

Complete Agenda

CABINET

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

DATE	Tuesday, 19th July, 2022
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Hybrid Meeting - Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH and Zoom
CONTACT POINT	Annes Siôn 01286 679490 cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Dyfrig Siencyn	Leader of the Council
Nia Wyn Jeffreys	Deputy Leader
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Housing
Beca Brown	Cabinet Member for Education
Berwyn Parry Jones	Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal and YGC
Dafydd Meurig	Cabinet Member for Environment
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Elin Walker Jones	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Ioan Thomas	Cabinet Member for Finance
Menna Jones	Cabinet Member for Corporate Support

AGENDA

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THE CABINET 14/06/22

Present-

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig L Siencyn, Nia Jeffreys, Craig ab Iago, Beca Brown, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Menna Jones, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan and Ioan Thomas.

Also present-

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Ffion Madog Evans (Senior Finance Manager) and Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader).

Item 6: Dewi Wyn Jones (Council Business Service Support Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 MARCH 2022

The Chair accepted the minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2022 as a true record.

6. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn.

DECISION

To approve the Gwynedd Council Performance Report 2021/22 and recommend its adoption by the Full Council at its next meeting on 23 June 2022.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that it reflected the Council's work over the past year. It was explained that it was a very interesting report which showed some of the work that had been done and the steps taken to maintain the Council's performance for the future.

The Council's Business Support Service Manager added that the report demonstrated the Council's progress against its priorities during 2021/22. It was noted that the report was balanced as it addressed the work that had been delivered and the work that had not been completed. It was expressed that the first part of the report covered the progress in relation to Council priorities while the second part dealt with departments' performance relating to their day-to-day work.

It was explained that this work had been prepared by the departments and verified by the Cabinet Members before the election. It was noted that the report would be submitted to the Full Council on 23 June.

7. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2021/22 - REVENUE OUT-TURN

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

DECISION

1.1 To note the final financial position of the Council's departments for 2021/22.

1.2 To approve the amounts to be carried forward (the "Revised Over/ (Under) Spend" column of the summary in Appendix 1), namely -

DEPARTMENT	£'000
Adults, Health and Well-being	(69)
Children and Families	(97)
Education	(60)
Economy and Community	(72)
Highways and Municipal	0
Environment	(100)
Gwynedd Consultancy	(100)
Housing and Property	(100)
Corporate Management Team and Legal	(33)
Finance	(96)
Corporate Support	(63)

1.3 To approve the following recommendations and financial virements (as outlined in Appendix 2) -

- The Highways and Municipal Department to receive one-off financial support of £746k to fully abolish the overspend for the year, considering the exceptional circumstances relating to the crisis this year. This will allow the department to move on to face the challenges of 2022/23.
- In order to comply with the Financial Regulations, the following departments will not keep their underspend above (£100k):
 - Environment Department (£91k)
 - Gwynedd Consultancy Department (£9k)
 - Housing and Property Department (£180k)

The Cabinet's decision is sought to earmark a total of £280k to a post-Covid recovery fund in order to finance the associated financial challenges facing the Council.

- On Corporate budgets:
 - that (£2,183k) relating to capital costs is allocated to the capital programme fund
 - with the remainder of the net underspend on Corporate budgets being earmarked as follows:
 - (£395k) placed in the Council's general balances
 - (£3,000k) to the Council's Transformation fund to fund the Council's priorities and work of a transformational nature
 - (£1,377k) to the post-Covid recovery arrangements Fund to fund the associated financial challenges that the Council will be facing.

1.4 The financial virements from specific funds as outlined in Appendix 4 were approved following a review of the funds, harvesting (£851k) from funds and using £746k of it to assist the Highways and Municipal Department which has overspent in 2021/22 and transfer the remaining £105k to the Council's general balances.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it provided details on the Council's expenditure in 2021/22. It was explained that a summary of the final position of all departments was included in the report along with the amounts to be carried forward at the end of the financial year. Attention was drawn to the financial impact of Covid-19 on the Council yet again with £17.5 million claimed from the hardship fund and Furlough by the end of the year.

The main matters and fields where there had been a significant difference were highlighted, specifically the number of additional substantial grants late in the year that had transformed the financial position by the end of the year. Attention was drawn to the money received in addition to the £2.5m in the Local Government Settlement, Social Care Hardship grant of £1.9m, Social Care Recovery Fund of £1.5m along with Council Tax backlog of £0.9m to name but a few. It was expressed that there was underspend across all departments apart from the Highways and Municipal Department which was overspending by £746,000. It was explained that it was the Municipal field that was continuing to overspend with the most prominent problems in the field of waste collection and disposal.

It was explained that there had been a substantial improvement in the Adults Department after receiving substantial grants in the last months of the year, including a grant of £1.9 million for Local Authority Social Care Hardship. The impact of Covid on the department was highlighted again which was worth over £3.7 million by the end of the year. It was explained that school balances had increased from £6 million at the end of March 2021 to £16.7 million by the end of March 2022 in light of the impact of Covid and the receipt of various numerous grants. It was expressed that in terms of Council funds that a feasibility review of the Council's specific funds had been carried out when closing the accounts and that £851,000 in resources had been harvested.

The Senior Finance Manager added that the situation had been transformed over the last months before closing the accounts as a consequence of receiving a bulk of grants late in the year. It was explained that this gave the Council an opportunity to prepare for challenges in 2022/23, and it was emphasised that this was a one-off situation only.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was explained that this report was technical. It was noted that this year's settlement had been very good, but that the next two years would not be as good and therefore the Council was facing a difficult time.
- It was expressed that grants had helped a number of departments for this year, but it was asked to what extent was there a need to worry about the future?

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22 - END OF YEAR REVIEW (31 MARCH 2022 POSITION)

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

DECISION

To accept the report on the end of year review (31 March 2022 position) of the capital programme.

The expenditure of £37,054,000 on the capital programme during the 2021/22 financial year was noted, which would be used in the statutory financial statements for 2021/22.

To approve the revised financing as shown in part 4 of the report, namely:

- £173,000 decrease in the use of loans
- £11,304,000 increase in the use of grants and contributions
- £94,000 reduction in the use of capital receipts
- £426,000 reduction in the use of revenue contributions
- No change in the use of the capital reserve
- £1,003,000 increase in the use of renewal funds and others.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it presented the revised capital programme

and to approve the relevant financing sources. It was expressed that the main conclusions were that the Council had succeeded to spend £37.1m in 2021/22 on capital plans, with 81% of it funded through specific grants.

It was explained that the impact of Covid-19 had continued on the capital programme. It was noted in addition to the £31.2m reported on in previous reviews 2021/22, that a further £26.8m of proposed spending had been re-profiled to 2022/23 and attention was drawn to the main plans including:

- £7.6 million in Housing and Homelessness Strategy Plans
- £7.2 million in Flood Prevention and Land Drainage Schemes
- £6.5 million in 21st Century Schools Plans and Others
- £4.0 million in Welsh Government New Grants in Housing (displaced resource re-profiled)
- £3.2 million in Additional General Capital Grant 21/22 (received in the last quarter of the year with the right to transfer it to 22/23).

Attention was drawn to additional grants the Council had managed to attract since the previous review, which included:

- £3.2 million - Additional General Capital Grant 21/22 - approved slippage to 22/23.
- £3.1 million - Grants from the Land Development and Construction Fund which enables replacing existing funding to be spent in 22/23.
- £1.3 million - Intermediate Care Fund Grant - adaptations to adult establishments and facilitate joint working with other agencies in the care field.
- £1.1 million - Free School Meals Capital Grant - approve replacing current funding to be spent in 22/23 on school kitchen modifications.

The Senior Finance Manager added that there was an obvious impact on grants with a high number of grants slipping, and it was highlighted that this affected Council funds.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was explained that this report was technical and there were robust plans for the plans that had slipped. It was expressed that the Council's Assets Plan would be submitted soon and it would note how much capital funding would be available to spend in the coming years.
- Dissatisfaction was expressed with grants arriving late in the year, emphasising that it was difficult to plan for the long term and ensure a balanced budget.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 1.30 pm

CHAIRMAN

THE CABINET 28/06/22

Present -

Councillors: Dyfrig L Siencyn, Nia Jeffreys, Craig ab Iago, Beca Brown, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Menna Jones, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan and Ioan Thomas.

Also present-

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance Department) and Annes Siôn (Democracy Team Leader).

Item 5: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department)

Item 7 and 8: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department) and Alun Gwilym Williams (Senior Business Manager).

Item 9: Marian Parry Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department).

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

Cabinet members and officers were welcomed to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: THE SLATE LANDSCAPES OF NORTHWEST WALES, WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The report was submitted by Cllr Dafydd Meurig

DECISION

1. To approve the changes included in the Consultation Report.
2. To formally adopt the Slate Landscape of North West Wales World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Guidance to be used as a material planning consideration when making decisions within the Gwynedd Council Local Planning Authority.
3. To delegate powers to the Assistant Head of Environment Department to make any non-material modifications, that may be required to the draft SPG before it is published on the website.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting the need to adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance as it provided more substance to the Council's basic planning policies. It was explained that this needed to be adopted by the Cabinet, rather than the Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Committee since it related to specific areas within Gwynedd. It was explained that the document was extremely detailed and would be used as a material planning consideration when making planning decisions within the Gwynedd Council Local Planning Authority Area. It was expressed that minor amendments needed to be made to the documents and a request was made for rights to be delegated to the Assistant Head to make any grammatical corrections that were seen in the document.

In addition, the Assistant Head of Environment Department noted that the document was being submitted to Snowdonia National Park the following day, also for adoption.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Attention was drawn to the very detailed observations received from Ffestiniog Town Council and they were thanked for taking their time to offer such thorough observations.

6. THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn.

DECISION

It was agreed to:

1. End the trial of operating with only one director and proceed with the usual recruitment process.
2. Abolish the post of Head of Gwynedd Consultancy on the retirement of the current Head of Service and merge the Highways and Municipal Department and Gwynedd Consultancy as one new department.
3. Transfer the Waste and Recycling units from the Highways and Municipal Department to the Environment Department and move one Assistant Head / Senior

Manager post.

4. Restart our Supporting People programme by locating the relevant Assistant Head of Service as part of the Leadership Team, for a period of two years initially.
5. Confirm that relocating elements of the Early Years and Youth Service from the Children and Families Department to the Education Department will be implemented by the Chief Executive.
6. To delegate the power to the Head of Legal Services to modify the Council's Delegation Scheme to reflect the changes as they become operational.
7. To note that the above changes will achieve an annual net revenue saving of approximately £81,000 which will sit within the Leadership Team for the time being until required.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, noting that the Council was now adapting back after the pandemic period and that it was a good time to revisit and alter the Council's internal arrangements. It was explained that empty posts needed to be filled in the roles of Corporate Directors and for Gwynedd Consultancy to be moved into the Highways and Municipal Department. It was noted that in order to be able to cope with the added pressure, that the Waste section would be moved to the Environment Department.

It was expressed that these alterations were being made in the right places and secured a saving of £81,000 per year to the Council.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Support was expressed for the Chief Executive's plans to alter the Council's internal arrangements, highlighting that there was a long list of schemes that the Council wished to deliver and it would assist towards the efforts made to realise the schemes.
- It was expressed that it was a good time to make changes and that they made sense. It was noted that the alterations should be carried out seamlessly in order to have the least impact possible on services and to create units prior to the transfer, and specifically regarding the Waste Service.
- The need to highlight the alterations to all Councillors and the public so that they were aware was emphasised, since there was often some confusion regarding what fields of work were in the Environment Department and Highways and Municipal Department.
- The existing Corporate Director was thanked for her exceptional work over the years and it was noted that she was a role model for women.
- The exciting plans that were to be seen in the Council's priority list were highlighted, and the need to work across departments to ensure that the plans were actioned was highlighted.

7. RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING FEES 2022/23

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

To agree to increase the Gwynedd residential and nursing standard fee for the 2022/23 financial year in accordance with the following option and to implement them in accordance with the Council's terms and conditions.

	£ per Week
Residential	£645
Residential EMI	£780
Nursing	£800*
Nursing EMI	£900*

*Not including the Health Board's contribution to nursing costs

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was highlighted that the standard residential and nursing fees for Gwynedd needed to be increased for the 2022/23 financial year. A correction to the report was noted, i.e. that it was at the Cabinet meeting in March of this year when the Cabinet agreed to the standard fees for independent residential and nursing homes for 2022/23. It was explained there was a need to set the fee before April to allow implementation. At that Cabinet meeting, a request was made for a further report in order to consider the possibility of a higher fee for staffing levels, as well as annual inflation costs. It was noted that this report was the result of the work that had been done by the department to look further at this matter.

Attention was drawn to the Equality Impact report, highlighting that securing the fees allowed the Council to be viable and to pay staff properly.

The Senior Business Manager added that the Cabinet had asked the Department to look further at fees and that two options could be seen in the report. It was explained that increasing pressure could be seen specifically on residential, nursing and dementia care in the county, and that these aspects required more attention. It was explained that a higher increase was needed to the price in these fields in order to strengthen the provision.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that there was a shortage of placements in the nursing and dementia field across the county and that there was a need to pay more for that. It was explained that a discussion was being held to collaborate with the Health Board and Clwyd Alyn Housing Association to maintain a range of care in the field.
- Private and Council care staff were thanked for their work during the pandemic period and it was noted that there was a need to secure a living wage for our carers.
- Support was expressed for option b in the report in order to ensure that the field was fairly funded and it was highlighted that inflation currently

added to the challenge.

8. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it was the Cabinet Member's first report in this field, and it was expressed that it was an important report which served as a benchmark of the department's position and highlighted what work needed to be done.

He explained that no performance challenging meeting had been held yet, but that a number of the matters had been the subject of discussion with the department over the past weeks. It was highlighted that the second part of the report highlighted the progress that had been made with the department's Council Plan schemes. It was noted that a lot of work had been done on the schemes and that reference was made to the required improvements. It was expressed that the work of redesigning the Care Service was underway and that work was currently being done on tenders to develop a new care service.

It was emphasised that workforce recruitment and retention problems were evident throughout the report and it was emphasised that this problem was not unique and that it was something that could be seen both regionally and nationally. It was noted that the department was looking to develop innovative ways to attract workers to the sector and to understand the barriers. It was explained that a further report on the matter would be submitted before the Cabinet in due course.

In terms of the department's performance, it was noted following discussions with the Head of Department, that further work needed to be done to look specifically at the services' purposes and measures, in order to prioritise the work and move forward. Cllr Dafydd Meurig was thanked for his support and for his work as the Cabinet Member who had held this portfolio previously.

The Head of Department added, in relation to recruitment, that a varied programme of recruitment activities and sessions had been carried out, which had been very successful in some areas, however no interest whatsoever had been seen in other areas. It was explained that a further report on the work would be shared over the next months. In terms of the Council Plan schemes, it was noted that these were specific work programmes, with a number of work streams in each of them. It was explained that one of the department's biggest tasks was

to change the culture across the care field, both internally and externally. It was expressed that the biggest change could be seen across the service through changing the culture.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The lack of progress in the scheme for Canolfan Dolfeurig in Dolgellau was highlighted; this had been in the pipeline for over five years, and it was expressed that the money earmarked for this could now possibly be insufficient.
- It was explained back in August 2021, that the department was projecting an overspend of £1.4 million; however, after receiving £1.9 million in grant funding from the Welsh Government's Social Care Pressures Fund, the department had underspent by £68,000. It was emphasised that the underspend was completely reliant upon a one-off grant, and it was highlighted that savings would be very challenging for the department in light of the increasing pressures being witnessed.

9. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The report was submitted by Cllr Elin Walker Jones

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that it was an update on progress and a benchmark for the beginning of her journey as Cabinet Member. Cllr Dilwyn Morgan was thanked for his work as the previous portfolio holder.

It was expressed that the report outlined what was happening in the department and highlighted a number of exciting schemes. It was explained that one of the department's biggest challenges was the fact that a number of the staff had been redeployed to respond to the crisis in Ukraine. It was noted in terms of priority projects that the work of keeping families together continued. In terms of the Autism Plan, it was noted that a coordinator had been appointed on a temporary basis and that staff training had been carried out.

It was highlighted that staff capacity and recruitment was a major challenge for the department, however, she was happy with the performance nonetheless. It was explained that the number of requests for support from the department was continuing to rise. It was noted that the Department had underspent by £97,000 in the last financial year as a result to the department attracting grants.

The Head of Department added that schemes were progressing but that a high number of Supporting Families staff had been redeployed to work to assist

families who were arriving here from Ukraine. It was highlighted that the Strategy for Keeping Families Together continued to be successful, with a high number of children remaining with their families. It was noted that there was an increasing demand and a staff recruitment and retention problem, and it was noted that the number of requests in April and May had been higher than ever. Nevertheless, there was light at the end of the tunnel as the department had succeeded to appoint 7 social workers straight after they graduated from the Social Work course at Bangor and Glyndŵr Universities.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was highlighted that the two care departments had received grant funding at the last minute from the Government and a request was made for the Local Government Association to press on the Welsh Government to include the money within the annual settlement so that departments could plan in advance.
- It was noted that although the department had underspent last year, that the Cabinet, over the past two years, had removed savings targets of £1.1 million and £300,000 from within the department. Nevertheless, it was expressed that it was very encouraging that the department had managed to recruit in order to respond to the consistent increase in demand.

The meeting commenced at 1pm and concluded at 2pm.

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 6

MEETING	Gwynedd Council Cabinet
DATE	19 July 2022
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor Beca Brown
OFFICER	Gwern ap Rhisiart / Rhys Glyn
TITLE OF ITEM	Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant Projects

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 The Cabinet's support is sought to proceed to submit full business cases to the Welsh Government to secure funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant scheme to deliver the purposes of the following projects:
- a) **Project 1** - Invest over £1.1m to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Gwynedd Language Centres - the second phase.
 - b) **Project 2** - Invest over £1.5m in capital funding and £0.3m in revenue funding to increase the capacity of three schools (Llanllechid, Bro Lleu and Chwilog), in order to support Welsh communities of linguistic significance (i.e. the communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers) to thrive.
- 1.2 Cabinet approval is requested to carry out a statutory consultation on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog to 95, which is an increase of over 25% to the existing capacity, in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, and report back to the Cabinet after completing the consultation.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE APPLICATION

In 2021, the Welsh Government submitted a proposal inviting Local Authorities to apply for funding from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant scheme. The Welsh Government's main aim for the grant was to support investments that would facilitate growth in Welsh-medium education and the use of Welsh, aimed specifically at projects that would make a prominent contribution towards achieving the Welsh Government's aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

As a result of the invitation to apply, the Education Department submitted a bid to fund two projects.

On 21 February 2022, confirmation was received from the Welsh Government that they had given their approval in principle to fund 100% of the capital and revenue funding towards the two projects submitted in the bid.

This amounted to £1,151,000 of capital funding towards the development of the Language Centres and £1,533,000 in capital funding towards increasing the capacity of three primary schools.

The Government has also given its approval in principle to a revenue grant of £341,874 towards employing a full-time teacher in each of the three primary schools for a period of two years. After the two year period, it is anticipated that the increase in the number of learners at the schools would be reflected adequately in their budgets so that they can continue to fund the posts of these teachers on a permanent basis, following the initial two years.

The budgets for the two projects are noted in the table below:

Project	Sum
Project 1: Increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Language Centres	Capital: £1,151,000
Project 2: Increase the capacity of schools to support Welsh communities with a linguistic significance (i.e. communities of over 70%) to thrive	Capital: £1,533,500
	Revenue: £341,874
	Total: £1,875,374
Total	£3,026,374

3. BACKGROUND TO PROJECT 1: Invest over £1.1m to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of Gwynedd Language Centres - the second phase.

On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved a new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As a part of this vision, and after receiving £1.1m from the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, we are in the process of establishing two brand-new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county, and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. We are also in the process of improving the resources in the Porthmadog immersion education site, which is again located strategically in the centre of the county. These three sites will provide immersion education to learners from years 5-9 in a learning environment of the highest degree.

In addition, we also have three primary sites which provide an immersion education for years 2-4. These immersion sites have not received any capital investment as part of the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant funding.

Therefore, we saw an opportunity to submit a bid to the second phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, in order to reconcile capacity and improve the learning environment at the three immersion education sites that did not receive an investment in the first phase.

By means of this bid, the Education Department is eager to incorporate the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, and offer cross-curricular experiences for all learners. It is also intended to ensure a strategic location for each of the immersion sites that will be a means to extend experiences and increase the opportunities for learners who are latecomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom by being located within convenient reach of facilities such as the Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n lach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, this will be an opportunity to extend the learners' experiences as they benefit from experiences that bring the Welsh language to life. To this end, by means of the capital investment from the first and second phase, each of the Immersion Education System sites will be suitable to deliver the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and offer cross-curricular experiences for all learners. Since it was established in the 1980s, the immersion provision in Gwynedd has been pioneering in the field, and the new-look system will consequently modernise the provision, the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, as well as all capital investment and the best facilities, will continue to pioneer now and in the future.

Maesincla Language Centre

Maesincla Language Centre is located within the Ysgol Maesincla building in Caernarfon. The space that Maesincla Language Centre has is restricted (which consists of two classes of a different size, one of which is very small), disrupts the quality of the experience for the learners. Also, the space within the Language Centre is not convenient for delivering the Curriculum for Wales and to offer enriching cross-curricular experiences to the learners.

Considering that Maesincla Language Centre will provide an immersion education mainly for years 2-4, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to extend and adapt the existing space of Maesincla Language Centre in order to improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, including indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors.

Dolgellau Language Centre

Dolgellau Language Centre is currently located in a building between the primary site of Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau, and the Council's offices in Cae Penarlâg, Dolgellau. Presently there is only space for one class for a total of between 8-12 learners at Dolgellau Language Centre and the Centre shares playtime and lunchtime facilities with the Ysgol Bro Idris primary site. Based on the demand for immersion education in the area, there is need to increase capacity at Dolgellau Language Centre and reconcile the number of learners received at each site across the Immersion Education System. Also, the space at the Language Centre is not convenient to deliver the Curriculum for Wales and enriching cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

Considering that the Dolgellau Language Centre would provide an immersion education to years 2-4 mainly, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan a bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the existing site of Dolgellau Language Centre to an alternative site at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau, in order to improve the capacity of the Centre, improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, including indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors.

Llangybi Language Centre

Llangybi Language Centre is currently located as a part of the Ysgol Llangybi building. The Language Centre in Llangybi is not located in a strategic location in the county, and the current location of the Centre restricts the experiences available for learners in order to enrich the learning experiences. The space at the Language Centre is not convenient for delivering the Curriculum for Wales and enriching cross-curricular experiences for the learners. Considering that Llangybi Language Centre will provide an immersion education for years 2-4 mainly, there is a need to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and plan bespoke space for play areas, as well as quiet areas. Also, there is no suitable space available to meet parents or external agencies as needed.

Therefore, by means of the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the existing site of Llangybi Language Centre to a strategic location on the site of Ysgol Cymerau in Pwllheli. This will be a means to improve the learning environment and ensure a bespoke space for the

requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, which will include indoor and outdoor play areas, as well as a suitable space for visitors. By relocating to Pwllheli, it will also ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means to extend experiences and increase opportunities for the learners who are latecomers to use their Welsh outside the class, i.e. by having convenient access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thereby bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners. Inevitably, relocating the Language Centre to Pwllheli will have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi, in terms of the number of staff and adults on the site. The Council acknowledges the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for accommodating the Centre. Following the relocation, the use of the Centre's space will be available for the school's purposes.

This investment would lead to improving the experiences, resources and learning environment for intense immersion for year 2-4 learners in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, and it will enable the Authority to provide an immersion education to more learners in line with the increasing demand on the service.

Currently, there is a limit on the capacity number of learners at the immersion education settings of 72 learners per term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment, as well as the *phase 2* capital investment; means that the number of learners that could be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners per term.

Therefore, securing a further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd is a way of ensuring growth in the number of learners that benefit from a Welsh and bilingual education in the county, as well as ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language in formal and informal contexts, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

3.1 THE NEED FOR A DECISION

Although the project's funding has been approved in principle by the Welsh Government, there will be a need to submit a full business case before them in order to secure capital funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in order to invest £1.1 million in our Language Centres for year 2-4 learners.

3.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGE

3.2.1 Equality assessment

An equality assessment was completed on our plans to invest £1.1 million in *phase 2* capital funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant at the three primary age Language Centres (years 2-4), who are currently located in Caernarfon, Llangybi and Dolgellau. As a part of the proposal, we also considered the impact of relocating and reconciling the capacity of Dolgellau Language Centre to accept 16 learners like the rest of our Language Centres, and we considered the impact of relocating the Llangybi Language Centre to Ysgol Cymerau, Pwllheli. See the full assessment in **Appendix A**.

It is concluded that investing £1.1 million of capital grant funding from the Welsh Government, as well as the investment that has already been made in our Immersion System, in order to reconcile capacity and relocate Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres, will not have a negative effect on equality, whether on characteristics or on a general duty.

3.2.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

An impact assessment was completed on the proposed impact of increasing capacity and improving the learning environment at our Primary Language Centres in Gwynedd on the Welsh language specifically. See the full assessment in **Appendix A**.

It is noted in the assessment that investing £1.1 million of additional Welsh Government phase 2 capital funding in our Immersion Education System is a way of ensuring a teaching environment of the highest standard, increase the capacity of the Centres, as well as ensuring strategic locations for all of the immersion education sites, creating the best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among the learners that are new to Gwynedd.

3.2.3 Socio-economic impact assessment

A socio-economic impact assessment was completed on the proposal to invest £1.1 million in capital funding, increase capacity and relocate the Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres, as well as improve the learning environment at Maesincla Language Centre. See the full assessment in **Appendix A1**.

It is concluded that what is being proposed will generally have a positive socio-economic impact, because through the phase 1 and 2 of the Welsh Government capital investment all centres will be strategically located across the county, and through opening two new Language Centres in key locations in the county, and at the same time increasing the capacity, it will be an opportunity for learners to benefit from an immersion provision that is more local to them.

3.2.4 Well-being Assessment

The Education Department has a role in promoting well-being aims amongst school pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the '2018-23 Gwynedd Plan'.

A well-being assessment was completed on the proposal to invest an additional £1.1 million in *Phase 2* Welsh Government Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in our Immersion Education System, increase capacity and relocate the Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centre. See the full assessment in **Appendix A2**.

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and Council's well-being objectives, it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposal, if approved, will ensure that learners who are latecomers and who are referred to the provision in one of the three Primary Language Centres in question are educated at centres that will have received the same level of investment as the rest of the Centres, and will be in a position to be able to offer consistent learning experiences in a learning environment of the highest regard across the System. The assessment details the strength of the proposal that highlight that more learners in Dolgellau every term and across the system as a result, will have opportunities to live and thrive in a naturally Welsh society, increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and give them a fair opportunity to develop into confident and equal speakers amongst their peers.

4. BACKGROUND TO PROJECT 2: Increase the capacity of schools to support Welsh communities with a linguistic significance (i.e. communities of over 70%) to thrive

During the Summer Term 2021, the governing bodies of three schools and their local members contacted the Education Department, concerned about the lack of capacity at those school to address

the increase in learner numbers as a result of housing developments within their natural catchment areas, namely Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog.

An opportunity was identified to submit an application to the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant to respond to the situations at these schools and package the application around communities of linguistic significance (communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers).

By means of this application, the Education Department is eager to support economic, housing and social enterprise developments in some communities of linguistic significance in the county, by increasing the capacity of the schools in response to a growth in the population as a result of these developments. By intertwining all of these elements of community regeneration together, it can create solid grounding for these communities, and create the best possible conditions for the Welsh language and for the communities to thrive.

