

MEETING	Communities Scrutiny Committee
DATE	18 September 2025
TITLE	Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2024/25
REASON TO SCRUTINISE	The Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd
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CABINET MEMBER	Cllr Craig ab Iago, Cabinet Member for Environment

1. Why it needs scrutiny?

- 1.1 The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23-2029/30 is one of the projects under the Green Gwynedd heading of Cyngor Gwynedd's 2023-2028 Plan.
- 1.2 Much of the work described in this annual report has already been scrutinised by the Climate and Nature Board and through the Council's internal performance challenge arrangements, but the annual report brings all the information together for the first time.
- 1.3 The scrutiny of this annual report will provide members of the Committee with assurances that arrangements are in place and that sufficient progress is being made in delivering the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 - 2029/30.
- 1.4 The Committee has an opportunity to check whether or not the Report is accurate and balanced. It can also propose any amendments or corrections, all before the Report goes to a meeting of the Council's Cabinet for adoption.
- 1.5 This Committee can also propose any ideas for further future action based on the information in the Annual Report.
- 1.6 According to Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to maintain and improve biodiversity and to promote the strength of ecosystems. We report on the progress against the 'Section 6 duty' within the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2024/25.

2. What exactly needs scrutiny?

- 2.1 The progress made in delivering the Plan.
- 2.2 What is the progress in relation to the ambition of the Plan - 'Cyngor Gwynedd will be net-zero carbon and ecologically positive by 2030'?
- 2.3 What are the next steps?

3. Summary of the Key Matters

- 3.1 The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2024/25 in Appendix 1 seeks to provide an accurate and balanced picture of the progress made during the year to realise the [Climate-and-Nature-Emergency-Plan.pdf](#) (CNEP).
- 3.2 The Report sets out the levels of carbon emissions and absorption for which Cyngor Gwynedd was responsible, calculated on the basis of data submitted to the Welsh Government's Energy Service. Based on this data we know what the 'gap to net zero' is and therefore how much more work is ahead of us if we are to meet our target.
- 3.3 The Annual Report also provides evidence on how Cyngor Gwynedd has been implementing Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The relevant information is in chapter 3 and then at the end of every chapter from 6 to 12.

4. Background / Context

- 4.1 The Council adopted the [Climate-and-Nature-Emergency-Plan.pdf](#) following a meeting of the Cabinet on 8 March 2022. The ambition of the scheme is "Cyngor Gwynedd will be net-zero carbon and ecologically positive by 2030." "Responding to the climate change crisis" is also one of the Council's 8 Improvement Priorities within [The Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28](#).
- 4.2 The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (the Plan/CNEP) outlines how we as a Council will adapt our way of working and delivering services in order to reduce our carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption capacity. It offers examples of projects we will be pursuing, their outline costs and the timeline for their completion.
- 4.3 The Plan became operational in April 2022 and the previous annual reports can be seen [here](#).
- 4.4 The Council is in the midst of reviewing the CNEP, and we have been publicly consulting on the current plan and seeking suggestions for changes during the summer of 2025. A new version of the Plan will be presented for scrutiny at a subsequent meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Main Matters

- 4.5 Chapter 5 of the Annual Report provides information on the levels of carbon emissions and absorption for which the Council was responsible, and on the all-important figure of the remaining gap to reach net zero.

- 4.6 The carbon emissions from our procurement processes are currently based solely on spending, and this can create a misleading picture of the true impact of our spending on the climate. Simply put, the more we spend the bigger the emissions.
- 4.7 The total carbon emissions for Cyngor Gwynedd in 2024/25, **including** procurement, has increased 4% since the 2019/20 baseline year and increased 24% since 2023/24. The main reason for that is the increase in financial spending.
- 4.8 Cyngor Gwynedd's total carbon emissions in 2024/25, **not** including procurement, has fallen 35% since the 2019/20 baseline year and increased by 4% since 2023/24. The main reasons for the increase since 2023/24 are the increase in energy consumption and increased travel, but the more detailed explanation can be found in the report.
- 4.9 Looking at our carbon emission and absorption data together, **without** considering procurement data, then our **gap to net zero** is 32% less than in 2024/25 compared to 2019/20 and 4% higher than in 2023/24.

