work in an integrated manner to deliver what matters to the people of Gwynedd - such as through our work as a member of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, or internally through projects such as Supporting People's Well-being and the Climate Change Action Plan. Steps have already been taken to show how we contribute to the principles of the Act by strengthening our performance

challenging and reporting arrangements. This work will continue over the course of the next year when we will further review our performance management arrangements whilst also looking to address the matter when introducing new impact assessment arrangements and respond to the requirements to undertake a self-assessment as part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

We have reviewed the content of the Plan over the past months in order to ensure that we are continuing to do the things that are important to the people of Gwynedd and to examine the social, economic, environmental and policy issues which influence the Council, and which are likely to influence the people of Gwynedd in the future. Of course, there have been some substantial changes in the needs of our communities as a result of the Covid-19 crisis and the lives of the people of Gwynedd currently look very different to how they were in 2017.

Therefore, as a Council, we have been reviewing the content of the plan and the priorities which were already set by us. The 2021-22 review of the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23 is the last one, and includes the continuation of schemes that are already in the plan, and a series of new priorities. A number of these have arisen directly from the Covid-19 crisis and others have arisen indirectly as the crisis, the associated living conditions and restrictions have highlighted other needs.

This version of the Plan, 'Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023: 2022/23 Review', will replace the current version. The following summarises the main adaptations undertaken following the review:

The following projects have been added:

- **Free school meals for primary pupils** - following the Government's announcement in November 2021 that it is intended to provide free school meals to all primary pupils, considerable work is needed in terms of the practicality of the scheme.

In addition, the scope or content of the following projects have changed:

- The scope of the **Bangor Catchment Area** project has been extended to include investment in the secondary provision in order to improve the learners' experience, and increase the number of learners who choose the take advantage of Welsh-medium secondary education in the city.
- The scope of the **Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes and second homes** project has been expanded to include a greater emphasis on better management through the planning system.
- **A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin taking action** has now been extended and re-named **A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Implementing and delivering projects within our Housing Plan in order to increase the opportunities for local people to have a suitable home within their communities.**
- **The Workforce and Recruitment in the Care Field** project has been incorporated as part of the **Workforce Planning** project. Consequently, several departments will work together closely to respond to the recruitment challenges facing the Council.

The Plan also includes information regarding what we are doing in response to the matters that were highlighted by Councillors as Local Priorities back in the autumn of 2017. Any changes or adaptations to our priorities, together with any actions intended to be undertaken in the future, will be addressed within the relevant Department Plans.

The uncertain financial situation in Wales and Britain poses a significant challenge to us as a Council as we plan our services for the future. An insufficient increase in the grant from the Government means that continuing to provide a number of services is difficult. Therefore, we must be creative and consider every possible way of providing the services that the people of Gwynedd deserve. However, we have clearly stated that any changes would be based on the need to see every community in Gwynedd thriving and to improve the well-being of our residents for the future.

Since the original Plan was adopted, the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board adopted its Well-being Plan during the spring of 2018. The well-being goals and the priorities highlighted within the Well-being Plan are consistent with the ones in the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023. The Council Plan focuses on the day to day services and the matters that the Council has prioritised while the Well-being Plan will focus on the fields where it is felt that public organisations could make more of a difference to the well-being of the people of the area by working together.

Our vision is for every community in Gwynedd to prosper, and for us as people to...

Well-being Objectives

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in quality homes within our communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment

We will achieve this by pioneering innovative ways of working, whilst focusing on...

Improvement Priorities

- Creating a viable and prosperous economy
- Every pupil having the opportunity to reach his or her potential
- Reducing inequality within the county
- Ensuring access to suitable housing
- Assisting people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh
- Assisting people who need help to live their lives as they wish
- Putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do
- Responding to the climate change emergency

...which will be supported by the day to day work of the Council's Departments.

Improvement Priorities

Our Improvement Priorities are the areas we believe we need to focus on in order to increase or improve the current situation. Below, you will find descriptions of the 8 Improvement Priorities, followed by the individual projects that will contribute to each of them.

There are some priority projects where it will be absolutely necessary for us to deliver them, and of course, the Council intends to deliver all of the projects within this plan and commits to putting every effort into doing so. However, it should be noted that the Covid-19 crisis, as we have seen since March 2020, is causing difficulties that can limit our ability to achieve fully on some things. We will report on any such difficulties in relevant performance reports.

Improvement Priority 1
Create a viable and prosperous economy.

Ensuring that there are suitable jobs available in the county that pay salaries that enable people to support themselves and their families is the foundation to allowing the people of Gwynedd to thrive.

How will we achieve this?

1. North Wales Growth Vision
Economy and Community Department

A lack of growth is a weakness in the economy of the whole of north Wales, and particularly the north-west. In an attempt to overturn the situation, the six counties in north Wales, and other stakeholders such as education establishments in the region and the private sector, came together to establish the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

The Board's main investment programme is the 'North Wales Growth Deal' and in December 2020 an agreement was signed between the Ambition Board, the Welsh Government and the UK Government which paves the way for achieving the Growth Deal. The bid will lead to an investment of £945m in the north Wales region over the next 15 years and create up to 4,000 jobs across north Wales. As a member of the Ambition Board, our aim as a Council is to ensure that the people and businesses of Gwynedd maximise the benefits from this financial investment, especially at a time when there will be a need to respond to the side-effects of Covid-19 and Brexit.

In 2021/22 the Program Office prepared and presented the business cases required by the 2 Governments for the 21 growth bid projects across the region.

In future, we will continue to contribute to the Ambition Board's work programme, including supporting a programme to improve the availability of superfast broadband across Gwynedd, supporting innovative local energy networks across the county; safeguarding and creating new jobs at the Trawsfynydd Power Station site, supporting the development of an innovative new science campus in Bangor and developing a Rural Innovation Centre in Glynllifon.

We will also contribute to the development of the North Wales Economic Framework, which is being prepared by Welsh Government to identify the main regional investment programmes in the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Keeping the Benefit Local
Corporate Support Department

The Council is responsible for procuring, or purchasing, a number of goods and services and it is eager to try to ensure that local businesses can compete and win these contracts in order to ensure that as much of the Council's expenditure as possible remains local.

The local market cannot always respond to opportunities due to restrictions in terms of size or other existing barriers. This then leads to local businesses losing the desire and ability to compete for work, and consequently, it is not possible to maximise the Council expenditure that is kept locally.

We are seeking to support local businesses with the changes to procurement rules as a result of leaving the European Union, taking advantage of the opportunities to procure locally.

During 2022/23, we will:

- share our learning from the 'Social Value Portal' project that assesses tenders based on price, quality and local value, recommending any changes to the way that the Council procures goods and services
- provide plans to develop the market's ability to win the Council's procurement contracts - responding to the questions of the Well-being of Future Generations Act in tenders, providing support to gain the necessary accreditations or any developments in the field
- create a 'map' of local businesses in order to maintain an image of the local market. This in turn acknowledges opportunities for businesses to apply for work or identify delivery gaps.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Creating High Value Jobs (£31,300 + salary)
Economy and Community Department

Salaries in Gwynedd are among the lowest anywhere in Britain. The weekly pay of residents in the county were almost the lowest in Wales in 2020 (£500 on average) and low pay was at its worst in our rural communities (£418 - the lowest in Britain). Low salaries will inevitably lead to higher levels of poverty and rural depopulation, which in turn affects our communities, the future of our young people, and the Welsh language as a healthy community language.

The Creating High Value Jobs project has already taken steps to improve the situation, ensuring European funding to realise a plan to develop space for businesses to locate at Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr, implement a plan to increase the number of school pupils who study the subjects sought by businesses within well-paid sectors and have influenced the decision to continue with the decommissioning work on the Trawsfynydd Power Station site and work with Welsh Government to establish a Start-up company to regenerate the site.

In future, we will continue with these schemes, and we will also lead on other schemes such as supporting the development of the creative and digital industries sector, supporting the development of the health and medical sector. We will also be working with Gwynedd businesses to understand the need for skills for higher value jobs in the future and promote these opportunities locally.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



4. Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig
Economy and Community Department

The nature of our rural economy means that 80% of Gwynedd businesses do not employ more than one person and there are too many jobs within sectors which don't pay well. This leads to threats in terms of the sustainability of our rural communities with these challenges having increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit.

The Council is seeking to strengthen the foundation of the rural economy by encouraging local enterprises to develop, create and maintain jobs across Gwynedd. A financial package has been identified via Europe to implement the Rural Development Programme in the area, which includes a package of projects to promote enterprise.

Ensuring digital connectivity for our rural communities, and that the workforce and rural businesses have the skills to take advantage of them are matters that have already received attention. We have held a pilot scheme to provide public WiFi in eight rural towns, and to increase access to computer equipment. We are also a part of the ARFOR programme, a Welsh Government investment to create more and better jobs in areas in west Wales where a high percentage of the population speaks Welsh.

In the future, we will continue to extend the digital provision in communities and will work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the private sector to establish a rural innovation hub in Glynllifon, giving particular attention to the food and drink sector, and we will work to develop the foundation economy and support our rural businesses to adapt.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- **Live in a natural Welsh society.**



5. Promoting Town Centres
Economy and Community Department

Lively town centres are able to make substantial contributions to the economic and social success of local areas and offer a broad range of services to our communities.

However, the "high street" areas of our town centres are currently facing substantial challenges with a number of national chain stores closing and trading being restricted as a result of Covid-19. There is a need to promote and support the development of town centres to ensure that they are able to adapt and thrive in the future; to maintain and create employment, provide a broad range of goods and services required by residents and visitors and provide new residential units.

During 2020, a cross-departmental group was established to develop a programme of improvements and short-term measures in response to the Covid-19 crisis. We were successful in attracting grants from the Welsh Government to implement a program of environmental improvements, signage, landscaping and traffic management measures. A fund has been set up to help businesses adjust their arrangements to welcome customers safely. A pilot has been set up to develop digital infrastructure in town centre's offering wifi, marketing and e-commerce opportunities, and arrangements are now in place to extend the scheme to all towns in Gwynedd.

We will continue with this work and develop a package of interventions to improve and promote town centres, based on what matters to residents within the communities.

We will collaborate with and support a broad range of business groups and local regeneration establishments in order to promote and attract investment to town centres. We will also continue to collaborate with businesses in Bangor and Caernarfon where Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have been established.

In the future, we will continue with efforts to regenerate town centres, paying particular attention to targeting empty properties. It is anticipated that there will be an opportunity to develop a series of plans to improve town centres across the County as part of the Regeneration Framework and we will attract grants, such as Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Regeneration Programme in order to implement projects.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



6. Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage
Economy and Community Department

In July 2021, Unesco's World Heritage Committee announced that the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales had been inscribed as a World Heritage Site. The designation gives us an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of our slate industry on an international stages, and to celebrate and protect the Welsh culture associated with those areas.

We have already used the World Heritage Site nomination as a tool to regenerate our slate communities and to increase the value of the tourist industry. £1m of additional resources have been attracted to the county through the Heritage Fund, Welsh Government, the European Union and Snowdonia National Park through the LleCHI project.

In future, we will submit a bid to fund a follow-up project to LleCHI in order to collaborate with the slate communities to create a programme of regeneration activities in these areas that will improve the appearance and look of communities, improve the quality of the visitor's experience, and will lead to an increase in residents' ownership of their heritage, language and culture.

We will review the site's structures and management arrangements in order to implement the Management Plan and in order to continue to engage and collaborate with communities, landowners, businesses and partners to ensure that we take advantage of the opportunities arising as a result of the designation for the benefit of the people of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



Llun: Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru

7. Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper
Economy and Community Department

As a result of Covid-19 and Brexit, it is a period of uncertainty and change for businesses. Gwynedd Council is determined to help local enterprises to adapt and respond to the challenge and we have already supported local businesses by providing financial aid, advice and support.

The county's businesses are involved with many Council departments and they receive a service from them, including rates, planning, trading standards, building control and procurement. We will continue to prioritise resources and efforts to support our local businesses, ensuring that all sections of the Council consider how they can offer assistance to support businesses to thrive.

We are also encouraging Gwynedd businesses to make the best of the support available by communicating regularly with the 4,400 businesses that receive our information bulletins.

We are supporting and collaborating with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's Programme Office on a package of Growth Deal projects in order to create opportunities for businesses in Gwynedd's economy in the future. We are also running a campaign to encourage the residents of Gwynedd and visitors to support local businesses.

As well as continuing with the above, in 2022/23 we will appraise the plan's activities and review our priorities for developing the economy as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and Brexit.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families.



8. Tourism - creating a sustainable tourism plan
Economy and Community Department

We have concerns that the people of Gwynedd do not benefit as much as they should from tourism, and the Covid-19 crisis has underlined how the negative impacts of the industry can sometimes outweigh the advantages.

Work has been done to understand the change in tourism trends over the years and identify the benefits and risks to Gwynedd, including the impact on the communities, language and culture of the area and second homes.

Over the past year, work has been done to draw up sustainable tourism principles for Gwynedd and Snowdonia, which will the basis to a future management plan. Also, an agreement of understanding has been signed between the Council and Snowdonia National Park Authority to collaborate in this field.

We will complete the work of establishing a vision and principles for tourism in the future and will develop the Gwynedd Visitor Economy Management Plan and Eryri 2035 and an Action Plan in cooperation with communities and the sector in order to secure the greatest benefit for the people of Gwynedd from visitors.

The Plan and Action Plan will set a direction for policies and activities across the Council's departments in the future, but it will also acknowledge the short-term need to respond to the impact of Covid-19.

As part of the cross-departmental and cross-authority work, and following in-depth consultations with communities, businesses and motor homeowners; the Environment Department will lead on a project to improve the management of motor homes. This will include regulation and enforcement where possible as well as developing an 'aire' pilot for up to 6 sites across Gwynedd during 2022. This work will be part of the Sustainable Tourism Plan' Action Plan.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

9. Regeneration: Creating regeneration plans for our areas

Economy and Community Department

There is a risk that every service implements its own programmes in accordance with grant guidelines, but may not respond to the actual needs and regeneration opportunities of Gwynedd. We have established the Regeneration Board with the intention of developing a Regeneration Plan for the County's communities. The Programme will incorporate cross-departmental activities, along with the Council Plan's priorities.

We will establish a new Regeneration Framework and develop action plans for 13 catchment areas across the County.

We will consult with stakeholders in order to understand how communities wish to see their areas developing in the next 10-15 years, and identify local priorities. These schemes will give particular attention to the needs of town centres and the future of the 'high street' across Gwynedd in the future.

We will ensure that activities across the Council's Departments will contribute to the development and implementation of these plans, as well as the participation of local organisations and groups, and key partners.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 2
Every pupil is given the opportunity to achieve their potential.

If we are to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise, it is crucial that Gwynedd has a sustainable quality education system in place, which gives our residents the skills to take advantage of those opportunities.

How will we achieve this?

1. Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon
Education Department

The variety in the quality of the education and experiences of learners across the post-16 education system in Arfon affects outcomes and learning pathways.

The Cabinet has already given permission to commence engagement with stakeholders to discuss the vision for post-16 education in Arfon. The informal engagement was held during the Autumn Term 2020.

We are continuing to hold informal discussions in order to discuss and air possible options with the profession, using these discussions to determine the best way to keep momentum with this important project.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Bangor Catchment Area
Education Department

Despite the pandemic the new Ysgol y Garnedd building opened its doors in October 2020 and became the new educational home for up to 420 primary-age learners in the city of Bangor. The school site also offers a nursery education and comprehensive childcare provision in a bespoke environment with the best possible resources. Also, space has been planned carefully for specialist units on the site to further support child development. This project kept within the budget that had been earmarked for it.

The project was nominated for three Construction Excellence in Wales 2021 and came out top in two, namely: Digital Construction Award and Client of the Year Award.
We will arrange an official opening with the school when it will be safe to do so.

As part of the arrangements in the Bangor catchment area, Ysgol y Faenol was also extended substantially. Although the timetable slipped as a result of the pandemic, the work was completed early in 2022. The school is able to admit 315 learners as a result of the extension, which is an increase of 129 learners. The building has also been planned to act as a hub for the local area, with a new community centre and space for the early years being built as a part of the development.

In light of the recent significant investment in Ysgol y Garnedd and Ysgol y Faenol, the Council recognises the need to also invest and improve the resources and learning environment at Ysgol Hirael. This will serve to enhance the learner experience and enable the school to provide education and curriculum in the 21st century.

The Council acknowledges that Ysgol Tryfan does not have the resources that we would wish them to have, and that this affects the learners' experience. Thus, the Council will consider the options available to improve secondary resources in the city of Bangor in order to ensure a first-class learning environment as well as buildings and resources which will enable us to deliver education and curriculum in the 21st century.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Cricieth Catchment Area
Education Department

The condition of the building and the current learning environment of Ysgol Treferthyr in Cricieth is poor, which affects the learner's experience. We will therefore build the new school in Cricieth in order to improve the learning environment and ensure the best resources for the learners to thrive.

In 2021/22, a statutory notice was published and the Cabinet confirmed the final decision to relocate the school. We have engaged on plans, and confirmed a budget towards securing an Early Years Unit on the site. We have also appointed a contractor and a geophysical inspection of the site has also been carried out.

In 2022/23, as a result of land purchase and receipt of planning consent we intend to start the work of building the new school, aiming for the school to open on the new site in September 2023.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



4. Meirionnydd Collaboration
Education Department

There is a risk that matters relating to the current procedure affects the experiences of Meirionnydd learners, e.g. the Meirionnydd secondary schools find it difficult to recruit teachers, middle managers and leaders. Unless a solution is found, the impact on the resilience of the education system and leadership conditions in the area will continue.

The obvious challenges of the Covid period and the resulting busy nature of secondary schools have impacted the progress of this priority.

During 2021/22, we have gathered the views of Headteachers and representation from the Governors of each secondary school on the potential challenges facing them in terms of providing a quality secondary education in the Meirionnydd area. During this work, we gave particular attention to identifying the challenges facing schools in terms of teacher, middle manager and leader recruitment.

By the end of 2021/22, we will collect the views of pupils and parents on the quality of the experiences that the children receive at the schools, as well as the views of staff on the experience of working within these schools. In order to ensure fair comparison, we will also circulate the questionnaire among staff, parents and pupils at Dwyfor and Arfon schools.

The direction and actions of this priority for 2022-23 will be based on the views of all key stakeholders. Should a situation arise where no substantial concerns have been highlighted, we will consider the propriety of this priority as part of the Council's Plan in the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.

5. Free school meals for primary schools
Education Department

In November 2021, it was announced that the Government intended to provide free school meals to all primary pupils. Though the scheme is welcomed, considerable work is needed in terms of putting the scheme into practice.

No detail has reached us yet in terms of the timeframe for realising the scheme, but the agreement between the Labour party and Plaid Cymru is in place for a period of three years, therefore it can be assumed that priority will need to be given to this project over the coming three years.

On average, approximately 50% of primary pupils choose school dinners with the other 50% bringing a packed lunch from home to school. This scheme will potentially double the number of primary pupils choosing school dinners.

During 2022/23, we will consider what providing free school meals to primary school pupils will mean to the Council and what will need to be done in order to realise the commitment, including scoping work.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives



6. Transforming the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion
Education Department

There is a risk that we will be unable to make suitable provision for each pupil with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) because no resources were received from the Government to meet the increase in the need for statutory provision (ALN and Tribunal Act, 2018).

It is also possible that children and young people will not have the correct access to specialist staff (e.g. Bilingual Educational Psychologists, Sensory Teachers) and key roles in terms of statutory jobs within the code (Early Years Lead Officer, ALN Coordinator), due to the combination of recruitment and funding difficulties and an increased workload.

During 2021/22, we have:

- developed the collaboration processes with the Health Board by collaborating with the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) within the Health Board
- held a number of stakeholder training events
- implemented the necessary systems to identify needs early in the early years, and preparation work in the Post-16 sector is continuing
- developed a work, curriculum and assessment link between the mainstream and Special Schools which continues to be developed
- continued innovative work in terms of the use and continuous development of the on-line Individual Development Plan system, with the system driving the entire process for the schools, parents, external agencies and other education provisions (e.g. the early years)
- looked at the methods of funding the Additional Learning Needs provision in the mainstream continues to take definitive steps towards September 2022, as well as national collaboration on ensuring training and recruitment of specialist bilingual staff (e.g. Psychologists).

Elements of the Legislation have been live since September 2021, but with a three-year transition period up to September 2024. During 2022/23, we will:

- review the operational processes on an ongoing basis to ensure systems that are as simple and useful as possible
- continue to develop suitable systems for the legislative change, focusing on post-16, the partnership with parents and agencies, and the most suitable funding method for the legislative requirement, in close collaboration with the Further Education Colleges
- establish a funding method - review the funding method in order to obtain a model that provides better stability in terms of provision
- continue with national discussions, and continue to convey the message regarding the concern about training and recruiting specialist staff.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

7. The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People

Education Department

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment; and some of them need additional help to close that gap as well as support with their welfare.

Parents are concerned about sending them to school or they decide to home school, and there is an increase in safeguarding concerns.

We are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown have highlighted the vulnerability of the early years sector, and outside school we are also realising that the 16-24 age group has been disproportionately affected by the crisis, more so than any other age group.

During 2021/21, we have established project boards for the Early Years field and for the support field for post-16 young people. The project boards have identified the priority fields and clear work plans have been drawn up for the majority of them. We have also focussed our efforts on the 5-16 age group by supporting the schools to implement the Accelerated Learning Programme with funding from Welsh Government. This will enable us to respond to the impact of lockdown on the well-being and attainment of specific groups of learners.

Work has been done to address the well-being of 3-16 year old pupils and as a first step, discussions have commenced with a range of partners, including the health service, to map in detail who is supporting and responding to a broad range of our young people's well-being needs.

In 2022/23, we will have introduced a strategy for the early years field, which will secure the best start for families with children aged 0-5 years in Gwynedd.

We will also have updated our engagement framework for our post-16 learners and drawn-up a strategy to provide well-being, mental health and homelessness support for them.

We will have agreed on the most effective support model in order to support the well-being of school-age pupils.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

8. Digital Learning Strategy
Education Department

There is a risk of providing a sub-standard education for the children of Gwynedd due to a failure to maximise the opportunities afforded by digital learning. The aim of the strategy is to give the best digital provision to support our learners and teachers to foster a range of skills to use technology confidently, creatively and critically.

In light of revising the curriculum, digital competence is a statutory responsibility across all learning areas and needs to be considered in all aspects when designing and introducing the curriculum. The quality of school networks and the quality and number and availability of devices for teachers and learners is varied. There is a varied understanding of the medium amongst teachers. The procedure of maintaining the equipment does not ensure seamless access.

The Digital Education Strategy has been approved and the work of implementing it has progressed considerably during 2021/22. Key work on the infrastructure across all of our schools has drawn to a close, with new devices distributed to the majority of our learners in the primary and special sector. A new support model has been drawn up with the work of establishing it about to commence so that it becomes fully operational from April 2022 onwards. An agreement has been reached on a sustainable funding model in order to ensure that the digital devices do not become dated, without a way of updating them, which is co-funded by the Council and the schools.

Our priorities during 2022/23 will be to establish the support system and move to introduce devices to every teacher and the majority of pupils in the secondary sector.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 3
Reduce inequality within the county

It must also be recognised that, currently, not everyone in our society has the opportunities to fulfil their potential. Certainly, as in every county in Wales, inequality exists within the county at different levels, with inequality created by poverty high in terms of the damage which is caused.

It is obvious that poverty can also have a significant devastating effect on well-being, and in particular on the future offered to children. Whilst we have services, which endeavour to mitigate the effects of poverty, it is our responsibility to consider if there is more we could do.

We also have a responsibility to maintain a good standard of services to look after those children who find themselves in situations where there is a need for the Council to take responsibility for them. Ultimately, none of them wants to be in such a situation.

How will we achieve this?

1. More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the world of work

Economy and Community Department

It has been a changeable year in the world of work in Gwynedd. A high number of people were unemployed during the first half of the year, and then a substantial number of employers were reporting recruitment challenges during the summer, with a more mixed picture towards the end of the year.

Unemployment and a reduction in household income can affect the health and welfare of individuals and families and increase the demand on public resources. Preventing this is a key part of the anti-poverty agenda. There are direct benefits from being in work in terms of increasing earnings, but there are also wider benefits in terms of health, children's life opportunities and community pride.

We have already diverted priorities in order to be able to respond within existing resources by:

- extending the Communities for Work programme in order to support more unemployed individuals who have been referred by Government agencies to receive support to overcome barriers to work
- working with employers, especially within the tourism industry, to ensure that more Gwynedd residents benefit from the employment opportunities available, and support the residents of Gwynedd to foster the digital skills required to access work
- supporting workforces that are being made redundant to support them to gain access to the relevant information by various services and that during a period of Covid-19 restrictions.

In future, we will continue with the above plans and collaborate closely with our partners across North Wales and with the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions to improve the coordination of our services. We will provide a programme to offer work experiences for unemployed young people in businesses across Gwynedd and an established task force will consider whether there are further steps that Gwynedd Council can take to respond to the challenge of supporting the people of Gwynedd back into work and support local businesses to secure the workers that they need.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.

2. Supporting People's Well-being
Children and Supporting Families Department

Some residents are finding it difficult to cope with life challenges as a result of the Covid-19 crisis; and the vulnerable situation of some other residents has worsened during the crisis. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to be healthy.

