

APPENDIX 2

PLANNING POLICY WORKING GROUP – 16 September 2026

5. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR) 8

The Working Group began with a presentation by Cyngor Gwynedd's Planning Policy Team Leader on the indicators of Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 8, the final AMR under the current Joint Local Development Plan. It was highlighted that all indicators were based on sound evidence and that the data presented contained factual figures. An overview of the AMR was given, explaining that the conclusions derived from the monitoring carried out annually by the planning policy service. It was explained that the purpose of the report was to assess the effectiveness of the Joint Local Development Plan's strategy and policy framework. The Working Group also received clarification of how indicators were assessed and scored against the success criteria associated with the Plan's policies. The main findings were shared with the members, highlighting the relevant percentages and data collected in the preparation of AMR 8. Concluding the presentation, the officer noted that the findings of AMR 8, together with the previous monitoring reports, would provide valuable evidence to inform the preparation of the new Local Development Plan.

Matters raised

1. The need to compare the findings of the current AMR with those of previous years in a more consistent manner was highlighted, to identify the indicators and issues that required more attention or consideration. Clarification was also sought regarding the next steps and the main risks identified. In addition, it was asked whether the results of some of the AMR's indicators were over-reliant on the increase of large development sites, especially those containing five or more units.
2. A member suggested that the current position of the AMR and the LDP should be considered in a more realistic manner. It was noted that it should be recognised that the targets set for job and population growth had not been achieved in line with the expectations of the Joint Local Development Plan. Reference was also made to the outcomes of planning appeals, noting that the AMR could submit a rejected appeal as a negative result. However, it was suggested that some of these results could reflect flaws or incorrect assumptions within the Plan itself, rather than a failure in the decision-making process. The Wylfa project was used as an example of an external factor that had a significant impact on the delivery of the Plan's objectives and the performance of several indicators within the AMR. It was emphasised that the report should pay more attention to the external factors and wider circumstances that had influenced the results, to provide a more complete picture of the reasons for any failures or lack of progress against the targets.
3. A member supported the above points and asked for further clarification regarding the AMR's D19 indicator, which relates to new developments on brownfield sites. In

particular, it was asked why the status of the indicator had been indicated in orange considering that the Report indicated that the information was unavailable. It is not possible to say one way or the other, i.e. it is possible that the indicator was delivering, but that no information is available.

4. A member began by referring to the work of the Council's Education Department, noting their positive impression of their ability to forecast future pupil numbers and assess the need for additional school places over a period of time. They then moved to discuss the status and level of available jobs, noting that the number of posts had been lower than anticipated in the Plan. It has been suggested that this, as a result, has reduced the need for new residential units. Following this, the member asked what the status of the Plan would be after January 2027. While he acknowledged the response given, he expressed that the situation could mean that there was more flexibility to ignore the Plan's policies in future decision-making.
5. The member shared the conflict in the Planning Committee regarding the Welsh language, and it was believed that strengthening the supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on the Welsh language would help resolve the conflict. The need to strengthen the SPG's position was highlighted specifically on lands allocated for housing. The importance of recognising the mistakes or failures of an indicator or policy was also shared and to base housing developments on failed targets, Wylfa was used as an example of the reduction in population.
6. The member highlighted that the indicators from the AMR were purely factual and statutory and that the results of the indicators cannot change. A challenge was made regarding Section 106 and its impact on local affordable housing. The situation relating to the staff of the planning policy department was also recognised, and a proposal was made to accept AMR 8.
7. The member agreed with the comments made regarding the AMR, also referring to the challenges related to capacity and resources within the Planning Policy team. The member went on to discuss the impact of the Wylfa project on employment in the area, noting that failure to realise the anticipated employment levels had direct implications on housing demand. However, it was highlighted that a higher percentage of affordable housing units had been provided than anticipated, reflecting and supporting the Council's strategic objectives. The member also asked if any consideration had been given to policies relating to the density of residential developments in preparing the new Local Development Plan. In response, it was noted that it was likely that density levels would need to be reconsidered and reduced in some cases to ensure that they were in line with national requirements and policies, particularly in relation to drainage.
8. A Member noted that failures/inadequacies of indicators and the monitoring framework should be highlighted when presenting the report to the Welsh Government.

Responses

1. The officer explained that the performance and success of the indicators vary from year to year, depending on a number of external and local factors. In emphasising the importance of the AMR as a source of evidence for informing the new Local Development Plan, it was noted that the targets for the provision of affordable housing were being met, and that more exception sites had been developed during the AMR 8 period than in any previous monitoring period under the current Plan. The importance of giving close consideration to housing and Welsh language matters when preparing the new Plan was also highlighted. It was noted that the outcomes of the indicators could vary significantly from year to year, and that officers were limited to reporting on the data and applications received during the relevant monitoring period. Another officer added that the findings of the previous Annual Monitoring Reports needed to be reviewed to identify those areas that needed to be updated or reconsidered within the new LDP. It was emphasised that a wide range of matters would need to be addressed during the preparation of the Plan. It was further noted that there was a need to continue to pay close attention to the national policy framework, and it was confirmed that a report would be submitted to the Planning Committee to highlight these matters in more detail. Finally, it was recognised that certain risks could arise during the period between the end of the existing Local Development Plan and the adoption of a new Plan, particularly in relation to planning appeals and the pressures that may arise from the absence of a current development plan.
2. It was highlighted that planning policies were designed for unforeseen circumstances of what could happen and it was also noted that it was the flexibility of the policies that was important to deal with unforeseen issues. The officer shared that the AMR's indicators were the subject of frequent discussion between officers.
3. The officer noted that there was currently no clear method of monitoring or measuring the success of this indicator. As a result, it was considered that the indicator needed to be reviewed and strengthened to ensure that it provided a more robust basis for monitoring performance in moving forward with the new LDP. Proposed to add text to the AMR that highlighted what had been raised by the member.
4. In response, it was clarified that the status of the Plan would continue as a material planning consideration, and therefore the Council would not be able to completely ignore it when making planning decisions. Reference was also made to the member's earlier point regarding the Education Department, noting that the Department was being consulted on relevant planning applications for housing developments and had contributed to the preparation of the existing LDP as well as the new Plan under development. It was further emphasised that the status of the Plan after January 2027 would continue as a material planning consideration, and that planning officers and the Council would not ignore it when assessing applications. It was also noted that a report would be submitted to the Planning Committee which would explain the situation and the implications in more detail. It was shared that the main consideration in decision-making would be the development plan in place at the time, noting that the policies of

the current Plan remained consistent with the direction and requirements of the national planning framework.

5. Acknowledge the point raised. LDP circumstances are subject to change, and the statutory process will be there to deal with the changes faced.
6. Note the observation.
7. Agree that policies for meeting density will need to be revisited to comply with changes in legislation and to make the best use of land. Concerns that targets were not being met in the context of the LDP were shared while noting that issues, e.g. topography could affect the circumstances of applications and developments.
8. The officer noted that the impact of not realising the Wylfa project had been acknowledged and reflected within the relevant monitoring work. The officer also explained that the Local Development Plan had demonstrated its ability to respond to unexpected circumstances and changes, citing the success of the affordable housing provision as an example of this.