There is also an opportunity to combine the Welsh-medium Capital Grant that is available to the Education Department via the 106 Agreement, which is a legal agreement between the developers and local planning authority, which are associated with the housing developments in the areas in question. These agreements make it mandatory for developers to satisfy specific planning obligations, such as a contribution towards the local education provision when realising the development in question.

4.1 Ysgol Llanllechid

4.1.1 New housing developments

Adra housing association has recently developed a new 18 house estate in the catchment area of Ysgol Llanllechid, with a number of additional pupils now living in the school catchment and attending the school. *Adra* housing association has also obtained planning permission to develop 30 social rent affordable housing in another site, which is again located within the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area, and this development will again lead to additional learners coming to live in the school's catchment area. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 30 houses will translate into around 12 additional children requiring a place in Ysgol Llanllechid.

4.1.2 Increase in pupil numbers

243 pupils (reception - year 6) + 27 nursery pupils attend Ysgol Llanllechid (September 2021 Census), which means that it exceeds its capacity of 213 + nursery. Based on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the number of learners will continue to be high over the next 5 years.

This means that it will be very difficult for the school to cope with the numbers without creating an additional classroom for them.

4.1.3 Finance

In addition to a share of the £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Llanllechid, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 sum of £121,152 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments in the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area.

Ysgol Llanllechid is also included as a part of the Band B Condition and Suitability project in the 21st Century Schools scheme. Although the adaptations made to the building and its condition by means of Band B will not directly respond to the increase in the number of learners, since this project meets

the maintenance needs of the building, safeguards the access and exchanges a room to create suitable non-contact time space, it will improve the school environment.

Merging these budgets would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Llanllechid has a building that is fit-for-purpose and has sufficient space to serve the children of the catchment area and its community appropriately for the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Llanllechid.

4.2 Ysgol Bro Lleu

4.2.1 New housing developments

Two estates consisting of 12 and 24 new houses are currently being developed in the catchment area of Ysgol Bro Lleu. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 36 houses will translate into around 15 primary age children.

4.2.2 Increase in pupil numbers

178 pupils (reception - year 6) + 21 nursery pupils attend Ysgol Bro Lleu (September 2021 Census), which means that it exceeds its capacity of 159 + nursery. Based on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the number of learners will increase further over the next 5 years.

The likely increase in the number of learners means that it will be very difficult for the school to cope with the numbers without creating an additional classroom for them.

4.2.3 Finance

In addition to a share of the £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Bro Lleu, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 budget of £64,000 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments.

Merging this finance would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Bro Lleu has sufficient space to serve the children in the catchment area and its community appropriately in the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Bro Lleu.

4.3 Ysgol Chwilog

4.3.1 New housing developments

Over last year, Chwilog has seen the emergence of a new estate of open market housing in the village, which have now become a home to a number of young Welsh-speaking families, and there is planning consent for another two housing estates in the village, which could lead to a total of up to 39 additional houses in Chwilog over the coming years. Based on the formula for projecting the number of children in new houses, it is anticipated that 39 houses will translate into around 16 primary age children.

4.3.2 Increase in pupil numbers

The number of learners at Ysgol Chwilog has increased every year for the last five years, and projections suggest that it will have reached full capacity of 65 learners in September 2022, with 70

pupils (reception - year 6) + 15 nursery. It is anticipated that the increase in learner numbers will continue over the next 5 years.

The likely increase in the number of learners means that it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the school to cope with the numbers without urgently creating an additional classroom for them.

4.3.3. Finance

In addition to the share of £1,533,500 in Welsh-medium Capital Grant, which will be available towards developing an additional classroom at Ysgol Chwilog, the sums noted below have also been earmarked for developing the school.

A Section 106 budget of £6,240 has been committed for the Education Department's use as a result of the housing developments.

Merging this finance would be a means to ensure that Ysgol Chwilog has sufficient space to serve the children in the catchment area and its community appropriately in the future.

A revenue sum of £113,958 is also available from the Welsh-medium Capital Grant in order to employ an additional teacher for a two year period at Ysgol Chwilog.

4.4 THE NEED FOR A DECISION

4.4.1 Statutory process

The Schools Organisation Code notes that a statutory process must be conducted if '*an enlargement of the premises of a school (excluding nursery and special schools), which would increase the capacity of the school by at least 25% or 200 pupils as compared with the school's capacity on the appropriate date. In determining an increase in capacity all enlargements that have taken place since the appropriate date are to be taken into account together with the proposed enlargement.*'

Adding a classroom to Ysgol Chwilog would increase the capacity to 95, which is an increase of over 25% of the existing 65, which is the school's capacity at the appropriate date in this case. This means that a statutory process will need to be conducted before it is possible to make any adaptations that will lead to increasing the school's capacity. The first step in the statutory process will be to conduct a statutory consultation on the proposal.

4.4.2 The Welsh Government Business Case

Although the project has been approved in principle, a full business case will need to be submitted to the Welsh Government in order to secure funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant.

The use of any funding received to adapt Ysgol Chwilog will be subject to the outcome of the statutory process.

4.5 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGE

4.5.1 Equality assessment

An equality assessment was completed on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Chwilog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of the three schools would not affect equality, in relation to characteristics or the general duty.

4.5.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

An assessment was completed on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Chwilog on the Welsh language. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of these schools would not have a negative impact on the Welsh language in the catchment areas. Indeed, it is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all

primary children in the catchment area in their local school will create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language amongst the children and in the communities in question.

4.5.3 Socio-economic impact assessment

An assessment was completed on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog on the socio-economic elements. See the full assessment in **Appendix B1**. It is concluded that increasing the capacity of these schools will not have a negative socio-economic impact on the individual areas. It is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all primary children in the catchment area will create a firm grounding for the communities and create the best conditions for the prosperity of the communities in question.

4.5.4 Well-being Assessment

The Education Department has a role in promoting well-being aims amongst school pupils in the county through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty, the Council has published well-being objectives that outline the way it will improve well-being in the '2018-23 Gwynedd Plan'.

A well-being assessment was completed on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B2**. Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the seven well-being act goals and Council's well-being objectives, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposal will ensure that the children in the three catchment areas are educated in schools that are of a suitable size and in a naturally Welsh-speaking society, thus increasing the opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others, and to give them a fair opportunity to thrive among their peers.

Adapting these schools to secure sufficient space for all primary children in their catchment areas will mean that pupils will be able to access education in their communities.

It is anticipated that creating sufficient space for all primary pupils in the catchment area of their local school will create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language amongst the children and in the communities.

4.5.5 Community impact assessment

A community impact assessment was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**. After considering the impact of the proposal on the three communities, it is not anticipated that increasing the capacity of the schools by adding a classroom will not have any negative impact on the communities.

On the contrary, increasing the capacity at the schools will secure plenty of places for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities. It is anticipated that increasing the capacity at the schools will create a firm grounding for the communities and create the best conditions for the Welsh language and the prosperity of the communities.

4.5.6 Assessment on the quality and standards of education

An impact assessment on the quality and standards of education was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**. As a result of conducting the assessment, we are of the opinion that increasing the

capacity at the schools by adding a classroom is likely to have a positive impact since it will ensure that sufficient space is available to educate children in suitably-sized classes for the future.

4.5.7 Assessment of the impact on travel arrangements

An assessment was carried out on the impact of increasing the capacity of Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwilog. See the full assessment in **Appendix B3**.

As we are considering increasing the capacity of the three schools in response to the projected increases within their catchment areas, and anticipate that the homes of the majority of the children will be located within two miles of the school, and considering the existing numbers who receive free transportation, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant impact on transport arrangements as a result of increasing the capacity of the schools in question.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

Subject to the Cabinet's decision, a period of statutory consultation will take place, in line with the Schools Organisation Code (011/2018), on the proposal to increase the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog to 95. Following the 42-day consultation period, we will prepare a report noting any comments received and the relevant responses, and we will report back to the Cabinet.

We will also prepare business cases to be submitted to the Welsh Government's application assessment panels for capital and revenue funding from the Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant in order to secure their financial contribution to the two projects.

The use of any funding received to adapt Ysgol Chwilog will be subject to the outcome of the statutory process.

The table below notes the next steps, along with an outline timetable for implementation.

Date	Task
September 2022	Hold discussions with Ysgol Chwilog's Governing Body to explain the statutory procedure needed in order to comply with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
October - November 2022	Conduct a statutory consultation on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog.
October - December 2022	Present business cases to the Welsh Government for Projects 1 and 2 .
January - February 2023	Report back to the Cabinet after completing the statutory consultation on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog and receive the Welsh Government's decision regarding the funding.

6. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Monitoring Officer:

“As the proposal in relation to Ysgol Chwilog is a regulated alteration under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, the process that is proposed in relation to that school will be statutory one and will follow the requirements of the Act and the School Organisation Code.”

Head of Finance:

“I support the decision sought. I can confirm that the grant that is the subject of this report funds 100% of the capital and revenue costs of these schemes, as set out in Part 2 of the report. Officers from the Finance Department have discussed the financial aspects of the scheme in detail with Education Department officers, and have challenged some of the assumptions in the report to test the robustness of the financial plans. I believe that it is reasonable to expect that the schemes will be delivered within the grant available, and I am confident that arrangements are in place to keep a close eye on the costs of the projects, given the current rate of inflation experienced by the construction industry.”

Views of Local Members:

Councillor Paul Rowlinson (Local Member for the Ysgol Llanllechid catchment area)

"I would like to enthusiastically support the request for money to be invested in Ysgol Llanllechid. The school is already well over its capacity; there is no space for teachers to work on CPA work, no dedicated music room, no teachers' room large enough to house all the staff, lack of suitable places for holding intervention groups and holding professional discussions and often there are several different activities held in the hall at the same time. The headteacher and the governing body are concerned because the housing developments in the area will certainly increase the pressure on the building. The standard of the Welsh Language at Ysgol Llanllechid is excellent and the school succeeds in introducing the language to the pupils; it was noted in the headteacher's report to the governing body in March this year that all KS2 pupils speak Welsh fluently although only 62% speak it at home. This investment would enable the school to provide Welsh language education for the additional pupils and contribute to the goal of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050."

Councillor Rhys Tudur (Local Member for Ysgol Chwilog catchment area)

"I approve and support the intention to invest in Ysgol Chwilog. It is a great school and extremely Welsh. The school is in real need of investment to be able to maintain the significant increase that has been in its capacity and also the predicted increase. The current resources are completely insufficient. I am pleased that forecasts of population growth in the village of Chwilog have been fully considered in the reports.

I also believe that the reports do not include sufficient consideration of the impact on neighbouring schools. However, I accept if that does not have to be considered in the reports."

Assessing the Impact on Protected Characteristics, the Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Disadvantage

For help to complete this form see the *How to Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment* leaflet. You are also welcome to contact Delyth Gadlys Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708 or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru for further assistance.

The Council's is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the effect any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), has on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has a general duty to ensure fairness and foster good relations. A timely Equality Impact Assessment must be undertaken before making any decision on any relevant change (i.e. which has an effect on people with protected characteristics).

The Council is also required, under the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011) to consider the effect of a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), in its opportunities for people to use Welsh and to ensure that Welsh is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.

From April 1st 2021 the Council has a duty to have due regard to tackling socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

1) Details

1.1. What is the name of the policy / service in question?

Invest £1.1 million to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of the County's primary Language Centres.

1.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service that is being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

A historic decision which is a prelude to what we seek today:

On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved a new vision for an Immersion Education System in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As part of this vision, and as a result of receiving £1.1m from the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding we are in the process of establishing two completely new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county, and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. We are also in the process of improving the resources at the Porthmadog

immersion education site, which is again strategically located in the middle of the county. These three sites will provide immersion education for learners in years 5-9 in a first-class learning environment.

In addition, we also have three primary sites that provide immersion education to years 2-4. These immersion sites have not received any capital investment as part of the first phase of the Welsh Government's Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding.

An opportunity was therefore seen to submit an application for a second phase of the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant in order to harmonise capacity and improve the learning environment in the three immersion education sites that did not receive investment in the first phase.

Through the proposal, the Education Department is keen to incorporate the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales and offer cross-curricular experiences to all learners. It is also intended to ensure a strategic location for each of the immersion education sites which will be a medium to extend experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to the area to use their Welsh outside the classroom by having them located within easy reach of facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, there will be an opportunity to expand the learners' experiences as they benefit from experiences that bring the Welsh language to life.

Since its establishment in the 1980s, the immersion provision in Gwynedd has pioneered the field, and the System will have a new look due to the modernisation of the provision, the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, all the capital investment and the best facilities which will continue to innovate now and into the future.

Maesincla Language Centre

The Maesincla Language Centre is located within the Maesincla School building in Caernarfon. The space that the Maesincla Language Centre has is limited (namely two classes of different sizes, with one being very small) impairing the quality of the experience for the learners. The Language Centre's space is also not convenient for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that Maesincla Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the medium of a Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, therefore, it is intended to extend and modify the current space of the Maesincla Language Centre in order to improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with suitable space for visitors.

Dolgellau Language Centre

The Dolgellau Language Centre is currently located in a building between Ysgol Bro Idris primary site, Dolgellau, and the Council's offices in Penarlâg, Dolgellau. The Dolgellau Language Centre currently only has a space for one class and that for a total of between 8-12

learners, and the Centre shares playtime and lunchtime facilities with Ysgol Bro Idris primary site. Based on the demand for immersion education in the area, there is demand to increase the capacity of Dolgellau Language Centre and to harmonise the numbers of learners admitted to each site across the Immersion Education System. The space in the Language Centre is also not convenient for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that the Dolgellau Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the means of a Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant therefore, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Dolgellau Language Centre to an alternative site at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau in order to increase the capacity of the Centre and improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors.

Llangybi Language Centre

The Llangybi Language Centre is currently located as part of the Ysgol Llangybi building. The Language Centre in Llangybi is not located in a strategic location in the county, and the current location of the Centre limits the experiences available to the learners in order to enrich their learning experiences. The space in the Language Centre is not suitable for presenting a Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners. When considering that the Llangybi Language Centre will mainly provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Foundation Phase and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

By means of the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, therefore, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Llangybi Language Centre to a strategic location on the Ysgol Cymerau site in Pwllheli. This will be a means to improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors. By relocating to Pwllheli, it will also ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

Relocating the Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi from a social hub point of view. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school.

This investment would lead to improving the experiences, resources and learning environment for intensive immersion for learners in years 2-4 in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, together

with enabling the Authority to provide immersion education to more learners in line with the increasing demand on the service.

At the moment the number of learner capacity in the immersion education settings is limited to 72 learners each term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment together with the *phase 2* capital investment means; that the number of learners who would be able to be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners each term.

Ensuring further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd will therefore be a means of ensuring growth in the number of learners who benefit from Welsh and bilingual education in the county, together with ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language together in formal and informal context, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Debbie Jones (Education Corporate Services Manager)

1.4 When did you commence the assessment? Which version is this?

June 2022 (version 1)

2) Action

2.1 Who are the stakeholders or partners you need to work with to undertake this assessment?

In May 2021 we consulted with stakeholders in order to gather their views on our new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd.

Our intention at that time was to ask for the views of all stakeholders on the vision and the proposal to invest capital grant money from the Welsh Government in our Immersion Education System.

The Cabinet approved the new vision on 6 July 2021.

See below a list of the consultees we consulted with in the context of our new vision for the Immersion Education System in Gwynedd:

- Staff of Gwynedd Language Centres
- Representatives of Teachers' and Assistants' Unions

- Headteachers of Gwynedd Primary and Secondary Schools
- Schools Budget Forum
- Forum of Unions
- Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
- Language Committee
- Learners

2.2 What measures have you taken to engage with people with equality characteristics, regarding the Welsh language or with communities (either of place or of need) that live with socio-economic disadvantage?

We have communicated with the head teachers of the schools that have Language Centres located on their sites to let them know our intentions.

We have also contacted the heads of the proposed sites that are part of our plans for the future to inform them of our intentions.

Depending on the decision of the Cabinet, the next step will be to engage more widely with the key stakeholder regarding the intention and joint planning.

Historic consultations (May 2021):

The Education Department held a period of engagement with key stakeholders on the new vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond, back in May 2021.

As part of this engagement, a meeting was held to present the new vision with the Teachers' and Assistants' Unions together with a special meeting with the staff of the Language Centres on 27 May 2021, with an opportunity for the staff to consider the vision and submit comments by 21 June 2021.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 10 June 2021, together with the Language Committee on 22 June 2021 in order to receive the views of the elected members on the vision, together with an opportunity to scrutinise on it. The vision and plan to invest £1.1 million at that time received unanimous support for the proposal.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the head teachers of all Gwynedd secondary schools on 16 June 2021, together with all the head teachers of Gwynedd primary schools on 17 June 2021 in order to receive their comments.

As part of the engagement, 2 focus groups were held with learners of the immersion education system in our Language Centres on 22 June 2021 in order to ascertain their opinion as users of the service on the new vision.

As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the Schools Budget Forum for the purpose of consulting them on the new system of funding the new vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

A summary of all the comments we received as part of the engagement back in Summer 2021 can be seen [here](#). But briefly here are some headlines from the engagement:

Comments from Gwynedd Language Centres Staff

A presentation on the new vision was given to staff of the Gwynedd Language Centres on 27 May 2021, with an opportunity for them to submit comments by 21 June 2021.

In response to the new vision, the staff submitted the following comments

- The capital investment of £1.1m was welcomed in order to ensure a first-class learning environment, together with an increase in the number of immersion education sites.
- The intention to appoint a head and deputy for the service was welcomed, which would lead to a much more effective and efficient service, as well as ensuring the consistency of the service. It will also be a medium to ensure a close partnership between the system and the schools, being able to respond positively and efficiently to the needs of the schools. Nevertheless, it was noted that staffing each site with a teacher and an assistant would cause concern.
- Concerns were noted about reducing the length of the primary immersion course from 12 weeks to between 8-10 weeks, together with reducing the number of days from 5 days to 4 days per week, from the point of view of the impact of that on the linguistic progress of the learners.
- Concern was noted about the challenge of ensuring appropriate support for the learners when attending school for 1 day each week, although the staff agree with the purpose of this 1 day to enable learners to keep in touch with their local school, their peers and ensure their well-being.
- Although blended learning offers a number of possibilities, it was noted that blended learning brings with it a number of challenges also from the point of view of the technology itself, dedicated and suitable space in the schools, setting a timetable, together with inconsistency in the learners' situation. Collective learning is not equivalent to the experience of face-to-face learning, especially when practicing spoken language and gesture.
- Concern was noted about the age range of merging primary and secondary learners from years 5-9.
- It was also noted the need for more detail on some elements of the vision, and that it would be beneficial for the staff to receive clarity soon on some of these issues.

Headteachers of Gwynedd Primary and Secondary Schools

A presentation on the new vision was given to Gwynedd secondary headteachers on 16 June 2021, and to primary headteachers on 17 June 2021. In response to the new vision, the headteachers presented the following comments:

- We recognised the challenge of striking the right balance between ensuring intensive immersion in order to enable the learners to acquire the Welsh language as quickly as possible, together with enabling newcomers to settle and continue in their new school and create peers.
- It was noted that there is an opportunity for the Language Coordinators and Heads of Welsh Departments of the secondary schools to contribute their expertise in

developing the detail for realising the vision for the immersion education system towards 2032 and beyond.

- The intention to unite primary and secondary learners from years 5-9 on 3 of the immersion sites was welcomed.
- The vision and investment were welcomed by the primary headteachers, and in particular the intention to establish new immersion education sites in Tywyn and Bangor.
- The intention to co-finance the new system was supported, emphasising that this should not happen at the expense of resources in the schools.

Learners

2 focus groups were held with the current learners of the Language Centres on 22 June 2021. A representation from year 5 and 6 of the Cefn Coch Language Centre and a group of learners from the Secondary Language Centre contributed brilliantly in a session which discussed a series of questions in response to receiving presentation on the new vision for the Immersion Education System towards 2032 and beyond.

All the learners (15 of them) made a valuable contribution to the conversation, and it is important to note that their linguistic ability is a credit to the current Language Centres.

Agree with the vision or not

- Of all the learners (primary and secondary), 8 of the learners indicated that they agreed with the vision. 5 of the secondary schools stated a neutral opinion, with only 1 disagreeing with the new vision.
- One learner specifically noted that there were good elements to the idea of attending the immersion site for 4 days a week, and then 1 day each week at the local school, but the idea of feeling 'overwhelmed' with strange work on the same school day causing her concern.
- Another learner pointed out that technology helps to learn a language, but that investing in hard resources such as books and games remains a good idea.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence are you operating?

We are able to summarise the main cause for change and the need for a new vision for the Gwynedd Immersion Education System into the following areas, and how the proposal has an impact on them is elaborated on below:

1. Put the learner's needs at the centre
2. Contemporary and modernise the provision
3. Working in partnership
4. An opportunity to create a first-class learning environment
5. New opportunities arising from COVID-19
6. Lessons learned as a result of the Pilot Scheme implemented at the request of the Cabinet.

In order to achieve the vision, the purpose, the aim and the objectives, our intention as a result of receiving the grant money (aspect 1 and 2) is to invest a total of £2.2m in our Immersion Education System in Gwynedd, in order to ensure an environment first class learning, and fully modern facilities for 21st century learners and educators.

Our intention is to continuously ensure that the well-being, experience and needs of the learners are central to our plans. The new vision and our intention to invest in our Immersion Education System once again is an example of this commitment.

See from the new vision that we aim to contemporary and modernise the provision to respond to the needs of the learners and the new curriculum. But the need to invest in the infrastructure for the system including digital resources was also identified.

At the moment the number of learner capacity in the immersion education settings is limited to 72 learners each term, however, the *phase 1* capital investment together with the *phase 2* capital investment means; that the number of learners who would be able to be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners each term. Ensuring further capital investment in our immersion education system in Gwynedd will therefore be a means of ensuring growth in the number of learners who benefit from Welsh and bilingual education in the county, together with ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language together formal and informal texts, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Recently as part of our new vision we have appointed a Head of the organisation who has responsibility for the strategic direction of the service, and we are currently in the process of appointing a deputy to the service. These managerial layers are a recent investment in the staffing structure of the Immersion Education System to match the vision.

In addition, we learned a lot during the pandemic on how to maintain learners' connection and access to education, and this is also true from the point of view of our immersion education provision as the staff innovated as they moved to live learning through the medium of Microsoft TEAMS at the start of the lockdown periods. Although there have been clear successes from having to move the language learning experience from the centres to a virtual medium we are also convinced that the centre as the main location of the immersion provision is key if we want to give learners a safe space to build confidence and language skills. And so our vision deliberately proposes that the centre itself as a building remains central to the experience. However, the new vision sets a new weekly timetable which proposes that learners return to their mother school once a week in order to ensure their well-being and contact with peers.

The 3 sites that are part of the phase 2 investment will continue to provide immersion education to years 2-4 of the primary schools, and relocating the Dolgellau Language Centre to a larger site will enable us to offer the provision to more children in the area Meirionnydd.

In order to see more information about the vision and structure of the new system, the document can be read in its entirety [here](#).

2.5 Are there any gaps in the evidence that needs to be collected?

Not at the moment.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must give due regard to the effect any changes will have on people with the equality characteristics noted below. What impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics?

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	Positive	From a race perspective, the intended capital investment will improve the Maesincla Language Centre learning environment, and the relocation of Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres to strategic locations will have a positive effect on this feature, as it will be a means to improve the service and the learning environment for learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd, with those learners often from outside the borders of Gwynedd, Wales, and the UK. It is anticipated that the proposal will therefore create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language among these learners and the schools that the Language Centres serve.
Disability	Positive	As a result of the capital investment from the first and second phase, each of Gwynedd's Immersion Education sites will be fully accessible and have a first-class learning environment. This will benefit all learners including disabled learners.
Sex	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature.
Age	None	As a result of the capital investment from the second phase, more primary age learners will be able to access the service each term. It is however recognised that the relocation of Dolgellau and Llangybi Language Centres to strategic locations in the county, this will lead to slightly more travel for some primary age learners, and slightly less travel for other learners due to the fact that the new location is more convenient for them.
Sexual orientation	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature.

		The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Gender reassignment	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Pregnancy and maternity	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
Marriage and civil partnership	None	It is not anticipated that the change will have an impact on service users with this feature. The service will continue to follow anti-bullying policies, equality policies, equal opportunities and any other relevant policies.
The Welsh language	Positive	<p>Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd.</p> <p>The main aim of the Immersion Education System is to support learners to acquire the Welsh language and create new Welsh speakers. The proposal therefore contributes to the Welsh Language <i>Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23 by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers."</i> The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd</p>

		Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive	<p>By investing £1.1 million of Government capital grant money each Language Centre would receive an equal investment. This is an economic advantage and keeps professional quality jobs locally.</p> <p>Our phase 1 and 2 investment plans ensure that all Centres are strategically located across the county, and by opening two new language centres in key parts of the county and increasing capacity at the same time, there will be an opportunity for learners benefit from a more local immersion provision for them.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi in terms of the number of learners on the school site. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school. Relocating the immersion provision to Ysgol Cymerau will ensure that the same number or more newcomers continue to have access to the service.</p>

* Delete as appropriate

3.2 The Council has a duty under the 2010 Equality Act to contribute positively to a fairer society by promoting equality and good relations in its activities regarding the following characteristics – age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, gender reassignment, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must give due attention to the way any change affects these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?*	In what way? What is the evidence?
Abolishing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes	One of the principles of the new vision is to ensure that it does not have an impact on the availability of the provision for newcomers (i.e. That the same number or more learners have access to the service). Through the capital investment more learners will have access to the service, and will have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full

		<p>advantage of educational provision and experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy.</p>
<p>Promoting equal opportunities</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Through the capital investment more learners will have access to the service, and will have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full advantage of educational provision and experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy.</p> <p>It was noted in the previous consultation on the restructuring of the Language Centres in Gwynedd that there will be a loss of a specialist job that pays well for women (in the previous context), replacing them with jobs that pay less in have a negative impact on women. The new vision does not detail the staffing procedure of the new system at this point.</p> <p>But it can be assumed that the opening of two new sites in Tywyn and Bangor enables an opportunity to create new specialist jobs. In addition to this, the new vision would be an investment in strategic and linguistically challenging parts of the county.</p> <p>Investing in each of the immersion education sites is a means of ensuring consistency in the experience, resources and learning environment across the system. Our aim by applying for phase 2 capital funding was to ensure that all sites offer the same equal opportunities when acquiring the Welsh language within our immersion system here in Gwynedd.</p>
<p>Encouraging good relationships</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>One of the principles of the new vision is to ensure that it does not have an impact on the availability of the provision for newcomers (i.e. That the same number or more learners have access to the service). The change would therefore not have a detrimental effect, as there would still be equal opportunity for all learners who are newcomers.</p> <p>Relocating Dolgellau to be part of the Ysgol Bro Idris site would be a means of ensuring that more learners have access to the service and have the opportunity to acquire the Welsh language in order to enable them to assimilate into the bilingual society in Gwynedd, and take full advantage of provision and educational experiences in accordance with the Education Language Policy. Enabling the latecomers to acquire the Welsh language would ensure that they are able to foster good</p>

		<p>relationships with peers and the bilingual community in Gwynedd.</p> <p>Relocating to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will also be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the new arrivals spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school has a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers and build good relationships.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.</p>
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* to be deleted as appropriate

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English and that you seize every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing services bilingually) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

The proposal shows the long-term commitment of the Department of Education and the Council to provide contemporary, innovative and high-quality immersion education in a 21C learning environment for learners who are new arrivals in Gwynedd.

