MEETING	**Full Council**
DATE	**3 December 2026**
TITLE	**Annual Performance Report And Self-Assessment 2025/26**
PURPOSE	**Approval and adoption of Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2025/26**
CABINET MEMBER	**Cllr Nia Jeffreys**
CONTACT OFFICER	**Dewi W. Jones, Council Business Support Service Manager**

1 Background / Introduction

1.1 This report provides information about the progress made against the content of the Cyngor Gwynedd Plan 2023-28 during 2025/26. The intention is to provide a balanced report, which addresses the aspects that failed to be achieved as well as those aspects that have been successful. It is noted that the self-assessment is a statutory requirement under the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.**

1.2 Regular reporting is an essential monitoring requirement within the Council's performance management arrangements. We monitor our performance regularly at Departmental performance challenge and support meetings and since June 2025 performance reports have been presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee in order to increase transparency and provide independent public challenge to performance.

1.3 Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance and Self-Assessment Report 2025/26 **(Appendix 1)** is structured to reflect the format of the Cyngor Gwynedd's Plan 2023-28. In the first part the focus is on the performance of the Council Plan projects and the day-to-day work while the second part includes the Self-Assessment. As in 2024/25 the report is much more concise than in the past and the intention was to make it a document that is easier to read while continuing to give the reader reassurance that the Council reports meaningfully on its performance.

1.4 To demonstrate the impact of the Council's work on the people of Gwynedd, a selection of case studies, chosen with input from Cabinet Members, will be included at the end of each priority section, with further case studies published on the website. We will also publish an easy-read version or a separate easy-read document to ensure that the information is as accessible as possible.

1.5 Although responding to the 'Our Bravery Brought Justice' report was one of the Council's main priorities during 2025/26, it was not included in the Council Plan for 2025/26. However, the substantial work undertaken during the year to respond to the recommendations and strengthen the Council's safeguarding arrangements should be highlighted. Progress on the Response

Plan was reported regularly through an independently chaired Programme Board, which included representatives from several external specialist agencies, as well as through the Council's governance and scrutiny arrangements. Including the Response Plan as a prominent priority in the Council Plan for 2026/27 therefore builds on this work and underlines the Council's ongoing commitment to implementing the recommendations.

1.6 The arrangements for reviewing, reporting and assessing the Council's performance have been subject to legislative change through the arrangements of Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This requires the Council to measure its performance against three aspects, namely;
(a) That it delivers its functions effectively
(b) That is uses resources economically, effectively, efficiently and
(c) That its governing arrangements are efficient when delivering this.

1.7 This report responds to these new requirements and there is a duty to publish a report noting the conclusions of the self-assessment once in relation to each financial year, and to complete the work "as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year it relates to."

1.8 A duty to consult at least once in a financial year with local people, local businesses, council staff and trade unions is also stated. These consultations should be used to obtain feedback on the extent to which the authority is fulfilling the performance requirements. Over the past year, the Council has conducted surveys with staff and residents of the county and consulted with trade unions regarding its performance. There is a statutory requirement to have regard to the outcomes of consultations when preparing the self-assessment. It is confirmed that this requirement has been met and highlighted in the document.

1.9 In developing the 2025/26 Self-Assessment, the Council considered feedback gathered through surveys, consultations and engagement activity. Residents' feedback highlighted the need to strengthen trust, demonstrate value for money and ensure that their views influence decision-making. Businesses highlighted cost pressures and recruitment challenges, as well as the need for practical and financial support. Staff feedback was positive about the Council as a place to work, while also highlighting workload pressures and the need for greater appreciation. The Council continued to engage with trade unions on strategic and workforce matters, although no formal response was received to the specific request for feedback on the Self-Assessment. This evidence has shaped the strengths, risks and improvement priorities identified within the Self-Assessment. (Further detail on the feedback and findings arising from this work is set out in the Self-Assessment).

1.10 The Governance Group (that includes officers such as the Chief Executive, Head of Finance Department, Head of Corporate Support Department and the Head of Legal Services amongst others) has led/taken an overview of this process within the Council to ensure that the work is owned and led at a strategic level.

1.11 Statutory guidance requires the involvement of the Governance and Audit Committee in the self-assessment process, giving them the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations, which the Council is responsible for considering. As in 2024/25, the main potential issues for inclusion in the 2025/26 Self-Assessment were presented for the Committee's consideration at its meeting on 9 July, and a number of recommendations and comments were received.

1.12 A draft of the Self-Assessment document was presented to the Governance and Audit Committee at their meeting on the 22nd October, where it was agreed to accept the draft report while offering the following comments:

- Recommend that the Council consider consulting Gwynedd residents on Council Tax.
- Recommend that 'staff sickness absence' be added to the list of challenges/risks within the Self-Assessment document, in response to the increase in sickness absence.

1.13 The above comments have been addressed within the draft version of the Self-Assessment.

1.14 In accordance with the requirements of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, Appendix 3 outlines how the Council has complied with the Social Partnership duty. A draft of this document was discussed with trades unions representatives at a Trades Unions Liaison Group meeting on 21 October, and no comments or recommendations were received.

1.15 A Panel Assessment was undertaken in March 2026 as part of the Council's arrangements for reviewing its performance and governance. The findings of the 2025/26 Self-Assessment are aligned with the findings and recommendations of the Panel's report, providing further assurance that the key issues have been consistently identified and are being addressed through the next steps

1.16 In order to meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, we need to report on our contribution to the principles of the Act and specifically the well-being objectives that we have adopted. This report has been drawn up on the basis of our well-being objectives (the seven priority areas) outlining what has been achieved in the period in question. For convenience there is also a table at the end of the first part of the report identifying the objectives to which the projects contribute.

1.17 As part of the preparation of the Council Plan 2023-28 an Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared. The assessment on the Plan in its entirety does not identify any impact that would justify a departure from the recommendation, and there are elements for which a positive impact is anticipated. It is the Project Leaders' responsibility to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment on individual projects.

1.18 Not publishing a self-assessment would likely lead to statutory recommendations by Audit Wales, which would have implications on the Council's reputation.

2 Reasons for Recommending the Decision

2.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Council's Governance and Audit Committee have discussed Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2025/26 and have had the opportunity to present observations and recommendations. The Council Cabinet has discussed the report seen in **Appendices 1 and 3**at its meeting on 11 November and recommended that the Council adopts it.

3. Next steps and timetable

3.1 In accordance with what is required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the document will be circulated to the following list of recipients within the four-week period following this meeting:

i. Auditor General for Wales
ii. His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
iii. Welsh Ministers.

3.2 Arrangements will be made to inform the public of the report by communicating the report and the main successes visually via social media, as well as by printing and sharing copies with the media and at the Council's usual locations e.g., libraries.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Council is requested to approve and adopt Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2025/26.

5. Statutory Officers' Views

5.1 Views of the Monitoring Officer

As noted, undertaking a self-assessment is part of statutory duties placed on the Council in relation to assessing and reporting on its performance. There are a number of statutory steps which relate to reaching this point and these are specifically referenced in the head

report and the Performance Report and Self- Assessment as well as how the Council is to have regard to them. These are specifically around consultation and the views of the Governance and Audit Committee. I am satisfied with the propriety of the recommendation.

5.2 Views of the Head of Finance Department

The Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment is a key document that is now a core part of demonstrating the appropriateness of the Council's governance and performance arrangements. I am satisfied that the contents of the document are a fair and accurate reflection of Cyngor Gwynedd's position.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Performance Report and Self-Assessment 2024/25 (Draft)

Appendix 2 – Cyngor Gwynedd's Annual Social Partnership Report for 2024/25 (Draft)