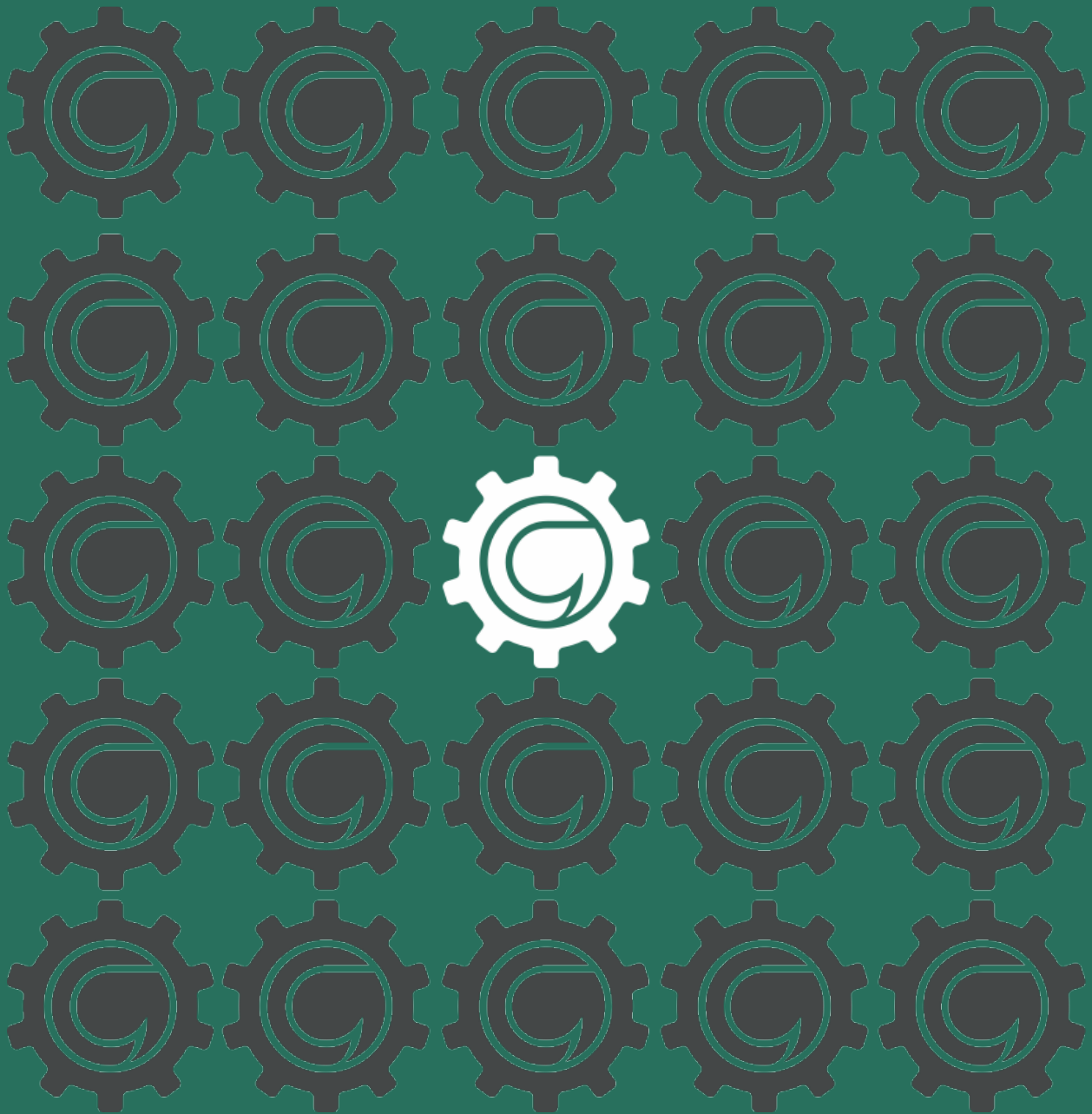


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# Council Staff Well-being Plan 2024 - 2028

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**CORPORATE  
SERVICES**

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CYNGOR GWYNEDD

Health, Safety and  
Well-being Service  
1 October 2024

# Cyngor Gwynedd Staff Well-being Plan

## FOREWORD

Welcome to Cyngor Gwynedd's Staff Well-being Plan. The well-being of our workers is paramount to us in the Council and is one of the key work streams of the **Ffordd Gwynedd Priority Project - A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce**. A healthy, satisfied and resilient workforce allows us to perform better, achieve more, adapt to change more quickly and this is essential to provide first class services for the people of Gwynedd.