The residents find it difficult to gain access to services and discover information about what is available to assist them, particularly through virtual mediums and on-line and therefore face being socially and economically excluded.

Some residents are facing financial hardship, losing their job and losing their home. Residents are finding it difficult to obtain the help that they need to deal with these challenges and maintain their well-being, both locally and in a timely way.

We have a broad and numerous network throughout the county's communities which helps and supports residents to cope and respond to their various needs. That network needs support to sustain that voluntary effort.

The long-term nature of this plan when seeking to tackle poverty, complex social challenges, and working across numerous services, means that we are continuing on a journey to achieve the plan's objectives.

During 2022/23, we will:

1. Prioritise our efforts and we will focus on supporting residents:-
    - who are facing homelessness - by building on the work that has already been done as part of the Housing Action Plan, re-shaping homelessness prevention services using the Housing Support Grant, expanding on the support to prevent homelessness among young people, and by supporting people with mental health needs who are facing homelessness
    - who are unpaid carers to their loved ones - by implementing the Gwynedd Carer Action Plan which aims to promote information rights and assessments for unpaid carers of all ages, and by developing provisions to support carers with respite and well-being
    - who are facing financial poverty and food poverty - by allocating resources to improve co-operation with relevant partners, and to increase our financial advice support service and promote benefits among residents
    - who are digitally excluded - by identifying our residents' needs and planning to fill any gaps in provisions by working closely with our partners.

2. We will work across services and with our partners on:
    - well-being interventions for children, young people and people of all ages
    - supporting communities
    - maintaining the resilience of communities and supporting volunteers/

3. We will also look at models to ensure that residents obtain access to the broad and new range of support available in a timely, coordinated and local way.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Women in Leadership
Corporate Support Department

The Council is firm that it pays equal salaries, however the Council acknowledges that the number of women who have a managerial role within the Council is disproportionate with the split within the entire workforce i.e. 70% women 30% men.

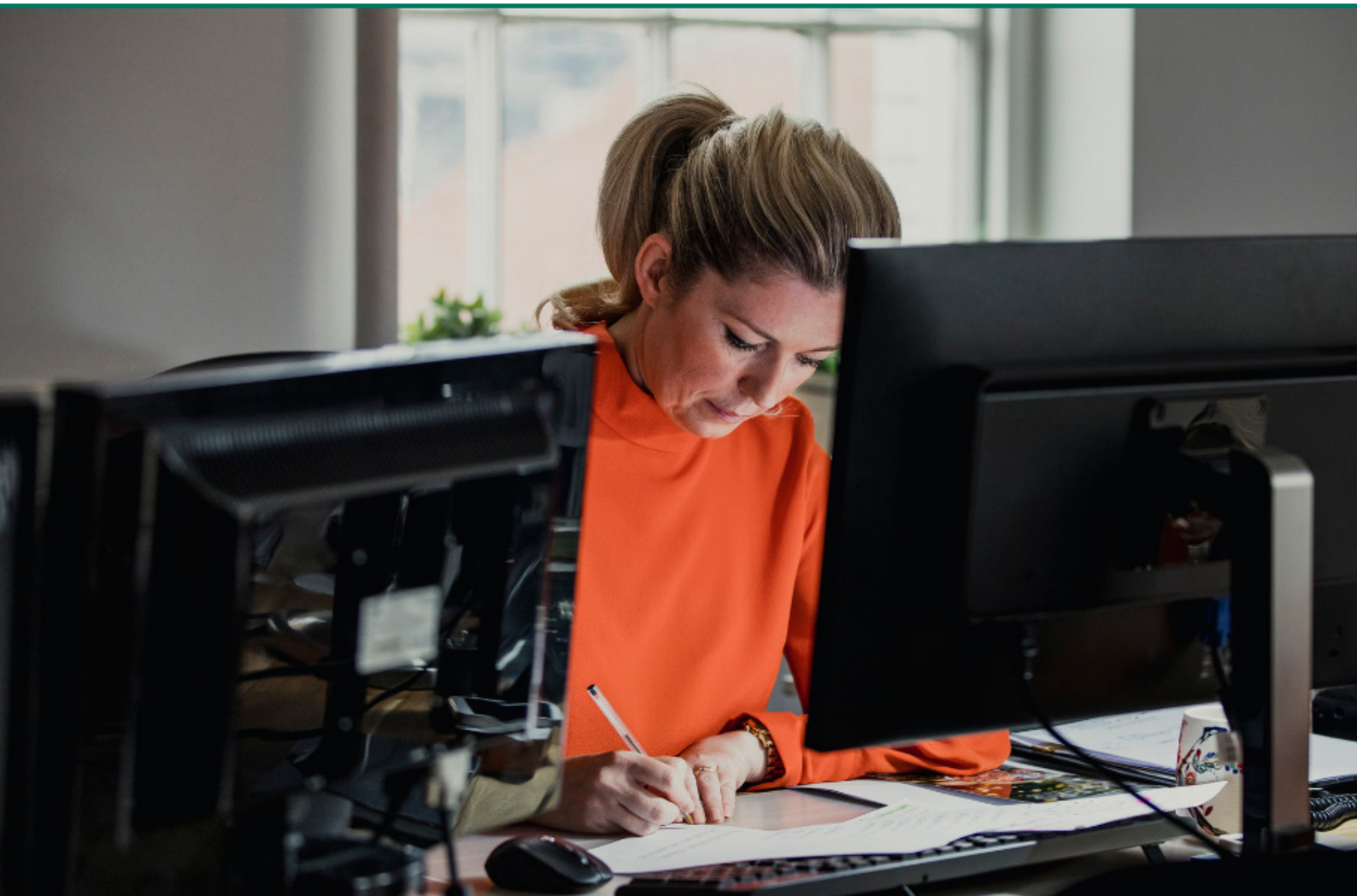
Thus far, we have managed to introduce a programme to develop potential for women, reviewed a number of policies and work practices and created forums for female leaders and potential leaders within the Council.

During 2022/23, we will:

- arrange further awareness raising sessions for male managers in the Council
- consider the suitability of the constitution of appointment panels for posts
- introduce a specific monitoring programme for women in the workplace
- review the success of the programme for developing potential for women
- continue to advise on a review of work conditions in relation to women in leadership.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



4. Implementing the Equality Plan (Ensuring Fairness for Everyone)
Corporate Support Department

In order to put the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do, we must first identify any barriers that some people face when looking for, or receiving services from the Council. Therefore, our intention is to undertake a thorough investigation of the opinion of Gwynedd residents who have protected characteristics (as noted in the Equality Act 2010) about the services offered by the Council.

Engagement took place during 2020/21 as a part of the 2020-24 Strategic Equality Plan but it has been extended to 2021/22 due to the need to identify new ways to engage.

During 2022/23, we will:

- create a further Action Plan based on the evidence we receive from the engagement work, including a training and awareness raising programme and steps to improve our knowledge in the field
- provide a new system of assessing the impact of change in policies and procedures on the residents of Gwynedd, whilst continuing to offer support and facilitate the ability of managers to carry out those assessments.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



Improvement Priority 4
Access to suitable homes

The Housing field has a vital role in helping the Council fulfil its ambition. We know that having a suitable, high quality home leads to better health, more resilient communities and a population that can contribute fully to society. It is important that we develop varied, innovative and green housing proposals - houses that people can live in for their whole lives - and also offer early support to those in need.

As a Local Authority, we will intervene to encourage a range of support and accommodation options to respond to the needs of the population today, and for future generations. Alongside this, we must ensure that the steps taken respect the culture of the county's communities.

How will we achieve this?

1. A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Implementing and delivering projects within our Housing Plan in order to increase the opportunities for local people to have a suitable home within their communities

Housing and Property Department

In order to reach the ambition in our Housing Strategy of "Ensuring that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable home of a high standard, which is affordable and improves their quality of life", we have adopted a Housing Action Plan which contains over 30 specific schemes and an investment of £77 million.

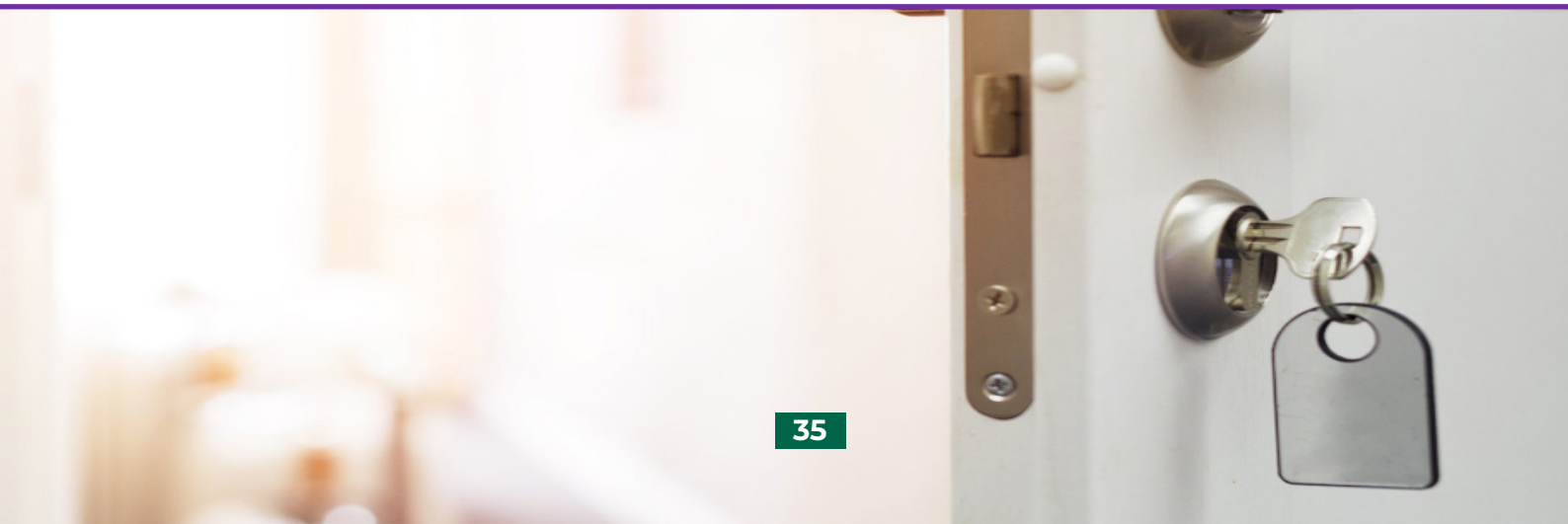
These schemes will aim to fulfil the following objectives:

- no one is homeless in Gwynedd
- social housing available to all who need one
- everyone's home in Gwynedd is affordable to them
- Gwynedd Housing is environmentally friendly
- homes having a positive influence on the health and well-being of the people of Gwynedd.

During 2022/23 we will continue to implement these plans to increase the opportunities for local people to find suitable homes within their communities.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Easy and clear access to enquiry services and advice on housing issues: Establish 'one front door' and help-desk for the public to help them with housing problems

Housing and Property Department

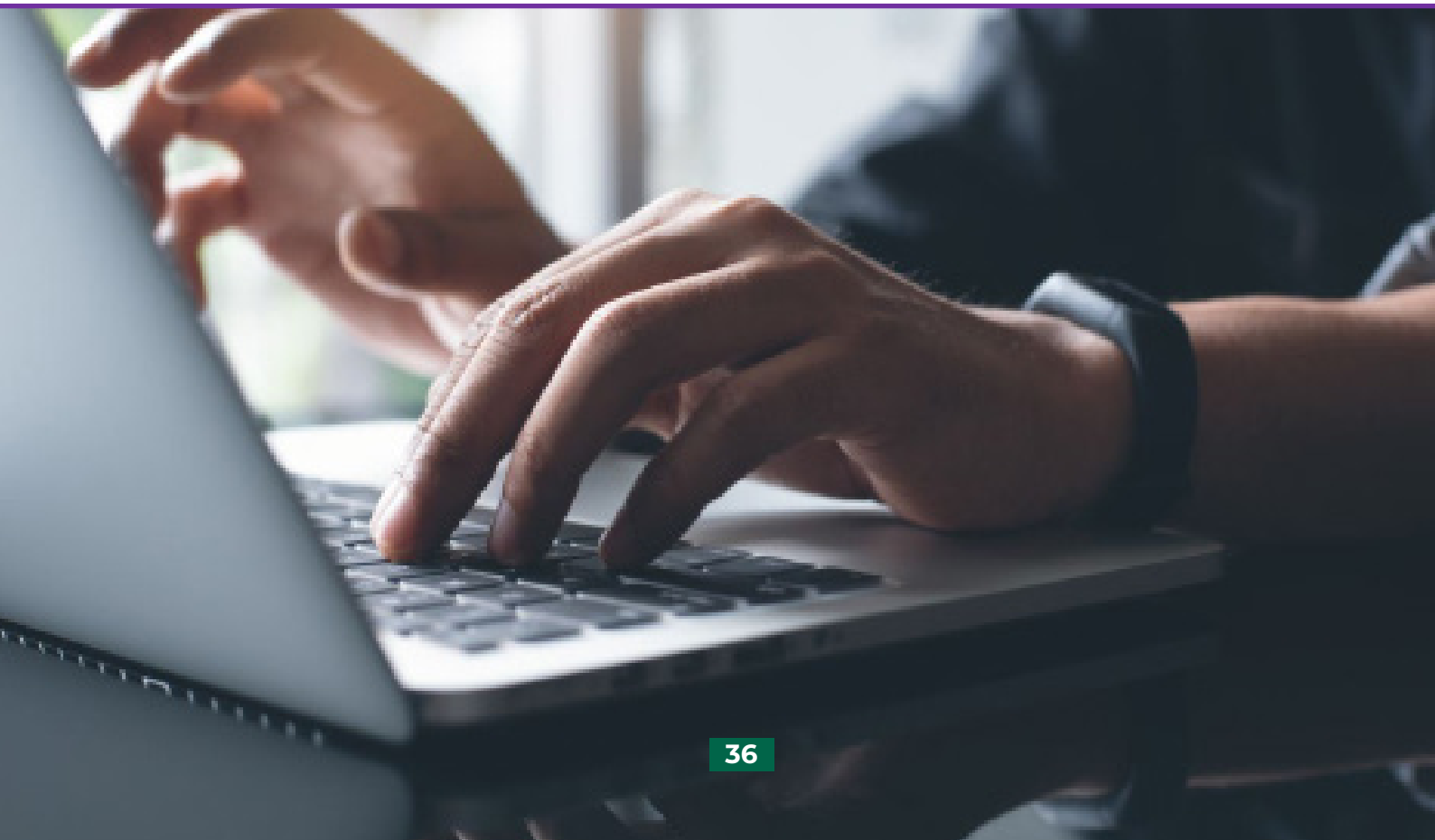
Currently, there are many points of contact within the Department for the public to be able to access various services within Housing and Property. Our Housing Action Plan includes a project for establishing a single point of contact by creating a Housing Help Desk.

We have explored alternative models of providing a help desk and started work on establishing a type of Housing Help Desk that can advise the public on how best to resolve their housing needs. This has included consultation with stakeholders to ensure that support aligns with the housing services offered by external providers.

We have appointed an officer who is co-ordinating the establishment of the innovative One Stop Shop to ensure that Gwynedd residents have one entrance to access specialist help for their housing inquiries.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes and second homes

Environmental Dpartment

The substantial number of houses in Gwynedd that are being used as holiday homes (as short-term holiday lets and second homes), is a major concern with the side-effects including an increase in house prices, which is a major barrier to local residents being able to live in their communities. As the housing crisis is one of the Council's main priorities, research on holiday homes was commissioned by the Cabinet, in order to gather evidence to see what could be done to better control the situation.

The Council has been putting pressure on Welsh Government for years to introduce changes to have better control of holiday homes, and in December 2020, the Council's research, titled "Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes", was published and submitted to Welsh Government, putting pressure on them to implement the recommendations. The research has been significant to the statements by Welsh Government in November 2021 to consult on modifications to the regulations and to planning policy, which recognise the need to have better control of holiday homes.

The consultation on Legislation and planning policy for second homes and short-term holiday lets was announced on 23 November 2021 and will be open until 22 February 2022, and the Department is co-ordinating the Council's response to the consultation. A key step as we move forward in 2022/23 will be to consider what response Welsh Government will have to the Council's response to the consultation (and that of others), which will then influence the next steps the Council could take to have better control of holiday homes.

The Department is also providing input to other consultations that the Government has involving holiday homes, including local taxation for short-term holiday lets, a registration and licensing scheme for housing and a housing scheme for Welsh-speaking communities. Again, the main work in 2022/23 will stem from our response to the consultations and, of course, the response and intention of Welsh Government thereafter, and we will work with several departments within the Council to accomplish this.

It is also noted that the Council will continue to put pressure on Welsh Government to change Section 66 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 in order to regulate the transfer of domestic homes into self-catering holiday units that are subject to non-domestic rates. The vast majority avoid any local taxation as they receive small business rate relief, which consequently reduces the investment of income received from the Council Tax premium in our Housing Action Plan.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.

Improvement Priority 5
Living lives through the medium of Welsh.

One of the unique features Gwynedd has as a county is its Welshness. Gwynedd Council itself is dedicated to working through the medium of Welsh, but that in itself is not sufficient if we are to keep the unique nature of the county alive.

How will we achieve this?

1. Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services

Corporate Support Department

Gwynedd Council has been prominent in terms of ensuring that services for residents are available through the medium of Welsh as we operate through the medium of Welsh internally. It is continual work to **Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's Services**, and we are aware that there is a need to continue to maintain our staff's language skills.

The work of gathering self-assessments on linguistic ability from staff, to a large degree, is now self-sufficient. This is because we have put systems and arrangements in place, for example:

- the questionnaire is available to complete via the Self-service system
- a message is sent to staff who are appointed via the central system
- the questionnaire is a part of the process of inducting care staff.

This means that we can somewhat change the project's main focus. Whilst the main focus to date has been on gathering the self-assessments, the feeling now is that more attention should be given to the follow-up step, namely: **responding to needs** and **extending the provision**. During 2022/23, this will include:

- responding to the needs of staff who do not fully meet all language designations for their posts
- responding to the needs of other members of staff who have noted that they would like to receive language training
- marketing the opportunities that are available more regularly
- extending the internal provision of language training.

The work of gathering self-assessment will also continue, but will focus on:

- continuing with the current campaign with staff in the Highways and Municipal department
- continuing to work with care homes
- developing the work of collaborating with community care staff.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh society.

2. The Welsh Language in Public Services
Corporate Support Department

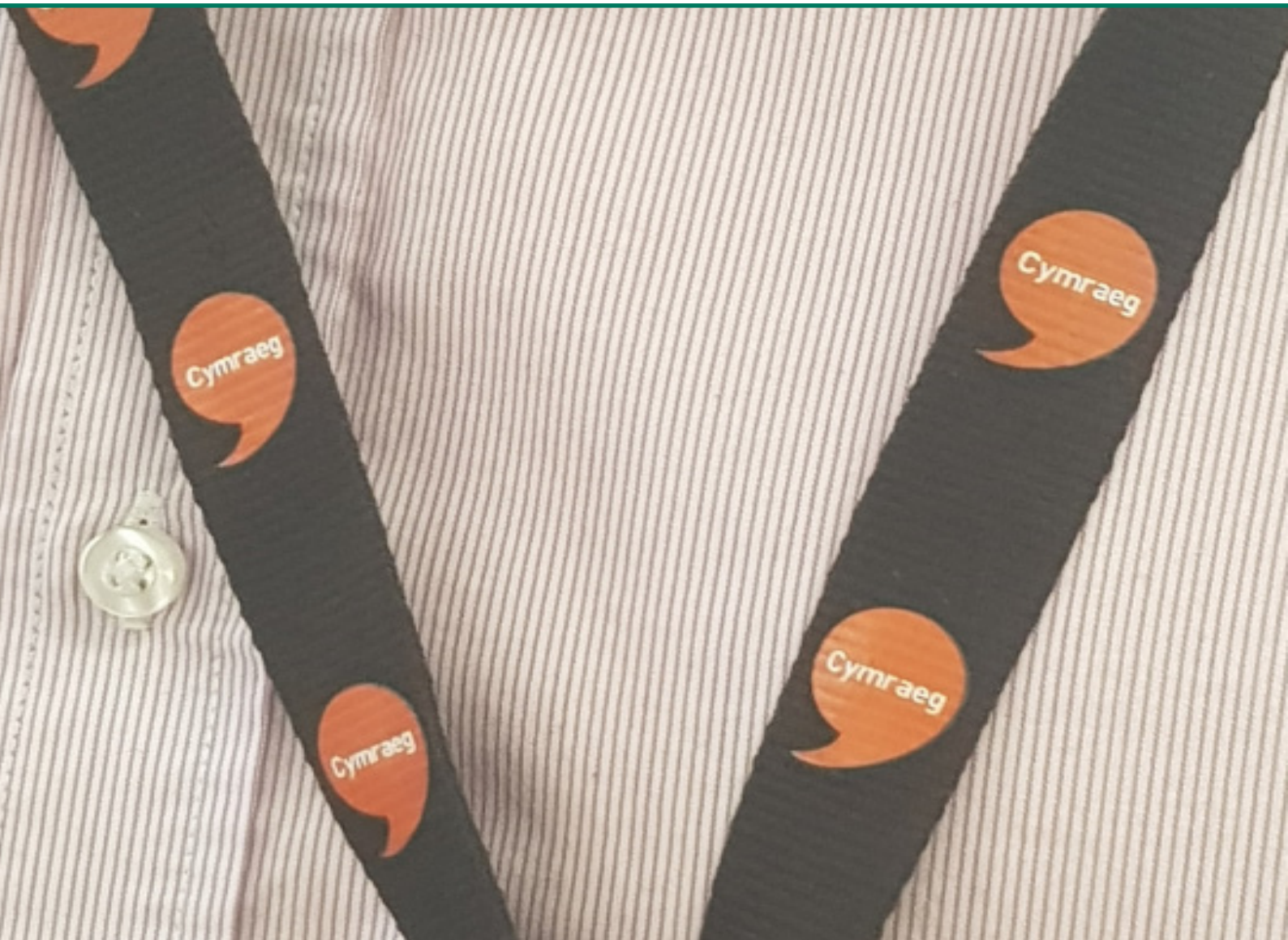
At present there is inconsistency in the provision of bilingual services by public bodies in Gwynedd which means that it is not always possible for residents to use the Welsh language naturally when communicating with public bodies.

Public organisations in Gwynedd and Anglesey suspect that fewer people choose Welsh medium services compared to the number of Welsh speakers in both counties. By working with our partners who are a part of the Welsh Language Sub-group, Public Services Board, we have commissioned a study of traditional receptions, that will investigate this. During 2022/23, we will:

- consider how we can encourage more people to engage with us in Welsh, and to be comfortable to do so, based on the conclusions of the study in the first place
- implement plans based on those considerations.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh Society.



3. Native Welsh Place Names
Corporate Support Department

We are concerned that native Welsh place names are disappearing from the landscape of Gwynedd as a result of a lack of use of Welsh names and an increase in renaming places in English.

The work programme has been drawn up and prioritised. During 2022/23, we will:

- deal with internal matters that are within the Council's control for initial attention
- raise public awareness and interest in native Welsh place names
- collaborate with other organisations to protect Welsh names within the county.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh society.



4. Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People

Education Department

The skills and confidence of learners (more specifically in non-Welsh speaking homes) in Welsh have deteriorated as a result of lockdown and Covid-19.

In 2021/22, we have succeeded to establish a baseline of the current situation of the Welsh language as a result of the impact of lockdown and Covid-19 and we have started to support schools to draw-up a Strategy and Action Plan to respond to the situation.

During the process of setting a baseline, we also saw that concern was highlighted about the oracy skills and confidence of pupils in Welsh. We will respond to these concerns as a priority in 2022/23 by assisting schools to support pupils' oracy skills and confidence. We will provide additional training or support for teachers and assistants and collaborate with individual schools to draw up action plans to respond to the needs.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 6
Helping people who need support to live their lives as they wish.

As a Council, we provide direct care to children and their families and to adults who need specialist support, but our vision is that everyone of all ages receives the support they need in the most suitable and convenient way for them.

As the needs of each individual and family are bound to be different, in order for them to continue to live their lives as they wish we need to adapt our services to be more closely tailored to the real needs of those who need our support. To succeed, we will need to continue to work with other providers, such as the Health Board, always remembering to put the needs of the individual at the centre.

How will we achieve this?

1. A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the Future

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted a number of other factors that can affect our ability to continue to provide suitable care services for the people of Gwynedd. In 2021/22, a task group was set up to look at the 'true cost of care' and the initial information has highlighted a financial gap, between the current fees the Council can offer and the fees of nursing and residential homes, meaning that residents are not offered a wide choice of care homes in their communities. During the year we have also carried out a pre-planning consultation for a Nursing care site in Penrhos, built an additional Dementia Unit at our Care Home in Barmouth and started work to adapt the Centre for individuals with a learning disability in Dolgellau.

In order to ensure that we are able to continue, in 2022/23, we will:

- seek to understand the "actual cost of care" to consider possible options for our care commissioning arrangements in the future
- continue to proceed with the Penrhos Site project in order to address the need for a Nursing bed provision in Pen Llŷn. Jointly with the Health Board, we will, during the year, be clear on the options we have in terms of the possible provision models that would enable us to have a direct role in the provision of Nursing care on the site
- work towards further increasing the number of dementia beds in the county
- consider whether our support services, e.g. day care and respite continue to be suitable to address the needs of the people of Gwynedd, or whether there is a need for us to do something differently
- adapt our care provision buildings in order to be able to meet additional infection control measures.

