



APPENDIX 4

TITLE **Assessment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

1. PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 1.1. This assessment introduces the Gwynedd Economic Strategy, and explains how the Strategy has been developed, and how it meets the requirements and purpose of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACT

- 2.1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a responsibility on public bodies in Wales to act in a sustainable manner and contribute to the well-being of today's generations, as well as future generations. It considers well-being in a holistic manner, including economic and social, environmental and cultural aspects.
- 2.2. Decisions made by public bodies are required to meet two requirements – the Five Ways of Working and the Seven National Well-being Goals. The Five Ways of Working identify a series of actions that should be acted upon when making decisions, and the Seven Well-being Goals outline the long-term outcomes towards which to contribute.

Five Ways of Working (Principles of Sustainable Development for Wales):

- Involvement
- Long-term action
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaborate

National Well-being Goals:

- A Prosperous Wales
- A Resilient Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- A more Equal Wales
- A Wales of Cohesive Communities
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language
- A Globally Responsible Wales

3. THRIVING WALES

- 3.1. While the well-being goals are holistic and interdependent, *it is a prosperous Wales* that looks most at economic issues. It is defined in the following way:

"An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing [...] fair work."

It recognises the value and importance of productivity, but stresses that "prosperity" is not growth for its own sake. Rather, the emphasis is on socio-economic well-being – on life outcomes, not traditional economic indicators, without overusing the planet's resources.

- 3.2. In his [2025 Annual Report](#), the Future Generations Commissioner said that economic policy in Wales has not moved sufficiently towards a wellbeing economy model (p. 86.), and that this should be done at all levels, including local government. In its definition, it includes decent work, fair and local procurement, local economies, skills for the future and a low-carbon society.

- 3.3. In light of these definitions, it is argued that the vision of the Strategy aligns very closely with the meaning of the well-being aim emphasised by the Commissioner:

"An innovative, productive and low carbon economy which strengthens the Welsh language, creates new opportunities and contributes to everyone's well-being."

The vision is defined against five principles that focus on the well-being needs of the people of Gwynedd:

- **To live with dignity:** That everyone should receive enough to sustain themselves and their families, to have full and happy lives without wanting for anything.
- **Opportunities:** That every individual should be able to access the opportunities they need to realise their full potential, regardless of their socio-economic background.
- **Fairness:** That no area, person or community should be left behind.
- **Local roots:** That Gwynedd's enterprises are the essence of Gwynedd's economy, and through them, we are able to retain the wealth that we create locally.
- **Sustainability:** That the Welsh language and environment must be nurtured and protected which, together, make Gwynedd such a unique place to live, work and venture.

4. PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

METHOD	HOW WAS IT IMPLEMENTED?
<p>CONTENT</p> <p>To elicit input from individuals and groups with an interest and/or expertise in relevant issues, and to reflect the diversity of the area served.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The messages conveyed by the people of Gwynedd in the <i>Ardal Ni</i> Consultation (2022) were used to identify what the people of Gwynedd feel is good about their local areas, and the things that need to be improved. These messages have been incorporated into the vision of the Strategy to ensure that we reflect what is important to the people of Gwynedd. It is a useful resource for understanding the views of Gwynedd residents, and the diversity of views in different parts of the county. ▪ Enterprises in Gwynedd were invited to respond to two <i>Business Surveys</i>, the first in 2024 and the second in 2025. While hospitality businesses have been somewhat over-represented, there have been responses from businesses in a diverse range of industries. Messages were conveyed about businesses' intentions for the future, the challenges they face and the types of support they value. The Strategy responds to this input, particularly in its treatment of Gwynedd's enterprises – responding, e.g., to the challenges they have identified, including recruitment. ▪ The economic terrain is complex and involves policy actors at many levels. In order to elicit input from the greatest possible variety of actors and bring their expertise, a series of meetings were organised, including with the following bodies: Welsh Government, Business Wales; Federation of Small Businesses Wales; the agricultural unions (FUW, NFU Cymru); North Wales Ambition Board; North Wales Skills Partnership; Snowdonia National Park; Bangor University; Grŵp Llandrillo-Menai; Gwynedd Community Enterprise Network, and; Mantell Gwynedd for the volunteer field in Gwynedd.
<p>LONG-TERM ACTION</p> <p>Identify long-term trends and plan for them in a way that is balanced with short-term needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The policy and economic planning context is uncertain and rapidly changing in Wales. There is uncertainty as to the future of funding schemes from the Welsh and UK governments, and there is an increasing emphasis on regional collaboration. This Strategy responds to these uncertainties, setting a long-term strategic direction, regardless of the funding plans provided to the Council and its partners. ▪ The Strategy responds to a series of "gaps" that reflect the structural underperformance of the economy in Gwynedd over the longer term, when compared to Wales and the UK. Over half of them are National Well-being Indicators and show Gwynedd's relative disadvantage in terms of economic well-being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Productivity Gap (Well-being Indicator 09): The value of what is produced in Gwynedd (per hour worked; per job filled) is substantially lower than the Welsh and UK averages in 2023, and the productivity growth rate in Gwynedd is substantially lower than the Wales and UK averages since 2004. ○ Industrial Gap: A relatively narrow range of industries, with employees and enterprises more numerous in a smaller range