## WHY DO WE NEED A WELL-BEING PLAN?

Having a structured and comprehensive Well-being Plan assists the Council to:

- ✓ Attract new employees;
- ✓ Engage, motivate and retain employees;
- ✓ Create a healthy and inclusive culture;
- ✓ Reduce sickness absence rates;
- ✓ Improve the performance and development of individuals;
- ✓ Improve productivity and ensure success.

## WELL-BEING IN CYNGOR GWYNEDD

At Cyngor Gwynedd during 2023/24:

- The cost of absences for the Council in real terms was £5.7m
- **14,404 (22.13%)** work days were lost due to sickness absence related to stress, depression and mental health problems;
- 7,718 (11.86%) work days were lost due to sickness absence related to musculoskeletal problems;
- 'Other sickness' was recorded as the main reason for the sickness of **22.79%**;
- Long-term absences contributed to **51%** of the Council's sickness absence days;
- On average, every officer in the Council has lost **10.29** work days a year;
- **2.72%** more sickness absence days were lost in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23.



- 665 staff members were referred to the Occupational Health Service
- 194 Council staff members were referred to the Counselling Service (Medra)
- 129 Council staff members were referred to the Physiotherapy Service

During October 2023, a Staff Voice Survey was shared with every member of the Council's staff. The purpose of the Staff Voice Survey was to find out what Council employees need to ensure that the people of Gwynedd are central to their work; what support or assistance they need to do their work and what information do they need about benefits, their rights and responsibilities.

Having analysed the data and staff opinion on well-being in the Council, the following is a summary of the main themes and some of the observations made by staff on well-being matters:

### **Their Manager's Role**

- *Need more training for Line Managers on how to deal with their staff*
- *I need more support from my line manager*
- *There is a need to maintain contact between employees and team managers to ensure that all information is shared*
- *Very fortunate to have him as a Manager. This has proven to me that the Council is genuinely concerned about staff well-being. My manager holds a 1 to 1 with me to see how I am.*

### **Stress**

- *Too much work pressure, too much extra work being forced on us*
- *Increasing work pressure*
- *Divide work more fairly between the team*
- *It would be good to see the Council consider workload and capacity. The number of officers with large workloads will ultimately affect well-being.*

### **Promoting well-being events**

- *I do not feel that anyone asks about my well-being*
- *It was only by chance that I found out that there are several support services available*
- *It is not good enough to leave it to the employees to try to find the support that is available for them*
- *Highlight more of the good support that is available - not everyone knows about it*



## Work environment

- *The offices do not promote well-being, everything is dated.*
- *Need a working environment that is fit for purpose, and nicer*
- *Need a space where we can eat our lunch*
- *We need suitable desks and somewhere to go for a break from the desk*
- *The offices' image is disastrous and shabby and it makes one feels joyless when walking in*

We spend most of our lives in the workplace. According to Public Health Wales (2019), there is increasing evidence that the workplace could be an effective place to improve individuals' well-being. If we are unhappy at work for whatever reason - it could be poor relationships with co-workers, excessive work pressure, or an unsupportive Manager; it will affect our well-being. Being employed can offer financial security, social connections and a sense of belonging. In brief, to ensure well-being, individuals need to feel satisfied in their work. The Council therefore plays a significant part in influencing employees' general health and well-being.

By ensuring that we realise our vision, we can attract, recruit and retain staff in a way that demonstrates that we take their well-being seriously so that they contribute proactively to the Council's productivity and effectiveness.