We have also committed to improve the quality of our care provision across the county. During 2022/23, we will:

- open a bespoke dementia unit that has been completed at Llan Ffestiniog, but has not been able to open due to the Covid-19 crisis
- open a bespoke dementia unit in our care home in Barmouth.
- make use of the adaptations made to our care home in Dolgellau in order to offer bespoke care for individuals with profound physical needs
- open the Extra Care Housing provision in Pwllheli, and continue with the work of identifying opportunities for similar developments in other parts of the county, with priority given to Dolgellau and to the broader Meirionnydd area

- strengthen our quality assurance services to ensure sufficient support for care providers to help them maintain a quality service for the residents of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



2. Re-designing our Care Services
Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The county's care needs are changing, and we have been collaborating with the Health Board to transform our community services. We need to facilitate the ability of our staff and Health Board staff to collaborate as one team within specific areas. This will lead to ensuring that individuals who require health and care support in the community will have one point of contact, in order to ensure the best results and a seamless service. We are also working to change our way of providing domiciliary care across the county in order to facilitate our ability to ensure that the care has been tailored based on what matters to the individual.

In 2021/22, a number of the Council's domiciliary care teams started to work shift patterns and the staff training to administer medication began, which provides greater stability for staff and flexibility for individuals receiving care. In addition, the Community Mental Health Hub in Pwllheli has reopened following its closure due to the Covid-19 crisis and we have set up well-being hubs in Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog to provide emotional and practical support to individuals up to the age of 25.

During 2022/23, we will:

- empower the integrated teams (teams that include care staff as well as health staff), to be able to achieve what matters to the adults of Gwynedd. This will include looking at appropriate training and removing any technological barriers
- implement and establish a new home care model and begin to experience the advantages of the change for the benefit of Gwynedd residents.
- strengthen our Occupational Therapy service, including developing a specialist manual handling service to enable individuals to live as independently as possible
- add to the network of community hubs that support and create opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities by commencing the construction work to adapt Canolfan Dolfeurig in Dolgellau
- agree on the most suitable way to meet the well-being needs of individuals in a preventative way in Caernarfon, that will be a community provision for all adults in the area
- experience the benefit of having well-being hubs for people aged up to 25 years in Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog. The provision available will offer emotional and practical support to individuals
- add to the suitable accommodation options for individuals with Learning Disabilities to encourage independent living, rather than funding expensive out-of-county placements
- undertake an initial evaluation of mental health provision provided by the Council so we can review what will be required in the context of the increase in demand and effects of the Covid-19 pandemic
- work with Health and third sector partners to ensure consistency of access to appropriate mental health services across the county so that individuals receive timely support.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

3. Keeping Families Together Strategy
Children and Supporting Families Department

Some families need specific support at times to help them bring up their children so that those children are able to stay with their family, to thrive, to be healthy and to be safe. No children are brought into care unnecessarily in Gwynedd and we wish to ensure that this does not happen. Sometimes, it is inevitable that a child is brought to our care as it is dangerous for them to remain at home. Our arrangements and decisions when that happens are based on the risk and needs of the family. When a child comes into care, every effort needs to be made so that the child receives appropriate, suitable and local care; and that the child and his/her family are supported so that the child can return to his/her family.

During 2022/23, we will:

- mainstream the learning from the Effective Child Protection project as a part of our workers' practice across our services namely, conducting collaborative conversations with families that focus on the change needed to reduce the risk of significant harm; supporting practitioners to continually reflect on their practice
- We will implement the improvements we have identified via the Ffordd Gwynedd exercise to improve what we are doing and how we work, in order to provide the required support to families. We will focus on communication arrangements between services, strengthening joint working procedures and reviewing the ineffective processes we have identified
- review joint procedures with our partners in the aim of moving towards a 'no wrong door' approach in regards to responding to children and young people's emotional well-being and mental health needs ("No Wrong Door"- Regional Community Strategy for children and adolescents' mental health 2022-27).

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



4. Ensure a specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some children and young people who come into our care have complex and profound needs. Some of these children have to receive care and support in an expensive placement outside Gwynedd / Wales, far from their family and community. We wish to ensure that we have a variety and a sufficient number of suitable placements available locally, and that we have specialist workers and support locally to address these children's needs.

During 2022/23, we will:

- Evaluate the multi-agency team that has been piloted jointly with partners to support children with complex needs and their families
- Act on the options appraisal to identify the residential provision available locally for children with complex needs
- Take advantage of Maethu Cymru's campaign to increase the numbers of foster carers by recruiting and providing resources to assess carers in order to secure a sufficient number of placements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



5. Ensure that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive

Children and Supporting Families Department

Children and young people with autism with high skill abilities; and children with autism and no learning disability, find it difficult to access the specialist support which they require. The experiences of these children and their families show that there is room to improve our current assessment arrangements; that there are gaps in the provision and that they require help during the transitional period to other services such as adults and health.

During 2022/23, we will:

- Adopt an Autism Plan that shows how we will improve our collaboration arrangements and move to fill the gaps identified
- Monitor the implementation of the plan via the Local Autism Multi-agency Board, which brings together the Health Board, third sector partners and Council departments
- Secure resources to create the roles identified through the plan to support autistic children and young people during the transition age from childhood into adulthood, and during the period when they are awaiting an autism assessment
- Introduce a training programme for workers in general and specialist services to raise awareness of autism and the local plan.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



Improvement Priority 7
Placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do.

As previously noted, the Council already provides a wide range of activities which seek to ensure that we achieve our vision. However, there is always room for improvement. We recognise that there are examples where we do not always look at things through our residents' eyes, and we need to ensure that this happens everywhere within the Council.

Of course, this does not mean doing everything for everyone, as our resources do not permit us to do that. It means that we prioritise those things which are of most importance to our communities, and ensure that the limited resources available contribute to doing what is most important to the people of Gwynedd (whilst accepting that prioritation will inevitably mean not achieving everyone's aspirations).

This consideration will also have to take place at a time when the funding available for services is significantly reduced. In that respect, there will be a need to ensure that the funding available is used to deliver the most important things.

How will we achieve this?

1. Clean and Tidy Communities
Highways and Municipal Department

We will collaborate with the residents and communities of Gwynedd by engaging in order to develop an Action Plan to correspond with this priority by expanding and developing community partnerships to improve the quality and appearance of the County, e.g.

- clean and tidy streets
- roads and walking paths in a good condition
- local work teams to complete the work
- a discussion on the principles and actions by engaging with the community and staff
- drawing up an action plan, identify aspirations and possible stakeholders on a community level.

During 2021/22, we have:

- commenced the planning work to engage with the residents and communities of Gwynedd, including investigating the most effective methods of maintaining a successful engagement plan
- engaged with Council staff to gather views about how we can secure clean and tidy communities.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



2. Implement the Ffordd Gwynedd Work Programme Plan (Empowering Units to Implement Ffordd Gwynedd)

Corporate Support Department

As a Council, it is our responsibility to ensure, as we provide our services, that the needs of the people of Gwynedd steers how we offer those services. In doing so, we should avoid any unnecessary working arrangements. We are already challenging service teams to reflect on their current working arrangements, to challenge whether they are placing the people of Gwynedd at the centre and whether there is room for improvement.

Managers were supported to understand the close link between the Ffordd Gwynedd culture and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and amended job descriptions have been agreed for managers and team leaders, as well as all remaining Council staff, which confirms the behaviours expected of them.

During 2022/23, we will:

- review the results of the self-assessment of how work methods and the culture are embedding, identifying a work programme to drive that culture forward even further
- re-start those service reviews that have been delayed as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

3. Ensuring that managers practice their Health and Safety role effectively

Corporate Support Department

We need to ensure that our arrangements for protecting Health and Safety are robust and whilst we have mature arrangement within the Council, we are concerned that there are pockets where there is an opportunity to improve operational arrangements.

During 2022/23, we will look at specific aims for the following elements, that will, when combined, be at the core of the framework for the effective management of health and safety, namely:

- clear and visible leadership on health and safety matters
- have effective and proportionate systems where live and rational data can be produced to support the management of health and safety and to support innovation
- get the workforce (on all levels) informed and competent for their roles and trained in the risks they face at work, ensuring availability of timely competent advice to advise on particular risks/latest developments in the field
- create a network, structures and a community to consult, communicate and make decisions on health and safety matters, not only internally, but also among stakeholders such as the third sector, contractors and suppliers
- establish an effective procedure to monitor, learn from mistakes, and develop and evolve on a continuous basis.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.



4. Planning the Workforce
Corporate Support Department

In order to ensure that the Council is in a position to provide services that always place the residents of Gwynedd at their heart, we must ensure that we have the right staff in place with the right skills.

Although Covid-19 has highlighted an effective and committed workforce, this period has also highlighted the challenges of attracting and retaining staff across the Council. Recruitment to areas of care and family support specifically has been difficult, causing risks in terms of our ability to meet statutory responsibilities on behalf of the Council in the safeguarding, care and support field.

We must ensure that we have sufficient employees with the necessary skills to cope with the increasing need that is likely to arise in the future. This means that we need to continuously look at our recruitment practices, train staff, evaluate their performance and foster and develop their talents.

Long-term stability was established for the Apprenticeships Scheme and Cynllun Yfory Scheme for Managers and Experts during the past year, and the internal Talent Development Plan has been drawn-up as a framework for the future. During 2022/23, we will:

- extend the Apprenticeship Plan to include a higher number of apprentices, in collaboration with local external employers to provide work experience
- implement the internal Talent Development Plan across all Council departments
- continue to carry out local recruitment campaigns #GalwGofalwyr across the county, as well as trialling new ideas and methods
- collaborate closely with the departments' management teams to agree on established arrangements and identify gaps in skills and expertise anticipated over the next 5-10 years and to take pro-active steps to address these
- look specifically at the recruitment situation in the children's social care and adult care fields, looking at ways to increase capacity and the resilience of our workforce.

As part of the work to recruit, train and foster staff talent, during 2022/23 the Corporate Support Department, Children and Family Support Department and the Adults and Well-being Department will work together to deliver this priority.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

5. Realising Savings
Finance and Information Technology Department

The Council has good financial planning arrangements, that have already identified many efficiency savings in order to minimise the service cuts for Gwynedd residents.

The work already achieved over a number of years suggests that we have harvested a vast proportion of the efficiency savings available, but we need to continue to monitor all of the Council departments' approved plans in order to ensure that the bulk of the proposed savings are achieved.

After a long period of identifying and realising savings, which exceed £32m in the period since 2015/16, plans are now so much more difficult to realise with efficiency projects being much more work than service cuts. Back in January 2021, the savings schemes were reviewed to assess what historic schemes were now unachievable, and an amended programme of savings was drawn up. Furthermore, the 2022/23 savings were reviewed in January 2022 in order to assess those that were achieveable, and deleting and re-profiling some of the plans. Through the robust arrangements we have to monitor how departments deliver savings, we will ensure that this amended programme is delivered.

There are uncertain financial projections for 2022/23, as expressed in the 2022/23 Budget Strategy to the Cabinet on 28 September 2021, as a result of changes to the financial and economic climate, as well as a lack of information. In light of the uncertainty, the priority of improving savings delivery should be kept for 2022/23. A further review of the savings will be undertaken when establishing the 2022/23 budget to assess plans that are not delivering and those considered to be difficult to deliver that have been programmed for 2022/23. We will also support departments with transformation costs, as they introduce new work arrangements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.



6. Strengthening communication and engagement
Highways and Municipal Department

The Highways and Municipal Department is very visible with aspects of the services reaching every resident throughout the county. Value can be added to the department's work by means of effective communication and engagement plans; for example, campaigns to prevent littering or dog fouling, or campaigns and guidelines to encourage re-use, re-purposing and reducing waste. It is also crucial that residents are confident in the Department's services and that their concerns and enquiries are dealt with effectively. We will ensure that the timely and meaningful response arrangements are in place and will:

- review current arrangements of communicating and responding to an enquiry
- highlight shortcomings/areas for improvement
- establish a task group with representation of officers as well as Galw Gwynedd
- identify measures to monitor.

During 2021/22, we have:

- established a Task Group with cross-departmental representatives in order to commence the work of strengthening our communication and engagement streams
- mapped processes to ensure that they are correct and current
- identified that there is a need to make better use of our internal system to strengthen our communication streams with Gwynedd residents
- identified new projects in order to strengthen our communication streams.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



7. Public Protection capacity
Environment Department

As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the importance of our Public Protection Services has become increasingly apparent, in their role of protecting the health of our communities, as well as advising and supporting the county's businesses.

The experiences during the crisis period has highlighted the lack of resilience in the Public Protection Services as a result of years of cuts.

During 2021/22, a review of Public Protection Services structures was undertaken in order to assess needs in full. The review has identified 4 actions to address the needs of the Services, namely:

- provide a temporary budget to facilitate the continuation of the Test, Trace and Protect Service
- employ 3 public protection trainees for a temporary period of 3 years for the purposes of succession planning
- provide a permanent budget to create Team Leader posts (x6) within the current staff capacity; in accordance with the principles of the Council's management tiers
- raise the salary levels of 13 environmental health / public protection / trading standards officers so that they are more comparable with the salaries of similar posts in other North Wales authorities.

During 2022/2023, the financial bids will be submitted and if successful they will be implemented in order to increase capacity to support and protect the residents and businesses of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives.



Improvement Priority 8
Respond to the Climate Change emergency.

At its meeting on 7 March 2019, the Council considered a motion relating to climate change and it was resolved to do our utmost to ensure that the county remains a vibrant, viable and sustainable home for our children and their children for generations to come. We do this by means of:

- Declaring a Climate Emergency;
- Committing to taking decisive action to reduce carbon emissions and strive for a zero-carbon future;
- Looking for innovative means to achieve zero carbon targets;
- Reporting back within 6 months on positive steps the Council has taken to reduce carbon emissions; and
- Call on Welsh Government and the Westminster Government to provide the requisite powers and resources to achieve the target of a carbon-free Gwynedd by 2030.

How will we achieve this?

1. Climate Change Action Plan
Environment Department

After the Covid-19 crisis interrupted this work, the Cabinet decided at the start of 2021 to provide one-off finance to appoint a Climate Change Programme Manager for an initial period of 12 months to lead on the work of bringing this plan together.

A cross-departmental Climate Change Board was also established to steer the work. The Board has been working to identify where we can achieve the biggest impact when reducing our impact as a body on the environment and to identify any gaps in our work to date.

A meeting was held with members of the Council by virtual means so that they could propose their ideas and it is expected that we will have adopted an Action Plan by the end of March 2022. In 2022/23, we will start to act in accordance with the vows noted in the plan.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



Departmental Plans

The first section of the plan, the Improvement Priorities, has focused on the Council's vision along with the Improvement Priorities for the plan's remaining period.

This next section includes the plans for the Council Departments. The plans describe the 'day to day' work of the departments, much of which is a statutory responsibility such as safeguarding children and adults or providing education.

In addition to the Improvement Priorities and the 'day to day' work, Local Priorities have also been identified by Elected Members as the issues that are of the highest importance to their constituents. These were discussed as part of the process of preparing the original Council Plan, and any developments on these are explained in the departmental plans that follow. The Local Priorities have been highlighted within a frame with a background colour.

Below is a list of all the departments along with information about their main responsibilities. Financial information about departmental budgets can be found together at the end.

If you wish to contact the department or the Head of Department you can phone 01766 771000 or follow the links below to our website.

	Head of Department	Page
1. Education Department	**Garem Jackson** Contact Details	**62**

- Support the daily running of Gwynedd Schools
- Support, maintain and improve educational standards within modern facilities
- Provide support and a service for Additional Learning Needs
- Lead the implementation of the Siarter Iaith and the Secondary Education Language Strategy

2. Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department	**Aled Davies** Contact Details	**69**

- Enabling the adults of Gwynedd to "Live my life as I wish"
- Provide care services through partnerships and collaboration
- Provide home care, day care and residential care

3. Highways and Municipal Department	**Steffan Jones** Contact Details	**73**

- Collect the recycling, food and residual waste of Gwynedd residents
- Highways and street maintenance
- Grass cutting and play and leisure grounds maintenance

4. Children and Supporting Families Department	**Marian Parry Hughes** Contact Details	**82**

- Safeguarding children and young people from harm
- Working to provide stability for families, children and young people
- Youth Services

5. Environment Department

Dafydd Wyn Williams
Contact Details

88

- Protect and promote access to the countryside
- Food hygiene and trading standards inspections; licensing and planning services
- Education and public transport, and developing beneficial transport opportunities
- Traffic and parking management service
- Covid-19 Track, Trace and Protect Service in Gwynedd

6. Economy and Community Department

Sioned E Williams
Contact Details

97

- Develop Gwynedd's economy by supporting businesses, tourism, marketing and regenerating communities
- Libraries, Museums and Archives

7. Housing and Property Department

Carys Fôn Williams
Contact Details

105

- Support homeless families and identify priorities for social housing and affordable homes
- Ensure safe and adequate housing for social and private housing tenants
- Bring empty houses back into use
- Maintain and develop the Council's property portfolio, whilst aiming to reducing carbon emissions.

8. Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy

Huw Williams
Contact Details

114

- Commercial consultative service which provides planning and management of infrastructure projects
- Building management service
- Local flood lead authority

9. Corporate Support Department

Geraint Owen
Contact Details

117

- Galw Gwynedd contact centre and Siopau Gwynedd
- Human resources, registration, communication and staff development
- Administrative and support services

10. Finance (and Information Technology) Department

Dewi Aeron Morgan
Contact Details

125

- Financial support to all the Council's services
- Council Tax and Gwynedd Pension Fund
- Support and development of the Council's information technology provision

11. Legal Services

Iwan Evans
Contact Details

133

- Legal support for all the Council's services
- Administration of Gwynedd elections
- Support the work of the Coroner for north west Wales

Education Department

The purpose of the Education Department is to ensure that Gwynedd's children and young people receive the best education in our schools to enable them to reach the highest standards and to nurture the qualifications and skills that enable them to live and prosper.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Free school meals for primary schools *(New for 2022/23)*(Improvement Priority 2)
- Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon (Improvement Priority 2)
- Bangor Catchment Area (Improvement Priority 2)
- Cricieth Catchment Area (Improvement Priority 2)
- Meirionnydd Collaboration (Improvement Priority 2)
- Transforming the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion (Improvement Priority 2)
- The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People (Improvement Priority 2)
- Digital Learning Strategy (Improvement Priority 2)
- Promoting Use of the Welsh language by Children and Young People (Improvement Priority 5)

SCHOOLS SERVICE

Support for Leadership, Management and Effective School Governance

It is the responsibility of the Education Department to promote leadership, management and the effective governance of our schools by supporting, equipping and holding governing bodies and school management teams accountable. This is done in several different ways depending on the needs of individual schools.

Support is given in terms of leadership and the effective management of our schools via a series of professional programmes that offer a path for professional development of teachers, middle management and senior leadership. This is also done via an incentive programme drafted jointly between the Education Department and Learning and Development for headteachers, management teams and middle managers in schools. In addition, the Education Department seeks to identify opportunities to give leaders valuable experiences to build a resilient organisation.

Support is given by the Education Department to governors by ensuring that they understand their role and act effectively, by giving strategic and practical support to them according to need, advising them appropriately, as well as by providing them with a programme of bespoke training to ensure the effective governance of our schools. The Education Department also has powers to intervene that may be used when a school is not governed appropriately.

Schools Improvement Service

It is the responsibility of the Education Department and GwE, in partnership with our schools, to educate our children, and our schools' results are consistently good. GwE is a schools improvement service, that works on behalf of the six Local Authorities in north Wales, to lead, organise and coordinate improvements in schools' performance.

The partnership between the Education Department and GwE provides our schools with both support and a challenge to improve the quality of classroom learning and teaching, to support leaders to improve the quality of leadership in our schools - all of this to further improve results for our children and young people.

In Gwynedd, there are 80 primary schools, 12 secondary schools, 2 special schools and 2 follow-on schools.

Performance

Schools provide inclusive education for children and young people up to 16 years of age. In Gwynedd, post-16 education is provided in partnership with the colleges and secondary schools in Arfon, by Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai) in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, and Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn in the Bala area.

Welsh Government has given clear direction to Local Authorities not to publish the educational results, and discussions are ongoing with the Welsh Government regarding the manner in which Education Authorities may be held accountable for their performance in the absence of comparative data on performance across Wales.

Transforming the schools system

Following consultation on the sustainability of the education system in Gwynedd, along with general concerns that the current schools system is not sustainable, the Council's Cabinet adopted the following, fit-for-purpose educational principles that will form the basis for realising the Education Department's vision and develop the organisation to ensure high-quality education for the children and young people of Gwynedd in the twenty-first century, namely:

- A system of viable secondary schools
- No more than two age ranges within the same class in the primary sector

- Approximately 80% of non-contact time for the Headteacher to focus on leadership issues in the primary sector.

Having adopted these principles, this field will become a part of the Department's day-to-day work, as it is anticipated that implementing the principles across the system, during the period of this Council, will not be a swift process. We will proceed cautiously to ensure that the education system can respond to the enormous changes on the horizon, such as changes to the schools inspection procedure (Estyn), along with very significant changes to the curriculum and the organisation of our schools in light of Professor Donaldson's recommendations.

EDUCATION MODERNISATION TEAM

Some of our school buildings are old and are unsuitable to meet the future learning and teaching needs of our children. The purpose of this service is to plan and realise innovative projects to adapt or build new schools for Gwynedd's children and young people to be educated in the best possible learning environment to enable them to thrive.

During the period from 2012-2021, the Council succeeded in investing £73 million to improve the condition and learning environments of the following schools for the benefit of the County's children:

- Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon
- Ysgol OM Edwards, Llanuwchllyn
- Ysgol Craig y Deryn, Llanegryn
- Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn
- Ysgol Bro Llifon, Groeslon
- Ysgol Hafod Lon, Penrhyndeudraeth
- Ysgol Glancegin, Maesgeirchen
- Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau Catchment Area
- Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn, Bala
- Ysgol y Garnedd and Ysgol y Faenol, Bangor

The Education Modernisation Team is developing viable education provision models that seek to:

- ensure a first-class learning environment for children and staff in Gwynedd schools
- improve the conditions and circumstances for headteachers to enable them to lead and manage schools effectively and efficiently
- ensure the most effective and best use of the Education Department's budget.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS SERVICE (ALN) AND INCLUSION

This service supports children and young people with Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion. The ALN Service includes specific areas of learning needs, communication and interaction, vision impairment, hearing and medical/physical impairments.

The service provides early intervention and support that is tailored for each individual pupil through a team of specialist teachers and assistants. The service offers support to schools through the Psychology Service. Every pupil has full access to Gwynedd schools therefore ensuring that every child reaches his or her full potential.

The welfare and inclusion service support schools to promote attendance, positive behaviour and support for children and young people who experience behavioural, emotional and/or social development difficulties. This support is delivered by a team of specialist teachers, welfare officers, school counsellors and specialist assistants.

We ensure that pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are fully included within Gwynedd schools through training, support in the classroom and providing behaviour support service outside mainstream schools. The welfare service promotes attendance by working with pupils, schools and families. Attendance at Gwynedd Schools over the last three years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic has been consistently good.

Although attendance is high and the rate of permanent exclusions is low, the challenge of maintaining and promoting welfare and inclusion is intensifying with an increasing number of pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour. The service will ensure that our schools receive appropriate training and support to meet the challenge. Underlying all of this, the service provides specialist guidance in the field of safeguarding. Specialist training and advice is provided to schools throughout the authority.

WELFARE AND ATTAINMENT GAP

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment and welfare as a result of the impact of the lockdown period and the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, every school implements an Accelerated Learning Programme with funding from Welsh Government to respond to the impact of the lockdown period on the welfare and attainment of some specific groups of learners.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE

The Welsh language permeates through all of the Education Department's work and services. In accordance with the new regulations issued by the Welsh Government, we have prepared and consulted on the statutory document, 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan', which will replace the existing document in September 2022 and have responded fully to the targets of the Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050 - A Million Welsh Speakers' document. The 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan' sets out clear expectations for the Department and our schools in terms of Welsh as a subject, as a teaching and learning medium, and as a social medium for the next ten years, and through the work programme of the Education Officers, Language Charter Coordinator and Secondary Language Strategy Coordinator and Catchment Area Language Coordinators, the Department supports schools to implement these expectations in all the County's schools.

Gwynedd has led the pioneering work of influencing children's social use of the Welsh language in primary schools through the Welsh Language Charter. The purpose of the Charter is to encourage children to speak Welsh outside the classroom, and to ensure participation from all members of the school community in order to achieve this aim.

Gwynedd is the only county in Wales that has established a Secondary Sector Language Strategy as a continuation of the Language Charter, and both the primary and secondary schools were all eager to see clear continuity with respect to the Language Charter. One fundamental distinction in the context of the Secondary Sector Language Strategy is that it involves the promotion of both formal and informal use of the Welsh language.

