

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

A report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd

Date of Meeting: 14 May, 2026

Title of Item: Annual Review of the Council's political balance

Contact Officer: Ian Jones,
Head of Democracy Services

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

The Council is asked to:

- adopt the list of committees and sub-committees to be established for the municipal year, as noted in **Appendix A**, and also the adoption of the seat allocation and senior salaries set out in the appendix.
- delegate the right to the Head of Democracy Services to make appointments to the committees on the basis of political balance, and in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.
- adopt the chairs of scrutiny committees on the basis of political balance as follows:

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Communities Scrutiny Committee
Care Scrutiny Committee

Plaid Cymru Group
Independent Group
Independent Group

2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 In accordance with statutory requirements, an annual review of the Council's political balance must be carried out, which is completed at the annual meeting.

2.1.2 At the annual meeting of the full Council on the **1st of May, 2025** it was reported that the political constitution of the Council was as follows:-

Group	Number
Plaid Cymru	46
Independent	21
Labour / Liberal	2
Total	69

2.1.3 Since then, there have been changes as follows:

- Councillor Wendy Cleaver, Independent Group was elected to the Barmouth Ward in August 2025 following the death of Councillor Rob Triggs.
- Councillor Gwion Emyr, Plaid Cymru Group was elected to the Bethel and Felinheli Ward in November 2025, following the resignation of Iwan Huws.
- The above changes did not have any impact on the political balance.
- Councillor John Pughe left Plaid Cymru Group and became an individual member in December 2025. This did not lead to a review of the Council's political balance as there was no request for a review as he was not joining a political group.
- The former Labour/Liberal group has changed its name: The group is called 'Gwynedd yn Gyntaf/ Gwynedd First' since January 2026.
- Councillor Gareth Anthony Roberts left Plaid Cymru Group and became an individual member at the beginning of May, 2026.

2.1.4 The political constitution of the Council is now as follows:

Group	Number
Plaid Cymru	44
Independent	21
Gwynedd First	2
Individual member	2
Total	69

2.2 ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

2.2.1 To remind members, the four main rules in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in relation to the allocation of seats are set out below:-

(a) That not all the seats on a committee can be allocated to the same political group;

(b) That the majority of the seats on a committee must be allocated to a political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership;

(c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the ordinary committees which are allocated to each political group shall be the same proportion to the number of all the seats borne by the members of that group on the Council;

(ch) Subject to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above, that the number of the seats on a committee which are allocated to each political group shall be the same proportion as the number of seats borne by the members of that group on the Council.

2.2.2 In order to ensure adherence to these rules, the Council has been dealing with committees in different blocks in the past. This also makes it easier to ensure adherence to rule (c) in paragraph 2.2.1 above.

2.3 CHANGES TO THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

2.3.1 The table in **Appendix A** confirms which committees are to be established for the municipal year.

2.3.2 As a result of the review of the political balance, following allocation to the political groups, the changes to committee seats are as follows:

- The individual members gain two seat each. They will be on the following committees, with Plaid Cymru Group losing a seat on each committee:
- Democracy Services Committee.
- Joint Local Advisory Committee
- Language Committee
- SACRE

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2.3.3 The Council is asked to adopt the allocation of seats in accordance with the political balance as noted in **Appendix A**.

2.4 CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS

2.4.1 In accordance with the requirements of sections 66-75 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, it is a requirement to allocate persons to chair scrutiny committees in order to ensure, as far as possible, that political balance is reflected in those chairpersons and that the groups that are not represented on the executive are given a fair proportion of the chairpersons.

2.4.2 Regulations mean that there is a specific formula for calculating the Scrutiny Chairs. The formula followed is "number of group members / number of Council members x number of scrutiny committee chairs". The regulations state that 'rounding down' is required for the group that is in the executive. In this case, as the Plaid Cymru group has 44 members, it means that they have one chair ($44/69 \times 3 = 1.91$, and having to 'round down' = 1).

2.4.3 The only committees whose chairpersons are to be allocated on the basis of political balance are the Scrutiny Committees. The annual review notes that **the Chairpersons of two of the scrutiny committees are to be assigned to the Independent Group and the Chairperson of one scrutiny committee is to be assigned to the Plaid Cymru Group.**

2.4.4 In accordance with the views of the Council's Business Group, it is recommended that the chairpersons should be allocated as follows:

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	Plaid Cymru Group
Communities Scrutiny Committee	Independent Group
Care Scrutiny Committee	Independent Group

2.4.5 There is no statutory or constitutional provision to manage the appointments of persons as the vice-chairs or chairs of all other committees (except that a member of the executive may not chair the Licensing Committee or the Democracy Services Committee).

2.4.6 The committees themselves will elect their chairperson in these instances, subject to the procedural rules limiting the term of a Chairperson to two years.

3. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

3.1 As noted above, the Council's Business Group has been consulted on the 14th April, 2026 with further consultation on the latest changes.

3.2 THE STATUTORY OFFICERS' OBSERVATIONS:

Monitoring Officer:

I have consulted on this matter and am satisfied with the appropriateness of the recommendation.

Statutory Finance Officer:

Nothing to add regarding financial propriety.

APPENDIX A - ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

A	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Gwynedd First	Individual Member	Tot
Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	12	6	0	0	18
Communities Scrutiny Committee	12	5	1	0	18
Care Scrutiny Committee	12	5	1	0	18
Governance and Audit	8	4	0	0	12

B	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Gwynedd First	Individual Member	Tot
Democratic Services	9	4	1	1	15
Planning	10	4	1	0	15
Central/ General Licensing	10	5	0	0	15
Language	9	5	0	1	15
Chief Officers Appointment	10	5	0	0	15
Employment Appeals	5	2	0	0	7
Number of seats block A & B	97	45	4	2	148

C	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Gwynedd First	Individual Member	Tot
Pensions	4	2	1	0	7
Local Joint Consultative Committee	6	4	0	1	11
SACRE	4	2	0	1	7
Total seats A & B & C	111	53	5	4	173

Senior Salaries

In accordance with the previous decision of the Council, the senior salaries are paid as follows:

- Leader
- Deputy Leader
- 8 other Cabinet members
- The Leader of the largest Opposition Party
- Committee Chairs
 - Scrutiny Committee (x3)
 - Planning Committee
 - Licensing Committee (Central and General count as one Committee)
 - Pensions Committee
- Civic Head (Chair of the Council)
 - Deputy Civic Head (Vice-chair of the Council)