## OUR VISION

***"Work together to improve well-being across the Council's entire workforce creating the best possible work environment to ensure that we create a healthy, resilient and productive workforce that can work to the best of their ability to serve the residents of Gwynedd."***

## OUR AIM

Our main objectives in terms of the well-being plan are based on three foundations, namely:

1. Leadership and Management
2. Sustainable support
3. Environment

There is more information about the three foundations below, but before we consider them further, we should also highlight the Plan's action principles. These are the principles that we will adhere and commit to while delivering the Plan. We commit to:

- Ensure that our vision, aim and objectives are consistent with wider arrangements and procedures in the human resources and health and safety areas;
- Ensure that the plan's key objectives are consistent with the objectives of the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan;
- Ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of this statutory requirement.
- Ensure that well-being matters are coordinated corporately to ensure that the service and the proposals are fair across the Council, and that specific programmes are targeted and prioritised as needed.



## FOUNDATION 1: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

### Objectives

- Ensure that well-being is a central part of our strategic priorities for our leaders and councillors across every function in Cyngor Gwynedd and ensure that everyone is aware of the statutory requirements.
- Create a safe and healthy work environment that nurtures a culture of positive well-being, where our employees' well-being is an integral part of everything we do.
- Create effective managers with strong working relationships in line with the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan.
- Improve leaders' visibility and ensure that they engage with employees regularly and advocate the importance of well-being.
- Ensure that our employees understand their roles, their expectations, their focus in the future and create feelings of personal commitment and satisfaction.
- Improve leadership training so that leaders understand the links between well-being and other core areas such as health and safety and performance and development.
- Equip and empower managers to hold regular conversations with their staff about their well-being.
- Improve well-being for our varied workforce and ensure that well-being is considered a responsibility for everyone across the Council.
- To be recognised as an employer of choice that is concerned about well-being and recognises the role that well-being could play in the broader picture including improving productivity and working methods.



## FOUNDATION 2: SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT

### Objectives

- Provide a range of effective well-being support based on the needs of our workforce, using a collaborative approach.
- Our sustainable support focuses on four key well-being principles, namely:
  - Mental
  - Physical
  - Social
  - Financial

### **1. Mental Well-being:**

- Promote a culture where mental well-being can be discussed openly.
- Equip employees with the skills, knowledge and confidence to care for their own mental well-being and support others.
- Provide better access to support, advice and referrals.
- Ensure that stress risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly.
- Identify 'Well-being Champions' across Council Departments with Time to Change Wales.
- Continue with the i-Act training programme and mental health first aid.
- Continue and further develop specialist support for the workforce in terms of neurodiversity.
- Hold health promotional campaigns that reach every member of staff through visits, websites, posters, qr codes.
- Develop policies and procedures that represent best practice in terms of mental health, including creating an open and inclusive culture which shows respect towards the individuals who suffer from mental health conditions and the stigma that could exist around this including an alcohol and drugs policy;
- Offer 24-hour support for all staff by providing on demand counselling services;
- Promote a zero tolerance culture in terms of bullying and harassment.



## **2. Physical Well-being**

- Create an environment where employees feel they have been empowered and educated about their physical well-being
- Support employees to care for themselves and to take positive steps around health such as a healthy lifestyle, sleep, nutrition, physical activity, smoking, alcohol.
- Establish programmes for specific clinical conditions;
- Provide an opportunity for all employees to increase their physical activity by raising awareness of options for a healthy lifestyle, sleep pattern, smoking alcohol.
- Encourage staff to follow Public Health Wales' five ways to well-being framework.
- Support staff's physical health in the workforce by promoting our existing proposals and continuous research to develop new ones
- Support employees who are ill to remain in work and to return to work following sickness absence through the Occupational Health Service.
- Physiotherapy sessions for eligible staff who have been injured at work, or who suffer with symptoms that affect their daily duties.
- Ensure that our staff who work in a physical field receive Health Surveillance sessions in accordance with the Health and Safety legislation.
- Improve the working environment and ensure that staff complete a workstation self-assessment.