The Department also maintains Language Centres that provide intensive Welsh language courses for incomers to enable them to learn Welsh and contribute to Gwynedd's educational and social life. These Centres help our primary and secondary schools to implement the Welsh Language Policy. On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved and implemented the new vision of the "Immersion Education

System towards 2032 and beyond", by investing £1.1 million of Welsh Government Welsh-medium education capital funding to establish new immersion education sites in Tywyn and Bangor, as well as improving existing facilities at Porthmadog. The immersion system in its new guise will come into force in 2022-23.

CATERING AND CLEANING

The purpose of the Catering and Cleaning Service is to provide nutritious and healthy food for the pupils of Gwynedd Schools and to keep educational establishments clean and safe to assist pupils to reach their potential.

In November 2021, it was announced that the Welsh Government intended to provide free school meals to all primary pupils. The Department and the Council greatly welcome this proposal, however this scheme will potentially double the number of primary pupils choosing school dinners, and therefore a number of considerations need to be addressed and we will need to commence the scoping work during 2022/23. This work is included as a project relating to Improvement Priority 2 (Every pupil is given the opportunity to achieve their potential).

SCHOOLS BUSINESS CENTRE

For some time now, there has been considerable concern among head teachers regarding their working conditions, as they have to fulfil a number of different roles; as leaders, managers, teachers and administrators. Without exception, Estyn inspections show that effective leadership, together with adequate resources and time, results in a good education and high standards.

Since September 2019, the Schools Business Centre has been established to develop the support and assistance provided to our schools, to rationalise and share management requirements. The core function of the Schools Business Centre is to provide the SIMS service to primary schools, and there is also a focus on providing service level agreements to primary schools for services such as written and simultaneous translation for schools. There is also a focus on reducing the managerial and administrative workloads of headteachers and teachers.

RESOURCES SERVICE

The purpose of this service is to provide the necessary statutory support for Gwynedd schools to operate on a daily basis. The service includes admissions to schools, staff salaries and contracts, and school transport. It also provides support for schools with finance, human resources, health and safety and information and communication technology. The service also provides support to school Governors.

This service provides the necessary statutory support for Gwynedd schools to operate on a daily basis. There are three specific services, namely:

- School Staff Salaries and Contracts

- Education Data Unit
- Governor Support

The School Staff Salaries and Contracts service ensures that the schools receive a support service of the highest standard in the salaries and contracts field promptly and correctly. This enables the heads and governors to concentrate on our children's education.

The Education Data Unit service provides support to the Department through providing a data and information infrastructure of high quality that drives decisions and performance. The School Admissions Service is also a part of the Education Data Unit.

The Governor Support Service assists Gwynedd school governors to operate effectively by ensuring that they understand their role, by giving strategic and practical support to them according to need, advising them appropriately, as well as by providing them with a programme of bespoke training to ensure the effective governance of our schools. The Education Department also has powers to intervene that may be used when a school is not governed appropriately.

The Resources Service also provides financial, human resources and health and safety support for schools as well as leading on education transport matters.

This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.
Live in a natural Welsh society
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The Adults, Health and Well-being Department provides a range of social care services for residents aged 18 years old or over who require advice, information, support or care due to specific needs. The purpose of the department is to enable the adults of Gwynedd to '*live my life as I wish*'.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following priority projects:

- A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the Future - (Improvement Priority 6)
- Re-designing our Care Services - (Improvement Priority 6)

It is also noted that the Department is contributing to the improvement priority of Workforce Planning (Corporate Support Department) by responding specifically to the recruitment challenges in the care field and by ensuring that we have enough employees with the necessary skills to cope with the increasing need that is likely to arise in the future.

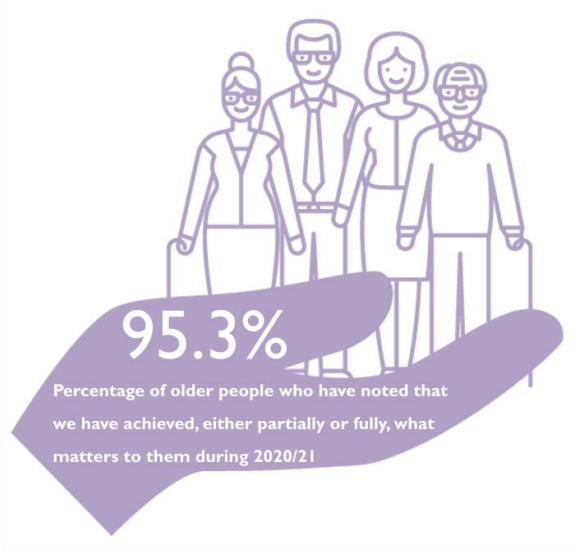
Of course, the Covid-19 crisis has had an unprecedented impact on all of the department's services. Although we have managed to maintain most of our services, some services are being run in a slightly different way. We have been faced with the challenge of restoring some of these services during 2021/22, and with Covid-19 still around, providing services remains very challenging. Our options for restoring or replacing services will need to be considered.

Older People, Physical and Sensory Disabilities Service

The purpose of this service is to help individuals to achieve what is important to them.

We work in partnership with individuals to try and achieve their personal goals by focusing on what matters to them. The service assesses needs in a way that builds on individuals' strengths. The service provides information, advice and assistance in a simple and convenient way within communities.

To continue to improve our seamless provision, we will build on our working relationship with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, statutory agencies and the third sector, to meet the personal goals of adults.



Mental Health Service

The purpose of this service is to offer support to individuals over 18 years of age who are experiencing mental health difficulties, by providing them with assistance to live full lives and to support recovery.
We are working alongside the Health Board to support individuals with mental health difficulties within the primary services, and are supporting individuals with more severe or complex needs to promote recovery and support them to live independently. We also offer assessment and support for mental health carers.

The Covid-19 crisis has created many challenges for the Service as it was not possible to offer face-to-face assessments and support. Despite the challenges, it has also offered opportunities in terms of providing virtual support that is more acceptable to the younger cohort and assisted in providing access to groups.

Learning Disabilities Service



The purpose of the service is to address and promote the well-being needs of individuals with a learning disability, whether physical, emotional, mental or social, and to ensure that we address what is important to individuals with a learning disability and their carers.

To ensure that we are fully responsive to the needs of individuals, a wide range of our services are often offered in partnership. This could be support for independent living, support out in the community, or much more.

We want to focus on a provision that offers opportunities to socialise and maintain relationships. There is a focus on developing community services through the local hubs and being led by the individuals and their carers.



Well-being Service

The main purpose of the service is to improve the quality of life by connecting people. We also co-ordinate the support for unpaid carers across Council services as well as supporting the Age Friendly Gwynedd work programme, which has the Bridging the Generations project at its heart. We do this through schemes that are focused on the following elements:

- an emphasis on being sociable and involved in the community (reduce loneliness)
- promote positive health and well-being
- promote working together with people and between people
- strengthen and develop services based on what is important for the people of Gwynedd

In the second half of the current financial year, we have received 3 additional funding streams to support the people of Gwynedd to recover from the after effects of the pandemic. The fund to encourage older people to rebuild and to have their voices heard has meant that we have made new contacts with various community groups across Gwynedd. In 2022/23, we hope to have a range of activities that bring people together, organised on the ground in our communities. The

additional funds for unpaid carers, whether adults or young people and children, have allowed for a wide range of additional support for carers, with the flexibility attached to the agreements ensuring that the support is adequately flexible to be tailored to meet the needs of the individual carer.

Provider Service



We provide residential, community and day care for adults with severe and complex needs.

The service is responsible for the following areas:

- Residential Care and Dementia Residential Care Provision
- Home Care Provision
- Day Care Provision

Much of the service's work is addressed within the priority projects led by the department.

The Dolgellau area was identified as a priority for developing bespoke care provision, and the effort to identify sites for development in this area is continuing. We are also looking at other areas in Meirionnydd more widely.

There was also a demand for bespoke units for the residents of Llŷn, and construction of Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli has begun in partnership with the housing association **Adra**. The 28 flat scheme is expected to be completed during 2022/23.

This priority is being addressed within the priority project 'A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the Future.'

The Covid-19 crisis has created new and different challenges for this service in particular, and as we consider the further development of the service it will be essential to ensure that we learn lessons from those challenges.



Safeguarding and Community Safety Services

The purpose of the **Safeguarding Service** is to protect individuals who have support and care needs and are at risk of, or are, suffering abuse. We ensure the quality of the Department's safeguarding work by monitoring and auditing individuals' experiences.

We lead on cases of escalating concerns, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards arrangements (a procedure that supports and protects adults who are unable to make decisions themselves or are unable to grant permission for their care) and respond to complaints and concerns in a timely manner.

The Service is also responsible for leading on **Community Safety** partnership work, which is a statutory partnership. We work across two counties, namely Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council.

Percentage of adults safeguarding referrals completed during the year where the risk has been managed (excluding those who refused intervention)

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
94.2%	97%	91.46%

We will lead on the work on behalf of all the responsible members, namely the two Councils, the Police, the Fire Service, the Probation Service and the Health Board to tackle and reduce crime and disorder for the benefit of the safety and well-being of people in both counties. We will now be working on the partnership plan for 2022/23 to respond to identified crime and disorder priorities in both counties.

During the Covid-19 crisis, we have seen an increase in anti-social behaviour within our communities. A cross-departmental task force has been set up to address these problems.



Business Service

We provide support to the front-line teams of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department and the Children and Supporting Families Department, in order to enable them to achieve their purpose for the benefit of Gwynedd residents. We are responsible for:

- Telecare
- Workforce Development
- Clients' Finance
- Income and Welfare Unit
- Contracting and Commissioning
- Administrative Service
- Supporting Systems Unit

This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
Live in quality homes within our communities
Live in a natural Welsh society
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible

Highways and Municipal Department

This department provides frontline services that are important to Gwynedd residents, such as waste collection, bereavement services, road maintenance, fleet maintenance, playing fields and green spaces. Caring for the county's special environment is central to the department's work, and it contributes to the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. The Department has also managed to reach Accreditation Bsi 45001 (Health and Safety): 14001 (Environmental) and 9001 (Quality Control)

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following priority projects:

- Clean and Tidy Communities - (Improvement Priority 7)
- Strengthen Communication and Engagement - (Improvement Priority 7)

Waste and Recycling

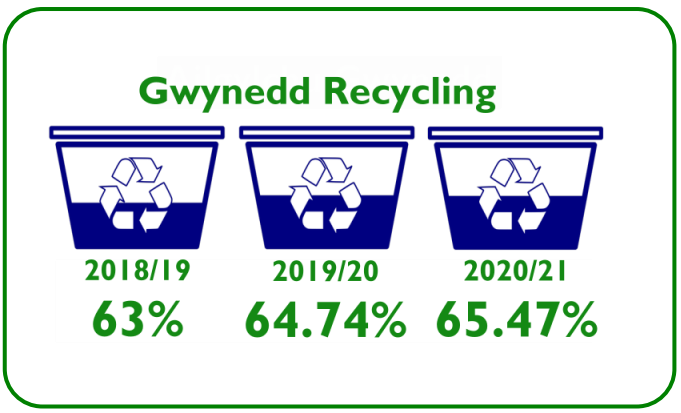


The department is responsible for undertaking over a million waste collections within any three-month period. Some of these collections are missed, and although the figure is low (less than 1%) we recognise the impact of these missed collections on our residents. The department now collects information in order to gain an understanding of why this happens and to enable it to respond to any relevant problems.

We are in the process of introducing new collection arrangements that will reduce the number of missed collections and provide the people of Gwynedd with an improved experience of the service by ensuring that the same crew works the same route every time.

The introduction of three-weekly bin collections, with weekly collection of food waste and recycling materials, has led to an increase in recycling and the Council achieved Welsh Government's statutory target of 64% of the county's waste being recycled by the end of March 2019/20, with Gwynedd's performance at 65%. The target will rise to **70% by March 2025**.

It is vital to deal with **waste** appropriately in order to protect our environment and avoid creating problems for our children and our children's children. Gwynedd Council is proud that we deal with our waste in a responsible manner, and that we give priority throughout this process to being as eco-friendly as possible.



Burying waste in the ground causes pollution to the land, water and the air. Since August 2019, we sent no waste to landfill directly due to treating our residual waste at the Parc Adfer waste-to-energy facility.

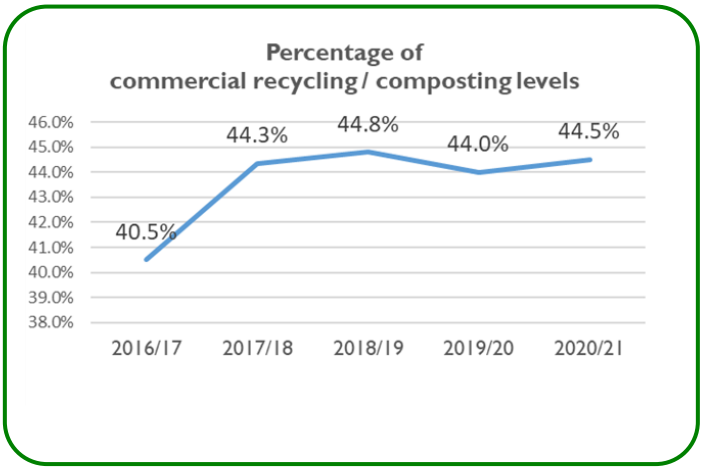
Former landfill sites within the county are now defunct, and we burn gases in accordance with the closure plan regulations. We are also responsible for arranging garden waste collections throughout the county, with the waste being converted to compost. The Department makes the compost available to Gwynedd residents at specific times of the year.

GwyriAD

GwyriAD is our in-county food waste treatment facility, which processes all the food waste collected from residents and businesses in Gwynedd. The facility can handle 11,000 tonnes of food waste, which is converted to green energy that supplies the national grid. This is enough to provide electricity for 850 homes.

Capacity exists on the site to increase the tonnages of food we collect in order to divert any waste from the residual waste bin, and we will be working towards this aim during 2022/23. 5144 tonnes of domestic and commercial food waste were collected during 2020/21. We are aiming to increase the tonnes over the next year.

Commercial Waste Services



We provide commercial waste and recycling collections to more than 2,000 business in the county. Some time ago we introduced food and recycling collections as part of the package offered to businesses, in order to ensure that businesses divert their waste from the residual bins and benefit from the recycling service. This has contributed to the Council's recycling performance as reported against our statutory targets, and performance has improved markedly over the past few years. With statutory targets becoming more stringent there is some work to do in order to improve things further, and a requirement will come into force to separate recyclable material, which is currently collected in one mixed bin. The new system will ensure that waste is treated appropriately for the benefit of the environment.

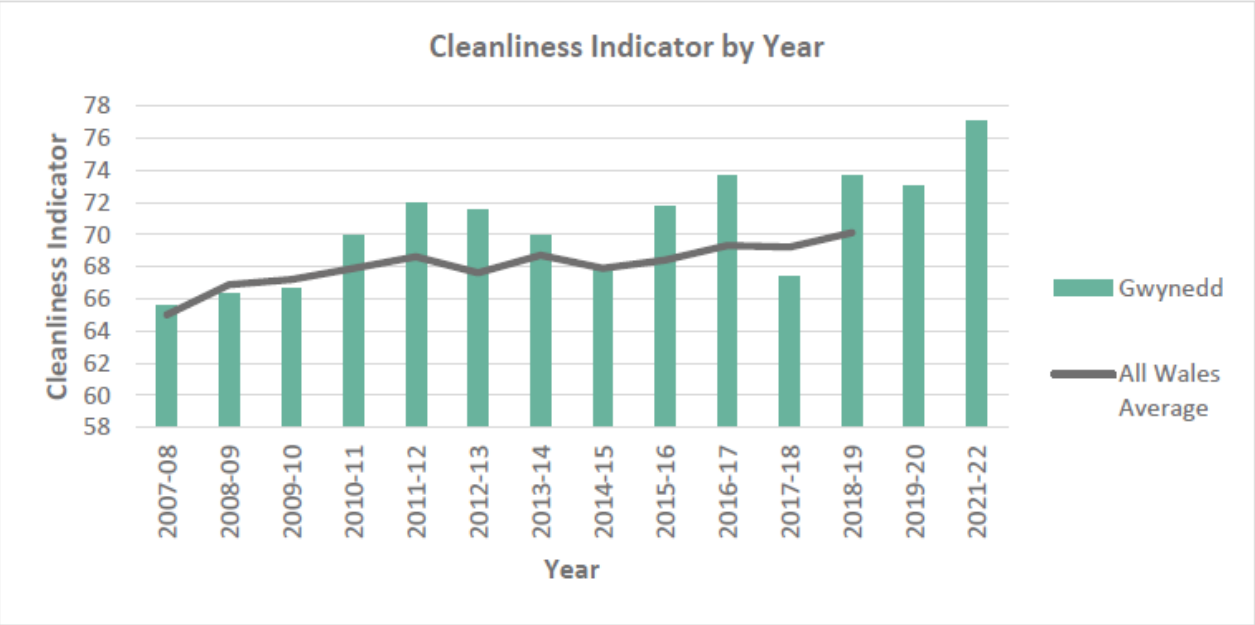
Waste Field Action Plan

- The changes in the waste collection arrangements in Gwynedd have improved the experience for the county's residents, and reduce the number of missed collections as well as the tidiness after the collection. We are in the process of monitoring the effect of this change on the service.
- Develop a new waste strategy for the county that will consider innovative ways to encourage reuse and increase recycling. Through this, we can achieve the new statutory target of 70% of all waste being recycled by 2025.
- Increase our domestic and commercial food waste collections for treatment in the GwyriAD facility and reduce the amount of this material found in the residual waste.
- Continue to reduce the residual waste created.
- Build on the work of promoting the circular economy in Gwynedd (an economy which promotes reuse and recycling to reduce waste).
- Look to increase our commercial provision in order to generate an income stream for the Council, and ensure that the county's waste is treated in a responsible and eco-friendly manner.
- Offer separated recycling collections to commercial customers.
- Introduce more recycling bins on our streets.
- Expand on our network of re-use shops within our Recycling Centres.

The Appearance of Streets and the Public Realm

In terms of the local environment, it is vital that our streets are clean and safe, and they must therefore be cleaned regularly. The appearance of streets and public spaces is important to the residents of Gwynedd, and there is a small team of officers responsible for dealing with environmental crimes such as fly-tipping, graffiti and dog fouling. We are in the process of developing a system to measure the number of days it takes to clear illegal fly-tipping. We apply a measure called the 'Cleanliness Index' (a combination of external and internal assessment) in order to assess the cleanliness and appearance of streets.

Keep Wales Tidy carries out a survey to assess how many 'defects' such as rubbish, weeds, dog fouling, chewing gum and cigarette stumps can be found on our streets. According to the independent survey, the cleanliness and appearance of Gwynedd streets continues to be of a good standard, and it appears that a recent improvement in behaviour has led to less untidiness. Recently, Keep Wales Tidy conducted its cleanliness review for 2021/22, you can see we have scored high compare to Wales's average. The score is noted below. There was no review during 2020-21 due to Covid.



Clean and Tidy Communities Teams

Recently, we succeeded to win a substantial investment to establish a Clean and Tidy Communities Team to carry out minor maintenance work and to complement the regular maintenance activities. The intention is to respond to concerns on a community level and make a visible difference to the area's image. This will make a significant contribution to the cleanliness, neatness and security of the local built environment. The hope is to establish 5 teams across Gwynedd, and that this will be operational by April 2022.

As part of the plan, we are eager to establish similar partnerships throughout the county in order to work together with communities to improve the appearance and environmental quality of their neighbourhoods.

Grounds Maintenance



The Department is responsible for maintaining roadside verges and open spaces in order to improve the environmental quality of our towns and villages and to make them safer places for residents. By now, we have taken advantage of the opportunity to promote biodiversity whilst ensuring that our junctions and public spaces remain safe and attractive. We are now looking at developing an appropriate policy in this field.

Children's Playing Fields

Children, parents and carers appreciate playing fields and we maintain 127 of them throughout the county. Playing equipment is very expensive and funding for the purchase of new equipment is exceedingly scarce.





We also maintain playgrounds so that they are safe for children and young people to be able to enjoy.

Over the period of the plan we will:

- adjust our grass-cutting patterns in order to promote biodiversity
- act on eco-friendly methods of dealing with weeds, and attempt to avoid the use of harmful pesticides wherever possible
- extend the development of community partnerships to improve the county's appearance and environmental quality
- look into alternative means of maintaining and retaining playing fields by collaborating with communities/partnerships.

Bereavement Service



We manage the Crematorium in Bangor and 16 of the County's largest and busiest cemeteries.

The bereavement service is crucial to residents, and we shall ensure a bereavement service which is appropriate and dignified.

Public Toilets



The Department is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the county's **public toilets.** The Council is under no obligation to provide public toilets, and a scheme to close a number of the county's toilets was introduced following the Gwynedd Challenge consultation. Nevertheless, the department believes that appropriate provision of public toilets is important in terms of individuals' experiences of the county, and alternative means were developed to keep as many toilets open as possible - by working in partnership with community councils or supporting community toilets within Gwynedd businesses. A partnerships agreement has been established with community and town councils which is now fully operational. We wish to thank everyone who has worked in partnership with the Council to sustain the alternative provision. It is due to this collaborative working that we are among the counties with the highest numbers of public toilets in Wales.

CCTV



In order to protect and safeguard the community we maintain a network of CCTV cameras in the populated areas of the County, namely Bangor, Caernarfon and Pwllheli. These systems assist in the monitoring of criminal and antisocial incidents.

The Department has enhanced the network of CCTV cameras throughout the county in order to further the work of safeguarding the county's residents and property.

Over the period of the plan we will:

- where possible, offer to extend the network in collaboration with communities and other partnerships
- collaborate with the Police on a safer streets plan

Fleet Service

The Department is responsible for managing and maintaining the Council's entire fleet of vehicles. The Fleet Service provides guidance and assistance to Council departments in order to ensure the appropriate, safe and lawful use of their vehicles.

In addition, the Service is responsible for maintaining over 400 vehicles to a high standard, which is done at three different locations across Gwynedd with workshops in Caernarfon, Pwllheli and Dolgellau.

The Department is working towards reducing the fleet's carbon emissions. Our aim is to invest in efficient vehicles, including electric vehicles. A baseline was set for our fleet emissions during 2018 and we are pleased to report that we have seen a reduction of 2.03% in our emissions - despite the busyness of the lockdown period.

Over the period of the plan we will:

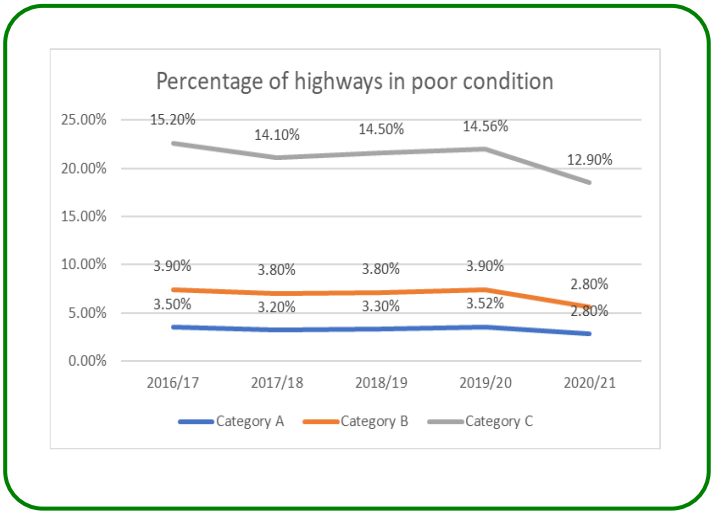
- develop a strategy to prioritise the work on fleet decarbonisation,
- trial electric vehicles in many services,
- explore the potential of using hydrogen as a carbon-free fuel on which to run our heavy fleet,
- establish a pool vehicle system for the Council, and also look into offering community use,
- establish a charging network across the County.

Highways and Street Lighting



It is important that businesses and residents are able to move safely and with ease within the county and, in order to ensure this, the Council ensures the upkeep of 2,697km of **county roads** and 199km of **Trunk Roads** (highways of national importance, on behalf of Welsh Government). Our highways in Gwynedd, which include the Class A and B roads, are currently in a good condition with fewer than 3% being defective and in need of attention.

With a reduction in the relevant budget, the condition of our Class C and unclassified roads has continued to deteriorate. Due to the financial pressures on the Council it is inevitable that there will be further pressure on the road maintenance budget, and it will be a challenge for us to prevent the deterioration in the quality of our roads, and in particular the lower priority Class C and unclassified roads.



There is a new national Code of Practice now in force which emphasises risk management.

The Service is in the process of introducing changes to the Highways Asset Maintenance Plan in the interests of consistency and reform, and to ensure that we reflect the new code. We seek to prevent any sudden deterioration in the quality of our roads. In doing so, we will reflect upon the contents of the new code of practice. The Service is also trialling the use of new materials or reusing materials to fill potholes. This will assist us in reducing waste and will contribute to our efforts towards reducing our carbon footprint.

North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency Highways Maintenance Agreement

Gwynedd Council is responsible for leading a partnership of seven councils in north and mid Wales which manages and maintains 1,100km of trunk roads (Welsh Government highways of national importance).

Asiant Cefnffyrdd Gogledd a Chanolbarth Cymru
North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent

It is our Highways Service that is responsible for the maintenance work, along with dealing with accidents and incidents that occur due to severe weather and outside normal working hours.