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd. The proposal therefore contributes to the *Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23 by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers."* The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a

move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English, taking advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community.

3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice in order to have a positive impact on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language, and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy / practice may have on the Welsh language?

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd.

The main aim of the Immersion Education System is to support learners to acquire the Welsh language and create new Welsh speakers. The proposal therefore contributes to the *Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23* by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers." The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The new weekly timetable is deliberately set to offer better transition opportunities and maintain contact with peers in the school, as the learners return to the school for 1 day each

week, which will be a means of ensuring the continuity of their support to acquire the Welsh language at school.

3.5 How does the proposal show that you have had due regard to the need to address inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this is about closing inequality gaps rather than just improving outcomes for everyone)?

The proposal shows the long-term commitment of the Department of Education and the Council to provide contemporary, innovative and high-quality immersion education in a 21C learning environment for learners who are new arrivals in Gwynedd.

Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create consistency across the System, and ensure equal opportunity for all learners to benefit from the very best conditions to acquire the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

3.6 What other measures or changes might you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice to show that you have had due regard to the need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Socio-Economic Act?

It is believed that increasing capacity and investing in each of Gwynedd's immersion education sites to ensure a first-class learning environment will ensure the same opportunities for all learners without discrimination to acquire the Welsh language.

4) Analysing the Results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

We believe that the additional investment of £1.1 million and the new wider vision is likely to have a positive impact on any of the equality features or the Universal Duty, due to the fact that the availability of the provision for the learners may improve or stay the same.

Our intention is to reconcile the obvious differences that would result from the achievement of capital financial investment phase 1 of the Welsh in Education grant. By committing to spend phase 2 capital money of the grant on the rest of those Centres that have not received investment to date, learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd will benefit from a first-class learning environment and consistent learning experiences across the system.

Our most important principle is to ensure that the welfare of the learners is central to everything. And so investing and securing better resources that improve the experience of all learners, opening new sites and changing the weekly learning schedule is an effort to improve the learning environment and the learning experience of Welsh for the latecomers here to Gwynedd, whatever it may be their background, age, ability, gender, race and nationality.

4.2 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

Investing £1.1 million more in the Immersion Education System and the new vision which the Cabinet approved last year is not likely to have a negative impact on any of the equality features or the Universal Duty, due to the fact that the availability of the provision for the learners is improving.

The relocation of the Dolgellau Language Centre to the Ysgol Bro Idris site will be a means of fostering good relationships with mainstream learners on the school site, and there will be a move to a model where the newcomers spend 4 days a week at the immersion education site, and then 1 day at their local school having a very positive effect on the well-being of the learners as they continue to have contact with their peers, foster good relationships, and take advantage of various opportunities and experiences to use the Welsh language.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole system, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Healthy Living Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

The relocation of the Llangybi Language Centre in Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi in terms of the number of learners on the school site. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre's space will be available for the purpose of the school. Relocating the immersion provision to Ysgol Cymerau will ensure that the same number or more newcomers continue to have access to the service.

Our intention is to see learners settle, root and acquire the Welsh language here in Gwynedd. Investing further in the Immersion System makes the environment and locations fit for purpose, with the Headteacher and staff owning the learners' well-being and education in partnership with the Education System more widely. It is key that the Immersion System continues to be at the forefront nationally and pioneers in giving newcomers the best start in acquiring the Welsh they demand in our bilingual education system.

4.3 What should be done?

Choose one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	✓
Adapt the policy to delete any barriers	
Suspend and delete the policy as the detrimental impacts are too big	
Continue with the policy as any detrimental impact can be justified	
No further action at this time because it is too soon to decide, or there is insufficient evidence	

4.4 If continuing with the project, what steps will you take to reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

There was an extensive period of engagement on the new vision and the intention to invest £1.1 million of capital money from phase 1 of the Welsh in Education grant back in 2021. An obvious result of the engagement with the staff and the unions, together with engaging with wider stakeholders was that there is historical praise towards the success of the Language Centres over the past decades to ensure that learners acquire the Welsh language.

The new vision was supported with a unanimous vote in its favour by the Cabinet and before that in a meeting of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Language Committee. A core part of the vision is to make purposeful use of the 100% Welsh Government capital money to ensure that the system is equal, fit for purpose and a resource

that helps newcomers acquire the Welsh language successfully through the immersion provision.

By investing an additional £1.1 million of capital money to improve the learning environment of the primary immersion education sites, along with locating them in strategic areas of the county in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, we hope to see better collaboration throughout the school term between the new system and the schools which together are key to supporting newcomers to acquire the Welsh language successfully and confidently.

4.5 If you are not taking any further action to delete or reduce the negative impacts, explain why here.

No negative effects have been identified.

5) Monitoring

5.1 What steps will you take to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy or service (action plan)?

We will monitor the impact of any change to ensure that the outcomes are positive and do not have any negative impact.



Wellbeing Assessment Report

Invest £1.1 million to increase capacity and improve the learning environment of the County's primary Language Centres.

- June 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

As a Council we are committed to the principles within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) in order to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Gwynedd's communities.

The Council's vision is:

Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to thrive and live full lives in their community, in a county which is one of the best counties to live in.

The Council has adopted well-being objectives that complement the national well-being goals and ensure that Gwynedd residents:

- Enjoy a happy, healthy and safe life
- Have access to quality homes within their communities
- Earn enough wages to support themselves and their families
- Receive a first-class education that will allow them to do what they want to do
- To live with dignity and independence for as long as possible
- Being able to live in a naturally Welsh speaking Society
- Enjoy the beauty of the County's natural environment.

The table below outlines the link between our well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

We will ensure that the residents of Gwynedd can:	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive Communities	A vibrant culture where the Welsh language is thriving	Globally responsible
Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives							
Live in quality homes within their communities							
Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families							
Receive education of the highest quality which will enable them to do what they want to do							
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible							
Live in a natural Welsh society							
Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment.							

The Education Department has a role to promote the Act's well-being goals to the county's pupils through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty the Council has published well-being objectives that outline how it will improve well-being in the "Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023".

1.1 THE CONTEXT OF THE IMMERSION EDUCATION PROVISION

On 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved a new vision for the Immersion Education Provision in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As part of this vision, and as a result of receiving £1.1m from the first phase of Welsh Government Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding, we are in the process of establishing two completely new immersion education sites in Gwynedd, located in strategic areas of the county, and areas of linguistic significance, namely Tywyn and Bangor. We are also in the process of improving the resources at the Porthmadog immersion education site, which is again strategically located in the middle of the county. These three sites will provide immersion education for learners in years 5-9 in a first-class learning environment.

In addition, we also have three primary age sites that provide immersion education to years 2-4. These immersion sites have not received any capital investment as part of the first phase of Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant funding, Welsh Government.

An opportunity was therefore seen to apply for a second phase of the Welsh Government Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, to increase capacity and improve the learning environment in the three immersion education sites that did not receive investment in the first phase.

Through the proposal, the Education Department is keen to incorporate the requirements of the new Curriculum for Wales and offer cross-curricular experiences to all learners. It is also intended to ensure a strategic location for each of the immersion education sites which will allow access to experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom by having them located within easy reach of facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, that will be an opportunity to expand the learners' experiences as they benefit from experiences that bring the Welsh language to life.

Since its establishment in the 1980s, the immersion provision in Gwynedd has pioneered the field, and the Provision will have a new look due to the modernization of the provision, the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales, all the capital investment and the best facilities one that continues to innovate now and into the future.

Maesincla Language Centre

The Maesincla Language Centre is located within Ysgol Maesincla in Caernarfon. The space that the Maesincla Language Centre has is limited (namely two classes of different sizes, with one being very small), this impairs the quality of the experience for the learners. The Language Centre's space is also not convenient for introducing the Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that the Maesincla language centre will provide immersion education to years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Early Years and to plan a dedicated space for

play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to extend and modify the current space of the Maesincla Language Centre to improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with suitable space for visitors.

Dolgellau Language Centre

The Dolgellau Language Centre is currently located in a building between the Ysgol Bro Idris primary site, Dolgellau, and the Council's offices in Penarlâg, Dolgellau. The Dolgellau Language Centre currently only has space for one class that can hold a total of between 8-12 learners, and the Centre shares playtime and lunchtime facilities with Ysgol Bro Idris primary site. Based on the demand for immersion education in the area, there is a demand to increase the capacity of Dolgellau Language Centre and to increase the numbers of learners admitted to each site across the Immersion Education Provision. The space in the Language Centre is also not convenient for introducing the Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners.

When considering that the Dolgellau Language Centre will provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Early Years and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. Currently there is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Dolgellau Language Centre to an alternative site at Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau to increase the capacity of the Centre and improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors.

Llangybi Language Centre

The Llangybi Language Centre is currently located as part of the Ysgol Llangybi building. The Language Centre in Llangybi is not located in a strategic location in the county, and the current location of the centre limits the experiences available to the learners to enrich their learning experiences. The space in the Language Centre is not suitable for introducing the Curriculum for Wales and rich cross-curricular experiences for the learners. When considering that the Llangybi Language Centre will provide immersion education for years 2-4, it is necessary to consider the requirements of the Early Years and to plan a dedicated space for play areas, and quiet areas as well. There is also no suitable space for meeting parents or external agencies as needed.

Through the Welsh Medium Education Capital Grant, it is intended to relocate the current site of the Llangybi Language Centre to a strategic location at the Ysgol Cymerau site in Pwllheli. This will improve the learning environment and ensure a dedicated space for the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales which would include indoor and outdoor play areas, together with a suitable space for visitors. By relocating to Pwllheli, it will also ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole provision, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.

Relocating the Language Centre to Pwllheli will inevitably have an impact on Ysgol Llangybi from a social hub point of view. The Council recognises the special relationship that has existed between the school and the Language Centre over the years and is grateful to the school for hosting the Centre. Following the relocation, use of the Centre’s space will be available for the purpose of the school.

This investment would lead to improving the experiences, resources and learning environment for intensive immersion for learners in years 2-4 in Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, together with enabling the Authority to provide immersion education to more learners in line with the increasing demand on the service.

At the moment the number of learner capacity in the immersion education settings is limited to 72 learners each term, however, the phase 1 capital investment together with the phase 2 capital investment means; that the number of learners who would be able to be immersed in the Language Centres will increase to approximately 96 learners each term.

Ensuring further capital investment in our immersion education provision in Gwynedd will therefore be a means of ensuring growth in the number of learners who benefit from Welsh and bilingual education in the county, together with ensuring an increase in the number of learners who use the Welsh language together in formal and informal context, contributing to achieving the Welsh Government's goal of one million Welsh speakers by 2050.

2. HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES?

Gwynedd Council's well-being objectives were considered when evaluating the only option.

Invest £1.1 million to harmonise capacity and improve the learning environment of the County's primary Language Centres.	
Objectives	Details:
Enjoy a happy, healthy and safe life	There will be more capacity in the immersion education sites, and learners will be educated in a first-class learning environment. Learners will also benefit from maintaining contact with their local school and with peers to ensure their well-being.
Live in quality homes within their communities	No effect
Earn a sufficient wage to support themselves and their families	No effect
Receive education of the highest quality that will allow them to do what they want to do	Newcomers to Gwynedd will benefit from a first-class learning environment at each of the Immersion Education Provision sites across the county.
To live with dignity and independently for as long as possible	No effect
Live in a naturally Welsh society	Creating a first-class learning environment and increasing the capacity of the Language Centres will create the very best conditions to support the growth of the Welsh language among those learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd.

	<p>The main aim of the Immersion Education Provision is to support learners to acquire the Welsh language and create new Welsh speakers. The proposal therefore contributes to the Welsh Language Promotion Plan in Gwynedd 2018-23 by ensuring that "Schools and educational institutions give every support and encouragement to develop confident Welsh speakers." The proposal also contributes to the Welsh Government's goal of one million speakers by 2050.</p> <p>The relocation of the Llanybi Language Centre to Pwllheli will ensure consistency in the experiences that can be provided to the learners across the whole provision, as locating each of the immersion education sites in strategic locations will be a means of extending experiences and increase the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.</p> <p>Through the Immersion Education Provision, it is ensured that learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd succeed in acquiring the Welsh language and are assimilated into the natural Welsh and bilingual life of our communities throughout the county.</p>
<p>Take advantage of the County's beauty and natural environment</p>	<p>The aim of the project is to invest in the resources of the Immersion Provision which serves learners in years 2-4 of our schools in the Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.</p> <p>The new arrivals often come from areas beyond the boundaries of the County, they also often come from municipal areas or areas that are very different from Gwynedd.</p> <p>The whole immersion provision of having received an equal investment would shape their seasonal activities together by ensuring that the unique natural environment relevant to each location, whether by the sea or the mountains is included in the lives and the education of all learners.</p> <p>The new Curriculum for Wales requires that education settings ensure that the unique natural environment that each area has is included as an integral part of the lessons and the life of the school/language centre.</p>

3. DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET THE GOALS OF THE WELL-BEING ACT?

Aim	Does the proposal contribute to this aim?	Measures to mitigate negative impacts on this aim:
<p>A prosperous Wales An innovative society using resources efficiently and proportionately, educated people, creating wealth and work.</p>	<p>The proposal would mean that newcomers to Gwynedd are educated in a first-class learning environment.</p> <p>By locating each of the sites in a strategic location across the county, as a means of extending experiences and increasing the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e., by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, thus bringing the Welsh language to life for the learners.</p> <p>It is therefore anticipated that it would enrich the learners' learning and social experiences.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales A nation that maintains and enhances biodiversity and healthy ecosystems that support resilience and the ability to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales A society where people's physical and mental well-being is as good as possible, and people understand what affects their health.</p>	<p>As part of the new vision for the Immersion Education Provision adopted by Cabinet, Gwynedd Council on 6 July 2021, ensuring the physical and mental well-being of the learners is central to the provision.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential irrespective of background or</p>	<p>The proposal will improve the learning environment and enable the Immersion Education Provision to offer education of the highest possible quality which</p>	<p>No effect.</p>

<p>circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>will give the experiences, skills and confidence to the county's newcomers and enable them to develop to be bilingual and successful citizens.</p>	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable and safe communities with good connections</p>	<p>By means of the capital investment all the sites of the Immersion Education Provision will be located in strategic areas of the county, continuing contact with their local school and peers which would be a means of promoting the continuation of good relations.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A vibrant Wales and culture where the Welsh language thrives A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language and encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and leisure activities.</p>	<p>The proposal would mean that newcomers to Gwynedd are educated in a first-class learning environment.</p> <p>By locating each of the sites in a strategic location across the county, as a means of extending experiences and increasing the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the classroom i.e., by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, and community and cultural events thus bringing the Welsh language and culture to life for the learners.</p> <p>It is therefore anticipated that it would enrich the learning experiences and the social and cultural experiences of the learners.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>Wales is globally responsible. A nation that, in doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, is considering whether doing such a thing could contribute positively to global well-being.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Sustainable Development Principles	Does the proposal consider the principle?
<p>Long term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs is also important.</p>	<p>By means of the capital investment the learning environment of all the Immersion Education Provision sites will be suitable for the years to come. The fact that the Provision can accept more learners each term will enable the service to respond to any growth in demand for immersion education across the county in the future.</p>
<p>Suspension How action to prevent problems from occurring or escalating can help public bodies achieve their objectives.</p>	<p>The implementation of the proposal will help the Council to respond to the growth in the number of newcomers to Gwynedd.</p>
<p>Integration Consider how the public body's well-being objectives may affect each of the well-being goals, all of its other objectives, or the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	<p>The Authority created a new vision for immersion education in Gwynedd, and on 6 July 2021, the Cabinet approved the vision for the Immersion Education Provision in Gwynedd towards 2032 and beyond. As part of this vision, an investment of £2.2m will be made to improve the learning environment of each site, together with increasing capacity, and ensuring that the provision is located in strategic areas of the county.</p>
<p>Collaboration Collaboration with any other person (or different departments within the organisation itself) could help the organisation meet its well-being goals.</p>	<p>The Education Department held discussions with relevant Headteachers and officers of the Housing and Property Department to find out their views on our plans. Our intention is to ensure that each Centre can offer the same experience and specialist facilities to all learners in whichever centre is closest to them.</p>
<p>Contents The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area they serve.</p>	<p>We have communicated with the head teachers at the schools that have a Language Centre located on their sites at the moment to let them know our intentions. We have also contacted the heads of the proposed sites that are part of our plans for the future to inform them of our intentions. Depending on the decision of the Cabinet, the next step will be to engage more widely with the key stakeholder regarding the intention and joint planning.</p> <p>Historic consultations (May 2021): The Education Department held a period of engagement with key stakeholders on the new vision for the immersion education provision towards 2032 and beyond back in May 2021.</p>

	<p>As part of this engagement, a meeting was held to present the new vision with the Teachers' and Assistants' Unions together with a special meeting with the staff of the Language Centres on 27 May 2021, with an opportunity for the staff to consider the vision and submit comments by 21 June 2021. As part of the engagement, the new vision was presented to the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 10 June 2021, together with the Language Committee on 22 June 2021 to receive the views of the elected members on the vision, together with an opportunity to scrutinise on it. The vision and plan to invest £1.1 million at that time received unanimous support for the proposal.</p>
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5. CONCLUSION

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the 7 goals of the well-being act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposed proposal will allow learners who are newcomers to Gwynedd to be educated in a first class learning environment, located in strategic areas of the county, which will be a means of extending experiences and increasing the opportunities for the learners who are newcomers to use their Welsh outside the class i.e. by having easy access to facilities such as Gwynedd Libraries, Byw'n Iach Centres, shops, clubs and social enterprises, and community and cultural events thus bringing the Welsh language and culture to life for the learners, helping them to assimilate and thrive in our bilingual education provision and as complete members of our communities here in Gwynedd.

Assessing the Impact on Protected Characteristics, the Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Disadvantage

For help to complete this form see the *How to Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment* leaflet. You are also welcome to contact Delyth Gadlys Williams, Policy and Equality Officer on ext. 32708 or DelythGadlysWilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru for further assistance.

The Council's is required (under the Equality Act 2010) to consider the effect any change in policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), has on people with protected equality characteristics. The Council also has a general duty to ensure fairness and foster good relations. A timely Equality Impact Assessment must be undertaken before making any decision on any relevant change (i.e. which has an effect on people with protected characteristics).

The Council is also required, under the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011) to consider the effect of a change in any policy or procedure (or the creation of a new policy or procedure), in its opportunities for people to use Welsh and to ensure that Welsh is not treated less favourably than English. This document therefore ensures that these decisions protect and promote the use of the Welsh language.

From April 1st 2021 the Council has a duty to have due regard to tackling socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions.

1) Details

1.1. What is the name of the policy / service in question?

Increase capacity in Ysgol Bro Llew, Chwilog a Llanllechid

1.2 What is the purpose of the policy / service that is being created or amended? What changes are being considered?

Increase places in the 3 schools to ensure sufficient capacity for current pupils and respond to future projections of population growth in the schools catchment area

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Gareth Jones (Modernising Education Officer)

1.4 When did you commence the assessment? Which version is this?

June 2022 (1st version)

2) Action

2.1 Who are the stakeholders or partners you need to work with to undertake this assessment?

Gwynedd Council Education Department

Staff, governors, parents and children will be involved in the consultation

2.2 What measures have you taken to engage with people with equality characteristics, regarding the Welsh language or with communities (either of place or of need) that live with socio-economic disadvantage?

We have communicated the proposal with the 3 schools involved.

We have discussed the need to maintain a statutory procedure with the headteacher of Ysgol Chwilog and communicate the need with the Governing Body (there is no need to sustain a statutory procedure in the other 2 schools)

Depending on the Cabinet's decision, the next step will be to discuss the proposal with the beneficiaries of Ysgol Chwilog in order to receive their input. We will do this in consultation with staff, parents, children and the wider community in Chwilog and neighbouring schools to receive their comments on increasing the capacity of Ysgol Chwilog including their comments on any impact on equality, the community or the Welsh language.

We will continue to update Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Llanllechid when planning an additional class and again try to identify any impact this may have on equality, the community or the Welsh language.

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

The outcome of the engagement with all stakeholders will be available following the statutory consultation process in Chwilog and further discussions in Bro Lleu and Llanllechid.

2.4 On the basis of what other evidence are you operating?

During the Summer Term 2021 the 3 schools, local members and their governing bodies contacted the Education Department concerned about the lack of capacity of those schools to meet the increase in a number of learners due to housing developments within their catchment areas.

A successful bid was made for the Welsh Government Welsh Language Capital Grant to create an additional class in the 3 schools to respond to the situations of these schools, packing the bid around communities of linguistic significance.

2.5 Are there any gaps in the evidence that needs to be collected?

We will be collecting more information during the statutory consultation.

3) Identifying the Impact

3.1 The Council must give due regard to the effect any changes will have on people with the equality characteristics noted below. What impact will the new policy/service or the proposed changes in the policy or service have on people with these characteristics?

Characteristics	What type of impact? *	In what way? What is the evidence?
Race (including nationality)	none	The school has a policy in place
Disability	none	The school has a policy in place
Sex	none	The school has a policy in place
Age	none	
Sexual orientation	none	The school has a policy in place
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	none	The school has a policy in place

Gender reassignment	none	The school has a policy in place
Pregnancy and maternity	none	The school has a policy in place
Marriage and civil partnership	none	The school has a policy in place
The Welsh language	none	
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	none	

* Delete as appropriate

3.2 The Council has a duty under the 2010 Equality Act to contribute positively to a fairer society by promoting equality and good relations in its activities regarding the following characteristics – age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, gender reassignment, disability and pregnancy and maternity. The Council must give due attention to the way any change affects these duties.

General Duties of the Equality Act	Does it have an impact?*	In what way? What is the evidence?
Abolishing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	The proposal will not alter schools' statutory duty to protect pupils from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
Promoting equal opportunities	Yes / No	PSE lessons are being held in schools that will educate children on promoting equal opportunities.
Encouraging good relationships	Yes / No	PSE lessons are being held in schools that will teach children how to build good relationships.

* to be deleted as appropriate

3.3 How does your proposal ensure that you work in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), to ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than English and that you seize every opportunity to promote the Welsh language (beyond providing services bilingually) and increase opportunities to use and learn the language in the community?

It is not envisaged that adding a classroom and increasing the capacity of the 3 schools will change the way the schools currently treat the Welsh language, and the schools will continue to take every opportunity to promote the use of the language in the school and the community.

3.4 What other measures or changes could you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice in order to have a positive impact on people's opportunities to use the Welsh language, and to reduce or prevent any adverse effects that the policy / practice may have on the Welsh language?

As part of the statutory consultation at Ysgol Chwilog we will give beneficiaries the opportunity to comment on any impact the recommendation may have on the Welsh language and respond to any concerns expressed.

We will continue to update Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Llanllechid as we plan to add a class and again try to identify any impact this may have on the Welsh language.

3.5 How does the proposal show that you have had due regard to the need to address inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage? (Note that this is about closing inequality gaps rather than just improving outcomes for everyone)?

By increasing the capacity of the 3 schools we will secure places for all primary age children in their local school regardless of their socio-economic background.

3.6 What other measures or changes might you include to strengthen or change the policy / practice to show that you have had due regard to the need to reduce disproportionate outcomes as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, in accordance with the Socio-Economic Act?

As the proposal will not affect the way in which the schools operate no changes are anticipated.

4) Analysing the Results

4.1 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, positive impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

It is not envisaged that increasing the capacity of schools will have a significant positive impact on equality, Welsh language or socio-economics other than allowing sufficient primary space for all primary school children to receive Welsh-medium education in the catchment area of their homes.

4.2 Is the policy therefore likely to have a significant, negative impact on any of the above and what is the reason for this?

It is not anticipated that increasing the capacity of the schools will have a significant negative impact on equality, Welsh language or socio-economic as the 3 schools will continue to serve their catchment area as it is at present.

4.3 What should be done?

Choose one of the following:

Continue with the policy / service as it is robust	
Adapt the policy to delete any barriers	
Suspend and delete the policy as the detrimental impacts are too big	
Continue with the policy as any detrimental impact can be justified	
No further action at this time because it is too soon to decide, or there is insufficient evidence	Continue

4.4 If continuing with the project, what steps will you take to reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

Although we do not anticipate any negative impact we will continue to monitor and take action to mitigate any negative impacts as required.

4.5 If you are not taking any further action to delete or reduce the negative impacts, explain why here.

No negative impact has been identified at this stage.

5) Monitoring

5.1 What steps will you take to monitor the impact and effectiveness of the policy or service (action plan)?

We will monitor the impact of any change to ensure that the outcomes are positive and have no negative impact.

Well-being Impact assessment report of increasing the capacity of
Ysgol Chwillog, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Llanllechid

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1. INTRODUCTION

As a Council we are committed to the principles within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) in order to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Gwynedd's communities.

The Council's vision is:

Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to thrive and live full lives in their community, in a county which is one of the best counties to live in.

The Council has adopted well-being objectives that complement the national well-being goals and ensure that Gwynedd residents:

- Enjoy a happy, healthy and safe life
- Have access to quality homes within their communities
- Earn enough wages to support themselves and their families
- Receive a first-class education that will allow them to do what they want to do
- To live with dignity and independence for as long as possible
- Being able to live in a naturally Welsh speaking Society
- Enjoy the beauty of the County's natural environment.

The table below outlines the link between our well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

We will ensure that the residents of Gwynedd can:	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive Communities	A vibrant culture where the Welsh language is thriving	Globally responsible
Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives							
Live in quality homes within their communities							
Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families							
Receive education of the highest quality which will enable them to do what they want to do							
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible							
Live in a natural Welsh society							
Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment.							

The Education Department has a role to promote the Act's well-being goals to the county's pupils through its activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. As part of the duty the Council has published well-being objectives that outline how it will improve well-being in the "Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023".

1.1 Context

During the Summer Term 2021 the governing bodies of 3 schools and their local members contacted the Education Department concerned about the lack of capacity of those schools to meet the increase in learner numbers due to housing developments within their natural catchment areas, namely Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Chwillog.

An opportunity was seen to apply for a Welsh Capital Grant to try to respond to the situations of these schools, by packaging the application around communities of linguistic significance (communities over 70% Welsh speakers).

Through this application, the Education Department is keen to support economic developments, housing and social enterprises in some communities of linguistic significance in the county, by increasing the capacity of the schools in response to the growth in the population due to these developments. By weaving all these elements of community regeneration together, it can create a solid infrastructure for these communities, creating the very best conditions for the Welsh language and the prosperity of the communities.

In February 2022 confirmation was received from the Welsh Government that the request of the Education Department, Gwynedd Council had received approval in principle.

The School Organisation Code states that a statutory process must be carried out if *'expanding a school site (with the exception of nursery schools and special schools), which would increase the school's capacity by at least 25% or 200 pupils, compared to capacity the school on the appropriate date. When deciding on an increase in capacity, all cases of school expansion that have taken place since the appropriate date must be considered together with the proposed expansion work.'*

As the addition of a class to Ysgol Chwillog will increase the capacity to 95, which is an increase of over 25% of the 65, which is the school's capacity on the appropriate date in this case, it will be necessary to follow a statutory procedure before being able to do any modifications that will lead to increasing the school's capacity.

As adding a class to Ysgol Llanllechid or Ysgol Bro Lleu will not increase capacity by more than 25%, there will be no need to carry out a statutory consultation in the case of these 2 schools.

2. HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES?

Increase the capacity of the 3 schools	
Objectives	Details:
Enjoy a happy, healthy and safe life	There will be more space in the schools. The pupils will be taught in classes that offer a suitable space.
Live in quality homes within their communities	No effect
Earn a sufficient wage to support themselves and their families	No effect
Receive education of the highest quality that will allow them to do what they want to do	There will be sufficient space in the schools for all the current children of the catchment areas and for the future when there is more demand as a result of housing developments. The pupils will be taught in classes that offer a suitable space.
To live with dignity and independently for as long as possible	No effect
Live in a naturally Welsh society	It is anticipated that creating enough space for all primary school children in the catchment area in their local school will create the conditions that will support the prosperity of the Welsh language among the children and the communities.
Take advantage beauty of the County's natural environment	No effect

3. DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET THE GOALS OF THE WELL-BEING ACT?

Aim	Does the proposal contribute to this aim?	Measures to mitigate negative impacts on this aim:
<p>A prosperous Wales An innovative society using resources efficiently and proportionately, educated people, creating wealth and work.</p>	<p>The proposal would mean that there is enough space in the schools for teaching all the children in their catchment area in classes suitable for the numbers. It is therefore anticipated that it would enrich the pupils' learning and social experiences.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales A nation that maintains and enhances biodiversity and healthy ecosystems that support resilience and the ability to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales A society where people's physical and mental well-being is as good as possible and people understand what affects their health.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales A society that enables people to fulfil their potential irrespective of background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>The proposal has been developed within the context of the Excellent Primary Education For Children in Gwynedd. The strategy outlines the vision: <i>“Provide education of the best possible quality that will provide the county’s children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens.”</i></p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Attractive, viable and safe communities with good connections</p>	<p>Adapting the schools in order to ensure enough space for all primary school children in their catchment areas would mean that the pupils would be able to get an education in their communities.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>A vibrant Wales and culture where the Welsh language thrives A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language and encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and leisure activities.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that creating enough space for all primary school children in the catchment area in their local school will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among the children and the communities.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>
<p>Wales is globally responsible. A nation that, in doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, is considering whether doing such a thing could contribute positively to global well-being.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal is likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Sustainable Development Principles	Does the proposal consider the principle?
<p>Long term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs is also important.</p>	<p>Current numbers and projections of pupil numbers as well as local housing developments show the need to increase capacity in the schools and the proposal will ensure enough places for the short and long term.</p>
<p>Suspension How action to prevent problems from occurring or escalating can help public bodies achieve their objectives.</p>	<p>Implementing the recommendation will help the Council to avoid problems of lack of space in the 3 schools.</p>
<p>Integration Consider how the public body's well-being objectives may affect each of the well-being goals, all of its other objectives, or the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	<p>The authority began the process of reviewing the school situation in the wake of a critical situation facing the school.</p>
<p>Collaboration Collaboration with any other person (or different departments within the organisation itself) could help the organisation meet its well-being goals.</p>	<p>Collaboration with other relevant departments and the individual schools will be an important part of achieving the objectives for the benefit of the schools and children in the catchment area.</p>
<p>Contents The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area they serve.</p>	<p>Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, the authority will carry out statutory consultation with relevant stakeholders such as parents, staff, unions, and the wider community in Chwilog. This consultation will also include specific consultation with children and young people. The authority will comply with the consultation requirements set out in the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code.</p>

5. CONCLUSION

Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the 7 goals of the well-being act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

The proposed proposal will ensure that children in the 3 catchment areas are educated in suitably sized schools and in a natural Welsh-speaking society, increasing opportunities to socialise and work together with others and give them a fair chance to flourish amongst their peers.

Adapting the schools in order to ensure enough space for all primary school children in their catchment areas would mean that the pupils would be able to get an education in their communities.

It is anticipated that creating enough space for all primary school children in the catchment area in their local school will create the very best conditions to support the prosperity of the Welsh language among the children and the communities.



Community Impact Assessment Report,

Quality and Standards of Education, Travel Arrangements,

Ysgol Chwillog, Ysgol Bro Lleu, Ysgol Llanllechid

- July 2022

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Community Impact Assessment Report

Ysgol Chwilog, Ysgol Bro Llew ac Ysgol Llanllechid

1. INTRODUCTION

During the Summer Term 2021, the governing bodies of three schools and their local members contacted the Education Department, concerned about the lack of capacity at those school to address the increase in learner numbers as a result of housing developments within their natural catchment areas, namely Ysgol Llanllechid, Ysgol Bro Llew and Ysgol Chwilog.

An opportunity was seen to submit an application to the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium Education Capital Grant to seek a response to the situations of these schools, and package the bid around communities of linguistic significance (communities with over 70% of Welsh speakers).

By means of this bid, the Education Department is eager to support economic, housing and social enterprise developments in some communities of linguistic significance in the county, by increasing the capacity of the schools in response to a growth in the population as a result of these developments. By intertwining all of these elements of community regeneration together, it can create solid grounding for these communities, and create the best possible conditions for the Welsh language and the communities to thrive.

2. YSGOL CHWILOG

The Schools Organisation Code notes that a statutory process must be conducted if '*an enlargement of the premises of a school (excluding nursery and special schools), which would increase the capacity of the school by at least 25% or 200 pupils as compared with the school's capacity on the appropriate date. In determining an increase in capacity all enlargements that have taken place since the appropriate date are to be taken into account together with the proposed enlargement.*'

Adding a classroom to Ysgol Chwilog would increase the capacity to 95, which is an increase of over 25% of the existing 65, namely the school's capacity at the appropriate date in this case, a statutory procedure will need to be conducted before any changes that will lead to increasing the school's capacity can be made.

2.1 The School

Ysgol Chwilog is located in the centre of the village of Chwilog, located between Y Ffôr and Cricieth. The School has capacity from nursery to year 6 of 74, with 76 pupils aged between 3-11 years, attending the school at present (September 2021 Census).

There are 3 classes in the school. The nursery year class, the reception year - year 2 class , and another class that educates years 3-6.

Due to new housing developments and the impact on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the numbers at the school will increase further over the next 5 years and therefore an additional class would be needed.

2.2 The Catchment Area

Ysgol Chwilog is located in the centre of the village of Chwilog, located between Y Ffôr and Cricieth in Gwynedd. The school's catchment area includes the village and nearby area, located between the catchment areas of Ysgol Bro Plenydd (Y Ffôr), Ysgol Abererch, Ysgol Llanystumdwy and Ysgol Llangybi.

Ysgol Chwilog is located in Dwyfor and in the Llanystumdwy ward. The latest data (2011 census) shows that the population of the Llanystumdwy ward is 2,080.

2.3 The Economy

1,460 people aged between 16 and 74 years of age live within the Llanystumdwy ward. 1,020 are economically active. 440 people in the same age group are economically inactive, with 65 of these being long-term ill or disabled.

The type of industry in which the population is active varies in the area, with the highest rate (13.7%) working in the Education field.

A number of businesses operate in the village, including a pub, post office and caravan park.

2.4 The Community

A number of activities are held in Chwilog, including;

- Cylch Meithrin
- Sunday School
- Merched y Wawr
- Welsh for Adults in the Madryn
- Y Gymdeithas
- Snooker Club
- Annual Eisteddfod
- Fitness Activities
- And other various activities in the Hall

In addition, there are a number of facilities in the village, including Siloh Chapel and Capel Uchaf, Village Hall, Post Office, Butcher, Pub and Children's Playing Field.

2.5 Summary of the school's use outside the school's core hours

Play Groups (School holidays)	
Aelwyd yr Urdd	✓
Drama	

Voluntary Groups	
Coffee Morning/Evening	✓
Community Auction	✓
Community Library	
Choir Practice	
Welsh for Adults	✓
Town/Community Council Meeting	
Cylch/Ysgol Feithrin	✓
Sports Club/Activity	
Breakfast Club	✓
After School Club	
Local Interest Club	

Source: Headteachers June 2022

2.6 Summary of the various facilities in the Communities

The following information has been gathered about the area of the schools in question:

Village Hall Community Centre	✓
Chapel/Church	✓
Public Transport	✓
Shop	✓
Café/Pub	✓
Post Office	✓
Surgery/Pharmacy	X
Library	X
Children's Playing Field	✓
Bank	X
Residential Home for the Elderly	X
Leisure Centre	X
Garage	X
Tourism Attraction	X
Cylch Ti a Fi + Cylch Meithrin	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

2.7 Summary of activities or groups that the school is regularly involved with:

Cylchoedd Meithrin/Ti a Fi	✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/Regional/National)	✓
Adrannau'r Urdd	✓
Visits to Glan-llyn / Llangrannog / Cardiff	✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

2.8 Deprivation

The Llanystumdwy Ward (which is a broader area than the geographical area of the Ysgol Chwilog's catchment area) is in the 50% most deprived wards in Wales (ranked 1,102 out of 1909 wards).

A number of fields are measured to draw up this general index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing (see the table below).

It is noted that the Llanystumdwy ward is within the 10% of most deprived wards in Wales in the field of 'access to services', i.e. deprivation as people are not able to access a variety of services that are considered essential for everyday living. The indicators include the average public transport and private travel times to a number of services such as supermarkets, surgeries, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.

In addition, the Llanystumdwy ward is within the 10% of most deprived areas in Wales in the field of 'Housing'. The indicators of this field are the proportion of people who live in an overcrowded home (bedroom use), and the proportion of people living in homes that do not have central heating.

Below is a summary of how the Llanystumdwy ward is placed in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014):

Area	Rank in Wales, out of 1909 areas. 1 = most deprived 1909 = least deprived	Most deprived % in Wales
Income	1,475	in the least deprived 50%
Employment	1,589	in the least deprived 50%
Health	1,485	in the least deprived 50%
Education	1,460	in the least deprived 50%
Access to services	152	in the 10% most deprived
Community safety	1,339	in the least deprived 50%
Physical environment	1,273	in the least deprived 50%
Housing	54	in the 10% most deprived

2.9 Context of the schools according to Estyn Inspection Reports (January 2013)

As part of the Estyn reports, the authors, i.e. the inspectors, will place the schools within their context and will detail their community connections. This is the context given to Ysgol Chwilog by Estyn inspectors.

"The school is located in the centre of the village of Chwilog, near Pwllheli. It serves the village itself and the surrounding rural area.

There are 62 pupils on the school's register, including nursery age children. The numbers have increased gradually over the past five years. Welsh is the main language medium of the school and the aim is to ensure that pupils are completely bilingual by the time they transfer to the secondary sector. 89% of pupils speak Welsh at home. There are no pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds at the school at present."

2.10 Schools' statistical information

School	Full Capacity (R - Yr 6)	Number on the register September 2021 (R - Yr6)	Number of Surplus Places 2021 (N - Yr 6)	Legal Category
Chwilog	65	70	5	Community school

Source: September 2021 Census

The table above shows the numbers at Ysgol Chwilog, from Reception to year 6. Also shown in this table are the school's capacity and the number of surplus places. Ysgol Chwilog is a community school, and educates through the medium of Welsh.

2.11 Assessment of the Probable Impact on the Community

In order to assess the community impact of the potential models, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community impact considerations of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and Well-being	No change	Neutral
Implications of the change on public transport provisions	No change	Neutral
Impact on facilities/other services provided at the school	No change	Neutral
The impact on broader community safety	No change	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school-age children to leave the community, or would young families be less likely to move to the community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive

Impact on other services provided locally	No change	Neutral
Detrimental effect on the community's broader economy	No change	Neutral
The general impact on the local community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive

2. YSGOL BRO LLEU

3.1 The School

Ysgol Bro Lleu is situated in the centre of the village of Penygroes, located between Porthmadog and Caernarfon.

The school's capacity from Nursery to Year 6 is 180, with 199 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age attending the school. This means that the school is already over capacity by 19 pupils (September 2021 Census).

At present, there are 7 classrooms at the school. One classroom to educate the nursery class (morning and afternoon) and reception, a classroom to educate the reception class and year 1. Years 2, 3 and 4 have a classroom each. Years 5 and 6 are educated together in two classrooms.

Due to new housing developments and the impact on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the numbers at the school will increase further over the next 5 years and therefore an additional class would be needed.

3.2 The Catchment Area

The school's catchment area is located in the Secondary Catchment Area of Dyffryn Nantlle and within a stone's throw of the Secondary School (across the road). It also includes the village and nearby area, and is located between the catchment areas of Ysgol Bro Llifon, Ysgol Talysarn, Ysgol Llanllyfni and Ysgol Brynaerau.

Ysgol Bro Lleu is located in Arfon and within the Penygroes ward. The latest data (2011 census) shows that the population of the Penygroes ward is 1,793.

3.3 The Economy

1,297 people aged between 16 and 74 years of age live within the Penygroes ward. 867 are economically active. 430 people in the same age group are economically inactive, with 72 of these being long-term ill or disabled.

The type of industry in which the population is active varies in the area, with the highest rate (16.2%) working in the retail and wholesale field; motor car and motorcycle repairs

3.4 Summary of the various facilities in the Communities

The following information has been gathered about the area of the schools in question:

Community Centre Village Hall	✓
Chapel/Church	✓
Public Transport	✓
Shop	✓
Café/Pub	✓
Post Office	✓
Surgery/Pharmacy	✓
Library	✓
Children's Playing Field	✓
Bank	X
Residential Home for the Elderly	✓
Leisure Centre	✓
Garage	✓
Tourism Attraction	✓
Cylch Ti a Fi + Cylch Meithrin	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

3.5 Summary of activities or groups that the school is regularly involved with:

Cylchoedd Meithrin/Ti a Fi	✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/Regional/National)	✓
Adrannau'r Urdd	✓
Visits to Glan-llyn / Llangrannog / Cardiff	✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

3.6 Deprivation

The Penygroes Ward is in the 50% most deprived wards in Wales (ranked 1,090 out of 1909 wards).

A number of fields are measured to draw up this general index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing (see the table below).

It is noted that the Penygroes ward is amongst the 30-50% most deprived in 5 out of the 8 fields.

Below is a summary of how the Penygroes ward is placed in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014):

Area	Rank in Wales, out of 1909 areas. 1 = most deprived 1909 = least deprived	Most deprived % in Wales
Income	697	in the most deprived 30-50%
Employment	796	in the most deprived 30-50%
Health	867	in the most deprived 30-50%
Education	1,409	in the least deprived 50%
Access to services	1,656	in the least deprived 50%
Community safety	794	in the most deprived 30-50%
Physical environment	1,886	in the least deprived 50%
Housing	860	in the most deprived 30-50%

3.7 Context of the schools according to Estyn Inspection Reports (January 2014)

As part of Estyn reports, the authors, i.e. the inspectors, will place the schools within their context and will detail their community connections. This is the context given to Ysgol Bro Lleu by Estyn inspectors:

"The school is located in the village of Penygroes, located approximately eight miles from the town of Caernarfon in Gwynedd.

There are 176 pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 on the school register, including 22 part-time nursery children. They have been organised into two classes according to their age and into four mixed-age classes. The school admits pupils to the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday."

3.8 Schools' statistical information

The table below shows the numbers at Ysgol Bro Lleu, from Reception to year 6. Also shown in this table are the schools' capacity and the number of surplus places. Ysgol Bro Lleu is a community school, and educates through the medium of Welsh.

School	Full Capacity (R - Yr6)	Number on the register September 2021 (R - Yr6)	Number of Sur- plus Places 2021 (N - Yr6)	Legal Category
Bro Lleu	159	178	-19	Community School

Source: September 2021 Census

3.9 Assessment of Probable Impact on the Community

In order to assess the community impact of the potential models, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community impact considerations of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and Well-being	No change	Neutral
Implications of the change on public transport provisions	No change	Neutral
Impact on facilities / other services provided in the school	No change	Neutral
The impact on broader community safety	No change	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school-age children to leave the community, or would young families be less likely to move to the community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive
Impact on other services provided locally	No change	Neutral
Detrimental effect on the community's broader economy	No change	Neutral
The general impact on the local community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive

3. YSGOL LLANLLECHID

4.1 The School

Ysgol Llanllechid is situated above the village of Bethesda, located approximately 5 miles from the city of Bangor.

The school's capacity from nursery to year 6 is 249, with 270 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age attending the school. This means that the school is over capacity by 21 children (September 2021 Census).

At present, there are 10 classrooms at the school; nursery class, 2 classes teaching the reception class, Year 1 class and Year 2 class. There are three classes educating years 3 and 4 together, one class for year 5 and another class for year 6. The largest class is 32 pupils, and the smallest class is 17 pupils.

Due to new housing developments and the impact on the projected numbers, it is anticipated that the numbers at the school will increase further over the next 5 years and therefore an additional class is needed.

4.2 The Catchment Area

The school's catchment area is located in the Secondary Catchment Area of Dyffryn Ogwen and within a stone's throw of the Secondary School. The nearby catchment areas are the catchment areas of Ysgol Abercaseg/Penybryn and Ysgol Tregarth.

Ysgol Llanllechid is located in Arfon and within the Rachub ward, but it was noted as the Arllechwedd ward in the 2011 Census. The latest data (2011 census) shows that the population of the Arllechwedd ward is 1,398.

4.3 The Economy

1,015 people aged between 16 and 74 years of age live within the Arllechwedd ward. 722 are economically active. 293 people in the same age group are economically inactive, with 33 of these being long-term ill or disabled.

The type of industry in which the population is active varies in the area, with the highest rate (16.1%) working in the health and social work field.

4.4 Summary of the various facilities in the Communities

The following information has been gathered about the area of the schools in question:

Village Hall Community Centre	✓
Chapel/Church	✓
Public Transport	✓
Shop	✓
Café/Pub	✓
Post Office	✓
Surgery/Pharmacy	✓
Library	✓
Children's Playing Field	✓

Bank	X
Residential Home for the Elderly	✓
Leisure Centre	✓
Garage	✓
Tourism Attraction	✓
Cylch Ti a Fi + Meithrin	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

4.5 Summary of activities or groups that the school is regularly involved with:

Cylchoedd Meithrin/Ti a Fi	✓
Eisteddfodau (Local/Regional/National)	✓
Adrannau'r Urdd	✓
Visits to Glan-llyn / Llangrannog / Cardiff	✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)	✓

Source: Headteachers June 2022

4.6 Deprivation

The Arllechwedd Ward is in the 30-50% of most deprived wards in Wales (ranked 855 out of 1,909 wards).

A number of fields are measured to draw up this general index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing (see the table below).

It is noted that the Arllechwedd ward is amongst the 30-50% most deprived in 4 out of the 8 fields and amongst the 10-20% most deprived in 2 fields.

Below is a summary of how the Arllechwedd ward is placed in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014):

Area	Rank in Wales, out of 1909 areas. 1 = most deprived 1909 = least deprived	Most deprived % in Wales
Income	927	in the most deprived 30-50%

Employment	845	in the most deprived 30-50%
Health	1,428	in the least deprived 50%
Education	1,499	in the least deprived 50%
Access to services	205	in the most deprived 10-20%
Community safety	707	in the most deprived 30-50%
Physical environment	897	in the most deprived 30-50%
Housing	197	in the most deprived 10-20%

4.7 Context of the schools according to Estyn Inspection Reports (March 2016)

As part of the Estyn reports, the authors, i.e. the inspectors, will place the schools within their context and will detail their community connections. This is the context given to Ysgol Llanllechid by Estyn inspectors:

"Ysgol Gynradd Llanllechid is located in the village of Rachub near the town of Bethesda. It falls under the care of Gwynedd local authority. There are 261 pupils aged between 3 and 11 years on the register, including 31 part-time nursery age pupils. The pupils have been divided between nine classes. Welsh is the main medium of the school's life and work."

4.8 Schools' statistical information

School	Full Capacity (R - Yr6)	Number on the register September 2021 (R -Yr6)	Number of Sur- plus Places 2021 (R - Yr6)	Legal Category
Llanllechid	213	243	-20	Community School

4.9 Assessment of Probable Impact on the Community

In order to assess the community impact of the potential models, it was decided to create criteria in accordance with the recommendations of the community impact considerations of the School Organisation Code 011/2018.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and Well-being	No change	Neutral
Implications of the change on public transport provisions	No change	Neutral
Impact on facilities / other services provided in the school	No change	Neutral
The impact on broader community safety	No change	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school-age children to leave the community, or would young families be less likely to move to the community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive
Impact on other services provided locally	No change	Neutral
Detrimental effect on the community's broader economy	No change	Neutral
The general impact on the local community	Increasing the capacity will secure plenty of places at the schools for all children in the catchment area, and will therefore secure them an education in their communities	Positive

4. SUMMARY

After considering the impact of the proposal on the three communities, it is not anticipated that increasing the capacity of the schools by adding a classroom will have any negative impact on the communities.

It is anticipated that increasing the capacity at the schools will create sufficient places for all primary children in the three-catchment area and create a firm grounding for the communities and create the best conditions for the Welsh language and the prosperity of the communities.

Quality and Standards of Education Assessment Report

Ysgol Chwilog, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Llanllechid

1. YSGOL CHWILOG

Ysgol Chwilog was inspected by Estyn in January 2013 where it was concluded that the school's current performance was adequate, along with the projections for improvement. It is acknowledged that the school has been on a relatively long journey of instability in the school's leadership and that the new Headteacher has only been in post for a few weeks.

The school was inspected in May 2022; however, the report is yet to be published.

See below a summary of the school's inspection in January 2013.

School	Inspection year	How good are the outputs?	How good is the provision?	How good is the leadership and management?	Level of Follow-up (if appropriate)	
Chwilog	January 2013	Adequate	Adequate	Unsatisfactory	April 2014	Good Progress

1.1 Assessment of the Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education

Positive	Neutral	Neutral
----------	---------	---------

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	No change	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	No change	Neutral
Teaching and learning experiences	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space in order to	Positive

	educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	
Care, support and guidance	No change	Neutral
Leadership and management	No change	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	No change	Neutral
A provision that at least equates to what is available to learners at the time (including those with ALN)	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space in order to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	Positive

2. YSGOL BRO LLEU

Ysgol Bro Lleu was inspected by Estyn in January 2014 where it was concluded that the school's current performance was outstanding, along with the projections for improvement. It is acknowledged that the senior managers have thorough knowledge of the school's needs and a clear vision about its development; and that the school has a successful history of innovation with new progressiveness with different methods of working.

See below a summary of the school's inspection in January 2014.

School	Inspection year	How good are the outcomes?	How good is the provision?	How good is the leadership and management?
Bro Lleu	January 2014	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

2.1 Assessment of the Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	No change	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	No change	Neutral
Teaching and learning experiences	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space in order to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	Positive
Care, support and guidance	No change	Neutral
Leadership and management	No change	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	No change	Neutral
A provision that at least equates to what is available to learners at the time (including those with ALN)	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	Positive

3. YSGOL LLANLLECHID

Ysgol Llanllechid was inspected by Estyn in March 2016 where it was concluded that the current performance of the school was good, along with the projections for improvement. It is noted that the leaders have a clear vision that is based on ensuring high standards and the welfare of pupils and that leaders have a good understanding of its strengths and the fields that it needs to improve.

See below a summary of the school's inspection that was carried out in March 2016.

School	Inspection year	How good are the outcomes?	How good is the provision?	How good is the leadership and management?
Llanllechid	Good	Good	Good	Good

3.1 Assessment of the Impact on the Quality and Standards of Education

Positive	Neutral	Negative
----------	---------	----------

Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	No change	Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	No change	Neutral
Teaching and learning experiences	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	Positive
Care, support and guidance	No change	Neutral
Leadership and management	No change	Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	No change	Neutral

A provision that at least equates to what is available to learners at the time (including those with ALN)	Adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space in order to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.	Positive
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4. CONCLUSION

As a result of conducting an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the quality and standards of education, we are of the opinion that increasing the capacity at the three schools by adding a classroom will ensure sufficient space to educate all children in the catchment area in suitable classes of the correct size.

Assessment of the Impact on Travel Arrangements

Ysgol Chwilog, Ysgol Bro Lleu and Ysgol Llanllechid

1. GWYNEDD COUNCIL TRANSPORT POLICY

In accordance with Gwynedd Council's transport policy, free transport is available:

- for learners who live two or more miles from the school in their catchment area, or the closest school (excluding nursery pupils).
- when learners who receive a primary education live less than two miles from the catchment area school they therefore are not entitled to free transport, but if traveling to the school along a road that is considered by the Council to be especially dangerous, free transport is offered.

The transport policy can be seen in the parents' handbook:

(<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Residents/Documents-Residents/Schools-and-learning-documents/School-Admissions/Guide-Book.pdf>)

2. THE CURRENT SITUATION

At present, no pupil receives free transport to Ysgol Bro Lleu, four receive free transport to Ysgol Chwilog and two receive free transport to Ysgol Llanllechid.

3. CONCLUSION

As we are considering increasing the capacity of the three schools in response to the projected increases within their catchment areas, and anticipate that the homes of the majority of the children will be located within two miles of the school, and considering the existing numbers who receive free transportation as a benchmark, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant impact on transport arrangements as a result of increasing the capacity of the schools in question.

Agenda Item 7

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn, Council Leader
Contact Officer:	Sioned Williams, Head of Economy and Community
Contact details:	sionedewilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru 01286 679547 MSTeams
Title of Item:	UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. To allow Gwynedd Council to undertake the 'lead authority' role for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in relation to the submission of the 'Regional Investment Plan' which is a UK Government requirement on behalf of the six North Wales counties.
- 1.2. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community - in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Services and the Chief Executive – to agree with the other North Wales counties on appropriate administrative and operational arrangements to safeguard the Council's interests.
- 1.3. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community–in consultation with the Leader, the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive – to agree on the content of the 'Regional Investment Plan'.
- 1.4. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community - in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive – to establish appropriate arrangements for delivering the programme in Gwynedd.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is one of the alternative funds established by the UK Government after leaving the European Union.

- 2.2. A financial allocation for Gwynedd has been announced as part of an allocation for North Wales. In order to ensure access to the funding, a 'Regional Investment Plan' must be submitted by 01 August 2022, outlining the priorities for use of the funds and the proposals for its administration.

3. INTRODUCTION

Background

- 3.1. When the UK left the European Union the Westminster Government pledged to provide funding to compensate communities that would no longer receive European funding.
- 3.2. The UK Government intends to administer the funding directly by using the powers established by means of the [UK Internal Market Act 2020](#). The Welsh Government opposes the UK Government's intention, and the Welsh Government's stance was confirmed by the Minister for Economy in [a written statement](#) on 07 June 2022.
- 3.3. The funding is part of the UK Government's wider levelling up agenda as outlined in its [Levelling Up White Paper](#) and, more recently, in the [Levelling Up Bill](#) that has been submitted to the Westminster Parliament.
- 3.4. To date, UK Government has announced four investment programmes:
- Levelling Up Fund (LUF);
 - Community Ownership Fund;
 - Community Renewal Fund (CRF - *now closed*); and
 - **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**.
- 3.5. An overview of all the funds can be found on the Council's website and further information is available on [the UK Government's website](#).

Overview of the UK's Shared Prosperity Fund

- 3.6. The [UK Shared Prosperity Fund's prospectus \(UKSPF\)](#) was published on 13 April 2022. The Fund will distribute £2.6 billion across the UK by March 2025.
- 3.7. All parts of the UK will receive some of the funding, which will be allocated to individual areas based on a formula.
- 3.8. Gwynedd's allocation for the period up to March 2025 is £24.4 million. £4.2 million of the total has been ringfenced to support adults to improve their numeracy skills.