## **3. Social Well-being**

- Continue to improve the relationship we have with each other across the Council.
- Nurture healthy, collaborative, nurturing and supportive relationships, which includes good leadership, to nurture a genuine community within Cyngor Gwynedd.
- Encourage civic and community engagement to improve a sense of belonging and create strong links within the broader community of Gwynedd.
- Create strong links with the broader environment we live in and work in by working with the people of Gwynedd.





- Develop a relationship with schools, university, the broader community to promote open opportunities such as apprenticeship programmes and Cynllun Yfory.
- Ensure that learning opportunities are available for employees such as training programmes that are relevant to the post along with opportunities to develop and expand horizons;
- Create an inclusive environment which celebrates equality and diversity.

#### **4. Financial Well-being**

##### **Objectives**

- Support individuals to become more aware of their financial situation.
- Reduce financial stress by assisting employees to manage their finances better and to become more financially secure. This will include fields such as debt management, budgeting, savings, pensions, investments and living within our means.
- Maintain and continue to develop a comprehensive benefits package for staff
- Promote employment practices that avoid low wages, unfixed contracts, unfair pay

#### **3. FOUNDATION 3: ENVIRONMENTAL**

##### **Objectives**

- Further build on the work environment in every workplace to ensure that safety and well-being is an integral part of the workplace.
- Ensure all our employment policies support staff wellbeing, not merely this Plan.
- Create an inclusive environment which celebrates the equality and diversity of the workforce.



- Identify and target intervention and support in workplaces where data supports more intensive intervention / support to identify and address the root of any patterns of absence.

## **HOW WILL WE IMPLEMENT THE PLAN?**

The purpose of our Plan is to ensure that well-being is a crucial part of our ethos as a Council. Well-being needs to be central across the whole Council by developing and creating a culture where well-being is promoted on every level across the Council and has a positive impact on everyone's individual and diverse needs.

We do this by means of:

### **Our Culture**

- Continue to work on having the appropriate culture in place so that well-being becomes one of the core values of the Council and is integrated in our procedures, policies and work practices.
- Increase visibility and awareness of well-being, improving the way of referring to internal and external resources.
- Develop a clear communication plan to ensure that messages about well-being are embedded and reach the Council's workforce.

### **Prevention**

- Focus on assisting employees to make better choices, to change behaviour and better manage their well-being.
- Make well-being a routine and not something that's considered only in times of change, emergency or distress.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of the Occupational Health Service and any well-being schemes related to the service.

### **My Well-being**

We will:



- Raise awareness of the need for everyone to take personal responsibility for their well-being and acknowledge the advantages of schemes used by Cyngor Gwynedd and how they could be used to support individual needs.
- Map what well-being means to individuals at different times in their career by identifying and understanding the key times that are important to people, and the impact these could have on their well-being which will in turn shape our well-being campaigns.
- Celebrate the diversion of our people, promote well-being inclusion and work to ensure that well-being is considered a priority for all.