5 Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

- 5.1 According to Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to maintain and improve biodiversity and to promote the strength of ecosystems.
- 5.2 The Welsh Government published a national biodiversity strategy, the 'Nature Recovery Action Plan' in 2015 which outlined the commitment to reverse biodiversity loss in Wales, and it contains 6 objectives for action. To comply with the Section 6 duty, public authorities must publish their own plan based on the Welsh Government's plan, and then the progress needs to be reported.
- 5.3 Cyngor Gwynedd has been updating our own Nature Restoration Plan during 2024/25 to comply with the requirements of the Act, but in the meantime we are reporting on our progress against the 6 objectives of the national Nature Restoration Action Plan through the Climate and Nature Annual Report. The information can be found in chapter 3 and at the end of chapters 5 to 11.

6. Responding to previous decisions of the Communities Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 At the Committee's meeting on 23 January 2025 when the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2023/24 was scrutinised, the committee decided: 'To ask the Leader of the Council to lobby the Welsh Government in relation to reviewing the methodology for measuring carbon emissions resulting from procurement processes.'
- 6.2 The Leader and officials have been putting pressure on the government to improve the current approach but unfortunately the methodology for calculating 2024/25 emissions has not changed. To try and improve the situation we as a council have

been working with Business Wales to help our suppliers create Carbon Management Plans and measure their own carbon emissions more accurately. This in turn will help us move away from the current system of measuring emissions solely on based on the monetary value of the agreement.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 After receiving comments from the Communities Scrutiny Committee, the report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet before a final version is published on the Council's website.

8. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 8.1 Have you **included** residents / service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult with them?
- 8.2 The final Annual Report will be published on the Council's website after receiving the Cabinet's seal of approval and we will share information about it with all Council members, and with the residents of Gwynedd and the general public.
- 8.3 Have you considered **collaboration**?
- 8.4 Chapters 11 and 12 of the Annual Report cover the work carried out in part by the Gwynedd Nature Partnership, namely a consortium of local organisations led by the Council. A number of other projects in CNEP are carried out in partnership with others, such as active travel projects in collaboration with Public Service Board partners.
- 8.5 What has been done or will be done to **prevent** problems arising or worsening in the future?
- 8.6 One of the basic principles of CNEP is to try to prevent further increases in the average temperature of the planet and to limit global warming to "well below 2°C" in accordance with the United Nations Paris Agreement. Each of the plan's projects seek to stabilise or even reverse the probability that the current situation will lead to further problems in the future.
- 8.7 How have you considered the **long-term** and what will people's needs be in coming years?
- 8.8 As noted above, the basis of the CNEP is to seek to prevent global warming problems from getting worse in the future, and while the Council has its own target of net zero carbon by 2030 the Welsh Government has set a target for the whole of Wales to be net zero by 2050. The CNEP therefore also takes into account that

changing the habits of Gwynedd's residents and businesses will be long-term work beyond 2030.

- 8.9 The Annual Report highlights that the CNEP itself states that further work is needed to incorporate projects that will help residents, businesses and communities to respond to climate change that is already changing our landscape, such as the impact of flooding and extreme weather. Work is currently underway to review the CNEP and make any necessary amendments so it is very likely that we will see additional projects in the future that will focus on helping Gwynedd residents to adapt to the different needs over a long period of time.
- 8.10 To ensure **integration** have you considered the possible impact on other public bodies?
- 8.11 A large number of the CNEP projects are planned or implemented in conjunction with other public bodies or with the voluntary sector and communities. See 8.4.
- 8.12 A number of local public bodies including Cyngor Gwynedd are members of the Public Services Board and one of the three Well-being Objectives in the Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan 2023-2028 is 'We want to work together to support our services and communities to move towards Net Zero Carbon'. There is ongoing collaboration with other local authorities across north Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh Government's Energy Service, Transport for Wales which has resulted in joint planning and commissioning. A number of CNEP projects are also dependent on successful collaboration with other partners, such as our biodiversity and land use projects in conjunction with the Gwynedd Nature Partnership.

9. Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duty

- 9.1 The impact of [Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Duties](#) on the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan were assessed when it was adopted at a meeting of the Cabinet on 8 March 2022. This assessment is directly relevant to the Annual Report on the CNEP.

10. Next Steps

- 10.1 Following the discussion at the Communities Scrutiny Committee any comments the Committee has on the Annual Report will be submitted to the Cabinet's attention. The Council's Cabinet will consider the Annual Report at its meeting on 14 October.

10.2 If the Cabinet approves the report we will publicise it and encourage the residents of Gwynedd to take advantage of the opportunities to reduce their personal carbon emissions as well as help the Council meet our own net zero target.

11. Background Information

[Climate-and-Nature-Emergency-Plan.pdf](#)

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report 2024/25