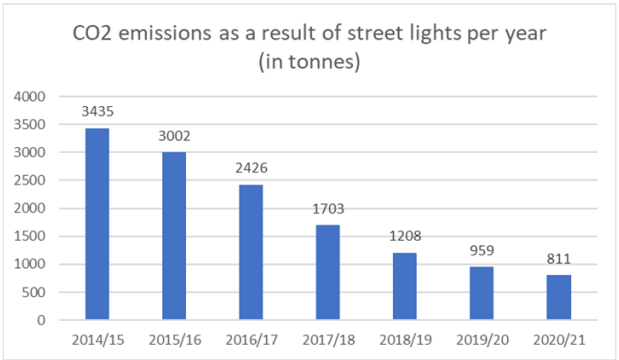
Maintenance of Bridges and Structures

We maintain 631 bridges throughout the county. They include 338 arched bridges and 96 that are listed and have additional requirements. In addition, we have 1,618 retaining walls throughout the county that are also maintained by the Department.

Street Lighting

We maintain 18,705 **street lights** and 6,067 **illuminated signs** in order to make our roads and streets safer. The lights use electrical power which has a detrimental impact on the environment in terms of carbon emissions and light pollution.

We have been converting street lights and signs to LED technology with the majority of them dimming or switching off when appropriate. This serves to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions, and to prevent light pollution today and for the future. In recent years we have contributed to carbon reduction by prioritising this work.



Over period of the plan we will:

- introduce a new Asset Maintenance Plan with risk-based priorities,
- trial new, eco-friendly surface treatment methods and encourage the reuse of raw materials.
- introduce a mobile electronic system for our employees to receive and record their work. This will enable us to work more efficiently.

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.

Children and Supporting Families Department

Our purpose is to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm; experience stability in their lives and receive the best opportunities for their health and well-being.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Support People's Well-being (Improvement Priority 3)
- Strategy to Keep Families Together (Improvement Priority 6)
- Ensure a specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs (Improvement Priority 6)
- Ensure that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive (Improvement Priority 6)

It is also noted that the Department is contributing to the improvement priority of Workforce Planning (Corporate Support Department) by responding specifically to the recruitment challenges in the care field and by ensuring that we have enough employees with the necessary skills to cope with the increasing need that is likely to arise in the future.

There are several teams within our service and we work within 3 tiers of need:

1. **Early Intervention**
2. **Care and support, safeguarding, and care needs**
3. **Specialist Teams**

In Gwynedd, we believe that every child and young person should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential. We recognise that children develop best when they are supported to grow and succeed within their families and communities. We also recognise that providing early intervention is critical in helping children and their families to thrive and to reduce the need for more intensive services.

Promoting well-being and supporting families to thrive goes beyond the services of our department alone, and consequently we intend to do further work across all the Council's preventative services to improve our ability to respond to the needs of Gwynedd residents, in a coordinated, integrated and efficient manner.

Early Intervention

The offer of early intervention is essential in helping children and their families to thrive and to reduce the need for more intensive services. We have a number of services providing early intervention, whether early on in the child's life so that they receive the support they need to thrive; or early on when a challenge or concern first emerges and before the situation deteriorates; and we will intervene in this way by working with the whole family.

Early Years Service

Our purpose is to make a positive difference to the life opportunities of children under four years of age by supporting nursery education provisions, developing the childcare and play sector, and providing parenting packages to help families raise healthy, happy and secure children.

We also provide more intensive packages of support in specific areas of Gwynedd through the **Flying Start** programme. The programme supports families with raising children and parenting, children's language and speech development, and health and care support, through multi-agency teams from education, health and care.



Team Around the Family

Our purpose is to intervene early when problems within families become apparent, but this intervention happens voluntarily with the family's permission. We will help by responding to needs and providing appropriate services.

We have received 309 referrals to the Team Around the Family in 2020-21.

Youth Service

Having the opportunity to socialise, take part in activities and continue to learn and develop new skills outside school is very important to the county's young people. Supporting young people to build resilience to be able to deal with any future challenges is very important for the Youth Service. Young people have told us that they want our support to help them look after their health and well-being, to help them develop and learn skills, and to help them be a part of their communities.

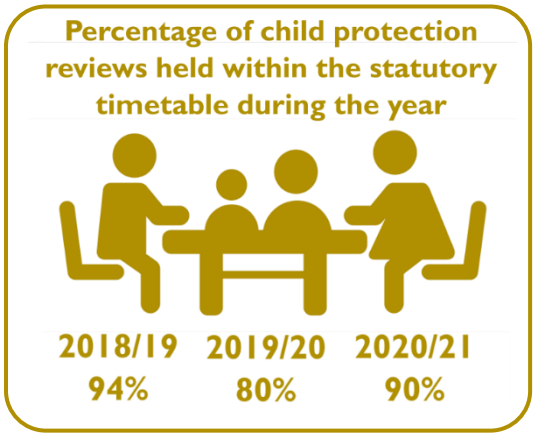
Care and support, safeguarding, and care needs

Most children and young people in Gwynedd live happy, safe lives and enjoy opportunities to learn and play. At times, however, some children and their families will need more formal advice and assistance.

The Council is responsible for leading, investigating and managing the county's child safeguarding interventions. We work closely with schools, the Police, the Health Board, doctors, and health visitors etc. to fulfil this statutory responsibility. The responsibility for safeguarding children is one of the Council's most important responsibilities.

The **Information, Advice and Support service** continue to maintain high standards when responding promptly to referrals that could be safeguarding ones, and to referrals for care and support. In order to safeguard children and young people we respond to referrals without delay. When those referrals include concerns about allegations of abuse, we must investigate those allegations in accordance with the Child Protection Guidelines. We will make a decision on each case within twenty-four hours in order to determine the best way to proceed.

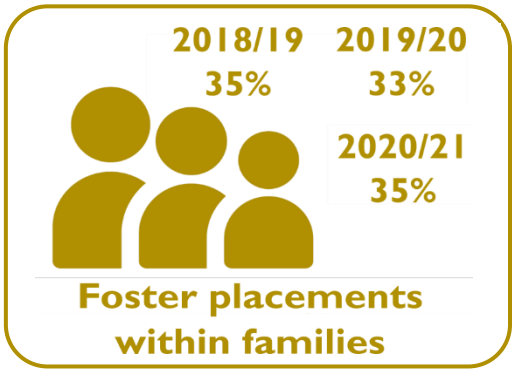
The **Social Work Teams** offer support and intensive intervention for children and their families. Social workers see children and their families regularly and keep in touch with them, remaining alert to issues of risk to children and young people. We ensure that there are resources available to support them and that their needs are clear to us. Plans are then put in place to respond to their needs. At times, we will refer on to teams that offer more specialist interventions, such as the services in the Trobwynt Team.



We also conduct child protection investigations; and sometimes, some families require highly intensive support and we need to bring children who are at risk into the Council's care.

Children usually come into our care under extremely difficult circumstances, and we are as ambitious for these children as anyone would be for his/her own child.

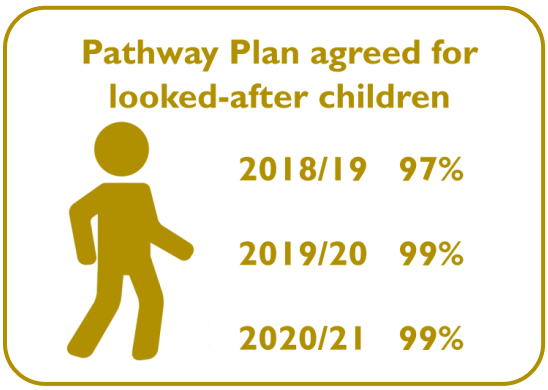
To ensure that children and young people experience stability, we support children to live at home with support where this is possible. Emphasis is also placed on trying to place a child with members of his/her extended family or friends of the family. Where this is not possible, the child will be placed with registered foster carers or, at times, some children and young people will require specialist residential units to meet specific



needs. The role of the Fostering Team is to ensure that we have sufficient foster parents to satisfy the needs of children who cannot live at home.

The role of the **Fostering Team** is to ensure that we have plenty of foster parents to meet the needs of children who are unable to live at home. We assess and support foster carers so that they can provide children who come into our care with the necessary support, and this is a high priority for the Department. We are aware that children who are in stable situations get the best opportunity to test those boundaries that are crucial for good development. This lays the foundation for achieving the best outcomes for them.

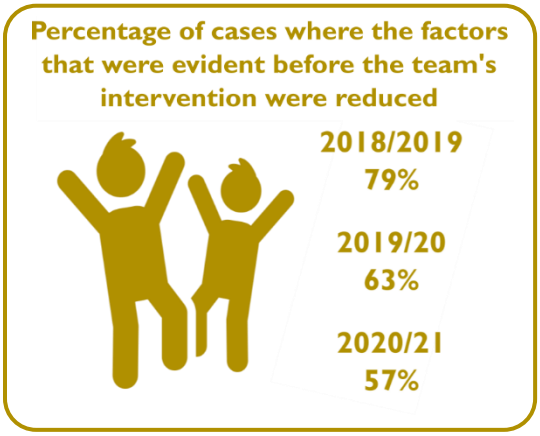
While a child is in the Council's care, it is our responsibility to provide a clear care plan for him/her which is reviewed regularly in order to ensure that the right decisions are made for the benefit of the child and that there are no delays in the plan.



The **Post-16 Team** supports young people that either need protecting or need care and support, including young people who have received care up to 25 years old. The workers see the young people regularly and encourage them to maintain good contact with their families and develop their skills to live independently. The 'When I'm Ready' Plan gives young people who are not ready to leave their foster placement on their 18th birthday the choice to stay on until they are ready to do so.

The Specialist Teams

The purpose of **Trobwynt Services** is to reduce needs by offering a range of intensive interventions and support to children who are on the edge of care, who have just come into care, or to safely return children home from care. By working closely and co-producing care plans with the children and their families, the physical and mental health needs and the emotional well-being needs of the children and their families are met.



The needs of families we supported during 2020/21 have been more complex and intensive; especially the number of young people in their teens who received support.

As part of these interventions the **Trobwynt Team** offers intensive support packages aimed at keeping children stable in their homes. The **Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS)** offers specialist intervention for families where there is alcohol and drug misuse from the parents and carers which is a

risk factor to the children. Because of the intensive nature of the intervention, the service is prioritised for families where the risk to children is high. The **Reflection** project offers specialist support to parents who have children in the care system on a permanent basis. In addition, **Trobwynt** offers a specialist service that focuses on abolishing care orders where intensive work has already been completed, and through this offers a way out of care for children and their families.

Derwen Team provides a service for disabled and ill children and young people and their families. We provide support for young, disabled people to help their inclusion in community activities and life, and to increase their skills so they become more independent. We provide periods of respite care for a great number of families through a support service. It is a multidisciplinary team that works in partnership with the Health Board. We have social workers, nurses and psychologists working in the team, and because of the wide range of complex needs, our workers need to possess expert skills to respond to the needs of the children and their families.



The purpose of the **Youth Justice Service** is to work intensively with children and young people who have offended, to prevent them re-offending. We offer a wide range of specialist interventions and work with the whole family in order to find solutions to help the children and young people from re-offending. We also work on a preventative basis with children and young people to prevent them from offending in the first place. We do this in partnership with schools and within the individuals' communities. We are a multi-agency team and we work in partnership with the Police, the Health Board, Careers Wales, Careers Wales, North Wales Housing and others.

How we ensure the quality of Safeguarding

In order to provide assurance to the Council that our safeguarding arrangements are robust, we have a **Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit** that focuses on different aspects of this important area of work. We implement the statutory duties to review cases of Looked After Children, and provide guidance on child protection, and chair Case Conferences and Strategy Meetings where allegations have been made about professionals.

We conduct child protection conferences in partnership with the families and other workers. Intervening with a family to safeguard the child can be very difficult for them. They do not often welcome this support, and very often only cooperate through enforcement. Our aim is to ensure that the child's voice is more prominent in these discussions and that families are involved more effectively in their safeguarding plan.

Independent Reviewing Officers monitor the care plans of every looked after child and young person. They ensure that the care plans have given appropriate weight and consideration to the wishes and feelings of the child, and that the child fully understands his/her situation bearing in mind the child's age and comprehension. The Independent Reviewing Officers give assurance to the Council that the interests of the child are safeguarded throughout their time in care. They listen to children, make sure they are happy with their plans, ensure their opinion is heard and that their plans are followed, and they are sufficiently empowered to take action if the plans are not followed.



This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Environment Department

The Environment Department leads on the following main areas:

- **Planning and Building Control**
- **Public Protection**
- **Transportation and the Countryside**

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Public Protection Capacity - (Improvement Priority 7)
- Climate Change Action Plan - (Improvement Priority 8)
- Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes and second homes (Improvement Priority 4)

It is also noted that the Department contributes towards improvement priority 1, **Tourism - forming a Sustainable Tourism Plan** (Economy and Community Department) and the Environment Department leads on the project to improve management of motorhomes. This will include regulating and, where possible, enforcement as well as developing a pilot scheme to provide facilities for motor homes to stay overnight, for Gwynedd to include up to 6 sites with the first in place before the end of March 2023. This work will be part of the Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism.

Naturally, the Covid-19 crisis and the restrictions pertaining to it have had a considerable impact on all the department's services, with many e.g. our **Public Protection** services delivering quite different work to the norm, and this under pressure. We also have a completely new service, the Test, Trace and Protect Service, since June 2020 and we have had to find different solutions to ensure that we can continue to provide other services. All of this has had an impact on the usual way the department is run, and on our priorities during 2021/22 and although we were able to stabilise some services, the challenge of recovery and lack of capacity continues to face us as we step into 2022/23. We will use the lessons that have arisen from the crisis when considering the shape of our future services.

Planning and Building Control

Our Planning and Building Control Services comprise our Planning Service, our Joint Planning Policy Service (Gwynedd and Anglesey) and our Building Control Service.

The purpose of the **Planning Service** is to facilitate and manage sustainable developments for the benefit of our communities, the economy and the environment within the Gwynedd planning authority area (which does not include the National Park area).

The service is responsible for determining planning applications to develop land, as well as giving advice on any pre-application enquiries. They also take enforcement measures with developments that have not received planning permission and deal with all types of developments such as housing (including affordable housing), new schools, factories and substantial infrastructure developments such as National Grid schemes. The Service also investigates planning control breaches and undertakes enforcement when there is justification to do so.

Periods of long-term sickness over the last eighteen months has highlighted the lack of resilience in the Service that has had an impact on how quickly applications are determined and enforcement cases resolved, and therefore on the Service's performance.

Our **Joint Planning Policy Service** with the Isle of Anglesey County Council prepares planning policy documents, including preparing and monitoring the Local Development Plan that promotes sustainable development and includes maps and written policies used to determine planning applications. Alongside the work on the Local Development Plan, the service is responsible for preparing a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance for adoption. The guidance add details to the planning policies, and strengthen the Development Plan's ability to provide a firm foundation to make decisions on planning applications in the future. Guidance is also given on planning policy matters to the Gwynedd Planning Authority, the Isle of Anglesey County Council Planning Authority and to external organisations and the public.

During 2021/22 Annual Monitoring Reports (Local Development Plan) for 2019/20 and 2020/21 were submitted to the Welsh Government. The statutory process of reviewing the Joint Local Development Plan has commenced since the start of August 2021, with a public consultation on the Review Report that comes to the conclusion that a full form review is required, which is tantamount to the preparation of a new plan.

As a result of Legislation that will come into force in 2021 to create a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for the north Wales region (and the other regions), there will be a statutory requirement to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the region. The Council will be expected to contribute towards any costs of creating a New Unit that will be responsible for preparing the Strategic Development Plan, at a time when the Service will also need to prepare a Revised or New Local Development Plan. The service also collaborates regionally with other planning authorities, and a report and recommendations to provide a Strategic Development Plan has been presented to the Chief Executives of north Wales in 2021/22.

The purpose of the **Building Control Service** is to ensure that construction work is delivered in accordance with the Building Regulations to keep people safe while improving fuel and power conservation, protecting and improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. We also ensure that access and essential facilities are provided for the disabled in new buildings and as part of adaptations, and operate a 24 hour service to respond to dangerous buildings.

Following a Ffordd Gwynedd review of the Service, it was highlighted that fee earning work (Building Control applications) should be prioritised over non-fee earning work, such as regulation enforcement work when there was justification to do so. Since transferring to the Department in April 2020 the Building Control Service collaborates closely with other Services in the Department (and the Council) - to respond to problems that are associated with empty / untidy property on top of the work of dealing with dangerous buildings. The method of funding the Service was reviewed in 2021/22 to seek a more accurate split to reflect the work that does not attract fees, namely enforcement work.

It is a commercial Service that competes for work with Approved Inspectors (private sector) but they also compete for staff, and the Service lost two officers during 2021/22 and unable to recruit. Following 'Building Safety Reviews' as a result of the Grenfell tragedy by the UK and Welsh Governments, there will be legislative amendments to the Building Act in 2023 where there will be legal requirements in terms of competencies to undertaken the work. As a result, the Service will review the structure that will plan for the competencies requirements that will come into force in 2022/23.

The main priorities of the Planning and Building Control Services for 2022/23 will be:

- Strengthening resilience in the Planning Service to deal with planning applications quicker and to resolve more enforcement cases.
- Preparing a Delivery Plan that will commence the process of preparing an Amended Local Development Plan and commence gathering an evidence base.
- Establishing arrangements to identify the bulk of the Building Control enforcement work and identify performance indicators for this.
- Implementing the Building Control Service based on budget that includes more enforcement work, with a staffing structure that will meet the requirements of the new Building Act.

Public Protection

Our Public Protection Services protect our residents and visitors in relation to a range of environmental and health matters.

This includes:

- Control of pollution from substances or noise in the air, land, or waters and investigate complaints of pollution and statutory nuisance.
- Assessing the safety of private drinking water supplies and enforce improvements as required.
- Monitor industrial processes in various sites and regulate industrial emissions to the air (oil waste incinerators, mobile crushers, cement machines).

- Licensing various areas (e.g. alcohol, gambling, animal establishments, vehicles and taxi drivers) in order to protect users, businesses and the communities of Gwynedd from any detrimental impacts; again, taking enforcement action if required.
- Ensure that food and drink sold and manufactured, stored, distributed, treated or used in the Gwynedd, is free of any risk to health and complies with the appropriate standards.
- Prevent deaths, injuries and conditions that are associated with workplaces
- Protect the public from infectious diseases and harmful chemicals.
- Assist Gwynedd businesses to meet with the required statutory requirements in relation to food and safety.
- Enforcing a wide range of trading standards legislation involving the supply and distribution of goods and services and deal with a variety of subjects such as product safety, raising awareness of scams and illegal money lending, e-commerce and internet investigations, animal health and welfare and more.

In 2020/21 and 2021/22, as a result of the Covid crisis, these services focused on:

- Preventing the spread of Covid-19
- Dealing with high risk issues.
- Although continuing to undertake work to prevent Covid-19, proactive work has recommenced mainly with the inspection programmes including food inspections in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan, to include dealing with the backlog of inspections.
- Day-to-day licensing work, pollution control and trading standards.

We are also responsible for the **Test, Trace and Protect Service (TTP)** since June 2020. The main aim of this service is to reduce the spread of Covid-19 across our communities by supporting people infected with the virus to isolate appropriately. This includes identifying people who have been in contact with positive cases of Covid-19, supporting people with symptoms to get access to a Covid-19 test and work with specialist partners to control any risks to people who are isolating together with wider communities and businesses in Gwynedd. This service also undertakes significant work on behalf of other Welsh local authorities; this enables us to be more resilient across Wales and ensure the best use of public funding.

The demand on this service over the last year have been very significant as restrictions were relaxed leading to an increase in cases and in the average number of contacts to every positive case, especially amongst school-aged children. The workload has been more than ever and recruiting and retaining staff has been difficult due to the nature of the work and length of contract. In addition, the need to respond swiftly following issuing new guidelines is challenging and dependent on being able to regularly re-train staff.

We have received confirmation that the Welsh Government will fund this service until June 2022, however, presently there is no further guidance regarding what will happen beyond this period.

During 2021-22 the Department has undertaken a review of staffing structures in the Public Protection Service, as dealing with Covid-19 and trying to undertake day-to-day work has highlighted the lack of resilience as a result of the cuts implemented by the Council over the last 10 years. It is proposed to introduce new structures that meet with the requirements of the Services in April 2022.

The main priorities of the Public Protection services for 2022/23 will be:

- Present structures that will give the Services long-term resilience.
- Continuing to recommence the programme of food safety inspections in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan, inspections and product safety campaigns, fair trading, animal health and animal feed inspections, private water supplies and industrial processes.
- Seek guidance from the Welsh Government regarding what is expected in relation to the Test, Trace and Protect service beyond June 2022, working towards a digital method of sustaining this service (where there is a requirement for people to complete their on-line tracing form rather than over the phone) to reduce pressure on our services.
- Where circumstances allow, divert resources set aside wholly for Covid-19 work back to 'usual' public health work by also noting that the enforcement of Covid-19 requirements in businesses are likely to continue.

Transportation and the Countryside



Our **Transportation and the Countryside Services** encompasses work in several areas, including parking and street care, traffic and projects, integrated transport, road safety and countryside access and management. The work includes:

- Ensuring that our highways are safe with no barriers for users, including ensuring there is no unnecessary barrier to the use of the highways as a result of activities and events.
- Deliver projects dealing with road safety, improving the network and integrated and sustainable transport in a cost effective, timely and safe way.
- Ensure that new developments that impact our roads network have been designed and implemented safely.
- Providing a network of footpaths and cycle tracks and promote active travel.
- Parking enforcement on and off our streets and maintaining our car parks in a safe manner.
- Licensing the siting of skips and scaffolding on our roads and enforce property owners to remove obstructions off the road and so on.
- Provide safe, quality and cost-effective transport for Gwynedd residents, including public transport, transporting learners to educational establishments, community transport and transport for social services.
- To facilitate this we prepare public transport contracts and service timetables for the various routes, and the fact that over half the routes in Gwynedd are not commercially viable and are therefore dependent on financial support to run them.
- Seek to reduce injuries and accidents on our roads by undertaking appropriate educational initiatives, training and publicity e.g. offering cycling training and training to cross roads safely in schools, specific training for young people on our roads or for older people who continue to drive, and training on various areas such as speeding, wearing a seatbelt and installing baby seats safely.
- Look after the Gwynedd paths network by giving priority to maintaining those paths that give recreational and active travel opportunities within reach of communities. We also deal with

applications to divert and create paths and maintain and update the County's rights of way network maps.

- Maintaining and developing the national Coast Path which is approximately 300km long in Gwynedd.
- Ensuring that we comply with our duty to protect our biodiversity by giving specialist advice on planning applications, developments and enquiries.
- Coordinating the work of managing the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation, as well as protecting and seeking to manage the quality of the Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The **Parking Task Group** was established in 2019 to conduct a review of the Council's existing parking strategy as a great deal had changed since the Council conducted the last review in 2015. Stemming from the review, a new fees structure is now in operation and Members of the Council's Cabinet have authorised the Environment Department, in consultation with the Economy and Community Department, to hold a pilot project to use up to six of the Council's parking sites (or part of the sites) within the Gwynedd Planning Authority Area, to provide facilities for motor homes to stay overnight, including the designation of the locations; but subject to securing capital funding and necessary permissions.

The **Bus Reform Programme** aims to make wider improvements to the network across Wales. Welsh Government has commissioned consultants to deliver this work. The aim is to stabilise the network, increase the number of passengers using the bus service to encourage a modal shift and a change in travel behaviour. We are currently in discussion with Transport for Wales to establish this new network and we hope to commence the operation of parts of this early in 2022/23.

We have also secured funding from the Welsh Government to purchase 6 electric buses that will operate between Blaenau Ffestiniog - Porthmadog - Caernarfon from April 2022 onwards, and we intend to buy a smaller electric bus to travel around villages in Ffestiniog. This is in line with the Welsh Government's wish for public buses and taxis to be carbon neutral by 2028.

Following concerns about road safety outside Penygroes primary and secondary schools and some schools in Caernarfon, there are plans in the pipeline to improve road safety in the vicinity of Ysgol y Gelli, Ysgol Syr Huw Owen and the Arfon Byw'n Iach Centre. This scheme will include traffic calming measures, extension to a car park, provision for taxis and a new footpath. In Penygroes, a feasibility report has been undertaken this focuses on the traffic situation near Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle. Bids for capital funding have been submitted to undertake all these improvements.

It is noted that establishing a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for north Wales can also impact on transportation services as dealing with preparing the Regional Transportation Plan will be one of the CJC's duties. The Council will be expected to contribute towards any costs to create a new unit that will be responsible for preparing the Regional Transportation Plan.

In relation to our biodiversity work, the availability of grants via the **Local Nature Partnership** has enabled us to support and stimulate work that improves nature locally across the County. For 2022/23:

- It is anticipated that financial support from the Welsh Government towards the work of the Local Nature Partnership and the Local Places for Nature measure will continue and, subject to confirmation of funding, it will be possible to continue to support local groups in the Caernarfon, Porthmadog and Bangor areas to undertake work that supports and protects biodiversity. Resources will also be earmarked towards the management and safety work on some of the Department's woodlands and reserves, such as Coed Nyrseri, Tremadog, Coed Doctor Llanberis and Parc y Borth, Borth y Gest.
- New methods of land management of the Lonydd Glas will be trialled with the aim of increasing the variety of wild-flowers parallel to the footpaths.