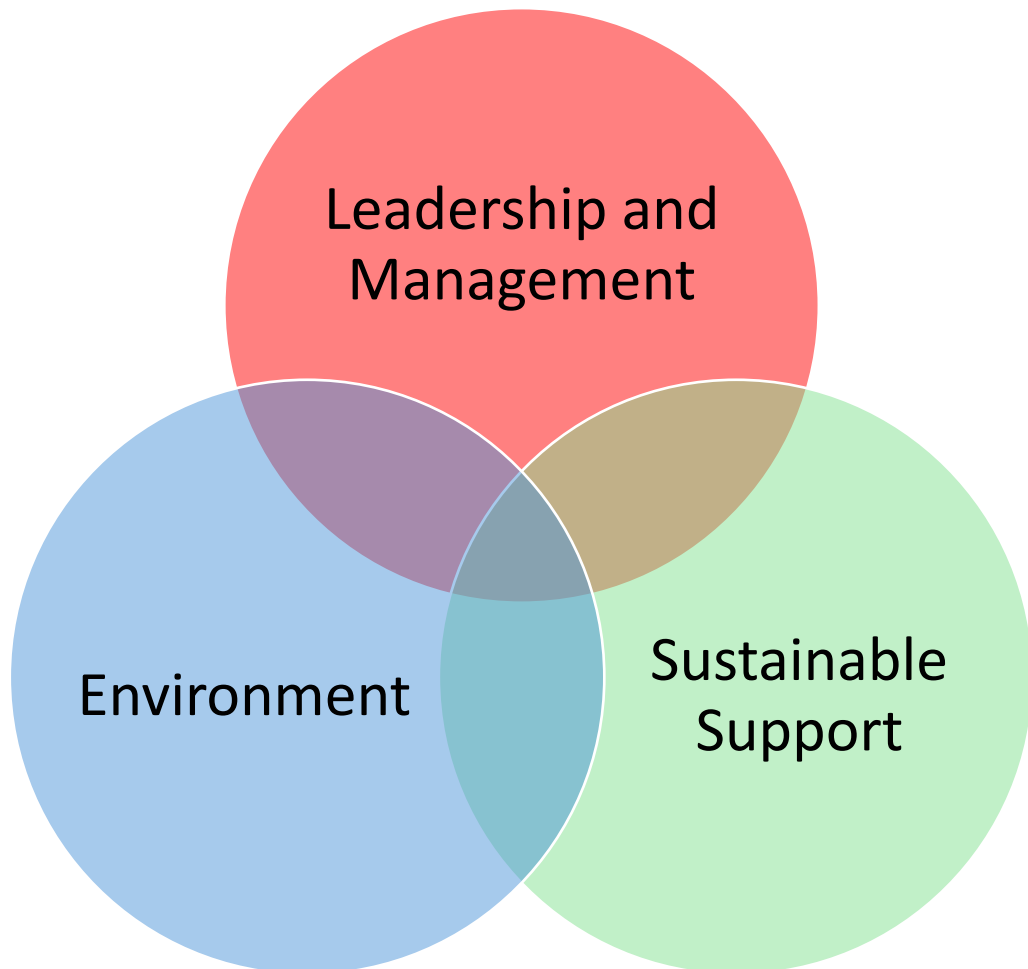
## **Evidence-based Collaboration and Action**

We will:

- Ensure that well-being initiatives are based on the workforce's needs and on firm research evidence.
- Give and receive feedback and share good practice to nurture collaboration.
- Improve our method of gathering data to learn more about our employees and track trends to measure success and areas of improvement.
- Track and measure action plans and hold regular reviews.



## OUR INTEGRATED WELL-BEING MODEL



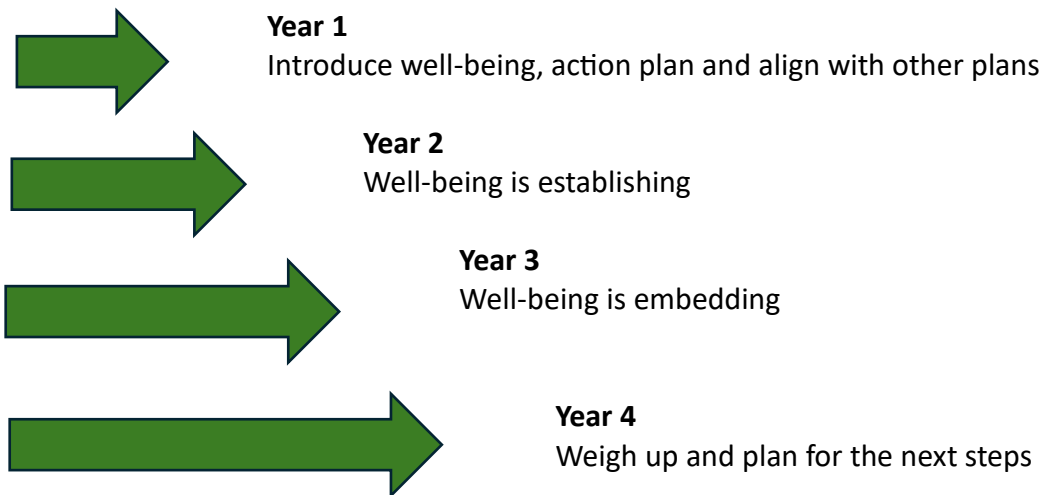
To implement the Plan effectively, a long-term action plan will be needed that includes specific details and the actions we will take as we proceed to deliver.

