

CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



Report for a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

Date of meeting:	16 September 2025
Cabinet Member:	Councillor R.Medwyn Hughes Cabinet Member for Economy and Community
Contact Officer:	Llŷr B Jones Assistant Head of Economy and Community Department Esyllt Rhys Jones Regeneration Programmes Manager
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Title of Item:	Holding a Bangor Business Improvement Districts Ballot

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

1. To note that the Business Improvement District (BID) Proposal and supplementary documents from the Bangor Business Improvement District Company have been received by the Council and that they comply with the Regulations;
2. That the Cabinet instructs the Returning Officer to hold the Bangor BID ballot;
3. To approve the arrangements and financial implications noted in Part 3 of the report;
4. To delegate the right to the Cabinet Member for Economy to vote on behalf of the Authority in the BID ballot.
5. If the ballot is successful in Bangor, and in accordance with the Business Improvement District (Wales) Regulations 2005, to delegate the right to the Head of Economy and Community, in consultation with the heads of the following departments to approve the final version of the Operational Agreement and the Baseline Agreement and complete the Agreements in accordance with the Council's arrangements:
 - Environment;
 - Highways, Engineering and YGC;
 - Legal;
 - Finance.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 It is noted in the Business Improvement District (Wales) Regulations 2005 that there is a need for local authorities to authorise the process of holding the Business Improvement District ballot. In accordance with the Council's constitution, the Cabinet is responsible for authorising this.
- 2.2 Local authorities have the veto right if it considers that BID proposals would likely conflict significantly with existing policy, would place a financial burden on taxpayers or that the levy was too high. However, the intention to hold a ballot is supported because:
 - The Bangor BID proposal responds to challenges which have been identified by the business community.
 - In holding a ballot, the business community receives the opportunity to support the establishment of the BID in order to give them the ability to realise the objectives which have been noted within the business plans.
 - The proposed BID could attract additional investment and maximise the profile of Bangor
 - The BID would be a medium to collaborate with the Council and provide additional services.

There is no reason to implement the statutory veto.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1. Following a successful ballot back in 2015, the Bangor Business Improvement District was established in April 2016 and the Bangor BID company was established to implement the BID. In accordance with The Business Improvement Districts (Wales) Regulations 2005 a BID only operates for a period of 5 years. It was required to follow a ballot process back in 2021 for the second term of the BID. The second term will end in March 2026, so it is again necessary to follow the same procedure for another term.
- 3.2 In order to hold a ballot for a further period, the BID company is required, in accordance with the Business Improvement District (Wales) Regulations 2005 to issue a notice on the Billing Authority so that the ballot can be held. In accordance with the Regulations, the Council is the Billing Authority.
- 3.3 Bangor BID has served a notice to the Council for the renewal of the BID. Bangor BID Company has issued the notice to the Council and the proposals received have been reviewed. It does not appear that the notice conflicts with any Council policy. With the Cabinet's approval, the next step will be for the Council to instruct the Returning Officer to hold the ballot.
- 3.4 As part of the process, the BID Company has been consulting with the directors as well as the businesses paying the levy for their proposals for 2026-2031. The BID Proposal and appendices have been included in the supporting documents.
- 3.5 It is anticipated that the details and arrangements of the proposed BID will offer a uniform levy of 1.5% across the board (based on 2023 Non-Domestic Rateable List), unlike the arrangements in 2016 and 2021 when a lower rate of 1.25% was available to charities and businesses in shopping centres. The new plan would still exclude properties with a taxable value of less than £5,000. It is anticipated that the BID would raise up to £170,000 per annum (namely £850,000 over 5 years) in Bangor.

3.6 Timetable

The legal requirements associated with holding the vote are included in the timetable below:

Action	Requirement within the Regulations	Date*
Cabinet Decision		16.09.25
Returning Officer to call the ballot	42 days before the ballot	15.10.25

Publish ballot papers	Last day: 28 days before the day of the ballot	30.10.25
Last day to vote		27.11.25
Counting the vote	As soon as practicably possible after the day of the ballot	28.11.25
Result announced		28.11.25
Starting date of the BID		01.04.26

* this is an outline idea of the timetable.

- 3.7 If the ballot is successful, Bangor BID Company and the BID will remain operational until 31 March 2031. If the ballot is unsuccessful, the Bangor BID Company and the BID will wind up on 31 March 2026.

Formal Agreements

- 3.8 In accordance with the Regulations, a series of agreements have been made between the Council and the BID Company. These agreements must be in place following a vote in favour. The draft agreements have been included in the supporting documents.

Baseline Agreement: this agreement defines the level of service being implemented by the Council within the BID area. In line with the agreement, the Council will be required to inform the BID Company of any change to this service during its term. The purpose of this agreement is to ease the minds of the businesses within the area, that do not pay the levy for the services that already exist. This agreement is currently being reviewed to ensure that the current version reflects the Council's current services within the boundaries of the BID. A draft of the agreement will be negotiated with the BID Company. Subject to a 'Yes' result, the agreement will be agreed and formalised.

Operational Agreement: this is a document that is an agreement between the BID Company and the Council which outlines and sets out the administrative arrangements, collecting the levy and the enforcement details in the context of the BID levy. The Council has the legal right to establish financial arrangements and to invoice and collect the levy in Gwynedd. It is required under the Regulations that the BID Revenue Account has been established. This arrangement will be wound up unless a successful vote is achieved and then the BID Company and the Council will be expected to agree on a new Operational Agreement from 1 April 2026 onwards. If the vote goes against the BID, the Council and the BID company will need to negotiate the final terms. In such a situation, there is a financial risk associated with unpaid levies, which is the responsibility of the BID and not the Council.