- 3.9. The allocation has been profiled to increase throughout the period with a minimum of capital funding specified annually (the capital sum can be increased if desired).
- 3.10. The Fund's stated main aim is *building pride in place and increasing life chances throughout the UK*. The Fund has three 'Investment Priorities', with individual objectives:
- a) Communities and place
 - b) Support for Local Businesses
 - c) People and Skills
- 3.11. 53 individual interventions have been selected from the Investment Priorities and a selection of outputs and indicators within the [supplementary documents](#) on the UK Government's website.
- 3.12. The Prospectus suggests that the Fund can be administered through one, or a combination of, competitive grants (the favoured approach), procurement / commissioning or directly delivered through teams within public organisations.
- 3.13. Schemes can also be delivered across more than one local area and regional activities, where appropriate, are encouraged in Wales (see below).

Regional Collaboration

- 3.14. In England, funding will go directly to individual counties to be used or distributed based on the 'Local Investment Plan' approved by the UK Government.
- 3.15. In Wales (and Scotland) it is a requirement for local areas to collaborate with others within their region (North Wales in Gwynedd's case).
- 3.16. The allocation of £24.42 million for Gwynedd is part of £126.46 million that has been allocated to the North Wales counties.
- 3.17. In order to ensure access to the allocation, it is necessary to produce and submit a 'Regional Investment Plan' to be approved by the UK Government. The Regional Investment Plan is required to be submitted before 01 August 2022.
- 3.18. The Plan is in the format of a standard form that will bring together the aspirations of the individual counties and the region in its entirety. The form must include an outline of:
- the challenges / opportunities associated with each investment priority

- selection / quantification of outcomes and results
 - selection of interventions
 - provide evidence of engagement
 - confirmation of the governance / administration arrangements
 - propose a method of selecting projects / delivery
 - distribution / profiling of the expenditure
- 3.19. One 'Lead Authority' will be accountable for the region's funding, allocating the funding to the other counties or directly to schemes if there is an agreement to deliver them across the region (a proportion of the financial allocation can be used to secure the appropriate resources to deliver the work).
- 3.20. The North Wales Chief Executives have asked Gwynedd Council - with the support of the Programme Management Office, North Wales Ambition - to deliver the role of 'Lead Authority' during the phase of developing and submitting the Regional Investment Plan.

Local delivery

- 3.21. Although the context of the UKSPF has an emphasis on regional collaboration, the task is to make a difference to the lives of local residents, and every county in North Wales is agreed:
- that areas need to benefit in line with the value of their individual allocation;
 - it is a matter for local authorities to decide on the use of their funding; and,
 - supporting projects operating across counties is a matter of choice for local areas.
- 3.22. The Fund's prospectus also notes the important role of partners in supporting local authorities to ensure the success of the UKSPF within an area, including advising on individual plans that will bid for funding.

4. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 4.1. Gwynedd Council is the host body for North Wales Ambition. The Council is therefore already undertaking the role of 'lead authority' for the region within the field of economic development.
- 4.2. Extending this role for the initial step of the UKSFP - namely producing and submitting the regional Investment Plan - is a

natural evolution of the existing function and allows sufficient time for the six North Wales counties to agree on their wishes for the future.

- 4.3. In light of the timetable for producing the Regional Investment Plan and agreeing the arrangements for administrating and implementing the Fund and the need to address the aspirations of all the North Wales counties; the work will continue until the end of July.
- 4.4. There are clear structures and arrangements in place for delivering the work, including a working group of Senior Officers to lead and a coordination group to deliver the operational aspects.
- 4.5. Work detailing the delivery arrangements and the creation of suitable structures / procedures locally and regionally will continue over the summer period after submitting the Regional Investment Plan.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1. The North Wales region Regional Investment Plan is required to be submitted to UK Government before 1 August 2022.
- 5.2. Subject to receiving the UK Government's response, it is anticipated that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will begin to be implemented during the autumn.

6. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 6.1. Seeking the views and feedback of stakeholders and residents is an important part of the arrangements to establish the Regional Investment Plan and deliver the UKSPF locally.
- 6.2. In Gwynedd there is an extensive process underway to seek views on the fields that require attention, the balance between fields and the best methods of delivery. The work includes:
 - establishing a specific page on [the Council's website](#)
 - a series of public workshops for local organisations and residents
 - briefing sessions for Members and Council Departments
 - individual consultation with the main local stakeholders in the public, private and third sector
 - Engagement with Members of the Senedd and Members of Parliament

6.3. The local consultation undertaken by each individual county is echoed on a regional basis, especially within the fields of People and Skills and Supporting Local Businesses.

6.4. Monitoring Officer's Observations:

'It is critical that the arrangements with the other Councils create a process which facilitates the spending. However, it needs to be recognised that acting as a lead body on a project of this nature creates responsibilities and accountability which need to be addressed through the contractual arrangements and passed onto recipients of the money.'

6.5. Head of Finance Department's Observations:

'I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the current situation in relation to the Shared Prosperity Fund. The implementation of the decisions sought will allow the Council to move forward to put appropriate arrangements in place to act as lead authority, in collaboration with Ambition North Wales, as well as enabling Gwynedd Council to access its allocation from the fund.'

Significant work is ongoing ahead in developing the appropriate plans, and to reach early agreement with our partners in the other local authorities on an appropriate mechanism that will protect the interests of Gwynedd Council while acting as lead authority.'

Agenda Item 8

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn, Council Leader
Contact officer:	Sioned Williams, Head of Economy and Community
Contact details:	sionedewilliams@gwynedd.llyw.cymru 01286 679547 MSTeams
Title of Item:	SECOND PHASE OF THE ARFOR PROGRAMME

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. To approve the second phase of the Programme as outlined in the report and authorise the Head of Economy and Community– in consultation with the Leader, the Head of Finance and the Chief Executive – to agree on the content of the final programme.
- 1.2. To agree for Gwynedd Council to lead on the second phase of the ARFOR Programme on behalf of Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire Councils in terms of managing Welsh Government's financial agreement, realising the joint schemes within the Programme and coordinating/administrating the Programme in its entirety.
- 1.3. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community - with the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal Service - to review and update the governance arrangements between the four counties and to submit a further report if required.
- 1.4. On the basis of receiving an agreement in principle from Welsh Government on the second phase of the Programme, to allow to proceed with the appointment of an ARFOR Regional Manager.
- 1.5. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community to establish appropriate arrangements for delivering the programme in Gwynedd.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1. Following the success of the ARFOR Programme, £11 million has been committed by the Welsh Government for the next phase of the Programme until March 2025.
- 2.2. Welsh Government wishes to receive an offer from Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire Councils regarding use of the budget and management of the Programme.

3. INTRODUCTION

First phase of the ARFOR Programme

- 3.1. In 2019, following a budgetary agreement between Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, £2 million was provided to Gwynedd, Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire Councils to trial innovative methods of supporting the economy in the Welsh language heartlands (the ARFOR Programme).
- 3.2. The Programme was operational until the end of 2020/21 and Gwynedd Council led/coordinated the Programme at the request of the other counties.
- 3.3. In Gwynedd, the following schemes were realised via the ARFOR Programme:
 - *Support for Enterprise* - an advice and financial assistance package for businesses that wished to venture and create new jobs
 - *Production Space* - establishing [the Ffiws centre](#) in Porthmadog to provide opportunities for local businesses and the community to use new equipment and technology
 - *Enterprising Communities Challenge* - support was provided to Partneriaeth Ogwen, Bethesda; Henblas Centre, Bala and Menter y Plu, Llanystumdwy to develop social enterprises that circulated money within their communities and created jobs
 - [Llwyddo'n Lleol 2050](#) - supporting local young people to venture within their communities and inspire others to follow their example
 - [Bwrlwm ARFOR](#) - a scheme across the four counties to promote examples of local success and encourage use of the Welsh language
- 3.4. The implementation period of the Programme was substantially affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. Despite COVID-19, and the modest budget, the [Evaluation of the Programme](#) reported that it had made a difference, which included supporting the creation of 65 new jobs in Gwynedd.

- 3.5. Most significantly, the first phase of the Programme highlighted the lack of data regarding the interrelation between economic prosperity and the state of the Welsh language; the need for further investment was highlighted and the practice of collaborating between Members and officers of the four counties was established.

Second phase of the ARFOR Programme

- 3.6. Based on the results of the first phase of the Programme, by means of the Co-operation Agreement between Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, a further £11 million has been secured to sustain the second phase of the Programme (ARFOR II) until March 2025.
- 3.7. In April 2022, the ARFOR Board (namely the Leaders of the four counties) submitted an 'Outline Proposal' for the second phase of the Programme to Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru setting out the rationale, purpose, strategic objectives and principles of the Counties for ARFOR II. The Outline Proposal is enclosed in Appendix 1.
- 3.8. A desire to continue to collaborate on a four-county basis was confirmed, for the following purpose:

Support communities that are the strongholds of the Welsh language to flourish by means of economic interventions that will also contribute towards increasing opportunities to see and use the Welsh language on a daily basis.

- 3.9. In consultation with Welsh Government officers (the Economy Department and the Welsh Language Unit), officers of the four counties have developed proposals to convert the strategic objectives into projects for delivery.

Proposed ARFOR II projects

3.10. **Llwyddo'n Lleol 2050**

Evolution of the project to support young people to venture within their native communities that was only operational in Gwynedd and Anglesey during the first phase of the ARFOR Programme across the four counties.

The scheme will continue to support young people to venture through a combination of support and financial assistance but it will also extend to support young families to remain or return to the area, and seek to change the perceptions of target groups regarding their ability to fulfil their aspirations locally.

The scheme will be operational across the four counties and realised on a regional level via a commission managed by the leading authority.

3.11. Cymunedau Mentrus (Enterprising Communities)

Build on the successful business support funds that were available from the four counties during the first phase of the ARFOR Programme by providing financial and practical support for commercial, social and community enterprises to establish and develop.

The activity will focus on enterprises that take advantage of the unique qualities of their communities (including the Welsh language) and/or that circulate money within their areas in order to increase the amount of wealth that is kept locally.

The scheme will be operational across the four counties but realised locally by individual counties (although it will have an emphasis on coordinating and reconciling the provision).

3.12. ARFOR Challenge Fund

Establish a strategic fund to allow organisations (including Councils) to secure resources to develop and trial activities within the ARFOR area that will achieve the strategic objectives of the Programme.

The Fund will respond to findings in the appraisal of the first phase of the ARFOR Programme that an opportunity needs to be offered to a wider range of organisations with an interest in the field to contribute and allow new activities to be commissioned during the lifespan of ARFOR II.

The scheme will be operational across the four counties and managed on a regional level by the leading authority with input from all counties.

3.13. Strengthen the identity of ARFOR communities

The scheme will build on previous work to promote good practice and use of the Welsh language. The work will promote the identity of communities with a high density of Welsh speakers and stimulate the loyalty of local residents by disseminating positive messages about their area and West Wales in its entirety.

The scheme will be operational across the four counties and realised on a regional level via a commission managed by the leading authority.

3.14. Learning from the ARFOR Programme

A key quality of the ARFOR Programme is stimulating collaboration and cascading learning about the field.

The scheme will ensure that monitoring and evaluating results and the impact of ARFOR will be central to the Programme, and ensure that

structures to share lessons from the Programme and its activity are established from the offset.

The scheme will be operational across the four counties and realised on a regional level via a commission managed by the leading authority.

Managing / administrating ARFOR II

- 3.15. The second phase of the ARFOR Programme will continue to be lead by the Board, which includes the Leaders of the four counties. The Board will be supported by a Group of Officers including senior officers representing the four counties, along with representatives from Welsh Government and the Welsh Local Government Association.
- 3.16. The counties of Anglesey, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire have already stated a desire for Gwynedd Council to continue to coordinate / lead the programme on behalf of the four counties.
- 3.17. A legal agreement between the counties has already been established for the first phase of the ARFOR Programme. The current agreement will be reviewed to ensure protection for Gwynedd Council's interests in light of the increased ARFOR II budget and the desire to commission some joint activities.
- 3.18. Likewise, reflecting on the increased budget of the Programme and the increasing emphasis on regional collaboration, it is intended to establish a regional team - via Gwynedd Council - to manage the Programme and ensure a suitable resource to coordinate the work in individual counties. It is wished to proceed to appoint a Manager for the Programme as soon as Welsh Government confirms that it is satisfied with what is proposed for ARFOR II.

4. THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 4.1. The proposed activity for the second phase of the ARFOR Programme is an evolution of the programme's previous activity, giving specific attention to the lessons learnt.
- 4.2. Gwynedd Council has previously undertaken the 'lead authority' role for the ARFOR Programme and it is wished to continue with the arrangement taking advantage of the expertise that already exists within the Council.
- 4.3. Swift action will need to be taken to realise the Programme after Welsh Government agrees on the content and, to this end, an appropriate resource to lead on the work will need to be ensured as soon as possible.

- 4.4. Work detailing the delivery arrangements and the creation of suitable structures / procedures locally and regionally will continue over the summer period.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1. A further meeting between the ARFOR Board, a Welsh Government Minister and a representative of Plaid Cymru will be held in the next few weeks.
- 5.2. The formal proposal of the four counties will be submitted following the discussion.
- 5.3. Subject to receiving Welsh Government's response, it is anticipated that ARFOR II will start to be implemented during the autumn.

6. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 6.1. Monitoring Officer's Observations:

'As stated in the report, the legal agreement and the governance arrangements between the counties will be reviewed in light of these developments and a further report will be presented if necessary.'

- 6.2. Observations of the Head of Finance Department:

'I have no objection to the decision sought. I can confirm the financial information contained in the report, and the Finance Department will support Economy and Community officers in implementing this scheme.'



Creu Gwaith - Cefnogi'r Iaith

ARFOR Phase II (2022/23 – 2024/25)

OUTLINE PROPOSAL

Rationale

The vast majority of communities with a high density of Welsh speakers are in Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Ceredigion and Anglesey. These communities are crucial to sustain the vitality of the Welsh language and its continuation as an everyday language.

The economic challenges of the four counties - such as low salaries, underemployment and a shrinking workforce - are common to many rural and marginal areas in Wales and beyond; however, the impact of these challenges on the Welsh language is unique and far-reaching.

The prosperity of Welsh strongholds is conditional on more than employment and pay, but it can be reasoned that the economy's inability to support residents to achieve their aspirations - and sustain flourishing places - is detrimental.

Purpose

Support communities that are the strongholds of the Welsh language to flourish by means of economic interventions that will also contribute towards increasing opportunities to see and use the Welsh language on a daily basis.

Strategic Objectives

1. **Create opportunities for children and young families (< 35 years old) to remain or return to their native communities** - and support them to succeed locally by venturing or developing a career and securing a livelihood that achieves their aspirations.
2. **Creating enterprising communities within Welsh speaking areas** - by supporting commercial and community enterprises that aim to keep and increase local wealth by taking advantage of their areas' unique identity and qualities.
3. **Maximise the benefits of activity by collaborating** - by establishing a learning mindset via action and continuous improvement, learning from

activity within individual areas and then extending it but tailoring to local circumstances.

4. **Strengthen the identity of communities with a high density of Welsh speakers**
- by supporting the use and visibility of the Welsh language, encouraging a sense of place and local loyalty, along with increasing awareness of what is common across the region.

Operating principles

- Collaboration, joint-planning and sharing lessons.
- Increase an understanding of the problem and continuously improving by building on what was achieved during the first phase of ARFOR.
- Ensure that appraisal is an integrated part of the programme.
- Add value and reinforce mainstream activity (linguistic or economic development) or address gaps in provision.
- Focus efforts on a small number of core themes so that it is possible to measure impact but continue to break new ground and trial ideas.
- Operate on a four-county basis with a view on lessons for other areas and the scope to extend geographical boundaries in the future.
- Contribute positively to cross-cutting themes; reduce carbon footprint, skills, innovation and use of technology.

Agenda Item 9

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



A Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn
Contact Officer:	Sioned E. Williams, Head of Economy and Community Department and Dafydd Wyn Williams, Head of Environment Department
Contact Number:	32547
Subject	The Levelling Up Fund

THE DECISION SOUGHT

- a. To support the intention of targeting the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund for the Bywiogi Bangor, Llewyrch o'r Llechi, and Ardudwy Green Corridor projects;
- b. To authorise the Head of Finance Department jointly with the Head of Economy and Community Department and Head of Environment Department to agree upon the details of the bids, to sign the bids and the offer letters if successful, for the Gwynedd Levelling Up schemes.
- c. To authorise the Head of Economy and Community Department, the Head of Environment Department and the Head of Finance Department to sign the bids and the offer letters when targeting the full funding packages to deliver these schemes.

REASONS FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The Economy and Communities Department and the Environment Department have prepared three significant bids. The right is requested to submit these bids to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On 23 March 2022, the British Government announced the details of the second round of the Levelling Up Fund <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-levelling-up-and-community-investments#the-levelling-up-fund-round-2> . It is one of a package of funds launched by them after leaving the European Union and losing access to the Structural Funds that were available as a Member State.

- 1.2. Between 2021/22 and 2024-25, up to £4.8bn of capital funding is available with UK Government guaranteeing a minimum of £240m (5%) for Wales. The maximum for bids is £20m with a possibility for transport and cultural schemes to be up to £50m. It is a competitive bidding process throughout the UK. The bid for a package of regeneration projects submitted by Gwynedd Council in the first round in 2021 was unsuccessful.
- 1.3. The aim of the fund is to invest in local, visual and good quality infrastructure schemes in the fields of transport, regeneration and town centres together with cultural investments. A particular emphasis is placed on post-industrial areas, deprived towns and coastal communities. The fund this year will continue to invest in projects under the following three themes:
 - Transport
 - Town Centre Regeneration
 - Culture
- 1.4. Each Local Authority can submit one Transport bid and one regeneration and Town Centre or Cultural bid for each constituency. Each individual bid can include up to three different post code areas. This means that Gwynedd Council can submit two Regeneration or Cultural bids, and one Transport bid.
- 1.5. One principal change this year is that Gwynedd has moved from priority category 3 to priority category 1. This is to be welcomed and is likely to strengthen Gwynedd's bids.
- 1.6. In accordance with the guidelines, there were further considerations linked to the type of bids that could be submitted such as maturity, value, commencement period and completing the expenditure, number of sites that could be included in one bid as well as match funding (at least 10%).
- 1.7. There is an extension to the closing date for submitting bids. However, it is expected that the decision on the Fund will be announced in the autumn. There is no certainty that there will be a third round of the fund, but if there are uncommitted funds this time, Local Authorities will be invited to submit further bids.

2. THE REASONING AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 2.1. Having received feedback from the British Government on Gwynedd Council's 'Glannau' bid, and in accordance with the themes and operational matters associated with the Fund, a cross-departmental scoping exercise was conducted to look at practical possibilities. It should be noted that the level of interest and the concepts discussed were broad but to comply with the fund's operational requirements, only a very small number of schemes were practicable to be considered based on being mature enough, within budget, available to be implemented within a tight timetable and responding directly to the criteria.

Bywiogi Bangor Scheme

- 2.2. The Bywiogi Bangor Scheme is a scheme which responds to the fund's priority theme of **investing in town centre regeneration**. It is a package with a value of approximately £40m for Bangor city centre, which couples interventions associated with health and well-being with the re-purposing of the High Street and the regeneration of the city centre. The aim

of this package is to lead to economic regeneration, long-term investments and the creation of employment.

The package includes:

- Development of a Health and Well-being Centre in a strategic site in Bangor city centre;
- Environmental improvements in Hirael Bay (linked to the coastal defence work) and active travel links between Hirael Bay and Port Penrhyn and the City Centre;
- The first phase of the work of establishing North Wales Medical School in Bangor in one of the University's buildings on Dean Street.

Further financial information is provided in Appendix 1. A more detailed report will be submitted to Cabinet that will present the full funding package and a consideration to a contribution from Gwynedd Council in the form of a loan.

The scheme in Bangor fully responds to the work of Bangor Strategic Partnership and the priority of the Bangor Strategy and Vision (2015) that they commissioned. This scheme is also supported by Bangor Leadership Group that has been established between Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board, Gwynedd Council, Welsh Government, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Bangor University to oversee the significant investments within the City.

The scheme is expected to contribute to outputs and results such as:

- Restore and re-purpose empty/redundant buildings in the city centre;
- Increase the numbers of users within the city centre;
- Create and protect employment and increase spending in the city centre;
- Improvements to the environment and public spaces within the city;
- Coastal protection;
- Create and develop active travel links;

Ardudwy Green Corridor Scheme

- 2.3. The Ardudwy Green Corridor Scheme responds to the Fund's priority theme of **investment in transport**. It is a package worth approximately £40M, to include the construction of a new bypass road for the village of Llanbedr, create a new access to the existing airfield in addition to providing wider improvements to the walking and cycling provision, bus stops and electric charging points along the A496 in the Ardudwy area.

Appendix 1 provides further financial information. Gwynedd Council will work in partnership with Welsh Government and other partners to identify funding opportunities and a further report will be presented to Cabinet to present the full package.

The scheme is expected to contribute to outputs and results such as:

- Upgrading the provision of active travel routes in the area;
- Improving access to public transport (buses and trains) in the area;
- Offering provision for electric car users throughout the area;
- Improving traffic safety and management in the village of Llanbedr;
- Developing infrastructure in order to maximise economic benefit, for the whole area, from Llanbedr Airfield in the future.

Llewyrch o'r Llechi

- 2.4. The Llewyrch o'r Llechi scheme is a package worth £27M and includes projects across the slate valleys of Gwynedd, to respond to the theme of ***investing in culture***. It identifies opportunities to maximise the benefits to the local community and economy arising from the World Heritage Site designation in 2021. It is a scheme that offers opportunities, employment and developments that contribute towards the regeneration of these communities.

The package includes:

- Hwb Dinorwig – a package of schemes to upgrade the provision of the Slate Museum, Parc Padarn and links to the quarries in the Llanberis area;
- Hwb Ogwen – a package of schemes to upgrade a building in the centre of Bethesda to improve the industrial and heritage offer, and improve the links between the town centre and the main attractions;
- Hwb Ffestiniog – a package of schemes to upgrade buildings in the centre of Blaenau Ffestiniog to improve the industrial and heritage offer, and improve the links between the town centre and the main attractions;

A further report on the full details will be presented to Cabinet. Appendix 1 summarises the funding details.

The scheme is expected to contribute to outputs and results such as:

- Recovery and re-purposing of empty/redundant buildings in the town centres;
- Ensuring consistency in the interpretation and cultural experience of the area;
- Creating educational, health and well-being and community facilities;
- Improving awareness of the culture of the slate valleys;
- Creating economic opportunities;
- Creating and protecting employment and increasing sustainable spending throughout the year in the valleys;
- Improvements to the environment and public spaces within the towns;
- Creating and developing active travel links;

- 2.5. A comprehensive Risk Assessment has been created for all the schemes. The following summarises the risks identified for the Council.

- Failure to secure expenditure in the current financial year which is one of the Fund's requirements;
- Failure to spend the money in total by the end of the 2023/24 financial year which is one of the Fund's requirements;
- No match funding for the schemes;
- Difficulties involving land issues;
- Difficulties in obtaining the necessary statutory permissions;
- Problems arising as a result of third party agreements to realise the scheme.

- 2.6. By now, Levelling Up is one of the most significant capital funding opportunities that is available to Local Authorities to apply for, for the benefit of Gwynedd's communities. Gwynedd Council has identified packages of schemes that respond to the priority themes

and have ensured that the opportunities for Gwynedd are maximised. The County's Members of Parliament are supportive of the schemes.

- 2.7. The decision sought through this report enables officers to move forward to establish detailed project management arrangements and comprehensive funding packages for the individual schemes described above. Further reports will be submitted to the Cabinet on the details of the above schemes.

Equality Issues

- 2.8. Each scheme associated with the Levelling up Scheme will ensure that equality matters are a core part of the scheme. A full assessment will be undertaken for each scheme as they are developed.
- 2.9. When a third-party partner is operating a scheme, it will be necessary to comply with equality matters and a full assessment will be part of the legal agreement with the partner.

Issues relating to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)

- 2.10. The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 identifies seven well-being goals. It sets an ambition, permission and legal obligation to improve our social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being. This report and the work associated with the three Levelling Up Schemes responds to these Well-being Goals:

- A Prosperous Wales - In Gwynedd, the economy is vulnerable and the retail and business sector in our town centres, the slate valleys and rural areas of Meirionnydd, specifically, make a substantial contribution towards the county's economy, and offers a cross-section of employment opportunities. These schemes also make a positive contribution towards a prosperous economy;
- A Healthier Wales - the theme of health and well-being is a common theme in all the bids, from the direct health services and training to bespoke infrastructure to improve the health and well-being of Gwynedd's residents.
- A more equal Wales - town centres are places that offer a variety of opportunities and provisions for a broad cross-section of the population, regardless of the background or circumstances of the individuals;
- A Wales of cohesive communities - vibrant and prosperous town communities offer a range of services in a pleasant and safe environment. This is crucial for the future of communities and a core part of these schemes;
- A Wales of Vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh language - town centres contribute towards protecting our culture through their people, attractions and services, along with the work of promoting the Welsh language. The Llewyrch o'r Llechi bid identifies the cultural importance of Gwynedd;
- A globally responsible Wales - active travel and leisure schemes are a prominent part of all the schemes that support the carbon reduction agenda.
- A Resilient Wales - Gwynedd's communities play a key role in establishing structures and opportunities that can face and respond to future economic and community challenges.

3. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

The work of fully developing the schemes is continuing and the decision on the Levelling Up fund is expected in the autumn.

4. VIEWS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS:

i. The Monitoring Officer:

“Any further observations from a propriety perspective will be presented at the meeting”

ii. Head of Finance:

“The decision sought will allow the Council to move on to the next stage of applying for funding from the Levelling Up Fund, and I believe that what is being sought is reasonable and practicable. I am satisfied with the accuracy of the financial information that appears in the report.

I am confident that appropriate steps are in place within the Council to ensure proper use of the funding and the arrangements in place to manage the various projects will be robust. However, the Cabinet needs to be aware of the match-funding that will need to be sought for these projects, and there is the possibility that Gwynedd Council will have to find the match-funding in some cases, as described in Appendix 1, if other sources are not available. As set out in that appendix, further reports will be submitted to Cabinet in those cases with full financial details.”