A grant programme to improve access has allowed improvements to paths across the county and the improvements and tree safety work on Lôn Eifion have been completed, however, the work of widening part of Lôn Las Menai was postponed for environmental reasons. The work has been scheduled for the first months of 2022. A Welsh Government Access Improvement grant programme has enabled a number of improvements to popular and well-known paths across the County, including y Lôn Goed, Llanystumdwy and a multi-use path around Trawsfynydd lake. Subject to grant availability, further improvements will be made during 2022/23.

The main priorities of the Transportation and Countryside Services for 2022/23 are:

- Conducting a pilot project to provide overnight facilities for motorhomes in six parking sites in Gwynedd.
- In response to the climate change challenge and the Council's carbon reduction targets, work will be commenced to identify and measure the value of Council land to absorb carbon. The field of work will place emphasis on woodlands and how they can be managed better together with identifying opportunities to extend or to create new woodlands.

This year we have earmarked £25k to develop the scheme to construct a Cycle Path between Tywyn and Aberdyfi. As a part of the work, the service will need to purchase land near the road verge and discussions with the landowner have been difficult as a result to the social distancing restrictions.

In 2022/23, we intend to hold a meeting with Councillors in the area to give them an update on where we are, the barriers we face and how we propose to proceed with the following scheme.

Negotiating and agreeing on an agreement to create new rights of way or changing the status of existing paths is a process that can take time ad in 21/22 we managed to ensure an agreement to create a section of the coastal path between Talybont and Porth Penrhyn, it is anticipated that the path will open during 2022. The discussion is continuing to ensure a multi-use path between Pwllheli and Llanbedrog.

In recent years sections of the Coast Path has been affected by several landslides that have resulted in work to recover the path, however, there are several locations in the areas of Nefyn, Cricieth and Penllech Beach where there is no further option but to negotiate to divert the path. With the likelihood that further landslides will occur, resources and efforts will need to be directed in response if we wish to protect the Coast Path.

Business, Programmes and Projects Service

These services support other services in the Department to deliver their purpose and the work includes the management of contracts, finance and income; attracting grants and project delivery; managing the development and effective operation of information technology systems; integration of tendering and procurement provision, land charges and providing support and administrative assistance to the different services.

The service also prepares, implements and manages a large number of the Department's contracts; monitors the progress and performance of providers and contractors in terms of agreements, contracts and finance of services; designs the Department's operational systems and support procedures in cost-effective ways and prepares and presents work papers regarding savings, changes to the staffing organisation and fees and charges.

We need to manage the development and implementation of information technology systems, design the operational systems and the procedures for all the services that are used across the Department in cost-effective ways, which will lead to more effective and efficient work practices.

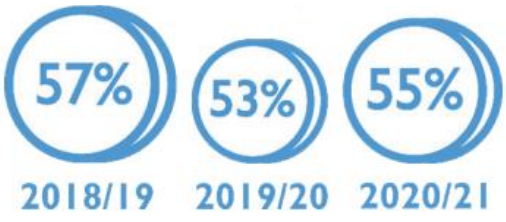
In 2022/23 the business, programmes and projects service will:

- Transfer to a national digital system for Local Land Charges for searches.
- Try to attract grants for improvement plans on our roads network, paths and 'active travel' multi-use network, improve coastal connectivity and undertake Wales ecosystems studies.

Corporate Category Management

This service collaborates and supports the Council's services to spend public funds in a strategic and correct manner by providing a deeper understanding of the market, products, suppliers and the supply chain to develop cross-departmental strategic category plans. The service priorities value for money and keeping the benefits local when undertaking its work. This includes early engagement with the local market and working jointly with

percentage of local expenditure within Gwynedd



Business Wales who provide advice and support to prepare bids. They also work with Council suppliers to encourage them to increase their local expenditure within their supply chains.

During 2022/23, this service will continue to prioritise Best Value for Money and Keeping the Benefits Local as the Council procures goods and services. In addition, we will look at how we can reduce the impact of our procurement activities on the environment and on our carbon emissions, which corresponds with the work noted under Improvement Priority 8 in our Plan to Respond to Climate Change.

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
Live in quality homes within their communities
Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.

Economy and Community Department

The Economy and Community Department comprises a range of services that aim to improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of Gwynedd communities.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

1) Growth Vision for North Wales - (Improvement Priority 1)
2) Create High Value Jobs - (Improvement Priority 1)
3) Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig - (Improvement Priority 1)
4) Promotion of Town Centres - (Improvement Priority 1)
5) Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage - (Improvement Priority 1)
6) Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper - (Improvement Priority 1)
7) Tourism - forming a Sustainable Tourism Plan - (Improvement Priority 1)
8) Regeneration: Forming regeneration plans for our areas - (Improvement Priority 1)
9) More Gwynedd residents to play a full part in the world of work - (Improvement Priority 3)

Here is an outline of the Department's work in 2022/23:

Economic Development Service

The economy's performance has an impact on the quality of life of Gwynedd residents influencing household living costs and income. We collaborate with partners to create the conditions for businesses and enterprises to establish themselves, to be competitive and develop in Gwynedd and to create high quality jobs across the County.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on Gwynedd employers and businesses in 2020/21. A broad range of businesses had to close during the first part of the year and this, in turn, affected the whole economy. As a result, the number of businesses, productivity and value of businesses has reduced. Brexit has also caused uncertainty for a number of businesses, especially businesses that depend on the import and export of key goods, and a broad range of businesses find it difficult to recruit enough workers.

Salary levels in Gwynedd continue to be much lower than in other parts of Wales and the productivity value of Gwynedd businesses is low compared to other areas. It is therefore important that Gwynedd Council takes proactive steps to create the conditions that will stimulate economic growth at a time of economic uncertainty.

There were 16,010 businesses, enterprises and community companies in Gwynedd in 2019. The Department provides information, advice and practical support to assist them to establish, stabilise and develop in order to support and create jobs. The Service gives specific attention to supporting businesses by providing different business support and innovation promotion packages for businesses by encouraging them to make better use of technology particularly in the most rural areas.

2,188

grants have been shared with Gwynedd businesses in 2020/21, to the value of £4.3M



The service works closely with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to develop projects to improve the region's economic productivity and to create higher value jobs in the county. As a result of the significant increase in employment we also work with partners to support businesses to employ workers and the people of Gwynedd to gain access to jobs.

During the next year we will continue to try to ascertain the long-term impact of COVID-19 and Brexit on Gwynedd businesses and raise awareness of support sources to enable businesses to cope with the change. We will also review our priorities in order to ensure that we provide help that benefits the people of Gwynedd and contribute to maintaining and regenerating our communities.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service

The tourism industry is a key employer in Gwynedd. With an economic value of nearly £1.35 billion, over 18,200 people worked in this field in 2019, but the visitor economy has been affected substantially by COVID-19 with businesses being closed for substantial periods and cancelled events. The value of the sector in 2020 dropped substantially to £575 million and employment fell to 9,570. As the restrictions were relaxed during the summer the number of visitors to the main tourist destinations increased significantly placing pressure on local communities. In order to be able to respond to the concerns of communities and businesses, the Council reviewed the field and adopted a series of principles to enable the sector to recover and develop sustainably in the future for the benefit and welfare of the people of Gwynedd.

77,570

followers on Snowdonia, Mountains and Coast's social media in 2020/21



In 2022/23, the service will focus on realising and embedding the Gwynedd and Snowdonia Sustainable Visitor Economy Plan 2035 and its Action Plan.

Maritime Services

As the Gwynedd landscape and natural environment is so important for the county's prosperity, the Department tries to ensure **safe resources of quality in our harbours, our marinas and on beaches** in Gwynedd in order to create a recreational resource to promote the well-being of local residents and visitors. The Department is responsible for managing up to 301km of coastline and beaches but are focusing efforts on managing the main award-winning beaches. It also manages 4 harbours in Aberdyfi, Barmouth, Porthmadog and Pwllheli as well as two marinas, namely Hafan Pwllheli that offers moorings for 400 boats and Victoria Dock in Caernarfon that offers moorings for 95 boats.

1,777 boats and **923** personal water craft were registered in 2018/19



Regeneration Programmes Service

Several economic, social, cultural and environmental factors combine to make Gwynedd a special place to live, work and venture. However, market forces are not strong in some communities and they need a boost at times in order to reverse decline, and to respond to the challenges they face before achieving future potential. This is a process of regeneration and it **is an intentional effort to collaborate with Gwynedd residents and partners to improve areas.**

It is not possible for one Department to achieve the aims of the Gwynedd Regeneration agenda alone. In order to make a long-term difference and make the best use of resources, there must be collaboration across Council Departments and with a variety of national, regional and local partners. The Regeneration Programmes Services is coordinating these efforts across the Council and is leading on a series of projects that have been identified as priorities by Gwynedd communities. One obvious field that has been identified by communities is the condition of town centres and concerns about the role of commercial centres in the future.

During 2022/23, the service will give particular attention to town centre regeneration programmes, and will target areas where the greatest change has been seen in retail patterns.

Community Support Service

The Department provides services in order for Gwynedd residents to make our communities a better place to live. **It is important that voluntary groups and local enterprises are supported to respond to local opportunities and needs.** The Council has a network of officers to support and empower communities and 'CIST' grants to support specific community projects.



57 community organisation projects were supported during 2019/20

We will target some communities more than others giving specific attention to planning support for areas with the most needs.

In 2022/23, we will focus on developing local regeneration plans for each of the 13 catchment areas in Gwynedd.

Libraries Service

The Council provides a service in nine main libraries, four community libraries and three library click and collect links across the county. It is important for Gwynedd residents to be able to borrow books and audio books, and to download e-books, audio e-books and e-magazines of their choice. 463,370 items were borrowed by Gwynedd residents in 2019/20 and 77,641 items in 2020/21 (a reduction due to the restrictions on the service because of the pandemic). However, not all Gwynedd residents can reach their local library and therefore the Council also provides a Library Service for the Home that visits 479 individuals every month. Gwynedd Libraries are also commissioned by the Education Department to provide the Lori Ni Service, which visits every Primary, Special and All-through School twice a year to lend reading books for 3-11 year olds. We also provide a Theatre/Cinema and a Library in the Neuadd Dwyfor building in Pwllheli.

Gwynedd residents use the library for so much more than just to borrow books. They are welcoming places for people to use for various activities - to get information about services, together with help and support to find on-line information. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Adults Education Partnership, with assistance from the Adults Community Education Grant, is working with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Adults Education Wales to offer a number of short courses and taster sessions in a range of fields. We also hold activities for Welsh Learners, and hold sessions for infants and story time for children. Through our Better Reading Collections, it is possible to gain access to trusted information on health and wellbeing matters, including Dementia and Mental Health. Gwynedd residents can also use one of the 96 computers or Wi-Fi, in the libraries for free to seek work, or to access local services, as well as being able to photocopy and scan. A programme of films, shows and cultural events are provided in Neuadd Dwyfor, Pwllheli.

The Gwynedd Libraries service received an excellent report for its performance in 2019/20, which shows that the service is performing well within the Welsh Public Libraries Standards Assessment Framework. As a result of COVID-19 libraries have been closed to the public for extensive periods, however alternative services, including click and collect have been available.

During 2022/23, we will:

- continue to collaborate with communities and promote access to the service, ensuring that our provision reflects the requirements and needs of the people of Gwynedd
- collaborate as the Gwynedd and Anglesey Adults Education Partnership to plan a comprehensive programme of learning opportunities for the people of Gwynedd in communities
- fully re-open Neuadd Dwyfor to the public and prepare a business case for future support

35,596
Gwynedd residents are Library members



Archives Service

9,843
documents seen by the public in 2019-20

The Council has a statutory responsibility to **protect our public records and to ensure that people have access to them**. We will do this through the two record offices we have in Gwynedd - Caernarfon Record Office and the Meirionnydd Record Office in Dolgellau.

Gwynedd Record Offices have a wide range of documents, photographs, maps and newspapers with the oldest document dating back to 1176. There is a range of public, official and private collections that reflect the culture and heritage of Gwynedd communities. Record Offices provide taster sessions and genealogy courses and collaborate with Gwynedd schools.

During 2022/23, we will:

- lead on collaborating with archives across the North and with the Welsh Government to implement the North Wales Archives Partnership Business Case, which seeks to identify opportunities to make the best use of archives resources in the region for the benefit of the people of North Wales
- identify the cost of digitising the collections and collaborate to identify systems to enable access to digital collections.
- highlight the opportunities that Gwynedd archives can offer to the Curriculum for Wales.

Museums and Arts Service

64,000
people have engaged with our museums in 2019/20

The Service runs two museums in Gwynedd, namely Storiel in Bangor and the Lloyd George Museum in Llanystumdwy, and is responsible for looking after their collections; providing access to them and arranging activities for our communities.

Much of our work in the field of community arts targets **health, well-being, education and tackling loneliness projects**. The Service is also responsible for allocating arts grants in order to support arts standards and arts opportunities for all.

The museums were reopened in 2021 with some elements opening gradually such as loans and activities. The arts activities are provided virtually; with packages being sent to our communities and some being physically arranged on sites from October 2021.

Our aim will be to continue enriching the lives of Gwynedd residents by promoting an understanding of our unique heritage and culture.

During 2022/23, we will:

- work with the Friends of the Lloyd George Museum to create a new way to manage the Museum
- ensure the success of the Storiel scheme and establish a Development Trust for it so that it may work with the arts and heritage sector in Gwynedd in the future
- work with the arts sector to realise our plan for the arts and implement its objectives
- contribute to the development of a Culture Plan for Gwynedd.

Leisure and Country Parks Service

We collaborate with partners locally, regionally and nationally in order to inspire, support and enable Gwynedd residents to be active and live healthy lives.

The health trends of Gwynedd residents are slightly lower than the national average. However, with the levels of obesity among four-year-olds in Gwynedd amongst the highest in Wales, it is crucial that Gwynedd Council and partners respond and create the conditions to promote healthy living.

Gwynedd Council has a network of 12 leisure centres across Gwynedd which attract 1.3 million visits every year. This provision enables Gwynedd residents of all ages to learn new skills and enjoy participating in active activities in safe locations.



91% of users satisfied or very satisfied with the Byw'n Iach service in 2020

Gwynedd Council is committed to continuing to provide these facilities and has established the Byw'n Iach Cyf. Company to run the centres on its behalf in future. The Department has awarded a contract to the Company to manage the service from April 2019 and we are monitoring the contract regularly in order to assure the quality of the service. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the centres have had to close for extensive periods during 2020 and 2021.

As well as managing these facilities, the Council has also entered into a contract with the Byw'n Iach company to provide key programmes to improve inclusion in sport and fitness activities. The Community Sports Programme promotes active and inclusive activities for young people and older people in centres, schools, clubs and in the community and the Exercise Referral Scheme helps to reduce the impact of conditions that prevent the residents of Gwynedd from exercising and improving their health. There has been a significant increase in the number of clients for this service, especially in the fields of dementia and chronic conditions and there is clear evidence that shows the impact of this investment on the quality of life and health.

The Council also manages the country parks in Glynllifon and Padarn. These parks are important heritage sites and are popular attractions to visitors. However, the parks are also valuable assets to improve the well-being of Gwynedd residents and to promote healthy living. The Department will seek to secure more local benefit for communities from these assets in the future.

During 2022/23, we will continue to support Byw'n Iach and will:

- invest in sport and recreation activities in response to the demand
- collaboration with North Wales Sports to promote inclusion in sport
- upgrade the facilities of Parc Padarn and develop options for managing the Glynllifon and Parc Padarn Countryside Parks in the future.

Local priorities have been noted in the Council Plan since 2018/19 which responded to needs that had been raised by local Councillors. The Department has used these priorities when developing their wider work programmers and, therefore, a number of the needs are addressed through work that has already been described in this Department Plan.

We have listed local priorities below alongside the programme or project that has been planned in order to respond to that local and county need.

Local Priorities,	**Programme**
In consultation with local councillors in the Porthmadog, Ffestiniog and Penllyn areas in the Summer of 2017, an aspiration was noted to attract more long-term well-paid jobs to improve the economic situation of local residents. The Create High Value Jobs priority is developing new opportunities in Trawsfynydd and Llanbedr that will benefit these communities. In the Porthmadog area, it was also noted that the local councillors were concerned about the condition of some dormant sites in the area and in response we will be looking at opportunities to support, improve or reuse the sites.	• High Value Jobs • Promoting Town Centres
When we consulted councillors in the Dolgellau area it became evident that the poor connectivity of mobile phones and broadband hinders residents and the area's businesses. We are seeking to secure priority for the county from Welsh Government for plans in the field by following the principles of Digital Gwynedd.	• Growth Vision for North Wales • Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig
In the areas of Dyffryn Ogwen and Dyffryn Nantlle, local councillors noted that the promotion and regeneration of the high street was a local priority and we have made outline applications for some regeneration activities in the areas.	• Promoting Town Centres
In consultation with Bangor area councillors, their wish to improve the appearance of the local area was noted and to respond to empty shops, noting a wish to work with partners such as local businesses and Town and Community Councils to generate income to contribute to the work. This, in turn, would support local businesses and tradespeople. We are considering the opportunities to build on existing work jointly with the Bangor Business Improvement District and out partners locally and regionally to plan a response. Additional grant funding to maximise the benefit of the interest free Loans Scheme has been secured.	• Promoting Town Centres
There is also a link to the county level priority to implement the Gwynedd Slate Heritage plan. The regeneration of these areas should improve any negative image that stems from being post-industrialised areas and release their potential.	• Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage
During the Ffestiniog area consultation session, it became apparent that there were concerns amongst local councillors regarding the future of the Community Centre and services located there. The Regeneration team held a recent survey on public buildings across Gwynedd. This indicated that ineffective use was being made of a number of public buildings in Blaenau Ffestiniog including the Community Centre. In a time of financial hardship, there is an opportunity here to share resources better in the future.	• Community Support Service

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to sustain themselves and their families

Live in quality homes within our communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.

Housing and Property Department

The Housing and Property Department is a fairly new department, established during 2019 with the aim of facilitating the Council's ability to face one of the biggest challenges in the county, which is to ensure an adequate supply of suitable, good-quality housing to address the needs of a changing population.

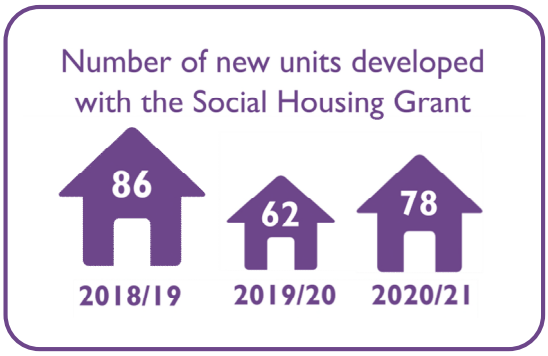
The Department is also responsible for managing the Council's property assets in order to ensure they are suitable for providing services to the county's residents.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

1) **A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd:** Implementing and delivering projects within our Housing Plan in order to increase the opportunities for local people to have a suitable home within their communities - Improvement Priority 4.
2) **Easy and clear access to an advice and enquiries service on housing matters:** Establish a single front door and helpdesk for the public in order to help them with their housing problems - Improvement Priority 4.

Housing Matters

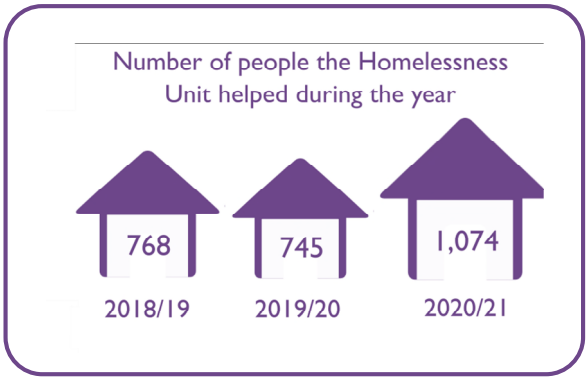
The Council uses Welsh Government's Social Housing Grant to facilitate the Housing Associations' ability to build more houses for local people. Our Housing Action Plan sets a challenge to try to build 500 new social houses by 2026. We now have a new Local Housing Allocation Policy, so that Gwynedd's residents will be given priority for the tenancy of these new houses.



Homelessness

The Homelessness Service provides advice and support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The team fulfills the Council's statutory duty to meet the requirements of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. Their work includes:

- helping to prevent homelessness before it occurs
- assessing the accommodation and support needs of individuals and families who are threatened with homelessness



- helping to find somewhere else to live when an individual or family are homeless or facing homelessness
- providing temporary accommodation in emergency cases, and securing accommodation for those in priority need.

Temporary Accommodation



The service provides many temporary accommodations until a permanent property is available for homeless people, for example two hostels in the Council's ownership that provide self-contained living units and support from staff to enable to individual to live independently and learn life skills. At present, there are 57 properties leased by private owners, and 27 properties leased by Housing Associations. Accommodation was provided to 816 families/individuals in 2020/21. The number who are facing homelessness has been increasing consistently for some years and this pattern continues, putting increasing pressure on the service to deal with the need to accommodate people at short-notice.

Tenancy support



Since many homeless people are vulnerable, support is provided to ensure that individuals can maintain their tenancy and avoid becoming homeless again. Support is provided on a number of issues such as claiming benefits, support for the maintenance of accommodation, understanding rights and responsibilities, and applying for grants for furnishing a property. We are currently supporting 150 individuals across Gwynedd.

Housing Support Grant

The early intervention grant programme is the Housing Support Grant, established in 2019 which helps prevent people from becoming homeless, stabilise their situation in terms of housing, or help individuals that could become homeless to find a home and retain it.

The Housing Support Grant brings together three existing grants, namely the Supporting People Programme, Homelessness Prevention Grant and Rent Smart Wales.

The services that are funded by the grant enhances the statutory service and assists to ensure that the general offer helps people find the right homes and gives them the right support to succeed. It supports vulnerable people to address problems such as debts, employment, tenancy management, substance misuse, violence against women, domestic and sexual abuse, and mental health issues.

Social Housing Register

The Gwynedd Housing Options Team administrates the Common Housing Register and works in partnership with the social housing providers in the county, namely Adra, Grŵp Cynefin and North Wales Housing. The group's primary aim is to prioritise access to social housing on the grounds of the greatest need in our communities and to provide advice to residents on the housing options that are available in Gwynedd. With the support of the Gwynedd Housing Options Team, 543 families managed to secure a new social tenancy in 2020/21.

Number of families given new tenancies in social housing during the year

2018/19 - **621**
2019/20 - **696**
2020/21 - **543**

The new Common Housing Allocation Policy, that has been operational since October 2020, prioritises the residents of Gwynedd for social housing and replaces the old points system for allocating housing.

Refugee relocation scheme

Since 2016 Gwynedd has housed and provided support for 8 families (40 individuals) to resettle in Gwynedd under the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement programme. The scheme has been very successful and we take pride in seeing these families resettle in their new communities.

As a result of this programme's success, the Council has now committed to welcome up to 20 of the most vulnerable refugees identified by the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as part of the Worldwide Refugee programme (now known as the 'United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme') over the next three years. Because of the pandemic, it was not possible to implement the scheme over the last year but we will take advantage of the opportunity to implement the scheme wherever practical.

Following the recent events in Afghanistan, we have been collaborating closely with the Home Office and continue to do so, and currently 5 individuals who have fled Afghanistan have been housed in Gwynedd and are receiving support to resettle within the community through the Re-locating Afghans Support Policy Plan.

Travellers' site

There is a statutory requirement on every Local Authority to meet the need for suitable sites for travellers. We have been managing a purpose-built site in Llandygai for many years, and following the receipt of grant aid from the Welsh Government, a £1.8M investment was made there recently to improve the facilities and expand the provision to meet the demand within the county.

Housing Enforcement



The purpose of the Enforcement Team is to ensure good-quality, warm and safe housing for tenants within the county. We are responsible for enforcing standards in 9,000 private-rented housing and 8,500 social housing in Gwynedd.

We are also in charge of the HMO Licensing Scheme which checks that such houses reach the expected standards. At present, 181 houses in multiple occupation have received a licence from us following a detailed inspection process.

During 2020/21, the Covid-19 pandemic had an effect on the service of this unit, as many other units, and it was not possible to conduct inspections and visit sites in the same way, and this is reflected in the data for the year.

Number of people assisted by resolving hazards in their homes

2018/19 - **1,454**

2019/20 - **807**

2020/21 - **107**

The Unit also works jointly with Rent Smart Wales to maintain a national register of rented housing, and in a normal year, inspects dwellings for Home Office cases, deals with complaints relating to cases of nuisance, deals with problems resulting from empty houses and deals with cases of illegal eviction.

The Covid-19 restrictions prevented us from holding most inspections, however we have been holding inspections on urgent matters and have recommenced with the general inspections since the rules have relaxed. We are waiting for the figures next year to reflect the number of inspections completed in a normal year.

Housing Alterations

This Unit is responsible for promoting the independence and well-being of Gwynedd residents by providing timely and high-standard alterations to the homes of children and adults with physical disabilities. Around £1.3m a year is invested on schemes such as creating accessible bathrooms, installing ramps outside the house, building extensions etc. as needed. Around 15 of these are referrals received from hospitals so as to enable patients to return home. We also fund around 750 minor alterations a year, such as installing handrails, mobile ramps and other small alterations.