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o of industries. o New Enterprise Gap: The business start-up rate in Gwynedd is amongst the lowest across Welsh counties in 2023, below the Welsh national average and significantly below the UK average. o High Performance Gap: The percentage of enterprises that saw an increase of 20% in the number of employees over a three-year period was consistently lower in Gwynedd than in Wales and the UK between 2018 and 2023. o Digital Connectivity Gap (Well-being Indicator 50): The percentage of properties with access to gigabyte connectivity (>1,000 Mbps) is lower than the averages for Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of properties also having the weakest connectivity (<15 Mbps). 4G and 5G coverage is also lower in Gwynedd. o Workforce Gap (Well-being Indicator 21): The unemployment rate is low, but the county's inactivity rate (i.e., proportion of population aged 16-64 who are not in work) is higher than the average for North Wales and the UK. o Population Gap: The population is ageing quicker than in Wales and the UK, with a higher proportion of older people of retirement age and high levels of outward migration among young people. o Pay Gap (Well-being Indicator 10): The average weekly salary of a full-time worker and household gross disposable income has been consistently lower in Gwynedd since 2010 than the Welsh and UK averages. o Work Conditions Gap (Well-being Indicator 16): Substantially higher rates of workers in Gwynedd are part-time and seasonal employees, compared with Wales and the UK. o Well-being Gap (Well-being Indicators 18 & 19): Low salaries and part-time jobs cause high levels of poverty in rural and urban areas, with in-work poverty particularly high in Gwynedd compared to Wales and the UK. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Along with these long-term "gaps", other long-term trends that are likely to have an impact on the Strategy and its effectiveness have also been identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Moving to a net-zero and low-carbon economy is an economic opportunity; but, if the new wealth created is to be preserved locally, it is necessary to ensure that the people of Gwynedd have the skills to take advantage of work and business opportunities. o New technologies, e.g., artificial intelligence is an opportunity; but poses risks, especially if the people and businesses of Gwynedd are not attuned to the latest developments and able to respond to them effectively. o The language shift in Gwynedd is partly influenced by the economy (Welsh Communities Commission, 2024); e.g., lower language transmission in socio-economically disadvantaged households.
<p>PREVENTIVE ACTION Prevent problems from happening in the first place or getting worse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy deliberately responds to a series of "gaps" where Gwynedd performs below national averages or peers, and which create socio-economic wellbeing problems. The following changes are therefore implemented which, in essence, seek to alleviate the "gaps" or prevent them from getting worse. On the one hand, structural change in the economy, including:

- **Raising the productivity levels of our enterprises and workers** to stimulate higher salaries and better working conditions.
 - **Increasing the competitiveness of our native enterprises** so that they are more effective and efficient, realising their long-term business objectives and creating quality jobs.
 - **Strengthening digital connectivity and the county's business infrastructure** to create the best possible conditions for enterprise.
 - **Creating a more diverse industrial foundation** with local enterprises in a range of industries, creating new opportunities and a more resilient economy.
 - **Supporting our people to gain the skills they need**, so that they, along with the enterprises that employ them, can take full advantage of opportunities;
 - **To retain more of the wealth created in Gwynedd locally**, in order to maximise benefits for Gwynedd's people, enterprises and communities, and;
 - **Building a net zero and naturally Welsh economy**, that is environmentally and culturally sustainable.
- This is primarily done in order to prevent or reduce the socio-economic wellbeing challenges faced in Gwynedd. To this end, the change implemented will include:
 - Higher salaries and gross household income;
 - More people employed in stable jobs;
 - Lower levels of poverty and socio-economic disadvantage;
 - Broader variety of employment opportunities locally;
 - More people able to stay, live and work in their local communities;
 - More people enjoying their work and realising their full potential;
 - A green economy that protects the county's exceptional natural environment, and;
 - A Welsh economy which increases the use and visibility of the language with customers and in the workplace across Gwynedd.

INTEGRATE

To act in a way that is compatible with, and adds value to, rather than undermines other plans and priorities.

- The Strategy builds upon the strategic direction already set out in the Council's Plan: *"Strengthening the economy and supporting the residents of Gwynedd to earn decent wages"*. The Strategy takes this direction, but because it is one of several corporate priorities, the purpose of this Strategy is to define the economic vision in further depth and to pay particular attention to the economy; that is to ensure priorities and meaningful action.
- The new Economic Strategy lies alongside the Gwynedd and Snowdonia Sustainable Visiting Economy Plan, following the direction set out in that Plan for tourism, and complements its vision for a sustainable wellbeing economy.
- *Gwynedd Ni* is Gwynedd Council's local regeneration framework. It focuses on 13 local areas across the county. To ensure

	<p>meaningful action in each of these local areas, individual action plans will be prepared for them and added to the framework. The content of these schemes will be co-developed with the Council's local partners – local representatives, community enterprises and private and charitable bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy has been developed in conjunction with the Council's new Procurement Plan, meaning that they blend very closely together, particularly when trying to keep the benefits of public spending local.
<p>COLLABORATE To act in collaboration with partners (both internal and external) and with enterprises and the people of Gwynedd.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Strategy has been developed in light of the input provided by a series of partners, as listed above in the Content Section. It recognises that it will be necessary to work with them to maximise the value of the Strategy and that the Council as a single body cannot act independently. Therefore, this Strategy lives up to the forces that are in the hands of the Council, as well as the forces that lie in other bodies. ▪ The Strategy recognises that the people and enterprises of Gwynedd are the essence of the local economy. Therefore, the Council will continue to elicit their input over the full duration of the Strategy, including the annual Business Surveys. There will also be a need to continue to work together in the implementation of the Strategy's projects. ▪ The local action plans developed in light of the Strategy will be co-created with the Council's local partners – local representatives, community enterprises and private and charitable organisations. This will ensure co-production and co-operation over the full lifetime of the Strategy, 2025-35.

5. HOW WILL THE NATIONAL WELL-BEING GOALS BE MET?

Thriving Wales

" An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing fair work."

See Part 3. The vision of the Strategy is explained very closely with the Future Generations Commissioner's definition of the Prosperous Wales goal, i.e., an economy that places emphasis on the socio-economic well-being of the population, not traditional macro indicators.

A Resilient Wales

" A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change."

Gwynedd has an exceptional natural wealth which makes it one of the best places to live and work. Therefore, protecting and nurturing the environment is central to the Strategy,

Action is planned to reduce waste, encourage circular and green ways of doing business, promote and take advantage of new opportunities in the green economy, and push for improvements in grid capacity locally to make renewable and low carbon energy developments more feasible in Gwynedd.

A Healthier Wales

" A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood."

