CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET

Date of Meeting:	**10 November 2026**
Cabinet Member:	**Cllr. Craig ab Iago**
Relevant Officer:	**Bethan Richardson, Climate Change Programme Manager**
Title of Item:	**Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26**

Report to a meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

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1. Decision Sought

i. That the Cabinet considers and approves the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26.

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2. The reason why the Cabinet needs to make the decision

i. Gwynedd Council issued a climate emergency declaration in March 2019 which led to the publication of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan 2022/23 - 2029/30 (CNEP) in March 2022. During 2025 a public consultation was undertaken to review the plan, which led to the creation of an update of the plan (version 2) which was approved by the Council's Cabinet in July 2026. However, this annual report assesses progress on the original plan published in March 2022.

ii. The CNEP is also one of the projects within the Green Gwynedd heading in The Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28, and therefore one of our strategic priorities.

iii. Annual progress reports on the CNEP have been published on the Council's website since 2022/23 following approval by Cabinet.

iv. 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.

v. A draft version of the Annual Report was discussed at a meeting of Gwynedd Council's Communities Scrutiny Committee on 1 October, and the committee's comments are summarised in 5. below.

vi. Following the same procedure as in previous years, this is an opportunity for Cabinet to decide whether they are satisfied that the Annual Report at Annex 1 provides an accurate and balanced picture of the work delivered during 2025/26 to meet the ambition of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

vii. 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 2025/26.

viii. Cabinet can also offer comments and guidance on the future work of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

3. Background

i. The Climate and Nature Emergency Plan (the Plan/CNEP) outlines how we as a Council will adapt the way we work and deliver services to reduce our carbon emissions and increase carbon absorption capacity. It provides examples of projects we will be pursuing, their outline costs and the timeframe to deliver.

ii. This is also the fourth year that we, like most other public organisations in Wales, have submitted data on our emissions and carbon absorption levels to the Welsh Government's Energy Service. Clear guidance is set on what data needs to be collected, which ensures accuracy and consistency between organisations.

iii. We measure our carbon emissions across the following categories: buildings and energy; street lighting; fleet and equipment; business travel; staff commuting; working from home; waste; procurement of goods and services. We also measure carbon absorption levels in the lands owned by the Council.

iv. We need to collect data about the carbon derived from our procurement processes, but the current methodology is based on measuring by financial expenditure alone. Simply put, the more we spend, the greater the emissions. Because this can paint an imperfect picture of the true situation the Annual Report sets out two different sets of data – with procurement and without procurement data.

v. Gwynedd Council's carbon data for 2025/26 has been submitted to the Welsh Government by 14 September, and the information in the Annual Report is based on what has been submitted. It is too early for us to receive comments back from the Government, but the information was accurate to the best of our ability.

vi. Based on this data we know how much the 'gap to net zero' is and therefore how much more work lies ahead if we are to reach our target.

4. Main Issues

i. 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.

ii. 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. For this reason, we present two sets of data in each chapter, namely ‘including procurement’ and ‘excluding procurement’.

iii. Cyngor Gwynedd’s total carbon emissions in 2025/26, **including** procurement, had fallen by 8% since the 2019/20 baseline year and by 11% since 2024/25.

iv. Cyngor Gwynedd's total carbon emissions in 2025/26, **not including** procurement, had fallen by 39% since the 2019/20 baseline year and by 6% since 2024/25.

v. Looking at our carbon emission and absorption data together, **without** considering procurement data, our gap to net zero is 37% lower in 2025/26 compared with 2019/20 and 7% lower than in 2024/25.

vi. The percentage of carbon emissions decreased in every category except commuting, and we consider that the increase in this category is due to a staff survey being held to collect more accurate data than was available in previous years.

5. Recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee

i. The Annual Report was presented to a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 1 October and their comments and recommendations of matters to be discussed by Cabinet are set out below:

1. To accept the report noting the comments submitted during the discussion.
2. The intention to discuss with Welsh Government Ministers the methodology for calculating carbon emissions in the area of Procurement, as well as a follow-up to the expiring EC04 scheme, was welcomed.

6. Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

i. Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 says public authorities operating in Wales have a duty to maintain and improve biodiversity and to encourage ecosystem strength.

ii. The Welsh Government published a national biodiversity strategy, the 'Nature Restoration Action Plan' in 2015 which outlined the commitment to reverse biodiversity loss in Wales, with which there are 6 objectives for action. In order to comply with the duty of Section 6 public authorities must publish a plan of their own based on the Welsh Government's plan, and then the progress needs to be reported upon.

Cyngor Gwynedd has been updating our own Nature Recovery Plan 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 Recovery Action Plan through the Climate and Nature Annual Report. The information can be found in chapter 3 and at the end of chapters 6 to 11.

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

i. Have you **included** residents / service users? If not, when and how do you intend to consult with them?

ii. 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.

iii. Have you considered **collaboration**?

iv. 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.

v. What has been done or will be done to **prevent** problems arising or worsening in the future?

vi. 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 2oC" 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.

vii. How have you considered the **long-term** and what will people's needs be in coming years?

viii. As noted above, the basis of the CNEP is to try to prevent the problems of global warming from getting worse in the future, and 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 a long-term work beyond the lifetime of the CNEP itself, which is 2030.

1. 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. The development of a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is one of the projects in version 2 of the CNEP and therefore it is very likely that we will see additional projects in the future that will focus on helping Gwynedd residents adapt to the different needs over a long period of time.

ix. To ensure **integration** have you considered the possible impact on other public bodies?

x. 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 7.iv.

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.

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

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.

9. Next steps and timetable

i. We will publish the Annual Report on our website and share information about it.

ii. We will continue to discuss in partnership and build relationships with external partners to discuss lessons learned from each other's work, and how best to develop the work into the future.

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10. Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

It is appropriate that the Cabinet has an opportunity to approve Gwynedd Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan Annual Report. No further observations to add in relation to propriety.

Chief Finance Officer:

I am satisfied that approving the decision sought will not create a new spending commitment as it reports on the activities of the last year. I have no objections to the decision sought from the perspective of financial propriety.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Climate and Nature Emergency Plan: Annual Report 2025/26