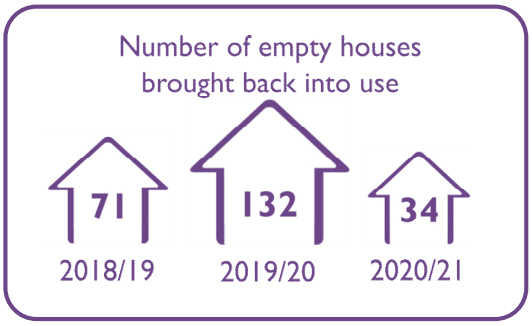
Number of houses modified for people with physical disabilities

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
202	217	145

The unit administers interest-free loans for repairing houses that are in a poor state and which are owned by residents on low incomes, and there is significant and constant demand for these loans.

During 2020/21, there was a reduction in the number of alterations completed due to the effects of Covid-19 and Brexit, with contractors and/or Gwynedd residents self-isolating, individuals not happy to allow contractors into the house to complete work due to Covid, or lack of availability of materials outside of Wales.

Empty Homes

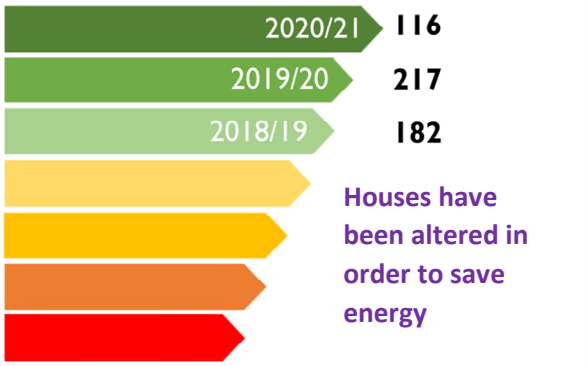


There are approximately 1,300 empty houses in Gwynedd at present, and we have an important role to play in attempting to bring these houses back into use in order to contribute towards the number of affordable housing that is available to local people. Since 2008, over 600 empty houses have been brought back into use through methods such as offering grants to first-time buyers, providing loans to landlords or private house owners, and the use of enforcement powers. This led to us being able to provide a home to over 1,000 local people in houses that had formerly been empty for some time.

During 2020/21, the Housing Action Plan was established, a plan that explains how we will implement our Housing Strategy over the next six years. The Plan has been operational since April 2021 and this will be driving the work on empty houses from now on. Consequently, a fall is seen in the figures of empty houses that have been brought back into use in 2020/21, however we trust that this figure will rise regularly during the next years.

Fuel Poverty

Most of the Government's resources in this field are directed towards the Housing Associations but the Council has also been able to make a valuable contribution in this important field.



Fuel costs to keep homes warm have increased significantly, and this has an impact on the income of Gwynedd residents, pushing many families into poverty or further into poverty. The Council is collaborating with the private sector on an Eco and Nyth plan to extent the number of houses that receive support measures.

The Council is collaborating with the Welsh Government on how we improve the condition of houses in order to install the low carbon measures that will in turn lead to reducing fuel poverty. We are in the process of establishing a one stop shop that offers a convenient point of contact for people who need support and answers to their fuel poverty problems.

We are ensuring that arrangements are in place to maximise these programmes to help us to deliver the Housing Action Plan, together with ensuring that these provisions are linked to broader tackling poverty programmes.

In 2020/21, the number of ECO applications had reduced, partly as a result of Covid-19 and the fact that companies can't visit Gwynedd homes as easy.

Property Matters

The purpose of the Property Service is to ensure that we have properties that are suitable to provide the Council's services, and to manage our property assets effectively and efficiently.

The Council owns 965 buildings located on 477 sites across the County. These are mostly buildings used to provide services to the residents of Gwynedd but we also own and use non-operational properties to promote the Council's objectives e.g. economic development, the provision of social care etc. Many of these non-operational properties are leased to local businesses and other organisations, which generates an annual revenue income of around £1.1M for the Council.

Maintenance



The Buildings Maintenance Unit provides a 24/7 help-desk to deal with approximately 10,000 requests a year for building repairs. Many of these are requests for work that require an urgent response to prevent the building from having to close.

In order to carry out this work we work in partnership with a number of local contractors, but we have also developed an in-house team of tradesmen who can undertake building work, joinery, electrical and plumbing work.

Property Safety

We ensure that our buildings are safe to use for providing services to the residents of Gwynedd by ensuring that we comply with the various statutory duties and ensuring that we have an effective maintenance programme. We manage risks relating to asbestos, Legionnaire's disease, Radon and fire risks and ensure that electrical, gas, oil, water etc. systems are safe for the thousands of residents who spend time in our buildings every day.

Property Development



A concept design of the new school in Cricieth that will open in September 2023

The purpose of the Unit is to develop new buildings or convert and renovate existing buildings to improve the service provided to the residents of Gwynedd.

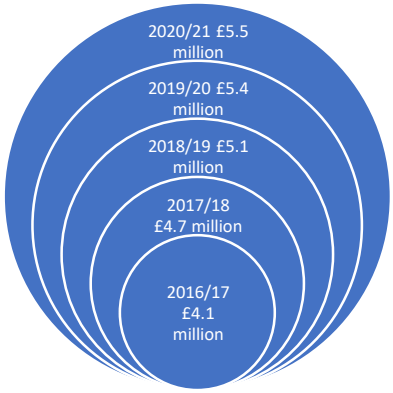
By working closely with the Education Modernisation Team, the Property Development Unit has completed a £60M programme of new school buildings over the past 8 years, and a new £47M programme is now being developed over the course of the next four years.

The team is also undertaking a programme of early year units and the County's language centres to meet the need in many individual communities across Gwynedd. In addition, the team has embarked on the delivery of a programme of Housing Action Plan developments, in response to the housing needs of Gwynedd's residents.

Estate Management

Our purpose is to ensure that the Council receives the best value in managing its portfolio of property assets, and ensuring that only those assets which we genuinely need are retained. Over the past decade we have been able to reduce the size of the Council's property estate by over 25%, ensuring that our spending on the maintenance and provision of buildings is kept to a minimum, in order to release financial resources for the provision of front-line services. This will continue as opportunities arise, but by now we also procure property and consider any assets that are no longer required for providing a service to deliver the Housing Action Plan.

Cumulative income from property sales



The Estates team is also responsible for managing all the Council's leases including the Smallholdings Estate and the Industrial Properties portfolio which includes the Intec and Mentec Enterprise Centres, generating an annual rental income of over £1.1M.

Managing Offices



The Offices Team provides office space for approximately 1,500 staff in seven large buildings, including all the related services associated with this such as care-taking, cleaning and security arrangements for all the buildings and their users. We also let office space to external tenants.

Cleaning Service



We also provide a **cleaning service** for a large number of the various buildings used to provide the Council's front-line services. We are also a provider for external organisations.

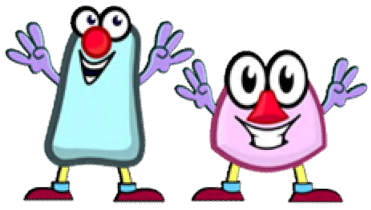
Energy Conservation Unit



Following the adoption of our Carbon Management Plan, the Energy Team is implementing a number of projects to **reduce carbon emissions**. Since the adoption of the Carbon Management Plan in 2010, up to 2020 we have succeeded in reducing the carbon emissions from our activities by 58.3%. In accordance with Welsh Governments changes, the Council will report using new methodology from now on, and this will be reflected in next year's figures. The work carried out by the team to reduce our usage has created annual revenue savings of over £1.1M for the Council. We have started working on identifying how we can contribute further to the Council's aspiration to tackle the climate emergency.

Our Energy Conservation unit has succeeded to establish an energy purchase framework that enables us to secure a cheaper price for our electricity and gas. By doing this we will save approximately £916,000 over four years. In addition, the framework creates an income for the Council as other councils and organisations use it.

A programme to raise awareness among school children has been an important part of this work and we have used characters such as Sbarci and Fflic to do so. www.sbarciafflic.org



Pest Control and Dog Wardens



We offer pest control services for the control and culling of all sorts of pests, through contracts and by responding to daily calls by the public for assistance to control pests in their homes or businesses.

We also provide the statutory service of looking after stray dogs.



Telecare



We provide a service for the installation and maintenance of Telecare equipment to the residents of Gwynedd. This is a hugely popular service amongst vulnerable individuals and their families, where the use of Assistive Technology enables people to continue to live independently in their own home.

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
Live in quality homes within our communities
Live in a natural Welsh society
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.

Gwynedd Consultancy Department (YGC)

The Gwynedd Consultancy Department (YGC) operates as a commercial department that generates income for the Council, whilst also undertaking statutory functions in water and flood management. By combining the commercial and statutory, YGC can maintain high quality jobs whilst retaining expertise within the county. The Department specialises in the fields of engineering, construction and climate change in relation to flooding and coastal erosion.

Water and Flooding

As a result of Climate Change, the threat of coastal erosion and flooding is exacerbating. Our intention is, where possible, to manage and reduce the impacts of these threats on the people of Gwynedd. This work is an important part of the Council's Climate Change plan.

Forward Planning and Identifying Risk

In accordance with the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), it is essential that we plan ahead to keep our communities safe, healthy and viable for the future. Climate change is creating specific challenges, and flooding has been acknowledged as an international priority.

In order to plan ahead for these challenges, we are creating a picture of flood risk across Gwynedd by analysing the data that we are collecting, as well as other official external data, such as climate and sea level projections. All of this then forms the basis to our Local Strategy Flood Risk Management.

The Service also encourages collaboration between the whole Council and various stakeholders (such as Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water, and our communities), to ensure that we take every available opportunity to collaborate to adapt and protect from flooding. Successful grant applications ensure that investment is made in Gwynedd's infrastructure which increases the resilience of our communities in light of flood risks. We have identified that ongoing support is required in every community in order to ensure sustainable resilience to mitigate against these risks in the future.

Below is a summary of the data collection which feeds into this work.

Investigating Flooding Incidents



There is a duty upon us to investigate flooding incidents under the Flood and Water Management Act. Since the Act came into force in 2010, on average YGC has investigated 49 incidents of indoor flooding each year. We also gather information by identifying faults or by receiving any flood-related concerns from Gwynedd residents. Our aim is to respond to these concerns as soon as possible.

Flood Prevention Asset Maintenance



21 km
of coastal defences are maintained

We are responsible for maintaining 226 coastal assets which extend along 21km of coastal defences, and 55 assets that manage the risk of flooding from ordinary watercourses. Surveying and maintaining these assets is essential as we protect Gwynedd's communities. We give a score from 1 to 5 (with 1 meaning 'as new') to each asset, and set a condition target for each one. Our aim is for every asset in Gwynedd to meet its condition target to ensure that they mitigate against flood risks for the people of Gwynedd. We also maintain and implement a coastal monitoring programme, which assesses changes to the coastline. This, due to climate change, will increasingly affect our coastal communities in the years to come.

Our Role in the Planning System

Gwynedd Council is the Local Lead Flood Authority and therefore YGC has a role to prevent developments and activities that could contribute to the flood risk. These mainly include:

- Providing advice on planning applications in relation to surface water flooding and the requirements of the new guidelines on planning for floods and coastal erosion that are operational from 1 December 2021.
- Advising on work in watercourses and approving relevant applications - on average per annum, we receive 50 applications that affect or prevent the flow in an ordinary watercourse. We ensure that the construction work is done in a way that has the least possible impact on flood risk and the environment. There is a statutory requirement upon us to respond in 28 days; however, the aim in every case is to approve applications as soon as possible.

Sustainable Drainage Systems Consent

Since January 2019, specific types of developments need to receive Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) consent. Before commencing the building work, developers must consider how they will manage water on the site in order to ensure the quality of the water and reduce the risk of flooding in the future.

We are a SUDS approval body and offer pre-application advice to assist developers to meet the requirements.

The number of applications have increased recently from 12 in 2019/20 to 48 in 2020/21

During 2022/23, we will:

- **Continue to prioritise flood prevention work in the county, and develop plans in order to mitigate flooding risks for the people of Gwynedd.**
- **Ensure that we can influence the process of renewing the Shoreline Plan 2, that will establish the long-term vision in relation to Gwynedd's coast.**
- **Change our systems in order to meet the requirements of the new guidelines on planning for floods and coastal erosion.**

Commercial Consultative Services



YGC design and manage projects relating to roads, structures, buildings, etc. in Gwynedd and across Wales. We create and maintain quality jobs that would not otherwise be available in the county, and as we attract fees for our work we are contributing towards the costs of maintaining Gwynedd Council.

We provide various consultative services in the following fields:

- building and infrastructure,
- water and environment,
- technical, and
- business and project management.

Financial Performance

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Turnover: **£5.3m**	Turnover: **£5.3m**	Turnover: **£6m**	Turnover: **£6.7m**
Profit **+£81k**	Profit **+£59k**	Profit **+£11k**	Profit **+£63k**
target exceeded	*target exceeded*	*target exceeded*	*target exceeded*

As part of these services, we can undertake architectural, surveying, design, inspection and assessment, hydraulic modelling and geo-technical work, and much more.

This work also plays an essential role in our ability to meet our statutory requirements in relation to flooding and coastal erosion. Our ability to attract fees for our consultation work enables us to build technical expertise within the Council, and retain that expertise and employ local people.

In turn, this expertise enables us to successfully attract grants by developing innovative and sustainable flood risk management work plans. Therefore, the consultation services are essential to allow us to protect the people of Gwynedd in light of the impact of climate change.

In 2022/23, we will be focusing on adding to our list of clients in order to increase the investment we attract, whilst also expanding the range of professional services that we can offer.

The day-to-day work of this Department contributes towards the following Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives,**
- **Live in quality homes within our communities**
- **Make the most of the county's natural environmental beauty.**

Corporate Support Department

The department reinforces the Council's ability to provide the best services to Gwynedd's residents through a combination of support, specialist and front-line services. This provides an opportunity for the remainder of the Council to focus on the other services that are provided directly to the public.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Keeping the Benefit Local - (Improvement Priority 1)
- Women in Leadership - (Improvement Priority 3)
- Implementing the Equality Plan (Ensuring Fairness for Everyone) - (Improvement Priority 3)
- Native Welsh Place Names - (Improvement Priority 5)
- Promoting the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services - (Improvement Priority 5)
- The Welsh Language and Public Services - (Improvement Priority 5)
- Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively - (Improvement Priority 7)
- Planning the Workforce - (Improvement Priority 7)
- Implement the Ffordd Gwynedd Work Programme Plan (Empowering Units to Implement Ffordd Gwynedd) - (Improvement Priority 7)

Customer Contact

Galw Gwynedd, from its centre in Penrhyndeudraeth, responds to telephone calls, e-mail messages and online service requests on behalf of Council services. Siop Gwynedd in Dolgellau, Pwllheli and Caernarfon operate as a combined one-stop-shop and reception for the same purpose, as well as operating as a first point of contact for the Tax and Benefits Services.

Answer phone calls, on average within 47 seconds

Galw Gwynedd receives approximately 190,000 telephone calls annually, and the Gwynedd Shops receive at least 20,000 visitors each year.

In future, we will:

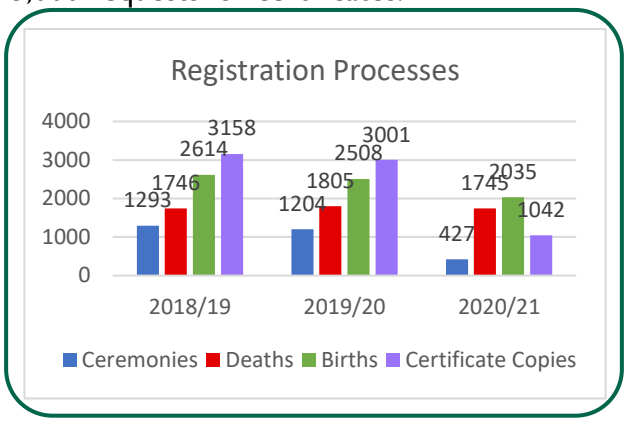
- review and introduce new arrangements for the switchboard service to improve customer services
- restructure in order to ensure that the full range of services can be provided in each of the Customer Contact Centres
- develop the current use of web-chat and extend the support to online service users.

Registration

The Council provides a registration service from four locations across the county.

During the past year, 5,600 marriages, civic partnerships, births and deaths were registered and we processed more than 3,000 requests for certificates.
In future, we will:

- develop self-service for requests for certificates
- strengthen our service continuation plans.



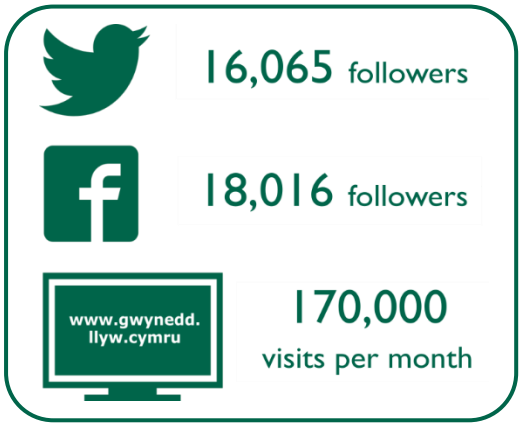
Communication and Engagement

The Communication and Engagement Service facilitates a two-way dialogue with the residents of Gwynedd, staff and councillors.

This communication includes maintaining a proactive relationship with the media, maintaining the Council's website and social media accounts, publishing Newyddion Gwynedd and coordinating opportunities for Gwynedd's residents to give their views on the Council's work and maintain the Council's internal communication arrangements.

In future, we will:

- improve the procedure for identifying and prioritising the main messages and the main issues in order to ensure that the people of Gwynedd receive the information they require
- undertake development work to ensure that the Council's website continues to meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd
- strengthen and extend our internal communication.



Council Business Support

This service coordinates arrangements for publishing the Council Plan, Equality Plan and performance reports in addition to advising on project arrangements and managing projects, service reviews and scrutiny investigations. We will assist the Council's services to give fair consideration to the equality and rights of each individual, consider the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and assist officers and councillors to challenge plans and working practices.

Another element of the service's work is supporting the work of the *Public Services Board* where Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils, with the Health Board, Natural Resources Wales and the Fire and Rescue Service, collaborate closely in order to improve the well-being of residents in several fields.

In future, we will:

- implement the work programme within the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 in order to ensure that equality is embedded in all the Council's work
- coordinate the work of drawing up the Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan for 2023-28
- coordinate the work of drawing up the Council Plan for 2023-28

Research and Information

In order for all Council services to work successfully in accordance with the Ffordd Gwynedd principles, they need to understand the needs of their customers, to be able to measure whether or not they are delivering what's important to their customers, and to make decisions based on the evidence of the impact on the people of Gwynedd. To achieve this, gathering, recording and analysing information is vital. We are here to support the Council's services to do this.

As so much information is kept to provide Council services, including information about people, we need to ensure that the arrangements for creating, retaining, sharing and using this information are working correctly and that they comply with legislation.

In future, we will:

- collaborate with the Business Support Service to improve the evidence that is available for Council services regarding the nature and needs of local areas in Gwynedd
- develop the information and analyses that Council managers receive regarding their workforce and make this information more accessible
- make the most of the potential of the Council's new document and records management system (iGwynedd) and help services to develop things that facilitate ways of working and reduce unnecessary steps

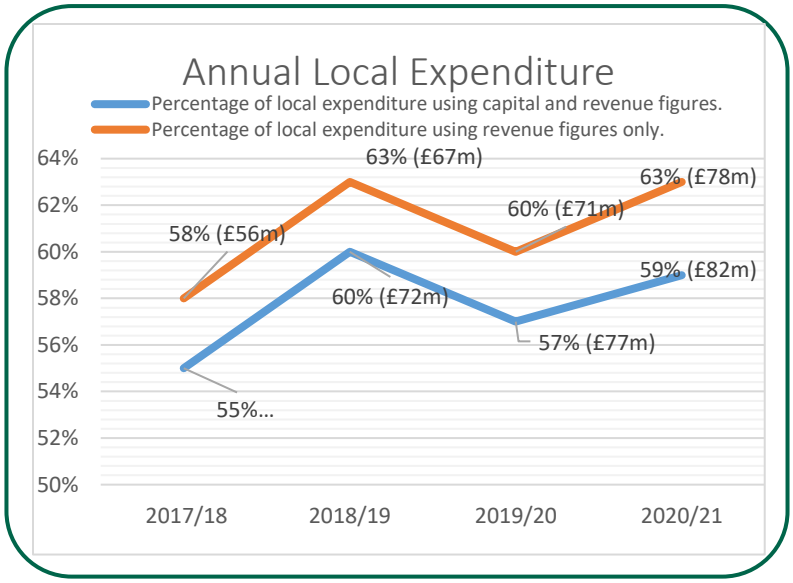
- ensure that information retention and sharing arrangements and practices mean that the use of data is safe and complies with legislation at all times.

Procurement

The Council spends over £118m annually on procuring, or purchasing, various goods and services from revenue budgets. In 2019/20, the locally purchased goods and services was equivalent to £71 million to the local economy.

In future, we will:

- strengthen and develop the procurement expertise within the Council and review what we are currently purchasing
- adopt best practice in the field and introduce further schemes to support the market
- develop our electronic purchasing systems in order to respond to new requirements



Democracy and Language

The Democracy and Language Service is responsible for three specific fields, namely democracy, translation and language. We are responsible for undertaking the committees process and offer various support to 69 councillors now. The number of councillors has been reduced due to changes by the Boundary Commission.

All the Council's services are available to the public in Welsh and English, but the Council's administrative language is Welsh. Therefore, we promote and enable the use of the Welsh language in all our services. This is supported by the provision of written and oral translation services for staff, councillors and the county's residents.

The Council wishes to see a situation where Gwynedd continues to be a stronghold for the Welsh language, and that it is an everyday language that is heard and spoken naturally by children, young people and adults across the county.

In future, we will:

- hold meetings of the Council's main committees in accordance with the adopted committee framework, while web-casting in accordance with statutory requirements and continuing to develop our arrangements more effectively/efficiently
- support new councillors and support councillors in new roles following the May 2022 Local Government elections
- continue to promote the Welsh language to ensure that everyone can live their lives through the medium of Welsh
- begin the evaluation and review of our Welsh Language Promotion Plan.

Support Service



The Support Service provides administrative support such as arranging appointments, ordering goods, printing, paying bills and distributing post for Council staff.

In 2021/22, the service has focused on rationalising the administrative arrangements, reducing unnecessary paperwork, and enabling staff and managers to access service and information directly and promptly.

In future, we will:

- input recruitment and appointment arrangements, in an effort to reduce internal bureaucracy and to facilitate the task for individuals when applying for a post in the Council
- change the procedure of communication and administration from paper to electronic means
- research work to be undertaken on the human resources systems available in the open market.

Emergency Plans

The Council has a role in preparing plans for dealing with emergencies and to collaborate with the emergency services, agencies and volunteers when caring for the public's well-being. The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted this key role more than ever before.

The provision of food and rest facilities, temporary accommodation and road safety are prominent examples of the specific responsibilities that the Council has in responding to various emergencies.

The Emergency Planning Operation Group, which has representatives from all Departments, co-ordinates the arrangements to prepare for emergencies while a Strategic Group, under the guidance of the Corporate Director, keeps an overview and challenges those arrangements as and when necessary. This is all supported by the Regional Emergency Planning Service which is contracted to provide specialist guidance in this field.

In future, we will:

- review and strengthen our service continuation arrangements and hold local exercises to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to the various emergencies faced.

Human Resources Advisory Service



The team of human resources advisers and officers are responsible for advising managers and school heads on a wide range of staff employment matters. This includes interpreting the employment conditions, equal opportunities issues, restructuring or service cuts, dealing with disciplinary matters and complaints, managing absences and workforce planning. The service also leads on a programme that focuses on reviewing and developing the Council's employment conditions and has a central role in maintaining a constructive working relationship with the trade unions.

In future, we will:

- develop and implement the service's business model, so that there is an increasing emphasis on giving advice and supporting managers to take ownership of day-to-day employment matters
- implement a programme of reviewing and developing local employment conditions to reflect and support the way in which the Council wants its staff to work.

Health, Safety and Well-being Advisory Service



The Service fulfils a statutory role of providing competent advice to the employer on health, safety and well-being matters. This includes advising on legal standards in safety, investigating accidents and other incidents, monitoring, examining and providing training programmes.

In addition to this, we support staff through periods of absences, provide advice to managers on the health of their staff and assess suitability to return to work following an injury or illness, screen the health of workers and carry out staff medical checks as well as plan and implement a programme to promote health and well-being.

In future, we will:

- mainstream mental health and well-being within the workforce, while raising awareness and empowering staff across the Council and promote a culture of sharing experiences and supporting individuals

- develop and implement a new business model for the Service in order to encourage ownership within the services of day-to-day health and safety matters within the Council and prioritise resources for the biggest risks.



Learning and Organisational Development

Dysgu a Datblygu'r Sefydliad

The service provides relevant learning and development support, consults and responds to the needs of individuals and teams, helps to develop a beneficial working environment so that everyone gives their best, helps services to identify opportunities to improve and develops talent to fill gaps in the future.