CYNLLUNIAU FFYNIANT BRO CYNGOR GWYNEDD 2022
GWYNEDD COUNCIL LEVELLING UP APPLICATIONS 2022

ATODIAD 1 / APPENDIX 1 : MANYLION ARIANNOL / FINANCIAL DETAILS

CAIS BYWIOGI BANGOR APPLICATION

Cynllun / Project	Corff Arweiniol / Lead Body	Partneriaid Gweithredol / Operational Partner	Gwerth / Value	Cais Ffyniant Bro / Levelling Up Application	Cydariannu / Match Funding	Ffynonellau Cydariannu / Match Funding Source	Ymrwymiad Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council commitment
Canolfan Iechyd a Lles / Health and Well Being Centre	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Bwrdd Iechyd Betsi Cadwaladr, Llywodraeth Cymru / Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board, Welsh Government	£29,232,282	£15,232,282	£14,000,000	Bwrdd Iechyd Betsi Cadwaladr, Llywodraeth Cymru, Cyngor Gwynedd / Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board, Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council	Ymrwymiad ar ffurf benthyciad i'w ystyried mewn adroddiad llawn ar y cynllun i Gabinet / Commitment in the form of a loan to be considered in a full report on the project to Cabinet
Gwelliannau Glannau Bae Hirael a chysylltiadau gwyrdd / Bae Hirael Waterfront and Green Links	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable	£5,845,863	£1,450,000	£4,395,863	Llywodraeth Cymru, Cyngor Gwynedd / Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council	Ymrwymiad eisoes wedi ei gadarnhau drwy Gynllun Asedau Cyngor Gwynedd fel rhan o ymrwymadau ehangach gwarchod yr arfordir / Commitment in place through Gwynedd Council Asset Plan as part of the wider coastal protection programme
Ysgol Feddygol Gogledd Cymru (Gwedd 1) / North Wales Medical School (Phase 1)	Prifysgol Bangor / Bangor University	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable	£5,195,436	£3,195,436	£2,000,000	Prifysgol Bangor / Bangor University	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable
Cyfanswm / Total			£40,273,518	£19,887,718	£20,395,863		

CAIS CORIDOR GWYRDD ARDUDWY / ARDUDWY GREEN CORRIDOR APPLICATION

Cynllun / Project	Corff Arweiniol / Lead Body	Partneriaid Gweithredol / Operational Partner	Gwerth / Value	Cais Ffyniant Bro / Levelling Up Application	Cydariannu / Match Funding	Ffynonellau Cydariannu / Match Funding Source	Ymrwymiad Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council commitment
Cynllun Coridor Gwyrdd Ardudwy / Ardudwy Green Corridor	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable	£40,940,368	£36,846,331	£4,094,037	Llywodraeth Cymru, Cyngor Gwynedd / Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council	Arian datblygol eisoes wedi ei ymrwymo o Gronfa Cydariannu Cyngor Gwynedd. Adroddiad pellach i'w gyflwyno i Gabinet i drafod manylion ariannol llawn / Development funding already committed through Gwynedd Council's Match Funding Fund. Further report to be submitted to Cabinet to present full funding package

Cyfanswm / Total			£40,940,368	£36,846,331	£4,094,037	
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CAIS LLEWYRCH O'R LLECHI / LLEWYRCH O'R LLECHI APPLICATION

Cynllun / Project	Corff Arweiniol / Lead Body	Partneriaid Gweithredol / Operational Partner	Gwerth / Value	Cais Ffyniant Bro / Levelling Up Application	Cydariannu / Match Funding	Ffynonellau Cydariannu / Match Funding Source	Ymrwymiad Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council commitment
Hwb Dinrowig	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Amgueddfa Cymru / National Museum Wales	£16,599,364	£9,694,653	£6,904,712	Llywodraeth Cymru, Croeso Cymru, Cyngor Gwynedd / Welsh Government, Visit Wales Gwynedd Council	Cyfraniad Cyngor Gwynedd eisoes wedi ei ymrwymo o gyllideb Parciau Gwledig (Economi a Chymuned) / Funding already committed from the Country Park budget in the Economy and Community Service
Hwb Ogwen	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Partneriaeth Ogwen, Cwmni Tabernacl (Bethesda) Cyf	£4,838,403	£4,344,153	£494,250	Partneriaeth Ogwen (arian y cwmni a grantiau), Cwmni Tabernacl (Bethesda) Cyf (arian y cwmni a grantiau), Llywodraeth Cymru / Partneriaeth Ogwen (own funds and grants), Cwmni Tabernacl (Bethesda) Cyf (own funds and grants), Welsh Government	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable
Hwb Ffestiniog	Cyngor Gwynedd / Gwynedd Council	Antur Stiniog, Llywodraeth Cymru / Antur Stiniog, Welsh Government	£5,308,388	£4,791,383	£517,006	Antur Stiniog (arian y cwmni a grantiau), Llywodraeth Cymru / Antur Stiniog (own funds and grants), Welsh Government	Dim yn berthnasol / Not applicable
Cyfanswm / Total			£26,746,155	£18,830,189	£7,915,968		

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of the Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dilwyn Morgan, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being
Contact Officer:	Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director
E-mail address:	awenmorwenaedwards@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
Title of Item:	The case for change: Provision of Nursing Placements as part of the public sector partnership

1 WHAT IS THE DECISION SOUGHT?

- 1.1 Members are requested to approve the case for change and ask the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to present an Outline Strategic Business Case by October 2022, to create a public sector partnership development on a site/sites in Gwynedd, in partnership with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 Members will be aware that Gwynedd Council are already a residential care provider for our residents. We have seen that this is an important part of our responsibility as a Council towards our most vulnerable residents. In terms of the residential provision for older people, currently the Council provides 50% of the entire provision, with the independent sector providing the rest.
- 2.1.2 However, as members are aware, all the nursing homes provision for our residents is provided by the independent sector. The main reason is that it has not been legally possible for Local Authorities to provide nursing care. We are therefore totally dependent on the external market to provide this essential nursing care to the population. As a result, if the number of places available is fewer than what is needed at any point in time, it would not be possible for the Council to respond with its own direct provision. This could cause delay for individuals before they are able to receive the care they have been assessed for; or, it may mean that individuals get an alternative placement and/or further than they would have wished from their community.
- 2.1.3 As a Council, we see that there are many benefits of being a provider of residential care placements, rather than to commission the independent sector to provide all the places. As we are a provider, it is possible for us as a Council to respond suitably and in a timely manner to any change in the demand for services.

2.1.4 Generally, until recently, Welsh Government policies, together with the expectations of inspectors (Care Inspectorate Wales), have encouraged Local Authorities to externalise their care provisions to the independent sector. The main reason for this is that independent and private providers can usually provide care for a lower cost than any internal provision, and the opinion obviously was that this was more effective and efficient for the public purse. We assume that the main reason for the difference in the cost between the internal and external provision is usually higher staffing costs in internal provision and specifically, the higher costs of Local Government pensions.

2.2 **The current situation**

2.2.1 The Government's view in terms of the need to externalise provisions nationally has recently changed considerably. Members will be familiar with the [White Paper on Re-balancing Care and Support](#) that notes the benefit of having a more balanced care market, encouraging Local Authorities to consider internalising provision in order to get better stability and control over essential services. It seems that this change of direction by the Government confirms that we were wise not to externalise our residential care and domiciliary care services over the years. Therefore, with these matters, we as a Council are fairly close to the mark in terms of the market balance suggested in the above White Paper. But what about the nursing care field?

2.2.2 Theoretically, the Health Board and the relevant Local Authorities should work together strategically to avoid a situation where there is insufficient nursing care provision available locally. Namely, to collaborate to create the correct conditions for private providers or for third sector providers to be ready and eager to open a nursing provision in our communities. In populated areas, where the care model is more cost effective to provide, the market could probably respond fairly well without much intervention and encouragement from commissioners, as the business model is more favourable. It is a different matter in areas of a more rural nature.

2.2.3 As evidenced in the work of the Population Needs Assessment, and the likely result of the work of the Market Stability Report, together with our day-to-day experience, by now we have an increasing lack of nursing beds for the requirements of our population. The latest data indicates that an increasing number of our residents are in nursing placements outside Gwynedd, and many of these are due to a lack of beds in our community. It is a sadness to us as a Council that we cannot ensure this nursing care closer to the homes of individuals, and that this can be undertaken in a timely manner.

2.2.4 Contrary to the residential field, the fact that we are not nursing care providers makes it impossible for us to easily step in to respond to this deficiency. We have to totally depend on the external market to decide that it makes business sense for them to step in. Unfortunately, the current situation is that we have a lack of nursing provision and the biggest companies we have demand higher fees than the standard fees set by the Council for nursing placements.

2.3 **The need for change**

2.3.1 Therefore, beyond the change in policy and national direction, we see that the existing situation raises a fundamental question for us as a Council. We understand and accept the benefits of being an internal provider for the residential and domiciliary care fields. Do these benefits exist in the nursing field, and should we therefore as a Council try to step into the market to provide nursing care?

2.3.2 The intention of this report is:

- to try and set an outline of the case for change,
- to set out the risks and barriers involved with the proposed change,
- to seek the views of Cabinet members on the change,
- and to agree to bring a strategic outline business case to the Cabinet in the Autumn.

3 THE REASONING AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION - THE CASE FOR CHANGE

3.1 We can probably come to a conclusion on the rationale and justification for recommending the decision by considering the following main benefits:

- a. Innovative Care Model which meets the future needs of residents
- b. Stabilising the Nursing Market
- c. Avoiding financial risks

3.2 Innovative Care Model which meets with Future Needs

3.2.1 As a Council, we are proud that we are seeking the best models to provide continuous services to our residents.

Considering the current situation, and the problems involved with:

- delays in discharges from hospital,
- having to use locations far away from the individuals' communities,
- and the need to leave specific domiciliary care to receive nursing care,

we certainly see that we have room to find better care models than we currently have.

3.2.2 The rural nature of Gwynedd also forces us to consider care models that enable us to be flexible and responsive. We do not want people to have to travel far to provisions that are far from their homes, rather we want them to be able to remain in their community and to receive a suitable service there, or as close as possible. In order to do this, it is essential that we have provisions and innovative care models that can respond to future needs in a flexible and timely manner.

3.2.3 As a result, being able to provide the full range of care services as locally as possible would be a significant step forward to secure the best services to our residents in the future. Undertaking this in an integrated way with the Health Board would be very innovative, and would place us at the forefront in terms of this change nationally. As a Council, we are very proud of the way we push the boundaries in terms of providing quality services.

3.2.4 Therefore, our vision is to develop provisions that are as local as possible and can provide the entire range of services that individuals need. We consider that moving to being a nursing care provider is an essential part of this vision, so that we can really take ownership and understand each section of the journey of these people when they need support.

3.2.5 We are also eager to use this opportunity to be a nursing care provider to develop our workforce across the public sector, enabling nursing staff and other clinical staff to get an opportunity to work in such a provision as part of their training and career.

3.3 Stabilising the Market

- 3.3.1 By allowing this extremely important provision to be provided entirely by the independent sector, there is a risk to the Council and the Health Board should the market fail. There is an obvious risk, as already highlighted, that there are not enough providers in the market interested in trading in Gwynedd. There is also a risk that providers will refuse access to these individuals, at least in the short term, or will charge an additional payment (top-up) on families.
- 3.3.2 In considering the health and care field as a whole, we often refer to it as 'one system'. At present, we are totally dependent on the open market and the independent sector for a key part of this 'system'. If we are to secure seamless and effective care to our residents, we and the Health Board have to carefully consider how wise it is to allow one part of the system to be totally dependent on a third party. All the arguments for being part of the nursing care provision are very similar to those arguments received with domiciliary care and residential care for years. By being an internal provider we can seek to add more stability to the market, by also being very flexible in emergencies or when requirements need to be changed swiftly.
- 3.3.3 In addition, there is a strong argument for being an internal provider as this means that we better understand the issues of providers. We can also be a point of reference in terms of practice and offer support where needed to providers, especially smaller providers and those who are new to the sector. We are also in a very good position to understand care provision costs. Comparing both costs would be a good way forward to see if costs are too low or too high in the market.
- 3.3.4 Of course in such a partnership, the argument in the end is that the Council would be able to better satisfy the nursing home needs of our residents by being part of the market. Without being a part of the market at all, the ability of the Council or the Health Board to respond to a failure in the market is very small and is a significant risk to both bodies.

3.4 Avoiding Financial Risks

- 3.4.1 One major consideration is whether there is financial benefit to us in stepping into nursing care, or whether this step would cost more to us as a Council and to the Health Board.
- 3.4.2 It is fair to note that the cost of providing our own residential care, compared to buying the provision from the independent sector, is more expensive; however, the difference has been reduced over the last few years. Obviously, as noted above, there are other reasons for our decision as a Council to continue to be a provider within this field.
- 3.4.3 For the residential and EMI residential field, the difference in the cost between providing the service ourselves and external provision is reducing, however, there are other benefits to us as a Council to be part of the provision.
- 3.4.4 In terms of the nursing field, the comparison is more difficult to estimate, as we are not currently a provider.
- 3.4.5 We estimate that it would be possible for us as a Council to provide nursing placements for a comparative cost to the fee we set to the independent sector this year. Therefore, the option of internal provision would be similar in comparison to us as a Council compared to the cost of purchasing the same number of placements from the independent sector.

- 3.4.6 The above assumption is based on a development of a specific size, and it appears that smaller developments would be less cost effective. Despite this, we are keen to look at the possibility, in partnership with the Health Board, to try to provide nursing care in our internal residential care homes.

4 CONSIDERATIONS AND RISKS INVOLVED WITH THE CASE FOR CHANGE

- 4.1 Agreeing to this change would mean that the Council needs to be totally convinced that the case for change would offer benefits to our residents, in terms of improving services, but also that any risk and consideration of note are mitigated or have been removed.
- 4.2 Before proceeding to providing nursing care internally in partnership with the Health Board, the Cabinet would need to satisfy itself that the following risks and considerations have received sufficient attention:
- a) that it is legally possible for us to provide nursing care
 - b) that it is possible to staff the provision in terms of the workforce and to appropriately supervise nursing staff
 - c) that placements and sites for development are available to us
 - ch) that capital funding is available to develop these sites
 - d) that there is great interest and support in principle to the change by the Government
 - dd) Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are supportive on condition that we keep within the legislation

4.3 Legal Considerations

- 4.3.1 The question of whether the Council can provide nursing care is core prior to considering anything else. Currently, as far as we know, there is no other Council in Wales that provides nursing care, and the general belief is that it is not legally possible for any Local Authority to do this. Therefore, prior to looking at anything else in terms of the case for change, we have to be clear whether it is possible for us to provide nursing care, or whether it is possible to change some of the legislation to allow this.
- 4.3.2 Following a request from the Chief Executives of Gwynedd Council and the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, we commissioned the legal company of Hugh James to answer the question "Can Gwynedd Council provide 'full nursing care' itself?"
- 4.3.3 Having received the legal advice, we have been given confirmation that the Council can provide Nursing care with the permission of the Health Board or by working in partnership with the Health Board. Therefore, it is considered possible, under the provisions of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2015 to establish a collaborative procedure between the Council and the Health Board that will lead to a provision to include nursing care. Suitable and robust collaboration arrangements will need to be developed to support such arrangements. More detailed work will be part of the development of the Business Case.

4.4 Sufficient Workforce

- 4.4.1 A key part of any provision is to ensure that we have a suitable and qualified workforce within these services. As has already been noted, we are very proud of the role we have played as an internal provider in securing good and fair employment to a large number of staff.

- 4.4.2 As a Council, we consider ourselves to be a good employer, and one of our objectives is to secure good jobs within the county. This means offering good jobs and conditions to people in the care field which is a positive matter at a strategic level in terms of creating quality jobs in the county, as well as meeting the requirements of the social care field.
- 4.4.3 Stepping in to provide nursing care may be a challenge to the Council in terms of trying to recruit staff and staffing the provision. The lack of nurses is very evident in press statements, and certainly the difficult period of the pandemic has added another challenge. Certainly, detailed planning would be required for such an enterprise, however, there is an opportunity here to collaborate with the Health Board to ensure that we have nursing staff available to work in the nursing homes. It is proposed to look at opportunities to second nurses, and indeed a system that would entail that nursing staff within the Health Board would complete a specific period in the homes as part of their posts. We can also look at 'grow your own' plans, bursary schemes and sponsorship, as well as potential schemes that try to attract individuals to return to Gwynedd.
- 4.4.4 The probable scenario is that the nursing workforce would be seconded to the Council's employment, but would continue to be supervised by the Health Board's clinical staff. This would allow the governance of any clinical matters to have appropriate overview from senior Health Board clinical managers via their inspection arrangements.
- 4.4.5 The Health Board is in the process of discussing options with local universities who provide nursing courses, and the intention is that we will be able to ensure that these partnership nursing care provisions will be part of the Health Board's workforce plans.
- 4.4.6 Recruitment difficulties in the wider care field is also a matter of concern to the Council, and Cabinet members will already be aware of the work that is on-going to try to respond to these challenges. Trying to recruit nursing staff is very challenging for the majority of care providers in Gwynedd. By being a provider, in partnership with the Health Board, we can try to improve the availability of nursing staff within care homes, looking into how the Health Board can use nursing staff to work within such an internal provision as part of their induction or training period, and also as part of the cycle for the Health Board's nursing staff. Perhaps we can look at such a provision as a site of excellence in the training and care field for older people, as well as being a setting for medical health staff to undertake research etc.
- 4.4.7 We of course try to provide Welsh language provision via any provider in the care field to meet with the requirements of the More Than Just Words Framework, of the Welsh Government, but of course more importantly, as we understand the importance of this to our residents. However, it is fair to say that some external providers have seen achieving this as being problematic and they have to depend on staff from external agencies. However, the Council's internal provision can ensure bilingual services that are more consistent and dependable.

4.5 Suitable Sites/Development Opportunities

- 4.5.1 As members are aware, Penrhos Care Home closed in 2020, and the site has been transferred to Clwyd Alyn Housing Association.
- 4.5.2 The population needs assessment and the Adults Department and the Health Board commissioning assessment note that more nursing care provision is required in the Pen Llŷn area and there is currently a lack of nursing beds. This is reflected when looking at the existing situation in terms of the number of people from the area placed in homes beyond the local area, as well

as the number of individuals who need a nursing home that continues in another location, such as a hospital or residential home.

As well as developing from anew on a specific site, such as the Penrhos site, the case for change may also include adding to the Council's internal homes, or of course changing the registration of the existing beds into nursing beds. This could be an option in terms of ensuring the future of the existing homes as the need for purely residential beds is reduced, but also to respond to the need for nursing beds in rural areas where it would not be suitable or cost effective every time to build from anew.

4.6 Capital Funding available to the Council for the Development

- 4.6.1 For the coming years, the Welsh Government has earmarked Capital Grants to promote the integration of Health and Social Care, and to support the work on re-modelling the care sector. The Capital Fund will be for the Integration and Re-balancing of Health and Social Care and will give an opportunity for us to make a bid for funding to finance an element of the development. Discussions have already commenced with the Welsh Government regarding getting access to the money in a timely manner.
- 4.6.2 Should the nursing development be developed on the Penrhos site, with approximately 60 beds, it would cost approximately £9 to £10 million. There will be a need to undertake detailed costing work, however, the intention would be to try to ensure capital grant funding initially, looking to borrow the remaining money. Therefore, the business case would need to include borrowing payments as part of the financial assessment.
- 4.6.3 It will be necessary to consider any revenue implications that will derive from the development. This will be part of the business case in moving forward.

4.7 Support of the Welsh Government and Care Inspectorate Wales

- 4.7.1 As has already been noted, the opinion and direction of the Government has changed in terms of the provisions provided by Local Authorities. The Government's White Paper on Re-balancing Care and Support notes that we should encourage innovative models and work in partnership to put such provision in place. We have used money from the Integrated Care Fund for the Penrhos Site project arrangements that indicate their support and the Welsh Government are aware of the vision and are supportive of the concept. The capital grants offered support this vision.
- 4.7.2 Thus far, no formal application has been submitted to CIW for a formal opinion on the details to provide nursing homes in partnership with the Health Board, however, the vision has been outlined to the liaison inspector, and the main matter CIW are considering is the legality of any provision and change, as well as its financial liability.

4.8 Support of the Health Board

- 4.8.1 As outlined in the legal opinion, the Council cannot proceed alone to provide nursing care. Permission is required from the Health Board or that the Council acts in partnership with the Health Board.
- 4.8.2 The Chief Executive and the Corporate Director have met with the Chief Executive of the Health Board as well as the Health Board's Area Director - West, to discuss the case for change. We

have received support in principle to the change and, depending of course on a viable business case and the formal support of the Health Board, it appears that we as a Council have the desire to proceed with this innovative development and also the Health Board.

- 4.8.3 This is what the Chief Executive of the Health Board, Jo Whitehead, noted about the vision and the plan:

The Health Board is very eager to support an innovative public sector partnership with Gwynedd Council that would provide nursing placements at the Penrhos site near Pwllheli.

The existing vulnerability of the care providers market in north Wales in relation to the nursing provision, as well as domiciliary care, is subject to continuous concern to the Health Board. An increasing number of care homes are under threat of closure as they cannot cope with increasing costs and lack of staff, which in turn, has an impact on the ability of our acute hospitals to discharge patients who are ready to leave. This leads to patients remaining in hospital for a longer period than they need, lower flow of patients and long waits for an ambulance. Having considered these risks, it is a key priority for the Welsh Government and the Health Board and partners to get to grips urgently with this pressure on the health and social care services, by seeking to stabilise this vulnerable market.

We are already collaborating with Gwynedd Council to look at the possibility of providing nursing care in a public sector partnership. Developing a sustainable public sector nursing care partnership model on the Penrhos site near Pwllheli will be an excellent opportunity to develop this work further. Of course, one of the main risks with any new proposal will be staffing, and therefore we are inspecting a more flexible workforce model that ensures that we provide a quality service with secure outcomes for our population.

5 NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 5.1 Should the Cabinet agree that there is a case for change and approve the decision to proceed to present an Outline Strategic Business Case for the Penrhos site, together with any other appropriate location, it is intended to undertake this by the Cabinet meeting during Autumn 2022.
- 5.2 In the meantime, the cost of the development at the Penrhos site, together with renovation costs or the internal development of homes, would be included (without prejudice) on the relevant grants bids lists.
- 5.3 The relevant consultation arrangements on planning matters for the Penrhos development will need to be undertaken by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association as owners of the site in accordance with the usual arrangements.
- 5.4 The case for change and the proposal will be discussed more formally with the Inspectors (Care Inspectorate Wales) and Government Ministers to seek their seal of approval.
- 5.5 Subject to the Cabinet's decision in the Autumn, together with the agreement of the Health Board via their governance arrangements, the Council will proceed, jointly with the Health Board, with an innovative public sector partnership development on the Penrhos site, aiming to start the development as soon as possible, providing a detailed time-schedule in accordance with this.

6 VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Monitoring Officer:

I have had input into this report and plan, and I can confirm that the legal matters considered in the report is an appropriate reflection of the situation. As noted, more detailed work will be required around the Concept as the detailed business case is developed.

Statutory Finance Officer:

The decision sought is to proceed to the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case. I have no objection to this, and I am satisfied that the financial information and risks that have been highlighted are reasonable and a fair reflection of the situation. The development of an Outline Business Case by autumn 2022 will be a significant task in a short time, and I can assure Cabinet that officers from Finance Department will be available to contribute to the work as required.

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dafydd Meurig - Cabinet Member for the Environment
Contact officer:	Gareth Jones, Assistant Head of Environment Department
Subject:	Future of the Joint Planning Policy Unit (Gwynedd and Anglesey)

THE DECISION SOUGHT

That the Cabinet agrees:

- 1) To extend the current collaboration agreement for the provision of the Joint Planning Policy Service until 31 March 2023;
- 2) That the collaboration agreement, and therefore the Joint Planning Policy Unit Service and the Joint Planning Policy Committee, is terminated on the 31 March 2023, and that a new Planning Policy Service is created for the Gwynedd planning authority area;
- 3) That the new Planning Policy Service prepares a New Local Development Plan for the Gwynedd planning authority area only;
- 4) That arrangements for supporting and making decisions on the process of preparing a New Local Development Plan and relevant planning policy matters are created for the Gwynedd planning authority area;
- 5) To delegate powers to the Head of Environment Department to agree on collaboration arrangements with Anglesey to ensure that the Council continues to meet the statutory requirements (and any associated work), required to monitor the Joint Local Development Plan;
- 6) That given this is a high priority matter, the Cabinet is requested to prejudge the annual bidding process and agree a bid for £70,000 of permanent revenue budget in order to meet the additional cost of establishing a Gwynedd Planning Policy Service;

REASONS FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The collaboration agreement that is in place between Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council to provide the Joint Planning Policy Service (JPPS), will end on 31 July 2022, and therefore a decision is needed regarding the JPPS for the future.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Joint Planning Policy Service (JPPS) was established by Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey Council on 1 May 2011 and subsequently, an agreement was reached on a collaboration agreement for the implementation of the JPPS, which ran until 31 December 2017. The main duty of the JPPS at the time was preparing the Joint Local Development Plan for the two local planning authority areas.
- 1.2. At the time, both authorities agreed that there was a strong business case for establishing the collaboration agreement, and this was evidenced following a review of the JPPS in 2017, which highlighted the planning and financial benefits for both authorities, which included:
 - Creating a more resilient service with a great deal of expertise across a number of planning fields.
 - Planning on a more strategic level and integrating cross-boundary policies.
 - Combining efforts in order to address local matters that are important to both authorities.
 - Sharing costs 50/50, and therefore making the best use of both authorities' resources and saving costs for the authorities.
 - Fully addressing matters in order to prepare a robust Joint Local Development Plan.
- 1.3. Following the review of the JPPS in 2017, both authorities agreed that there remained a strong business case to continue with the collaboration agreement, and in March 2017, it was agreed to continue with the arrangement up to 31 July 2022.
- 1.4. Since the Joint Local Development Plan was adopted on 31 July 2017, the main tasks of the JPPS have included monitoring the plan and preparing annual monitoring reports, preparing supplementary planning guidance, providing planning policy advice to both authorities' Planning Service, responding to Welsh Government consultations and commencing the process of reviewing the plan. In March 2022, the first step in the review process was achieved when approval was received from the Full Councils to publish and present a Review Report to the Welsh Government.
- 1.5. The next main task in the pipeline for the JPPS is to prepare a New Local Development Plan, and this work is a high priority for both Authorities. Appendix 1 includes an overview of the steps and process of preparing a New Plan.

2. Future Planning Policy Service provision

- 2.1 As the collaboration agreement terminates at the end of July 2022, high-level discussions have been taking place between the officers of both authorities over the past months regarding the future of the JPPS. A mutual conclusion was reached to recommend to Gwynedd Council's Cabinet and to the Isle of Anglesey County Council's Executive, to proceed with the process to wind-up the existing collaboration agreement.

2.2 The recommendation of both authorities has been undertaken by considering the high priority given to the preparation of a New Local Development Plan, and the changes that have occurred since the collaboration agreement was established in 2011.

2.3 Consideration was also given to the two main options that were open to the authorities for the provision of the Planning Policy Service in the future, looking at what the options would include, as well as consideration of any benefits and opportunities, disadvantages and any resulting risks to Gwynedd. Therefore, the following includes an assessment of the two main options and all matters that have been considered:

Option 1: Continue with the existing collaboration agreement

2.4 Option 1 would include:

- A new collaboration agreement for the implementation of the JPPS for a minimum 4-year period.
- A new agreement to deliver and support the Joint Planning Policy Committee.
- Prepare a single New Joint Local Development Plan.

2.5 Option 1 would result in a decision that is similar to the one made by both authorities back in 2011, before commencing the process of preparing the Joint Local Development Plan. Therefore, it follows that the benefits for both authorities that are outlined in part 1.2 of the report, could also be relevant when preparing the New Joint Local Development Plan. Consideration must also be given to the advantages associated with the fact that:

- The Team (Service) of 8 permanent officers has already been established, along with all relevant procedures, and has previous experience of preparing an adopted Local Development Plan.
- Governance arrangements have been established, along with decision-making arrangements.
- The costs are shared between both authorities, which will save money for both authorities.

2.6 Whilst the above advantages are noted, at the same time we must acknowledge that the national, regional and local planning context has changed considerably since the two authorities agreed to establish collaboration arrangements in 2011. At the same time, the aspirations of the two authorities are very different to the situation as it was back in 2011. Whilst accepting that advantages derive from continuing with the existing collaboration arrangements, the potential disadvantages and risks could include:

- The need to continue to report to two authorities with the process of preparing a New Joint Local Development Plan and associated policy work.
- Will preparing and New Joint Local Development Plan meet the individual vision and aspirations of the two authorities and is it possible to prepare a robust Plan that will achieve that?
- The establishment of the Corporate Joint Committee with its statutory requirement to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the North Wales

region, which is a new tier of planning policy that did not exist when the JPPS was established in 2011. There is uncertainty about the impact of this on Local Planning Policy Services in terms of resources etc. now and in the long term, and this is a matter that must be considered by the authorities individually.

