

Complete Agenda

CABINET

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

DATE	Tuesday, 25th October, 2022
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Hybrid Meeting - Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH and on Zoom This meeting will be webcast https://gwynedd.public-i.tv/core//en_GB/portal/home
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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9	SAVINGS OVERVIEW REPORT - END OF AUGUST 2022 REVIEW	Cllr. Ioan Thomas	Ffion Madog Evans	80 - 91
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THE CABINET 27/09/22

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig 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), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance Department) and Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader).

Item 6: Marian Parry Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department)

Item 7: Delyth G Williams (Equality Adviser)

Item 8: Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Service Manager) and Gwennllian Williams (Language Adviser)

Item 9: Eurig Williams (Human Resources Advisory Service Manager)

Item 10: Catrin Love (Health, Safety and Welfare Advisory Service Manager)

Item 11: Alun Gwilym Williams (Senior Business Manager) and Hawis Jones (Commissioning, Contracts and Projects Manager)

Item 13-15: Debbie Anne Jones (Education Corporate Services Manager) and Buddug Mair Huws (Assistant Resources Officer).

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 19 JULY 2022

The Chair accepted the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 as a true record.

6. CORPORATE PARENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

The report was submitted by Cllr Elin Walker Jones

DECISION

The information in the report, which reported on the work of the Corporate Parent Panel for 2021-22, was accepted and noted.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that Cabinet Members were required to be aware of the Corporate Parent Panel's work. It was explained that the report noted that the Council had a clear responsibility to be a Corporate Parent for every child in Gwynedd, and to ensure effective, safe, stable and suitable care for looked after children.

The main points in the report were highlighted, which included that there had been a reduction in the number of looked after children during 2021-22, with 46 children coming into care for the first time during the year and 54 children leaving care. It was emphasised that it appeared that the strategy for Keeping Families Together worked, with a high number of children who remained at home under supervision or placed with foster carers within their families.

Specific attention was drawn to Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers noting that the Home Office had instructed all Local Authorities to receive an allocation of asylum seekers. Between December and March, it was highlighted that the Council had received three asylum seekers, and it must be noted that finding suitable placements had been challenging due to their age, linguistic and cultural needs and very often due to the trauma they have experienced. The schemes that would be prioritised by the Panel this year were noted, which included re-examining the strategy and continuing to listen to the voices of looked after children.

The Head of Children and Supporting Families Department added that the number of asylum seekers were now ten individuals, noting that the timetable had been extremely tight with five days to find them a placement. It was explained that there was great responsibility on staff to ensure support for them and that one social worker had now been relocated to focus on this support.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Gratitude was expressed for the report and the importance of all Gwynedd councillors attending the training on their role as a Corporate Parent was noted.
- Gratitude was expressed for the amendments made to the panel this year with the Chief Executive now the Panel Chair, noting that this would ensure that all departments were aware of their responsibility in this field.

7. ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT CYNGOR GWYNEDD 2021-22

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Jones

DECISION

The contents of the Annual Report for 2021-22, Strategic Equality Plan 2022-24, were noted and approved.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that this was the second Annual Report - Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24. It was explained that the two years in question had been unusual and difficult and had affected the field of equality. Although the service had not been able to deliver everything it had intended during the period, it was stated that preparatory work and progress had been undertaken in each of the five objectives and all of the work was expected to be completed within the Plan's lifespan.

Attention was drawn to each objective individually, noting the main achievements. In terms of objective 1: To strengthen and deepen the capacity and commitment of Cyngor Gwynedd Staff and Elected Members in the field of Equality, by ensuring that they receive the right training, it was noted that remote training had been held and that work had been undertaken on the e-module.

With objective 2: Improve the information we have from and about people with protected characteristics, it was stated that this work had taken more time than expected but they had identified that this work was something that needed to be done continuously using different methods. When highlighting objective 3: Building on the work already carried out to embed Equality Impact Assessments as a tool to ensure better decision-making, it was stated that a comprehensive impact assessment template had been created on a regional level and had been adapted for use in Gwynedd. It was highlighted that one of the main successes was the Cabinet adopting the Equality and Inclusion Policy.

In terms of Objective 4: Act to reduce the pay gap between the sexes and identify any pay gap based on any other characteristic, it was noted that although the number of staff members who completed the equality questionnaire had increased from 41.8% to 48%, it was explained that this increase was by no means sufficient and, as a result, work would be encouraged and work undertaken with Departments. In terms of the final objective: Take action to attract a range of applicants in order to increase the diversity of our workforce, it was noted that a pilot scheme had been undertaken in the Corporate Support department to question those leaving the Council about any barriers they had faced. It was also explained that the Council worked with Inclusive Employers in order to improve Council services for all characteristics.