It is known that people who are socio-economically disadvantaged, facing low wages, job insecurity or poverty, are more likely to face poorer physical and mental health. Improvements in pay and working conditions will be implemented in the Strategy – and this, in due course, will have a positive structural impact on health outcomes.

It is also recognized in the Strategy that mental health is partly shaped by the enjoyment gained from work, or not. Therefore, ensuring that people in Gwynedd have access to work that they enjoy is also important.

A more Equal Wales

" A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances."

Unleashing the potential of the people of Gwynedd is a central objective in the Strategy, and it is emphasized on several occasions in the document itself. At the moment, the "gaps" which mean that Gwynedd is underperforming economically when compared to Wales and the UK, mean that the people of Gwynedd face a relative disadvantage - and, as such, face structural challenges reaching their full potential. Therefore, action will be taken to mitigate the "gaps" and prevent them from worsening across the Strategy's six priorities.

In particular, the fourth priority – *Supporting Our People* – deals

specifically with supporting people to reach their full potential: *"Supporting the people of Gwynedd to reach their full potential, to access quality employment, fair salaries and opportunities locally."* It consists of the following operations:

- Supporting people into work who are unemployed, inactive or facing additional challenges;
- Supporting people in work to get better jobs with higher wages, or more secure working conditions.
- Promoting the Real Living Wage among the county's employers.
- Promoting inclusive forms of employment to make it easier for people to be able to work.
- To promote employment opportunities that provide security to the people of Gwynedd.
- Supporting older people of retirement age to continue working and/or volunteering, where they want to do so.

It is also known that many of the young people who leave Gwynedd do so not because they necessarily want to leave, but because they feel it is necessary to do so to find work. Because of this, the migration challenge is specifically addressed to support young people to be able to succeed locally, regardless of their background and aspirations.

Wales of Cohesive Communities

"Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities."

Connectivity is an essential part of the Strategy, particularly in light of the digital "gap" which means that broadband connectivity is weaker in Gwynedd. Improvements in broadband connectivity are therefore being implemented, especially in rural areas facing the weakest digital connectivity.

A Wales with a Vibrant Culture where the Welsh Language Thrives

"A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation."

The Welsh language is central to the Strategy. Structural economic influences are known to have an impact on the viability of the Welsh language in those communities with a high density of Welsh speakers (Welsh Communities Commission, 2024), including Gwynedd – and the Strategy fully accepts that. The Strategy will act to mitigate or reverse the language shifts faced in Gwynedd and are partly driven by the economy, as well as increasing the use and visibility of the Welsh language more generally in Gwynedd, both among customers and in the workforce.

The largest language shifts include:

- Emigration of young people – More likely to be speaking Welsh.
- Local people are under-represented in the highest managerial positions in Gwynedd, and;
- Households with one or more Welsh speaking parents but

who are at socio-economic disadvantage, are less likely to pass on Welsh to children.

Any body, enterprise or business in receipt of support from the Council, whether financial or non-financial, will have to demonstrate an increase in their use of the Welsh language; and a new monitoring document has been developed for this purpose.

The Strategy also recognises the importance of Gwynedd's cultural scene, particularly in creating vibrance and a rich social life locally – and as an important aspect of the economy. Because of this, culture is specifically addressed in the sixth priority of the Strategy.

A Globally Responsible Wales

" A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being."

There is an international orientation to the Strategy. It recognises that Gwynedd and Wales have an international "diaspora" which often looks back to Wales and wants to make a difference to the communities it originally came from. It is an opportunity to bring resource, expertise and talented people back to Gwynedd, and they are targeted in the Strategy to do so.

Beyond this opportunity, the Strategy supports the move towards a net zero economy due to the climate change crisis internationally.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Following this assessment, it is concluded that Gwynedd's Economic Strategy very closely meets the requirements and purpose of the Well-being Act. The Five Ways of Working have been fully incorporated into the development of the Strategy, and there is a clear well-being orientation in it – an orientation that veers from a traditional focus on economic growth for its own sake, towards a new model of economic development that prioritises the socio-economic well-being of the population.