Option 2: Bring the collaboration agreement to an end

2.7 This is the option that both authorities are recommending to the Gwynedd Council Cabinet and the Isle of Anglesey County Council Executive. This option would include:

- Abolishing the JPPS and creating a separate Planning Policy Service for the two authorities.
- That the authorities prepare separate New Local Development Plans for their areas.
- Abolishing the Joint Planning Policy Committee and having separate arrangements in place for both authorities, that will feed into and make decisions when preparing a New Local Development Plan and relevant planning policy work.
- Continuing to collaborate on the work that must be done to monitor the Joint Local Development Plan.

2.8 The advantages and opportunities with option 2 include:

- Creating a new Planning Policy Service that gives 100% ownership to Gwynedd and focuses on the needs of the residents of the Gwynedd planning authority area.
- Preparing a New Local Development Plan with a vision for the Gwynedd Planning Authority area, which has local planning policies that facilitate that.
- The political input to the process of preparing and making decisions on the process of preparing a New Local Development Plan, restricted to Gwynedd Council Members only.
- The need to report to one authority only when preparing a New Local Development Plan and relevant planning policy work.
- An opportunity to take advantage of the expertise of the Planning Policy Service to lead on projects (e.g. holiday homes and second homes), or to carry out research that is important to Gwynedd.
- Development opportunities for staff and looking at a Planning Policy Service structure that meets the needs of Gwynedd.
- Opportunities to consider the possible demand on the staff resources of Gwynedd Planning Policy Service, as a result of the work being done to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the North Wales region.
- Opportunities to have Gwynedd's input and influence on the process of preparing the Strategic Development Plan.
- Opportunities to plan for the future in Gwynedd, noting that the Government's requirements in terms of preparing Local Development Plans will change after

the Strategic Development Plan is adopted, with the subsequent requirement for planning authorities to prepare a concise Local Development Plan ("lite").

- Opportunities to continue to collaborate with Anglesey and other authorities when there are advantages from doing so.

2.9 It can be seen from the above that there has been considerable change in the planning policy context since 2011, particularly on a regional level with the statutory requirement for Strategic Development Plans. The main opportunities offered by this option is that it gives Gwynedd ownership of the Planning Policy Services and New Local Development Plans, which in turn will focus on meeting the vision and aspirations of Gwynedd and the needs of the area's residents. This will also provide opportunities to seek to plan for the needs of Gwynedd Planning Policy Service in the future, and consider the implications of the Strategic Development Plans.

2.10 There is also a need to consider the potential disadvantages and risks that could derive from bringing the collaboration agreement to an end, including:

Creating a new Planning Policy Service for Gwynedd

2.11 Given the need to follow specific processes to bring the collaboration agreement to an end, which will include transferring / recruiting staff, there will be a delay in the process of commencing the work to produce a New Plan for a period of between 6 and 12 months, as the new Planning Policy Service would need to be established initially. The delay would also increase the risk of not having a New Plan adopted before the end of 2026 (the end of the period of the Joint Local Development Plan) which also presents risks associated with applications for speculative Development.

2.12 There are eight full-time posts in the Service at present, compared to 12 when the JPPS was first established in 2011 (7 from Gwynedd and 5 from Anglesey). It is anticipated that a minimum of 6 permanent planners (including a Manager) would be needed, along with 1 temporary support officer, for the new Planning Policy Service for the Gwynedd planning authority area. This would equate to a permanent additional annual cost for the Council of approximately £70,000. There would also be a temporary annual cost for three years of approximately £37,000, but half of this finance is already in place following a successful one-off revenue bid, with the remainder to be financed from a reserve fund which stems from savings that have accrued from the collaboration arrangement. The basis to the new structure and additional costs include:

- Whilst acknowledging the work field and associated duties (see below), it is essential to create a Planning Policy Service, with a Service Manager, for Gwynedd.
- The need to give the Council the best opportunities to recruit planning officers at the appropriate level, in order to deliver the functions of the new Planning Policy Service.
- The Service's main work will include preparing the New Local Development Plan.

- At the same time, and for the period up to 2026, there will be a need to continue to monitor the Joint Local Development Plan (with Anglesey).
 - The Service's input will be needed in the process of preparing a Strategic Development Plan for the region, and this will happen at the same time.
 - The Service is likely to continue to lead on holiday homes and second homes matters from a planning perspective, and possibly on other projects that are a priority for the Council.
 - Continuing to deal with day-to-day planning policy matters, such as providing planning policy guidance to the Council's Planning Service, developers and the public, and responding to Welsh Government consultations and documents from other bodies.
- 2.13 Therefore, it must be acknowledged that there will be higher staff costs for the Council with this option. Also, it must be acknowledged that there is no certainty that Gwynedd will succeed to recruit staff to the new Service, bearing in mind that a new Planning Policy Service will also be created in Anglesey. The truth is that more jobs will be available between the two new Services, compared to the eight posts that are currently in the Service. Also, at the same time, the Corporate Joint Committee is likely to be advertising jobs that will be needed to prepare the Strategic Development Plan. Therefore, there is a risk that recruitment difficulties could affect and delay the process of commencing and preparing the New Local Development Plan. Also, it must be borne in mind that providing the JPPS since 2011 has shared staff costs 50/50 and has saved costs, and also that savings have been realised over the years, which reduced the number of jobs from 12 to 8.

Creating a New Local Development Plan for the Gwynedd Planning Authority Area

- 2.14 One-off costs are associated with the process of preparing a Local Development Plan, whether this is done jointly or not. These costs include commissioning any work required to gather the evidence base, and the Public Examination at the end of the process, which is where the greatest costs lie. Opportunities will remain to jointly-commission some pieces of work (with Anglesey or Snowdonia National Park Authority and other authorities) - but it is likely that there will be a need to commission work that is specific to Gwynedd, and Gwynedd must pay all of the costs associated with the Public Examination.
- 2.15 Since Gwynedd would be paying all of the costs associated with the process of preparing a New Local Development Plan, it will not be possible to save costs, unlike the situation with the existing collaboration agreement. As an indicative estimate, the process of preparing a New Local Development Plan for the Gwynedd planning authority area only could cost around £150,000 more. The savings in the reserve fund that have been accrued over the years by collaborating, can contribute towards the total costs associated with the process, but a bid for "one-off" revenue funding will be required in the future to cover all the costs.

The preferred option

- 2.16 Both authorities, following their discussions over the past months, recommend commencing the process to terminate the collaboration arrangements, namely option 2, and the advantages to Gwynedd are set out in part 2.8 of the report.

In terms of the opportunities to focus specifically on Gwynedd Council's vision and aspirations and the needs of Gwynedd's residents, then terminating the collaboration agreement is the option that would best achieve that and therefore this is the preferred option. In order to ensure sufficient time to facilitate a smooth transition from the existing collaboration agreement, and move to create a separate Planning Policy Service, it is believed that the collaboration agreement will need to be extended up to the end of March 2023, and to terminate the collaboration agreement after this time.

- 2.17 It must be emphasised that this is in no way a reflection of the JPPS's work and the support provided to them by both authorities since 2011, and it is acknowledged that the JPPS has indeed achieved its purpose and brought benefits to both Authorities.
- 2.18 In making a decision on the matter, the Cabinet will need to weigh up the advantages and opportunities against the disadvantages and risks that will emerge following the termination of the collaboration agreement, as highlighted in the report.

3. Consultation and next steps

- 3.1 Discussions have been held at the Joint Planning Policy Service's Management Team, as well as with other senior officers at both Authorities. Also, a meeting has been held with JPPS staff to explain the situation and the recommendations for the future, and the Management Team provides updates as needed.
- 3.2 Appendix 2 to the report includes the steps and timetable that the JPPS Management Team has agreed upon for the coming months, however, it will require Cabinet approval to act upon some of the steps.

Views of the statutory officers

The Monitoring Officer:

Any further observations from a propriety perspective will be presented at the meeting

Head of Finance:

Extending the current arrangement is a sensible step, which will allow both councils to prepare for new arrangements from 1 April 2023. The Cabinet's decision to prejudice the bidding regime would mean that it will not be possible to weigh up this requirement against other bids for limited resources, but this issue is a high priority for the Council and the proposed course of action is therefore reasonable. Officers from the Finance Department have worked with the author on the financial information and I can confirm its accuracy.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The steps for preparing a New Local Development Plan

Appendix 2: The next steps for preparing separate Planning Policy Services

Appendix 1: Key stage for preparing a Local Development Plan

Key Stage		Timescales
Definitive		
Stage 1	Delivery Agreement Preparation and submission	Up to 4 weeks for WG approval (Usually shorter)
Stage 2	Pre-Deposit Preparation and involvement	Approximately 1.5 years
Stage 3	Preferred Strategy Public consultation	
Stage 4	Deposit plan Public consultation	Approximately 1 year
Indicative		Timescales
Stage 5	Submission	Approximately 11 months in accordance with PINS Procedural Guidance
Stage 6	Examination	
Stage 7	Inspector's Report	
Stage 8	Adoption	
		Total plan preparation time 3 ½ years (Plus one 3 month slippage period)

APPENDIX 2

ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING POLICY SERVICE 2022/23

AGREED BY THE JPPS MANAGEMENT TEAM ON 10 JUNE (SUBJECT TO THE CABINET'S DECISION)

ISSUE	ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES	BY
Contact the Welsh Government	1. Meet with WG officers - GJ to arrange a meeting for the MT with Mark Newey and Candice Myers.	Before the end of June 2022
A decision to be made on the Planning Policy Service in the future (agreement ends at the end of July 2022)	<p>The MT agreed that there was a need to submit Reports to the Cabinet (GC) and Executive (IACC) before the end of July 2022, with recommendations to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MT agreed that the agreement needed to be extended up to the end of March 2023 in order to establish new arrangements and deal with staffing matters, with the agreement to be terminated after this time. • Arrangements for future Governance as the Joint Planning Policy Committee will be abolished. • Preparing separate Local Development Plans • Collaboration arrangements for the future • Staffing matters. <p>(It is noted that some of these matters will be matters for individual Authorities - but if it is likely that GC will incur additional costs - these will need to be identified)</p> <p>The MT agreed to reconcile the reports, as far as possible, with GJ to share a draft with CB and DJ.</p>	19 July 2022 - Cabinet meetings (GC) and Executive (IACC)
The staff of the JPPS and individual Policy Services (GC and IACC)	<p>1. Update and support the staff of the Service. RJ to provide updates at team meetings - with the MT to also provide updates when timely to do so.</p> <p>2. Guidance from Human Resources (TUPE matters, etc.) CB to confirm contact at GC and IACC human resources and GJ to confirm GC's contact.</p> <p>3. Create staff structures for the new Policy Services for the individual Authorities -</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Before the end of June 2022</p> <p>Before the end of September 2022</p>

	<p>according to their individual needs, situation in terms of finance, individual aspirations etc., and also consider the additional requirements of the SDP / CJC. This to include a Job Evaluation and appraisal (if necessary). The MT agreed for the authority's arrangements to run concurrently. GJ to send existing job descriptions to DJ as soon as possible.</p> <p>4. Consult on the new structures - the MT agreed that this could be done jointly with the Service's staff - input needed from human resources.</p> <p>5. Recruit staff to the Structures.</p>	<p>October 2022</p> <p>Before the end of March 2023</p>
Finance	<p>1. CB and GJ to confirm points of contact for finance matters</p> <p>2. GC needs to invoice IACC for 2022/23 - for the year after the decision made in July 2022.</p> <p>3. Need to transfer 50% of any funding in the contingency fund to IACC and tidy the accounts when the agreement ends</p> <p>4. Both Authorities need to consider how to address any additional financial costs that could derive from the new staff structures</p>	<p>Before the end of June 2022</p> <p>July / August 2022</p> <p>After March 2023</p> <p>For the authorities to consider individually.</p>
Governance arrangements for the JPPS until the end of the collaboration agreement.	<p>1. A new Joint Planning Policy Committee created - meeting on 17 June 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MT agreed that there was a need for an awareness raising session before the Committee • Approve accounts - the only decision needed by the Committee. 	<p>17 June 2022</p>
High-level work programme - until the end of the collaboration agreement	<p>1. <u>Delivery Agreement (Draft)</u> The MT agreed upon the two Authority's wishes to prepare (draft) Delivery Agreements in order to facilitate the separate arrangements that are in the pipeline. It was agreed not to report upon the Agreements to the Joint Panel / Committee - since these are matters to be considered by the individual authorities.</p>	<p>Up to March 2023</p>

	<p>The Delivery Agreement will be in draft form, and individual Authorities will need to fill in information in terms of resources, etc.</p> <p>2. <u>Annual Monitoring Report</u> Work necessary in order to complete the 2021-2022 AMR. The MT agreed that this needed to be done and reported to the Joint Panel and Committee before submission to WG.</p> <p>The MT also agreed upon the following pieces of work:</p> <p>3. <u>Monitoring Housing Essential</u> Work has already commenced on this for 2021-2022. Information feeding into the AMR</p> <p>4. <u>Planning Applications</u> Continue to provide input on planning applications and pre-application advice as the need arises.</p> <p>5. <u>Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment with Snowdonia National Park</u> Work has commenced on this. Need to submit to the Government by the end of November.</p> <p>6. <u>Employment Land Review - jointly with SNP.</u> This is an important evidence base for Local Development Plans. The work of preparing a brief has commenced with a discussion continuing between the three Authorities (Planning Policy and Economic Development). Carrying out joint work is sensible for a number of reasons, including cost and understanding the need across the sub-region - this has been agreed on the level of relevant officers.</p> <p>7. Other matters arising which are priorities for the Authorities (e.g. Holiday Homes matters, consultations)</p>	<p>Before the end of October 2022</p> <p>Up to the end of March 2023</p> <p>Up to the end of March 2023</p> <p>End of November 2022</p> <p>To be confirmed</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>
<p>Framework for collaborating after the collaboration agreement ends</p>	<p>1. Informal agreement / understanding needed between both councils on the work that will need to be done with the Joint Local Development Plan and beyond - see below the potential work programmes.</p>	<p>By the end of March 2023</p>

<p>Work programmes after the agreement comes to an end in connection with the needs with the Joint Local Development Plan up to 2026</p>	<p>The MT agreed that this work will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 2022-2023 Annual Monitoring Report and annually up to 2026 (Plan period), who and how this will be done, noting that procedures are already in place in Gwynedd for this. 2. Housing Monitoring (this work is essential for the AMR) - we will need to establish a way of gathering the information of both authorities. Currently, an external system is used. 3. The housing growth figures and the holiday home threshold figures - both authorities will need to establish a way to gather this information. This work is essential for the Planning Services work of both Authorities. 4. A provision of regular guidance with the implementation of planning policies where needed as a result of an appeal decision or where changes are made on a national level. 	<p>1 to 4 continuously up to 2026</p>
<p>Additional collaboration opportunities.</p>	<p>The MT agreed that this could include:</p> <p>Individual new Local Development Plans</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Co-commissioning research / gathering evidence where this is advantageous to both Authorities. 2. Possibility of making Joint SPGs <p>Strategic Plans that affect both Authorities (e.g. Wylfa, National Grid)</p>	<p>When needed</p>

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



A Report to a meeting of the Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	19 July 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dafydd Meurig
Contact Officer:	Dafydd Wyn Williams - Head of Environment Department
Subject:	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for the Environment

THE DECISION SOUGHT

To accept and note the information in the report.

THE REASON WHY A DECISION IS NEEDED

In order to ensure effective performance management.

1. INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on developments in the fields within my remit as Cabinet Member for the Environment. This includes outlining the latest developments to date against the pledges within the 2018-2023 Gwynedd Council Plan; and the position regarding the performance measures.
- 1.2 I would like to remind you that all matters have already been discussed between me, the Chief Executive, Head and Deputy Head of the Department.
- 1.3 Since the report submitted to the Cabinet in December, the Department has reviewed the performance measures that were in place for 2021/22, this has been done in order to ensure that they measure what matters to the people of Gwynedd. This was outlined in Department's [Annual Report](#) and the previous performance can be viewed for the period from December 2021 until March 2022.
- 1.4 On the whole, I am satisfied with the department's performance and I acknowledge the challenges that have faced the services and the work in dealing with the backlog of work since the pandemic period. Wherever services have a backlog, I have asked them to highlight this so that it can be ensured that detailed plans are in place to address the work. In general, I am confident that the department is putting suitable plans in place to recover the situation, and I will elaborate on the progress made in the report.

2. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITIES 2018-2023

2.1 Climate and Nature Emergency Plan

2.1.2 Since the Cabinet adopted the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan in March this year, contacts have been developed with external partners (DEG/GwyrddNi, Partneriaeth Ogwen, Youth Senedd), in order to share information about the Plan and to develop joint engagement arrangements. We have also been contributing to the Welsh Local Government Association's Transition and Recovery Support Programme, by sharing information about our work under 4 main themes - buildings, land use, mobility and transport, procurement.

2.1.3 We are continuing to develop the work programme for the Plan projects, jointly with officers in various departments and we are pressing on with the work of preparing a plan to fund the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan.

2.1.4 In terms of the next steps, arrangements are in place for the Climate Change Board to reconvene in order to give direction to the work programme. Subject to reaching an agreement on expenditure, the work of commissioning programmes, e.g. training for staff and members, fleet strategy, will be able to proceed.

2.2 Public Protection Capacity

Following a review in 2021/22, successful funding bids were submitted to increase capacity and plan for future succession in this important field. Funding is in place to introduce Team Leader posts within the current structure. In addition, as a part of plans to ensure the resilience of the Public Protection Service, a 'one-off' bid has been secured to fund 3 trainee posts for a period of three years in the field, and it is intended to advertise these opportunities shortly.

2.3 Second homes

The Environment Department contributes towards the 'Access to suitable homes' Improvement Priority.

The Department has led on the Council's response to specific consultations in the planning field and we continue to hold discussions with Welsh Government on the next steps. The Department is coordinating and contributing to the cross-departmental Group, which includes the relevant Cabinet Members and Senior Officers, and this has been established to facilitate the Council's efforts in this key field.

2.4 Control of Motorhomes

The Department is also contributing to a priority in the Sustainable Tourism field by collaborating with the Economy and Community Department on the 'Aros-fan' project, which will pilot the development of up to 6 bespoke sites for motorhomes to park overnight. A grant has been secured from the Welsh Government's Brilliant Basics fund to help fund the project to trial the plots, with the intention of submitting planning applications in order to put the relevant infrastructure in place by the end of 2022/23.

3. PERFORMANCE

Below, I outline the main matters that have derived from the department's performance since the beginning of April 2022. The information does not refer to every service in the department, only towards those we feel that need to be brought to your attention.

Planning Service

- 3.1 It is encouraging to be able to report that positive progress has been made in **the average time taken to determine a planning application**. A total of 215 applications were received in April and May and it was seen that the time taken to determine an application dropped to 78 days, compared to an average of 103 days last year, with 71% of decisions made within the statutory timescale. It is acknowledged that the process of clearing the backlog of applications continues to be a challenge, and temporary changes have been introduced to the structure of the planning officers' team to create an additional team leader post. This means that the team leaders can provide enough support to the officers and help with capacity in order to deal with major cases.
- 3.2 The number of enquiries and requests for pre-application advice received by the Planning Service continues to be high and is having an impact on the capacity of officers to deal with planning applications and the service's day-to-day work. An effort is being made to clear the backlog and this will continue over the coming months.
- 3.3 During the period from 01/04/22 to 31/05/22, the **Planning Enforcement** Unit received 45 new complaints relating to planning regulation breaches, with 11 cases closed. The number of open cases now stands at 726, which shows an increase and an annual backlog and highlights the challenges of dealing with the current workload. The contract of an officer who was appointed for a temporary period last year has been extended for another year and it is expected that this will assist the team's performance, and work will be undertaken over the coming months to look in detail on this in order to deal with the backlog of cases.

Joint Planning Policy Service

- 3.4 The staff of this Service provide policy guidance on planning applications and pre-application requests. This new measure shows that **91% of the responses of the Planning Policy service** on the planning application consultations and pre-application advice requests **were submitted within 10 days on average** for the period. It is worth noting that the details required in order to respond to the consultations vary substantially, subject to the application, and this means that preparing a response can take more time for an officer, or that input is required from more than one officer.
- 3.5 It is a statutory requirement to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which reports on the performance of the Local Development Plan, and submit it to Welsh Government by 31 October every year. Work has commenced on the 2021/22 report by gathering and analysing information. The Service will also commence work on preparing the amended Local Development Plan in due course, which is of course a high priority for the Council.

Building Control Service

- 3.6 The **percentage of Building Control applications determined within the statutory timescales** (5 and 8 weeks, subject to the nature of the application) **was 91%** for April and May 2022.
- 3.7 Further changes are needed to the work flow of the computer system used as well as staff training in order to be able to gather all information in terms of the number of service requests on enforcement matters. We can report though, that the Service dealt with 14 cases during April and May - 8 in terms of dangerous structures and 6 in the enforcement field (unauthorised work).

- 3.8 It is pleasing to be able to report that **100% of general service requests (request for advice/enquiry) have been closed** during the two months in question, with an average of 4 days taken to process requests.

Public Protection Services

- 3.9 After focusing their efforts on stopping the spread of Covid-19 during the pandemic, the work of ensuring that food businesses meet the **food hygiene standards** has intensified over the past months. 2,189 Gwynedd food businesses were subject to the food hygiene scoring system on 31/5/22. Of these, 2,176 (99.41%) met satisfactory or higher standards and 13 (0.59%) did not meet the standards. Every one of these 13 businesses will be re-visited, but a new score cannot be given unless they request a re-score or win an appeal against the original hygiene score.
- 3.10 In accordance with the Food Standards Agency's Recovery Plan, every A risk (Hygiene and Standards) category premises has been inspected, as has every B hygiene risk premises, except for one. Officers will now focus on inspecting seasonal premises (open during the summer only), which are in the C and D hygiene risk categories. Nevertheless, there is a backlog from previous years from when staff were focusing on Covid-19 work and these inspections are included in the service's work programme.
- 3.11 The **Trading Standards Service** deals with matters relating to Animal Health and Welfare as well as Consumer Protection. There is an annual aim of inspecting 49 high-risk establishments in 2022/23, and although only 3 inspections (6.12%) have been completed to date, I am confident that the service will complete the work since the majority of the inspections are carried out during the autumn and winter months.
- It is testament to the expertise of the staff that the Service is leading on and coordinating the animal feed hygiene standards inspection programme on behalf of the Food Standards Agency across the north Wales area, and this work is progressing.
- 3.12 **Trading Standards received 171 service requests** during April and May - a combination of requests for the animal welfare and consumer protection fields. This new measure shows that **137 (80%) of the applications received have been closed** in the period in question.
- 3.13 As reported in the Council's Performance Report for 2021/22, the **Licensing** team has experienced a long-term period of sickness, as well as an increase in applications, which both affecting the time taken to determine applications. In order to address this, the Department has strengthened the administrative support provided by the support team and has started to use the corporate procedure for submitting DBS applications on-line. This has meant that the time it takes to process taxi applications has reduced by the end of May. 88 taxi licence applications were received in the period in question, **with the time taken on average to determine applications for a taxi licence at 10 days.**
- Since mid-April, a self-service system has been established in order to submit taxi licence applications electronically via the Council's website. Although it will take time for the industry to get accustomed to the change, the Service is confident that increased use of the new system will improve the time it takes to process licences in the future. It is worth noting that **77% of taxi applications in May** were processed in **less than 3 days.**
- 3.14 An increase has been seen in the number of **service requests** submitted to the **Public Protection (Pollution and Licensing) team**. Of the 689 requests submitted, 65% have been closed. It is worth noting that 36% of all service requests received relating to environmental protection matters are noise complaints. Such complaints take time to

investigate as evidence needs to be gathered over a period of time, in order to determine how to act on powers to deal with statutory nuisance.

Tracing Service

- 3.15 This service has made a key contribution to safeguarding the people of Gwynedd since it became operational in June 2020, and I wish to acknowledge my appreciation of the staff's work. Over the past months, the service has continued to operate with lower levels as the tracing work reduced as a result of the changes to Covid-19 regulations. Since the beginning of July, responsibility for the field is delivered on a regional basis under the guidance of Flintshire County Council. Nevertheless, it is important to note that any substantial increase in Covid-19 cases in Gwynedd in the future will require the input of Public Protection staff and this is a matter that will be escalated on the Department's Risk Register.

Network Management Services

- 3.16 Nine Parking Enforcement Officers operate across the county over 7 days a week now, which includes flexible hours beyond normal hours. A new measure has been introduced, namely the **time taken to respond to complaints about illegal parking**. During the period in question, **25 complaints** were received, with staff **visiting each site in question within three days** of receiving the request, with **a visit carried out within one day in 50% of cases**. **It was not possible to enforce in 8% of the cases** as the condition of the restrictions did not meet the required standard, and requests have been transferred to the Council's Highways Department in order to re-paint the road.
- 3.17 Another new measure for car parks relates to the **percentage of appeals submitted to the independent adjudicator which have been successful**. Fines are issued for vehicles that park in breach of the on-street and off-street restrictions (car parks). The service deals with everyone in a consistent, fair and transparent manner, and every motorist is entitled to appeal if they feel that any unfairness or error has occurred. **373 appeals were submitted during the specified period, with 73, namely 20% of them, being revoked**. Excluding extraordinary situations, the majority of successful appeals have been lodged by individuals who have not displayed a valid ticket for various reasons, e.g. the ticket has fallen from view. Every appeal is considered in full and if robust evidence reinforces the claim that a genuine mistake has occurred, the fine is revoked.
- 3.18 Since April, a new measure has also been introduced to the Streetworks field, to monitor the **percentage of works by statutory contractors that has taken longer than the original timetable**. The work carried out on our street or roads is a part of daily life, and although it causes disruption to members of the public from time to time, such work is vital in order to provide and maintain utility and transport services. The service's street inspectors are responsible for coordinating and monitoring all activities carried out by statutory contractors or contractors on the public roads network, and strive to avoid situations where areas are disrupted for long periods of time. The data for April and May shows that 574 works by contractors (electricity, gas, water companies, etc.) were carried out, and of these, **91% were being carried out within the original timetable**. Works can run beyond the original timetable for various reasons, e.g. unexpected discoveries after the road is dug up, delays due to staffing problems, reliance on other companies, inability to source the appropriate tools or equipment.
- 3.19 A new measure has been introduced to **monitor the number of service requests to the Traffic and Projects Service that have been closed within a specific time**. The intention is to have systems in place to facilitate the arrangements in order to be able to report on this information at the next performance challenging meeting.

Transport and Road Safety Service

- 3.20 A new measure has been introduced to the service, namely the **number of service requests being closed within a specific time**. Work is in progress to establish a system to enable the service to report on performance in this field, with an intention to report on performance at the next performance challenging meeting.

Currently, there are no specific monitoring officers in place to be able to report on **the percentage of bus services that are on time**.

The Department is working with Public Transport providers as well as other bodies to try to respond to any concern or obstruction arising, for example, by arranging an on-demand service or establishing a new service. Obviously, fuel costs have increased substantially and this is a major challenge for bus operators and taxi companies in order for them to be financially viable.

Countryside Service

- 3.21 Since April, the Service has been collaborating with the Information Technology Service to establish a specific system that will enable them to monitor the performance of the **service requests receiving appropriate attention within a specific time**. This is a new measure and staff are starting to familiarise themselves with using the new system, and it is intended to start using the system in full to record service requests in July.