There will be a need to ensure that this plan is reinforced by business plans and specific services such as the Council Plan and the Ffordd Gwynedd Plan.

An annual report will be produced at the end of every year to review progress and impact and in order to ensure that the Plan aligns with the Council's broader strategic objectives.

Ultimately, every individual in the Council should see and identify with the aims and vision of our Well-being Plan.





## MEASURING SUCCESS

Success can be measured in several different ways. Our method of measuring success in terms of this plan is through a cyclical process of collaboration, reflection and reviewing improvement.

We will use a variety of measures to measure the impact of the Well-being Plan and to ensure that well-being thrives and is central to the success of Cyngor Gwynedd.

Here are some of the methods we will use to measure success:

- **Sickness absence levels;**
- **Regular surveys and continuous feedback;**
- **Develop well-being impact assessments;**
- **Monitor and evaluate any well-being interventions to ensure that they remain effective;**
- **Annual evaluation report and action plans updated;**
- **Customer satisfaction / Reach organisational aims;**

## RESOURCES

In light of the current financial climate, we will have to maximise our existing resources to deliver the plan. This means that the Health, Safety and Well-being Service within the Corporate Services Department will mainly lead and coordinate the work. However, there is a key role in terms of the Well-being Champions and also the departments in terms of owning, contributing and implementing this plan. It is inevitable that this means that aspects of this plan cannot be delivered in ideal methods and to an early timetable.



With more resources, it would be possible to expedite the programme and possibly offer more intensive and comprehensive interventions but a business case will need to be submitted to do this on a case by case basis.

## **REVIEW PERIOD**

It is intended to monitor the plan's progress through the Ffordd Gwynedd Officers Group and also the Lead Group of that priority project. We will also report as needed to the departmental Performance Challenging and Support meetings and to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Council Cabinet.



## Work Programme - Year 1 (2024 - 2025)

Project Number	What?	Whom?	When?
1.	Develop the Staff Well-being Plan and obtain the observations of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	April - October, 2024
2.	The launch of the Council's Sickness Absence Policy to include the electronic system that management get access through 'hunnan wasanaeth'	Human Resource Manager	
3.	Arrange a Health and Wellbeing Road Show that targets blue collar workers and care homes.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager. OH Team Leader	
4.	Hold a strategic session with the Corporate Management Team on the contents of the plan	Assistant Head / Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	October, 2024
5.	Consult with the Corporate Forum with a request for them to submit it and discuss it at every Departmental Forum.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager. OH Team Leader	October 2024
6.	Submit the Plan to a meeting of the Council Cabinet for adoption	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	November, 2024
7.	Produce and implement a Communication and Engagement Plan with staff, add the document to the intranet, the Chief Executive's live session, staff bulletin etc.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	December/January 2025
8.	Give a Presentation on the Plan within the Managers' Network.	Assistant Head / Health and Safety Manager and the Team Leader	November 2024
9.	Recommence the I-Act training for existing managers and managers who come to work within the Council.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	October/November 2024
10.	Identify and raise awareness and hold training for Well-being Champions within Council Departments by 'Time to Change Wales'.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	October 2024
11.	Create a work programme for the role and boundaries of Well-being Champions across the Council.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	November 2024
12.	Review Cyngor Gwynedd's Well-being Policy and launch it	OH Team Leader H&S Team Leader	March 2025



13.	Create a programme of activities and support for all Council employees including an invitation for external partnerships to give presentations, such as the menopause, alcohol and drugs policy, 'Mind Cymru'	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	March 2025
14.	Develop links that can provide support for staff namely Occupational Health and Medra.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	February 2025
15.	Create reports for Heads of Department to include crucial information to create ownership and provide better data to manage well-being within their Departments.	Health, Safety and Well-being Manager OH Team Leader	April 2025