The Implications of Bangor BID to Cyngor Gwynedd

3.9. It is anticipated that the following implications will arise for the Council as the relevant local authority:

Financial Implications – The work to date has identified that 14 hereditaments within the boundary of Bangor BID are owned by Cyngor Gwynedd. This number is subject to change over the course of the BID term. As a business that pays business rates, a cost is associated with a successful ballot. Based on 2023 Non-Domestic Rateable List, the table below outlines what the annual cost would be to Cyngor Gwynedd over the next term of the Bangor BID if the vote was in favour. This levy would be a fixed amount over the BID term.

Hereditament	Rateable Value	Annual Cost of Levy
Storiol Café	£7,000	£105
Storiol	£1	£0
Library	£17,500	£262.50
"Llyfrgell Hall", Ffordd Gwynedd	£4,650	£0
Car Park - Canonry	£14,250	£213.75
Garth Road Public Toilets	£1,475	£0
Glanrafon Car Park	£21,250	£318.75
Allt y Castell Car Park	£1,600	£0
Pen Castell Public Toilets	£2,700	£0
James Street, Car Park	£8,700	£130.50
Sgwâr Kyffin Car Park	£16,250	£243.75
Min Afon Car Park	£9,500	£142.50
Plas Llwyd Car Park	£36,750	£511.25
Mentec Meeting Room	£5,200	£78
Total	£146,826	£2,006

Process of Holding the Ballot – Subject to Cabinet approval, Cyngor Gwynedd in accordance with the regulations, will instruct the Returning Officer (appointed under Section 35 of the People's Representation Act) to hold a ballot amongst the business community within the designated area to test support for a BID in Bangor.

Council Vote - subject to the approval of the Cabinet, in accordance with the arrangements in 2015, the Cabinet Member for the Economy will decide how the Council will vote and how many votes will be cast.

Legal contracts - the proposed agreements described above will be completed and they will be a basis to the collaboration arrangements between both organisations.

Long-term Support - If the ballot is successful, Cyngor Gwynedd will support the Bangor BID during the second term, supporting and involving itself to the work of further renewing and developing the economy of Bangor.

Impact on the Policy Framework and Procurement

There are no implications to the policy framework or procurement rules.

Equality Matters

The content of this report does not have any direct equality implications.

Issues relating to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) (2015)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 identifies seven well-being goals. It sets an ambition, permission and legal obligation to improve our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being. This report and the work associated with the BID responds to these Well-being Goals:

- A Prosperous Wales - In Gwynedd, the retail and business sector in our town centres make a substantial contribution towards the county's economy and offers a cross-section of employment opportunities. Bangor City Centre makes a substantial contribution towards the Gwynedd economy;
- A Healthier Wales - visiting our town centres, with a range of services, attractions and open spaces contributes towards the health and welfare of individuals;
- A more equal Wales - town centres are places that offer a variety of opportunities and provisions for a broad cross-section of the population, regardless of the background or circumstances of the individuals;
- A Wales of cohesive communities - vibrant and prosperous town centres would offer a range of services, entertainment, shops and services in a pleasant and safe environment. This is crucial for the future of communities;
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language - town centres contribute towards protecting our culture through its people, attractions and services, along with the work of promoting the Welsh language. Bangor is a cultural city, which has been referred to as the most Welsh city in Wales;
- A globally responsible Wales - supporting the town centres, the businesses and local producers support the carbon reduction agenda. The use of public transport within town centres is key.
- A Resilient Wales - town centres are key when establishing structures and opportunities that can face and respond to future economic and community challenges.

4. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 4.1 In accordance with the Business Improvement Districts (Wales) Regulations 2005 the Bangor Business Improvement District has submitted an application to Cyngor Gwynedd, as the Billing Authority, to hold a ballot.
- 4.2 The Economy and Community Department recognises that the principle of having a Business Improvement District within a town or city offers a way to attract investment to regenerate. The model is a vehicle for regeneration where there is no assurance of any alternative source of funding. The ballot offers businesses the opportunity to vote for the continuation of the BID in Bangor, or not.

5 NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the ballot is scheduled to be announced by 30 October. Once the notice has been submitted, this will allow the ballot papers to be issued along with details of the proposed proposals (with explanatory notes) during November 2025.
- 5.2 In accordance with the above timetable, the closing date of a postal vote would be 27 November 2025, with the results announced on 28 November 2025.
- 5.3 Should there be a vote in favour of a BID the decision will come into effect from 1 April 2026.

6 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

Observations of the Head of Finance:

“The Taxation Service has worked with Bangor BID over the first two periods of the scheme in collecting the levy on behalf of the company, ensuring that it is transferred appropriately to the company and taking appropriate steps to recover outstanding amounts. If the result of the ballot, therefore, is that the Business Improvement District should continue, the administrative arrangements are already in place and familiar to us. The levy is billed separately from the Non-Domestic Rates and it should be noted that the Council does not transfer any money to the company until it has been collected by the Taxation Service and properly invoiced by the company.

I have worked with the author of the report and I am satisfied with the accuracy of the levy figures which appear in the "Implications of the Bangor BID for Cyngor Gwynedd " section of the report.”

Observations of the Monitoring Officer

This report has received input from Legal Services. I am satisfied with the propriety of the report and can provide further guidance at the meeting if necessary.

Supporting Documents

- Bangor BID Proposal
- Draft Baseline Agreement
- Draft Operational Agreement