As a part of planning the Service's work for the years to come, strategic documents are being completed, namely:

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan - a draft of the Plan has been prepared, a [consultation](#) is open until 12 September, and we are eager to hear the views of Gwynedd's people and organisations about its contents.
- Nature Recovery Plan - good progress has been made on preparing the Plan, and the next step will be to engage with stakeholders. The departure of a member of staff has caused some delay and it is anticipated that the Plan will be completed during 2022.

The availability of grants for the Service's fields of work has increased during 2022/23, and up to mid-June, the Service had attracted £1.6 million from various sources to improve access, projects in the Llŷn AONB, as well as around £700,000 towards Local Places for Nature projects. In order to ensure that we are able to take advantage of and make the best use of these grants, it was agreed to earmark funding to appoint a Projects Officer for a year through the Transformation Fund, and it is pleasing to report that an experienced officer was appointed in May who will be responsible for the development, administration and implementation of grant programmes.

The Department's Business Services

- 3.22 As a part of our commitment in the field of customer satisfaction, new measures have been introduced since April for the performance in relation to the response to service requests from the Department's back office teams. In the field of **land charges**, it took **35 days on average to process applications** in April and May, with a total of 495 applications submitted over the two months. It should be noted that the service's situation has been challenging with an increase in land searches applications and enquiries, which reflects the situation in the housing market.
- 3.23 Since April, we also have a system in place to measure the **percentage of phone calls to the Public Protection group that are answered**, with **51% answered within 30 seconds**, and the **percentage of calls answered improving to 78%**. As a part of the calls system, the phone numbers of Public Protection officers transfer to a central group of numbers

if the officer does not answer after 3 rings. We will continue to monitor this field, and if it will help to improve performance, it may be possible to introduce a similar procedure for the Planning Service in due course.

4. FINANCIAL SITUATION/ SAVINGS

- 4.1 The Environment Department underspent £191k at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. In accordance with the Financial Regulations it was recommended to stick to the normal procedure to allow the department to keep (£100k) of its underspend in a fund.
- 4.2 The department has an element of a savings plan for 2022/23 as well as some additional plans which continue from previous years due to delay, totalling £113,120. At present, these have either been realised or on track to be realised by the end of the financial year.

Views of the statutory officers

The Monitoring Officer:

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

Head of Finance:

I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situation of the Environment Department.

Agenda Item 13

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



A Report to a meeting of the Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 19 July, 2022

Cabinet Member: Coun. Berwyn Parry Jones

Contact Officers: Steffan Jones, Head of Highways and Municipal Department
Huw Williams, Head of Gwynedd Consultancy Department (YGC)

Contact Numbers: 32402 / 32426

Subject:

PERFORMANCE CHALLENGING REPORT BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND MUNICIPAL AND GWYNEDD CONSULTANCY

THE DECISION SOUGHT

To accept and note the information in the report.

THE REASONS WHY A DECISION IS NEEDED

In order to ensure effective performance management.

Highways and Municipal Department

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on what has happened in my areas of responsibility as the Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal. This will include outlining what has happened against the promises of the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023; where the performance measures were outlined; and the latest on savings plans and cuts.
- 1.2 I would like to remind you that all the issues have already been discussed and scrutinized during the Highways and Municipal Department's Management Team.

- 1.3 Overall, I am comfortable with the performance of the measures reported. The Department is facing considerable work to ensure that we achieve the Welsh Government's statutory recycling performance by 2025. We are also pleased to report that we are in the process of establishing 5 'Tim Tacluso' to improve the County's image by investing in clean/tidy communities.

2. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN PROJECTS 2018-2023 (Improvement Priorities)

- 2.1 Set out below is the progress that has been made to date against the Department's improvement priorities projects. Overall, all projects are currently going in the right direction against the promises set out in the Council Plan. It is important to note that the department's improvement priorities are long-term and cover particularly crucial elements of our services. An important part of the work is engaging with the communities to understand and hear what is important to them. This work will complement 'Our Area Engagement Plan 2035'.

Clean and Tidy Communities

We were successful in getting unanimous support from the Cabinet to set up 5 'Tim Tacluso'. The project was launched in Arfon at the beginning of March. We had great feedback from members of the public and we look forward to establishing the teams to be operational across Gwynedd.

A Project Officer for Tim Tacluso 'Ardal Ni' has been appointed who will work closely with all project stakeholders, building effective and influential relationships with community groups and elected members in order to identify work that needs to be targeted to achieve clean and tidy communities.

To achieve what was promised in our report we intend to implement the following:

The Team's Work Program

- The Teams' routes will be based on the regeneration areas where they will be visiting on a bi-monthly basis.
- In order to respond to urgent matters, we will ensure flexibility within the work program.
- We anticipate that the applications from different locations will shape the future work program.
- As a principle, we will give fair attention to all large towns, large villages and small villages within the regeneration areas and the Teams will be there for a set period of time as required.
- We will therefore be able to share when a Team is in each area and open any requests for work.

Contact System

Ensuring a modern, clear, and timely contact is vital, so below we have set out a system that we think will work best:

- As we highlighted in our Cabinet report, we will make use of modern technology to receive applications for work from local members.
- We have been in discussions with the IT Team to develop an in-house system (FFOS) whereby Councilors and Community Councils will have access to the system to make applications for work.
- Through this system it will be possible to send an instant message to the Teams mobile devices and update any requests while working in the communities.
- Members will be able to identify a request as a routine or urgent one.

Strengthening Communication and Engagement

The Highways and Municipal Department is very visible with aspects of the service affecting every resident throughout the County. Value can be added to the work of the Department through effective communication and engagement plans; for example, litter or dog fouling prevention campaigns, or campaigns and guides to encourage re-use, re-use and waste minimization. It is also extremely important that residents are confident in the services of the Department and that their concerns and queries are dealt with effectively.

This project has commenced, beginning with a review of our current communications arrangements, a task group has been established with cross-departmental representatives (Galw Gwynedd team, web team and the Corporate Communications and Engagement Unit). The team has identified the need to strengthen our communication streams by focusing specifically on updating customers on their inquiries. To achieve this aim there will be work to develop the interactive map for public display on the Council website. The intention is to place the various assets of the department on a map where customers will be able to see the status of the asset and report any shortfalls.

Benefit to the Customer:

- A straightforward way to identify and select a particular problematic asset in a map Format.
- Ability to click on the specific asset if a problem is to be reported.
- View the maintenance schedule associated with the asset in question.
- See if the problem has already been reported - with the Council aware of the issue.
- Be able to decide if there is a real need to continue reporting the problem.
- Ensure that a customer can receive an update on the status of the problem.

Benefits to the Service:

- Centralised system to keep accurate, current, and secure information about service schedules and work programs.
- Avoid multiple calls for the same problem.
- Enable the service to respond effectively to the right asset.
- Enable the service to work mobile with live information delivered to their device/ tablet in the vehicle.

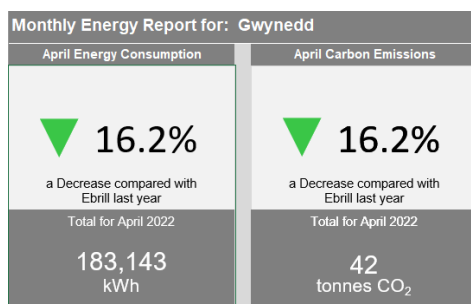
- A service that can respond much faster, for example the service will be able to receive requests live when going around doing work.
- Service efficiency, as one officer is going to assess each asset once.
- Map information on enabling the service to plan remit more efficiently.
- Opportunity to save diesel as well.

Other Projects

Street Lighting to LED Program

In the last report, I noted that work is continuing to change our street lighting and signage to LED technology. The Lighting Service is also working on replacing streetlights and signs with LED technology with a dimming arrangement. This work is ongoing and we are now in the final year of the project and are pleased to report that approximately 17,500 lamps have been replaced with approximately 200 remaining. In addition to the original plan, we have adopted an additional 300 lamps from NMWTRA as part of the de-trunking of the A487 road. As a result of this development, it is anticipated that the work will be completed by the end of the year.

The graph below highlights a reduction in CO₂ (Street Lighting) emissions as a result of the project:



The Council's Fleet Management Review Project

One element of this project is managing the use of Council vehicles. A consultation process took place ensuring compliance on employment. The work has taken longer than expected but is nearing completion.

Another important element of the fleet management project is the de-carbonisation of the fleet. This is in line with 'Improvement Priority 8 of the Council Plan 2018-23 - Responding to the Climate Change Crisis'. We are committed to taking decisive action to reduce carbon emissions and striving for a zero-carbon future which includes looking for innovative technology.

We have undertaken a review of all Council vehicles with the support of the Welsh Government and are preparing a fleet strategy which will be discussed at the Climate Board shortly. We will be looking at opportunities to add to our small fleet of electric vehicles as well as to maximize charging points within our depot and offices and a grant of £ 300k has been received for this element. The collection service will receive two electric refuse collection vehicles, and we envisage these will be with us in the Autumn.

Playgrounds Project

Playgrounds are important to children, parents, and childminders, however the high costs of play equipment and lack of money, maintaining them in a way that is safe for children and young people to enjoy is challenging.

We are pleased to report that the service has been successful in securing grant funding from the Welsh Government and has successfully installed a total of 14 new equipment in deprived areas across Gwynedd. As part of the maintenance programme we are also in the process of replacing 5 other equipment this year.

Below are examples of recent projects undertaken by the Service:

- Work with Community Group to upgrade Lon y Glyder playground and assist with arrangements for them to establish a community garden for the benefit of the community.
- Introduce wheelchair accessible roundabout at Trehwfa playground, Coed Mawr, Bangor.
- Introduce a multi-purpose climbing frame at Porthmadog, Mynydd Llandygai and Bethel in partnership with local community groups / Councilors.

Public Toilets

We are looking at two specific elements within the Public Toilet Service:

- Look at extending / adjusting our opening times.
- Installation of modern payment card machines.

Following the relaxation of the Covid restrictions we saw a significant increase in the number of tourists visiting Gwynedd. To ensure we provide the best service we will look at how we can alter the opening times of the toilets as required and any other relevant options.

We will also conduct an audit of the payment regime within those toilets with payment machines currently in place and consider installing modern payment machines that accept payment by card or cash.

3. PERFORMANCE

3.1 In terms of the Department's measures, I am generally happy with the performance. Nevertheless, I draw your attention to the main issues arising.

3.2 **Waste and Recycling Service** - as previously reported, the proper handling of waste is essential if our environment is to be protected. An Economy that promotes re-use and recycling while reducing waste (Circular Economy) is vital as we work towards this goal. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to reach 70% by the end of March 2025 and a clear strategy and action plan will need to be developed to achieve this goal.

One element that will be adopted to this service will be opportunities within the headline of the Circular Economy in order to move a step further, but also look at the new opportunities to respond to the priorities set by the Welsh Government, namely:

- Reducing the amount of waste generated and / or moving waste up the Waste Hierarchy, especially in terms of increasing the amount of waste that is reused and repaired;
- Further increase in recycling rates - including for non-domestic sites;
- Reducing emissions related to the circular economy, including decarbonisation of waste infrastructure and operations and their resilience to climate change;
- To increase resource efficiency and economic activity associated with the circular economy in Wales.

The table below highlights our recycling performance by year and quarter to the end of March, 2021/22:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2018/19	65%	62%	62%	62%	62.31%
2019/20	64%	65%	66%	64%	64.74%
2020/21	67%	69%	63%	62%	65.87%
2021/22	69%	61%	62%	65%	64.17%
2022/23					
2023/24					
2024/25					Must be at 70%

As a Department we provide a recycling kerbside sort collection service for Gwynedd residents that has been established to ensure that materials are recycled to the highest standard. The table below gives an indication of the weight of recyclables collected from the household waste stream and the recycling process:

Material	Tonnes 2021/22 (April-March)	Where does it go	The recycling process
Glass	4,717.34t	We send the glass collected to Berryman recycling company in South Kirby.	Berryman specialises in new methods of treating glass so the material can have a second life. This new material is used to produce new bottles/jars for construction products, insulation and many more.
Plastic Bottles	1,092.08t	Jayplas Recycling. (This company has several sites across the UK which specialise in recycling different types of plastics to the highest quality).	Here, the plastic bottles are sent through a processing system to produce PET Flakes which are then sold to companies that mould them to produce new food packaging.
Paper	3,327.10t	Palm Paper Mill near King's Lynn.	Here, our paper bulks are sent through a newsprint machine. This is the largest machine of its type in the world. At a speed of nearly 2,000m/minute it has the capacity to produce 400,000 metric tonnes of newsprint per annum.
Food	2,693.78t	GwyrAD Anaerobic Digestion Facility in Clynog Fawr.	GwyrAD - which is run by Biogen on behalf of the Council - is a specialist centre that converts food waste into electrical energy for the national grid. It also produces fertiliser for agricultural land.
Steel Cans	A total of 482.26t of steel/aluminium cans.	EMR (European Metal Recycling).	Our steel cans are processed at the EMR site near Liverpool. Here, our cans are crushed using a mega shredder that has the power to recycle a car every 15 seconds.
Aluminium Cans		Tandom Metallurgical Recycling.	Tandom uses a shredding line for recycling our aluminium cans. Through this shredding line our cans are broken down into 50mm particles. The steel is then separated using a magnet.
Garden Waste	4,568.38t	Gwrtaith Gwynedd.	The green waste that is processed on the Gwrtaith Gwynedd site near Pwllheli is turned constantly in compost wind-rows. The vast majority of the processed material is composted and used on farmers' fields.
Residual Waste	Domestic – 17,970.79t Commercial – 4,712.70t Street cleaning - 1,592.25t Bulky - 295.70t Recycling centres - 2,784.32t	Parc Adfer.	Our residual waste is processed on the Parc Adfer site in Deeside. This site is a heat and power facility that generates enough energy to power more than 45,000 homes and businesses in the UK. The site was established as part of a Public-Private Partnership with support from the Welsh Government, to serve five local authorities that are part of the North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Project.

- 3.3 **Ffordd Gwynedd Waste Service Review** - We noted in the last report that there had been a delay in starting the Ffordd Gwynedd review. We are pleased to report that this work is now operational with 5 specific areas of work identified. In addition, WRAP Cymru is undertaking a review focusing on our collection arrangements. We hope to share the findings of these surveys in our next report.
- 3.4 **Highways Maintenance Service** - Following the Ffordd Gwynedd review of the service, the new way of working has been put in place since the 1st April this year. It is good to note that this work was a success and has greeted the historical way of working. We are also in the process of updating our Asset Maintenance Plan to reflect the new requirements of the Code of Practice with an emphasis on risk management. We are also revisiting our roadside maintenance and complaint handling regime and will be part of the review of our highways Asset Maintenance Plan.
- 3.5 **Street Cleansing Service** - There has been considerable pressure on this service since the time of the crisis with litter, full bins and problems of dog fouling appearing to have increased. While we are keeping up with the situation, I anticipate that issues like this will come to light in the work on the 'Clean and Tidy Communities' project. I am also pleased to report that we were able to carry out a consultation on the forthcoming Dog Order and much good material has been recorded from this consultation. Another element of this service will be 'Clean and Tidy Communities Teams'. A report was presented to Cabinet on 30/11/21 outlining our intention to establish work teams to improve the image and enhance our communities within the County. We are pleased to report that our decision was unanimously supported.
- 3.6 **Street Cleansing / Street Recycling Bins** - The Department is looking at introducing recycling bins within our main centres, we will fund these bins through the Tidy Towns grant. We will also co-ordinate public awareness messages to ensure that residents present disposal materials in the correct bins.

We are keen to modernize our bin provision so we will install and trial smart bins on our streets. These bins self-compress the rubbish and are powered by solar energy. We have ordered 4 smart bins this year to trial. If successful, and we were to receive an additional grant to order more, this could lead to savings in waste collection costs.

- 3.7 **Ash Dieback** - A team has now been established to deal with the Ash. The main purpose of the team is to carry out inspections of ash trees on Council land and roads, assess their condition and draw up a program of work to deal with those that pose a safety risk to the public. They will also provide advice to Council departments and private tree owners in relation to their trees and prepare various information packs and resources on the Council's external website to raise public awareness of it.

Although the team will effectively operate as a 'one stop shop', in relation to the Council's land and roads, they will not take over the regular tree inspection and treatment responsibilities of each department. Nor will they act as the first point of contact in relation to receiving complaints about defective trees on Council land and roads. It is expected that officers in the relevant departments will continue in this role and transfer any issues to the team only after they have completed their initial inspections.

Trees absorb carbon and store it when releasing oxygen back into the air. As a result, our program of cutting trees may impact on the Council's ability to achieve its carbon neutral target by 2030. To this end, the team works very closely with the Countryside Service in the Environment Department to look at ways to compensate for this and seek partnership opportunities with other authorities and organizations to prepare plans for growing and replanting trees.

- 3.8 **BSi Accreditations** - The Department has been successful in transferring from Accreditation 18001 (BSI) and reaching the requirements of 45001 which we were required to complete before autumn of this year. This means that we are meeting high requirements in terms of service delivery, with management systems and Health and Safety arrangements that are monitored by the BSI for the accreditation.

An audit is carried out twice a year to ensure that we are adhering to the requirements, which is done on various fields within our scope.

We also have the following Accreditations:

- BSi 14001 - Environment
- BSi 9001 - Quality Management

The same procedure of audit applies, where a BSI auditor will visit the Department twice a year to conduct a detailed audit of our arrangements.

4. FINANCIAL POSITION / SAVINGS

- 4.1 The final revenue outturn for the Highways and Municipal Department showed an overspend of £ 746k. However, it was Cabinet's decision that the Department receive one-off financial support of £ 746k to eliminate the overspend, given the exceptional circumstances surrounding this year's crisis, so that the department can move forward to face the 2022/23 challenge. A review of the Department's 2022-23 financial position will be undertaken as part of the revenue review in late August and will be reported to Cabinet in October 2022.
- 4.2 The most obvious overspend and problems can be seen once again this year within the Waste Collection Service, and anticipate significant financial challenges over the coming year. We have commissioned WRAP Cymru to look in detail at this service and provide a detailed operational report listing observations, conclusion and recommendations. A Ffordd Gwynedd review is also taking place within this Service which will also highlight area of change.

5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

The Department will give priority to progressing the identified projects whilst also giving priority to reducing the identified overspend figure.

With a department that delivers frontline services, we will continue with the aim of delivering the best service to the residents of Gwynedd.

Gwynedd Consultancy Department (YGC)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on developments in the fields within my remit as Cabinet Member for YGC. This will include outlining the latest developments against pledges within the 2018-2023 Gwynedd Council Plan; the progress of performance measures; and the latest on the savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2 On the whole, I am satisfied with the performance of the measures for which I am responsible and I am grateful to the Department for their work. I am satisfied with the Department's financial performance.
- 1.3 As a result of publishing the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales (July 2020), I look forward to developing the Local Strategy. This will be an opportunity to put appropriate measures and priorities in place to reduce flooding risk and make the communities of Gwynedd safer.

2. PROJECTS IN THE GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN 2018-2023

The Department does not lead on any projects in the 2018-23 Council Plan. The Environment Department is leading on the Climate Change Action Plan with YGC supporting it on flood risk management and coastal erosion matters, which forms an important part of the scheme.

Below, please find information about the three very high risks, and it is noted that risks 2.1 and 2.2 are a fundamental part of renewing the Local Flood Risk Management and Coastal Erosion Strategy (Local Strategy), which is to be completed by October 2023. A National Group has been formed to agree on the format of the Local Strategy. I will with the agreement of the Cabinet, issue a brief to the Department outlining the scope of the strategy and setting clear prioritisation in terms of addressing risks. The Local Strategy will form part of the Council's Climate Change plan.

The risks in 2.1 and 2.2 have been challenged by the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

2.1 The risk of inland flooding because of the effect of climate change

My interdepartmental Flooding Project Group has prioritised inland areas via the catchment area prioritisation matrix.

In addition, the Department is chairing cross-departmental meetings to ensure an awareness of flooding projects, and to seek to add elements from other departments that will maximise value for those projects.

2.2 The risk of flooding from the sea in coastal areas because of the effect of climate change

The Department has identified vulnerable communities in terms of the risks from the effects of storms, erosion and coastal flooding. My interdepartmental Flooding Project Group has produced a coastal prioritisation matrix. This will identify the list of vulnerable communities that will require support.

2.3 The impact of climate change on Fairbourne

The document titled Fairbourne: A Framework for the Future, contains five work streams that are developing individual plans - Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Plan (FCERM), People and the Built Environment Plan, Infrastructure Management Plan, Business Support Plan and Natural Environment Plan. The Fairbourne Moving Forward Project Board includes the following bodies: Arthog Community Council (Chairing), Gwynedd Local Councillor, Gwynedd Council, Scottish Power, NRW, Community Ambassador, Network Rail, the Health Board, Welsh Water and Snowdonia National Park.

Recent progress has been as follows:

- A temporary Project Manager is in place.
- Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are now leading on a Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Plan. NRW are in the process of reviewing the condition of its assets and preparing a Strategic Outline Case (SOC).
- Gwynedd is leading on the People and the Built Environment Plan by working cross-departmentally. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) work has started and will also analyse the population's options. This will provide better information of the actual position, and extend our ability to support Arthog Community Council.

3. PERFORMANCE

3.1 This year continues in new and challenging circumstances. I am happy with the Department's performance.

Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy (YGC) acts as:

- A department that brings substantial income to the Council.
- Undertakes statutory functions in the field of water and flood management.

I now draw your attention to the main matters for YGC, starting with the commercial side.

3.2 Commercial Work

3.2.1 **The income and structure of the commercial work** - A project team brings together the necessary skills from four Services to successfully complete projects. Construction projects by their nature are different and require different expertise in accordance with the needs as identified in the Project Plan. Every project is measured by a client satisfaction survey.

The four Services are:

- Water and the Environment
- Building and Infrastructure
- Business and Project Delivery
- Technical

The fee earning hours for each member of staff is measured and the monthly totals are agreed with the Treasurer, in order to measure each Service productivity.

This year is less challenging due to strong client work programmes, but these programmes can change during the year.

In terms of the financial measures, I am happy with their performance, which is important bearing in mind that a vast majority of the Department's officers are involved with fee earning work, which brings an income of over £7.35 million to the Council. As the staffing structure is extended, the income target will rise.

The work pattern for the first two months follows the same work pattern as last year. Please see below the main clients that the Department works for 2022/23:

NMWTRA	Housing and Property Department	Environment Department Transportation and Street Care
Highways and Municipal Department	Ceredigion County Council	Welsh Government
	Powys County Council	Griffiths

- 3.2.2 Over the past year, the environmental team has been working on a number of schemes. They have conducted several protected species surveys to ensure that natural habitats are protected, and have also provided environmental improvement measures for the schemes. In addition, the team is taking advantage of opportunities to add elements that increase biodiversity on schemes. Environmental and sustainability matters influence all types of developments. Protecting conservation and improving the environment are all-important and are critical components in sustainable development and implementation.
- 3.2.3 The flooding and environmental risk teams make a substantial contribution to developing new projects to ensure no projects have a detrimental impact on our natural environment. By working closer to nature, the department has developed a plan that manages flow more naturally in the Wnion catchment area. This scheme has been jointly-developed with Snowdonia National Park to plant trees, plants, and create ponds in the catchment area.
- 3.2.4 The Department is very glad to maintain and develop local employment through the structure, which are quality jobs. Due to opportunities in the market, the Department has added 9 posts to the structure this year, with plans to add another 11 posts over the coming 18 months.
- 3.2.5 One challenge faced by the Department is the retirement of experienced officers and the growth in the size of the department, there is a need for more officers on team leader level and above, who have professional qualifications. The management team is giving strong support to officers who have the aspiration and ability to gain professional qualifications and the department is collaborating with educational bodies and professional bodies.

- 3.2.6 The Department gives high priority to staff training. The Department is the Regional lead on the North Wales Regional Professional Training Agreement on engineering work via the ICE (Institution of Civil Engineers). At present, there are eight trainee officers. This will enable the officers to develop their skills, and enable them to work on more challenging schemes. Staff are also aware that professional qualifications are key to attracting and winning work.
- 3.2.7 The Department's succession plan includes four further senior officers who are studying Level 7 Diploma qualifications in Strategic Leadership and Management, including the four Service Managers.

3.3 **Undertaking statutory functions in the field of water and flood management**

- 3.3.1 The Department acts as a commercial provider, while also undertaking statutory functions in water and flood Management matters. The Department specializes in climate change in terms of flood and coastal erosion context, addressing issues from rising sea levels. The department monitors its Works programme on a monthly basis.

During the financial year, the Water and Environment Service in its client role manages flood prevention plans that will reduce the risk to Gwynedd residents. The Flooding Service is working on nine business bids in order to attract investment to deliver more flood alleviation projects including Barmouth, Hirael, and the Ogwen catchment area.

- 3.3.2 There is a programme of major and minor schemes across the County that respond to previous flooding incidents. The department is working jointly with the highways department to complete 10 small-scale plans in the current financial year, which reduce the risk to almost 100 houses.
- 3.3.3 I will continue to work with the Department to hold appropriate discussions with key stakeholders including the Welsh Government, community councils and others such as the private and third sectors.
- 3.3.4 The assets to be inspected during the 2022/23 year have been completed. This has enabled us to identify the condition of our assets and programme any required maintenance. The assets inspection work has been submitted before the Communities Scrutiny Committee. Work to repair defective assets has been scheduled and the department continues to monitor the assets in the meantime.
- 3.3.5 North Promenade, Barmouth has suffered damage and coastal flooding for some years now. The work of drawing up an Outline Business Case (OBC) has been completed. The next step is to commence the North Promenade detail design. The cost of the project is currently £23m. The Council will need to identify 15% of match funding if the scheme is to be realised.
- 3.3.6 There is a duty upon us to investigate flooding incidents under the Flood and Water Management Act. Although, in the 2022/23 financial year, there were 23 internal flooding incidents.
- 3.3.7 Work to approve Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is continuing and the number of applications is increasing.

- 3.3.8 Keeping our coastal assets safe for the public is a priority and therefore risks need to be assessed for the coastal assets owned by the Council, the department has submitted a business case application for funding to address this work on a cross departmental basis.

4 ACCREDITATIONS

4.1 Investors In People (IIP) Accreditations

In 2021, the Department received an "Investors in People" accreditation for the fourth time. The IIP report and action plan will form part of the department's business plan for 2022/23.

4.2 BSi Accreditations

The Department has been successful in transferring from Accreditation 18001 (BSi) and reaching the requirements of 45001 which we were required to complete. This means that we are meeting high requirements in terms of service delivery, with management systems and Health and Safety arrangements that are monitored by the BSI for the accreditation. Also, the department has the following Accreditations, namely - BSi 14001 - Environment and BSi 9001 - Quality. The procedure in terms of the audit is that BSi inspectors visit the Department twice a year in order to conduct a detailed audit of our arrangements.

Internal audits are being completed in the department by the Business Unit and the department is collaborating with the Treasurer's department to complete specific audits.

5. FINANCIAL POSITION/SAVINGS

- 5.1 At the end of month 2 of the 2022-23 financial year, the Department estimates an underspend of £18,655. The Department's historical efficiency savings have been addressed and completed.

- 5.2 The Department anticipates that its performance will enable it to fulfil its financial target. The flow of work is more robust than previous years and there is sufficient work available from our clients for the remainder of the year.

6. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

The Department in its day to day activities will operate in a manner that the outputs reduce the risks identified in the Departmental Risk Register.

7. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Head of Finance Department:

I am satisfied that the report is a fair reflection of the financial situations of the Highways and Municipal Department and the Gwynedd Consultancy Department.