Learning and Development programmes are provided for staff (on all levels) and Elected Members, which includes developing leadership. We are working with teams and officers to ensure that the service is relevant, to 'fill gaps' in the provision and tailor titles to meet their needs. We promote and support individuals to take ownership of their own learning, and offer a range of learning methods that include the 'traditional' as well as innovative methods such as *coaching and mentoring* and learning through experience.

There is particular emphasis on developing remote learning ('virtual') methods, and the learning programme reflects this, with more learning opportunities being added regularly.

The objective of the *Organisational Development* work is to nurture behaviours and culture which create and maintain a working environment where staff are at their best to serve the people of Gwynedd. Giving staff a voice, and an opportunity to contribute their views and ideas is a crucial part of this while there is also focus on developing the future workforce through schemes such as *Identifying and Developing Talent*. An increasing range of benefits is offered which contributes to staff satisfaction and well-being.

Another important element is *Service Improvement* by responding positively to complaints, facilitating arrangements to services to take responsibilities for them, and learn from them. Also, to celebrate successes.

In future, we will:

- develop and extend the distance learning provision

- contribute to a scheme to ensure that all Council staff have appropriate information technology skills in order to use self-service systems and take advantage of the e-learning provision
- extend the work (consultative and practical) to support departments to develop teams and leadership skills
- develop and coordinate a range of support packages to help staff and managers to cope

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to sustain themselves and their families
- Live in a natural Welsh society

Finance (and Information Technology) Department

The Finance Department's intention is to contribute to achieving the aim of delivering the best for the people of Gwynedd during a difficult period by:

- **ensuring the appropriate support to the Council's business operation and its services when managing, safeguarding and developing its financial position, in order to establish a sustainable community in an open, accountable and progressive manner**
- **ensuring professional supportive guidance and technology of high standard that promotes the Council's basic values and encourages innovation**
- **providing front line services (such as collecting revenue and paying benefits) of suitable quality to the customer, providing fairness to people and communities, and focusing on residents.**

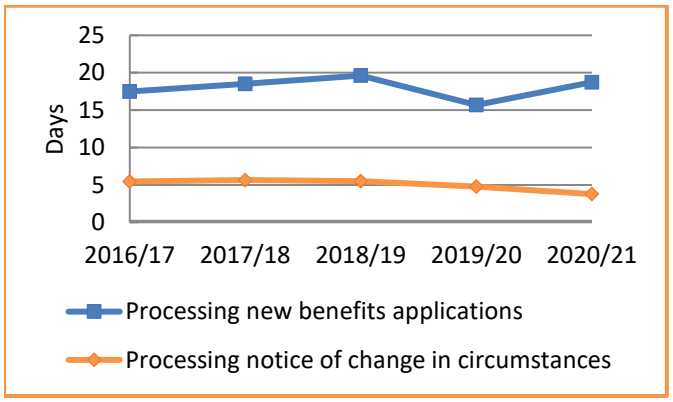
Together with the day to day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Realising savings – (Improvement Priority 7)

It is also noted that the Department contributes to the improvement priority Improving the Use of Houses as Holiday Homes and Second Homes (Environment Department), continuing to press for system reform in this field, using the evidence that they gather on an ongoing basis, to get Welsh Government Ministers to understand the magnitude of the problem that exists in Gwynedd.

Benefits Service

The Council administrates benefit support to approximately 7,500 tenants to pay their rents, and to approximately 10,000 individuals, couples or families to pay their Council Tax bill, aiming to do this in a timely and accurate manner.



It can be seen from the graph that the number of days it takes to pay has increased again in 2020/21, after a reduction in 2019/20. The result for the year reflects the spike in the first quarter of the financial year when there was a substantial increase in the number of applications, but the processing time returned to its average level by the end of the financial year.

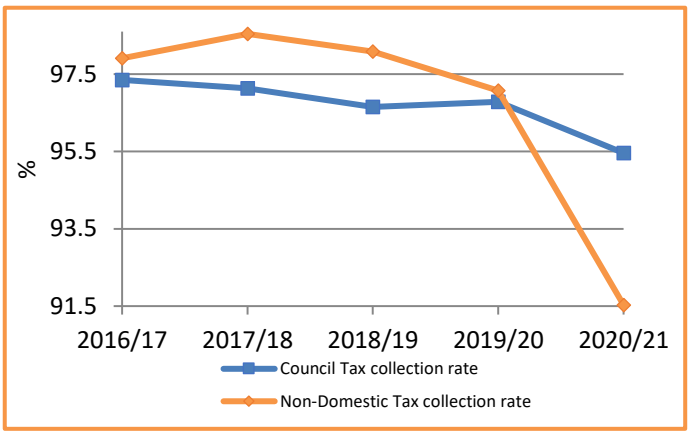
The UK Government has started a comprehensive review of Discretionary Housing Payments arrangements during 2021/22. The review will continue into 2022/23 and the Council will continue to lobby the Government with the intention of convincing them to continue with the rural element of the Discretionary Housing Payments, which makes a significant difference for the people of Gwynedd.

On the whole, arrangements are operating smoothly and therefore the likelihood of a substantial decline in the service provided by the Council is low.

Taxation Service

Without Council Tax and Business Rates, the Council would not be able to provide its services. This service administrates and collects Council Tax for over 61,500 properties, and Business Rates (Non-domestic Rates) of approximately 9,000 business properties in the most timely and efficient manner possible, including administrating the various available discounts, exemptions and relief schemes.

The percentage of Council Tax and Business Rates collected within the year



There was a reduction in the Council Tax collection rates during the first months of 2020/21, mainly as a result of the Council's decision to delay any taxation debt recovery work for the first three months of the year due to the pandemic and lockdown period. By the end of the year the collection rate was close to returning to the usual level.

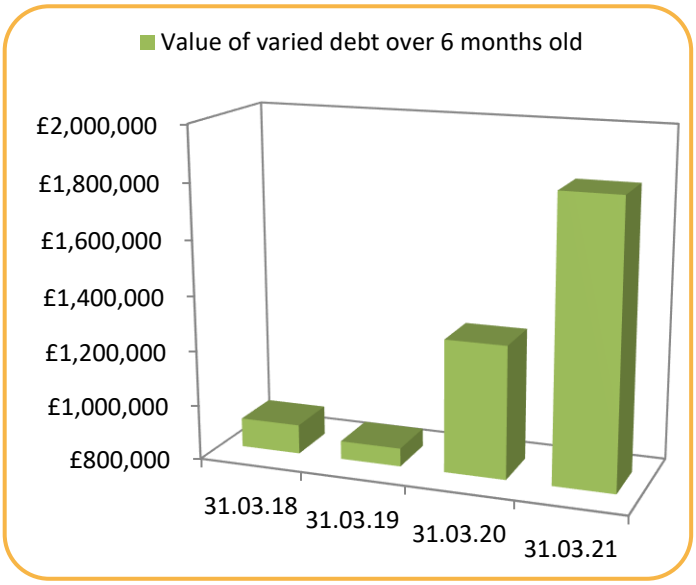
Some businesses have suffered considerably during 2020/21, and despite the business rate relief schemes for businesses in specific sectors, it is seen that the non-domestic rates collection rates are substantially lower in 2020/21 compared to a usual year. We will continue to work with businesses to direct them to suitable support, in collaboration with other services across the Council.

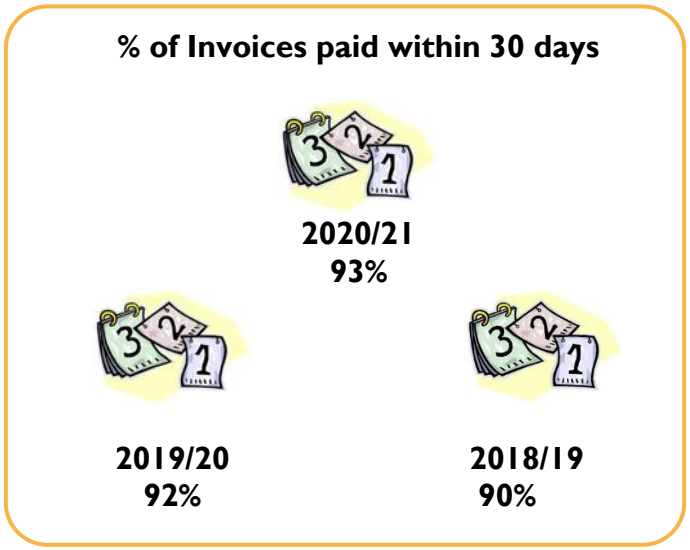
The Council's Taxation staff seeks to encourage individuals to request advice on personal budgeting and broader debt advice.

Income Service

The Council receives income (e.g. grants, payments for service) of all types, and the Income Service processes this income, collecting the Council's debts in a timely and efficient manner in order to make the most of the income. The service considers the needs of the Council's departments and operates sensitively to debtors' financial circumstances when carrying out its work.

The debtors figure over 6 months old on 31 March 2021 was higher than the equivalent date in previous years, partly due to the restrictions of the pandemic.





Payments Service

The service is responsible for paying the Council's creditors in an accurate and timely manner. We pay over 151,000 invoices annually, with 93% of the invoices being paid within 30 days on average, aiming to prioritise paying local suppliers promptly.

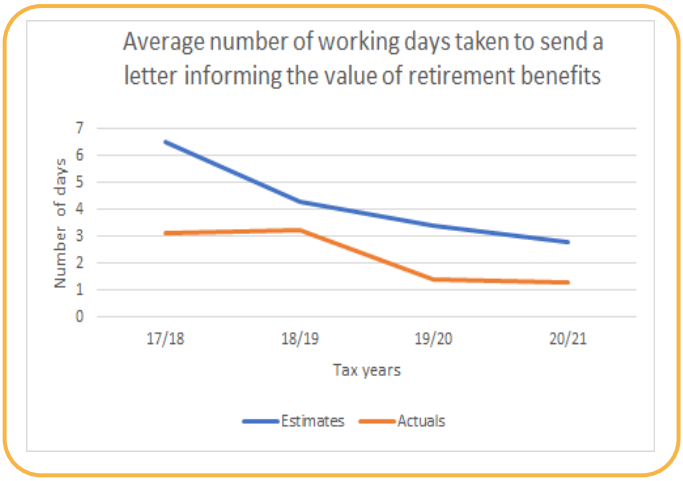
The service has now moved to a procedure of receiving invoices electronically, with over 97% of our payments now being bank transfers, rather than cheque payments.

Payroll Service

There are over 7,200 different individuals working for the Council in order to enable it to serve on behalf of the people of Gwynedd, and the purpose of the Payroll Service is to ensure that they get paid accurately and in a timely manner. The service also keeps appropriate accounts in order to pay external bodies such as HMRC.

Pensions Service

The Pensions Service is responsible for administrating the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) on behalf of over 40 employers including Gwynedd Council, Anglesey County Council and Conwy County Borough Council. The fund has over 18,000 active members, 12,000 deferred members and 10,000 pensioners. The service's daily duties include establishing a record for new members, making changes to members' records, calculating deferred benefits, transferring pension rights in and out of the LGPS, and paying benefits after the retirement and death of the scheme's members.



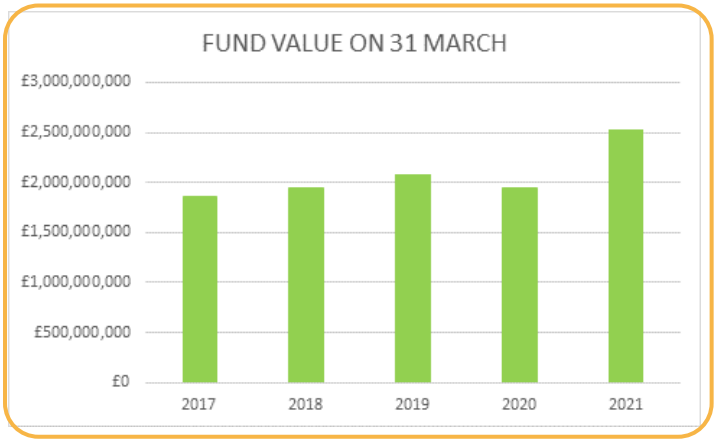
During 2022/23, the Pensions Service will focus on improving the correspondence and self-service provision for members. Also, it is intended to work with the employers of the Pension Fund to receive relevant details for re-calculating member benefits following the 'McCloud' case.

Investment and Treasury Management Service

This service invests the Council's money in order to earn interest, to contribute to the funding of the services. It also manages the investments of the Pension Fund, to ensure its ability to pay pensions now and in the future. In addition to this, the service plans and arranges long-term borrowing.

The Unit's aim is to keep money safe, earn interest and ensure that funding is available to pay for daily expenditure. During 2020/21, the Council's borrowing activity remained within the constraints originally set. £422,000 was the total interest and dividends received on Council investments, which is higher than the £400,000 included in the budget. No banks used by the Council for investments failed to pay.

Local government pension funds in Wales work by increasingly pooling investments in order to get the greatest benefit to the pension fund members. The Gwynedd Fund has pooled the equity and fixed-income and emerging markets investments, which means that 83% of Gwynedd's Pension Fund investments have now been pooled.



The beginning of the 2020/21 financial year was challenging, as a result of the collapse of the stock markets in March 2020 due to the pandemic, however, the markets have bounced back with a recovery in the value of the Pension Fund to £2.5 billion again by 31 March 2021, mainly in the equity markets.

During 2022/23, the Pension Fund's triennial valuation will take place, in order to identify the value of assets and liabilities of the 40 employers, and to adapt the level of their contributions to the pension fund by 2023/24.

Finance and Accounting Service (including devolved units)

The service provides a finance and accounting service for the Council's services, to help and support them to be effective and efficient. The service:

- Sets an annual balanced budget for the Council
- Regularly monitors and reports on the Council's financial performance
- Provides financial support with a gross budget of over £472 million
- Is responsible for producing final accounts for Gwynedd Council, GwE, Joint Planning Policy Committee, Harbours and North Wales Economic Ambition Board
- Assists the departments to realise over £32.7 million of savings since 2015 (out of a total of £34.8 million).



Success in staying within the budget

The Auditor General for Wales has published an unconditional audit report on the 2020/21 financial statements, indicating that the accounts have been appropriately prepared and provide an accurate and fair picture of the financial situation.

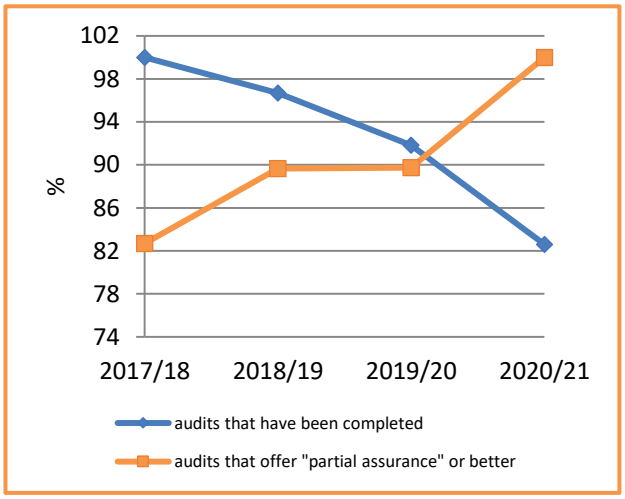
As a result of the pandemic's impact on the Council, with a combination of additional costs and income losses we will provide additional financial advice to all Council budget holders, as well as "business" advice to the departments.

In general, the money the Council receives from Welsh Government is insufficient to pay for the key services provided by the Council. Therefore, in order to ensure a balanced budget, we will also continue to realise the savings that have already been approved, and will also plan, as needed, to identify and select the savings required in order to respond to the financial challenge facing the Council in the future.

Internal Audit Service

The service reviews the Council's governance and administrative arrangements in order to give confidence to the authority and the citizen that these arrangements are robust. We report independently and objectively to the Head of Finance Department and the Audit and Governance Committee, and to the joint-committees where Gwynedd acts as the host authority.

For periods during 2020/21, Internal Audit resources had to be redirected temporarily to deal with the Covid-19 crisis, therefore, not every audit was completed in accordance with the expected timetable.



Risk and Insurance Service

All Council departments need to assess the threats and opportunities that could face them when providing their services, and prioritise their activities based on the assessment. The role of the Risk and Insurance Service is to advise and support the departments in doing so. The Service also protects the interests of ratepayers, by ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements and dealing with around 250 claims per year.

Work continues to ensure that all Council departments record their main risks and that they are regularly reviewed. The Risk and Insurance Service will support all departments to ensure that the use made of the Corporate Risk Register is consistent across the Council, and that risk assessments are updated continuously. In parallel, there will be increasing consideration of the content of risk registers when monitoring departmental performance.

Information Technology Service

The Council's Information Technology Strategy is implemented in order to help the people of Gwynedd to gain easy access to the Council's information and services, and for staff to work efficiently. The face of this service is the *Support Service and the Help Desk* which supports 2,711 users and deals with approximately 20,000 service requests per annum. 12,179 service requests received attention in the first two quarters of the year, and feedback was received from 480 users, with 466 noting that they were very satisfied, 9 satisfied and 2 dissatisfied and 2 extremely dissatisfied, with 1 stating that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service provided.

% availability of the network

2019/20: 99.98%
2020/21: 99.98%
2021/22: 99.8%



% satisfaction with the Help Desk

2019/20: 99.35%
2020/21: 99.22%



Although the initial upheaval associated with working from home has diminished, the unit's activity continues to be higher than usual as there are elements of catching up with the work programmes that slipped as a result of the crisis.

There are preparations in the pipeline internally to bring technical support to schools in-house, in the light of publishing the *Gwynedd Schools Digital Strategy*. The unit has provided 4,500 laptops and 900 iPads to the primary sector and are providing a further 3,700 laptops for the secondary pupils and 1,050 for the County's teachers.

The *Infrastructure, Security and Network Unit* ensures that technology services are introduced on firm foundations, extending to 300 buildings, 1,400 WiFi access points and 3,500 telephone connections and supports all systems in the data centre, on 440 servers and over 1,000TB of storage. The two data centres are connected with a direct fast fibre connection. Our resilience was further strengthened during 2021/22 by introducing a second internet connection in the data centre in Penrhyndeudraeth, and the generator became operational in the Headquarters.

One exceptionally important and critical element for the delivery and support of digital services is having robust security defences and our ability to respond and recover following cyber-attacks. Our defences were strengthened by updating our anti-virus packages and adding the ability to identify and deal with attacks more swiftly, adding a back-up copy procedure to strengthen our ability to recover from a catastrophe. In addition to new technology, a web-networking exercise was conducted, and a training programme was introduced to educate our users to act as the front line of our defences.

The *Development and Geographical Information Service Unit* provides systems that have been developed around the bespoke needs of the user, including systems that are being used by the departments to serve the public, direct interfaces for the public, and self-service for staff. Considerable progress was made during 2021/22 in the introduction of new systems, although numerous requests continue to be made for the provision of urgent new systems in response to the pandemic, such as claiming and processing various grants for the county's businesses.

The *Programme Management and Innovation Unit* provides support for the departments to meet their IT needs, including ordering IT equipment and materials, implementing and monitoring

agreements and analysing needs. This unit led on enabling the Council's meetings to be held virtually, and established the capability to do this in a hybrid method by the third quarter of the year, with this provision expanded further to officer meetings by the end of the year. Significant support was provided to the test, trace and protect campaigns and the increased testing, in addition to supporting various departments to establish new systems.

The Council Cabinet approved the Gwynedd Schools Digital Strategy, and in doing so, the preparations began to internalise the digital support. Substantial work was undertaken within the service's existing resources, including the renewal of all the County's schools' networks and Wi-Fi, the provision of computers to primary schools, migration of schools' e-mails to the HWB national system, migration of all the schools' files to HWB from their dependency on local servers. This work will continue and will intensify further during 2022/23.

During 2020/23, the Information Technology Service will carry out resilience exercises on the Council's infrastructure, bring the technical support to Gwynedd's schools in-house, and implement the new Corporate Digital Strategy.

Legal Services

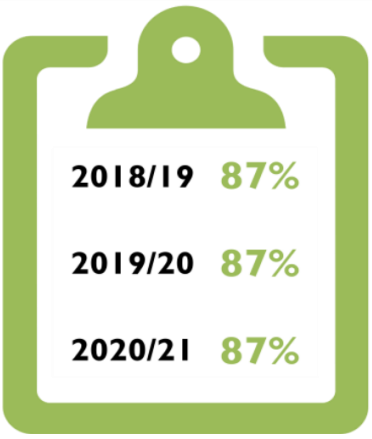
The department supports the Council's ability to provide the best services to Gwynedd's residents through a combination of support and front-line services.

Legal

The Legal Service provides legal support across all of the Council's range of work from child protection and prosecution to the preparation of traffic orders and land and property transactions.

As well as being available to deal with daily enquiries, the team on average deals with approximately 900 cases and transactions annually. We have also supported the main priorities of the Council, specifically implementing the Housing Strategy and a review of the Post-16 education system.

Customer Satisfaction Survey - score of 10 out of 10



Propriety

The Legal Service supports the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer to implement their responsibilities for the propriety of the Council's method of action, the Constitution and complaints as well as the ethical framework for members of the Council and Town and Community Councils.

We continue to support Gwynedd Council's propriety system along with the ethical system for the County's Town and Community Councils. This also involves giving advice and legal assurance on decisions and decision-making procedures. A Monitoring Officer and legal support services is also provided for collaboration projects: GwE, Joint Local Development Plan Committee and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

Our priorities for 2022/23 will be:

- Contribute to the work of establishing the North Wales Joint Corporate Committee
- Work with the Standards Committee to address the review of the ethical framework arising from Mr Richard Penn's Report
- Organise the training and induction of Council, Town and Community Council members on the Code of Conduct in light of the local elections.

Elections

The Legal Service also provides support to the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer.

We as a team are responsible for the administration of the electoral register and local and national elections and by-elections, referendums or polls within the county.

Our priorities for 2022/23 will be:

- Support the Returning Officer in the delivery of the May 2022 Local Elections
- Respond and extend and amend the voting rights, specifically for electors aged between 16 and 18 years old as a result of the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill 2019 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2020 by promoting registration and participation in relevant elections.

Coroner

The Legal Service provides support to the Coroner's Service for north-west Wales.

We support and administer Coroner arrangements for north-west Wales. The Team has been established within the Council and now receives direct support within the Department.

Our priorities for 2022/23 will be:

- Deal with the arrangements for appointing a Senior Coroner for the area and establish the area on a sustainable basis.

Financial Information 2022/23

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Net Budget 2022/23

Gwynedd Council Departments

Education Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Schools - Devolved	
Quality of Education Services	
Infrastructure and Support Services	
Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion and Welfare	
Leadership and Management	
Total	

Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Older People	
Physical Disability	
Learning Disability	
Mental Health	
Management, Administration and Other Services	
Total	

Highways and Municipal Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Waste and Recycling	
Road Maintenance	
Street Cleaning	
Street Lighting	
Public Toilets	
Grounds Maintenance and Playing Fields	
Crematorium and Cemetaries	
CCTV	
Fleet Management	
Other	
Total	

Children and Supporting Families Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Children and Supporting Families Management	
Operational Services	
Placement Services	
Derwen Services	
Youth Justice Service	
Edge of Care Team, Out of Hours Team and Other Services	
Early Years Unit	
Youth Services	
Total	

Environment Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Corporate Category and Management	
Planning Services and Building Regulations	
Joint Planning Policy Unit	
Safety, Cleanliness and Food Standards	
Environmental Health	
Trading Standards	
Public Protection Client Services	
Traffic, Road Safety and Enforcement	
Forward Planning	
Parking and Enforcemement	
Transport	
Concessionary Fares	
Countryside Services	
Total	

Economy and Community Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Departmental Management	
Regeneration Programmes	
Supporting Communities	
Maritime and Country Parks	
Leisure Contracts	
Sports Programmes	
Economic Development Programmes	
Marketing and Tourism, and Events	
Libraries	
Museums and the Arts	
Archives	
Total	

Housing and Property Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Management and Administration	
Corporate Property Services	
Caretakers	
Offices	
Maintenence	
Catering, Cleaning and Maintenance	
Energy	
Community Centers, Miscellaneous Buildings	
Smallholdings	
Industrial Units, Intec and Mentec	
Pest Control and Dog Control	
Housing Services	
Homelessness	
Total	

Gwynedd Consultancy Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Engineering	
Water and Environment Unit	
Building Unit	
Flood Risk Management	
Total	

Corporate Support Department 2022/23	
Maes	**Net Budget £**
Departmental Management	
Emergency Planning (appears in the Corporate Support Departmental Plan)	
The Council's Business Support Unit	
Communications and Engagement	
Research and Information	
Democratic Services	
Welsh Language Services	
Procurement	

Human Resources Advisory Services	
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisory Services	
Support Service	
Learning and Organisational Development	
Siop Gwynedd, Galw Gwynedd, Blue Badges, Registrar	
Total	

Finance and Information Technology Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Departmental Management	
Finance and Accounting	
Treasury Investment and Management	
Internal Audit	
Pay-roll	
Payments	
Income	
Central Revenue	
Taxes	
Benefits	
Information Technology - Corporate	
Information Technology – Programme Management	
Information Technology – Development	
Information Technology - Infrastructure	
Information Technology – Support	
Total	

Corporate Management Team and Legal Department 2022/23	
Area	**Net Budget £**
Chief Executive, Director and the budgets of specific schemes	
Monitoring and Propriety Officer	
Legal Services	
Register of Electors	
Coroner	
Elections	
Total	