The Equality Adviser added that there had been some slippage with the work as a result of the pandemic, but they were progressing and that the service was confident that it would deliver within the scheme's timetable.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Gratitude was expressed for the report and everyone was reminded that

promoting equality was a responsibility for everyone and not this service alone.

8. AMENDING THE COUNCIL'S WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Jones

DECISION

The amendments made to the Language Policy were supported and it was recommended that the Full Council adopted the amended Policy.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, and the decision noted. It was noted that the Welsh Language Policy imposed requirements that ensured that services and officers worked in a manner that corresponded with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards. It was also stated that it set out where the Council went beyond the requirements of the Standards by operating in a manner where it puts the Welsh language first, or raises the status of the Welsh language.

It was explained that the need for review had arisen as a result of actions that had been imposed after the Welsh Language Commissioner's investigations, and also a realisation that some things had changed in the way the Council operated and delivered services (more use of on-line services in particular). It was stated that there was a need to reflect changes in priority Projects such as Language Designations, Self-service and guidance of the Welsh Place Names Project.

The main changes seen in the report were highlighted in terms of outlining general principles at the start of each section, to provide guidance to take digital action where there was no guidance previously and to strengthen the guidance on assessing impact. It was stated that discussions had been held internally with groups of staff on these adaptations along with two discussions with members of the Language Committee.

As the next steps, it was noted that the Language and Scrutiny Unit would be drawing up a communication programme so that all departments are aware of the adaptations made to the Language Policy.

The Language Adviser added that adaptations had been made to the Language Policy following a discussion at the Language Committee, and this is to respond to observations received in the consultations undertaken.

9. ANNUAL REPORT - EMPLOYMENT

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Jones

DECISION

The information in the Annual Report for 2021/22 was noted and approved.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that it provided an overview of the main workforce matters that had been addressed last year. It was emphasised that the report also referred to the main challenges facing the Council as an employer over this year and the longer term.

Attention was drawn to the main messages in the report, firstly when coming out of the pandemic, the Council like all Councils and employers, operated within an employment context that had now changed significantly. It was stated that working practices had changed permanently and, as a result, it meant that some recruitment and staff retention problems were starting to become apparent. It was emphasised that planning the workforce effectively was more needed than ever, and to try to anticipate future challenges and prepare for the skills and people required to cope with it.

It was noted that the health and well-being of staff was absolutely vital to the Council and there were now different pressures on families with the increase in living costs and as an employer, the Council needed to be aware of how that strain could affect staff's well-being. It was stated that the Council continued to develop and experiment with 'hybrid' working arrangements for staff, and it was noted that arrangements would stabilise over the winter months and provide a better picture of what would be in place in the longer term. However, it was emphasised that the needs of services and Gwynedd residents would ultimately drive the final arrangements.

The Service Manager emphasised that the report specifically examined the workforce and themes seen in the Council over the past year. It was added that the themes highlighted continued to be important to the service and that they would remain a priority over the next period. It was noted that pressures were seen on services to recruit and retain staff across the Council and that work was being undertaken to look at this.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that the Apprenticeships scheme seen within the Council needed to be maximised and promoted and that more use should be made of the scheme.
- It was stated that it was significant that there had been a large increase in the figures of posts being re-advertised over the past few years, and it was noted that the Council needed to ensure that it examined how it advertised posts and conveyed the best image for prospective applicants. It was explained that the recruitment market had changed during the pandemic and that the Council was seeking to catch up with the times to improve the way it advertised.
- It was explained that members were aware of staff leaving the Council to work in other companies and authorities due to the ability to work from home and it was enquired whether the Council offered the same type of terms. It was noted that working flexibly and virtually provided opportunities and challenges to the Council and the need for the Council

to encourage applicants to join the workforce was highlighted.

- The need was highlighted for the Council to promote the benefits of working for a Local Authority and to show the Council's whole employment package.

10. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING ANNUAL REPORT

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Jones

DECISION

The Annual Report was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, and the decision noted. It was noted that this was the second consecutive challenging year for the department due to the Covid-19 situation. It was stated that challenges had been different to the first year of the pandemic with challenges involving the response to the Government's ever-changing requirements, the safe recovery of Services and getting vulnerable staff members back to work safely. It was also emphasised that this had been done when Covid figures in Gwynedd were higher than they had been in the previous year.

In terms of accidents and incidents, it was explained that 113 cases of staff catching Covid at work had been reported to the Health and Safety Executive. In terms of other accidents, it was added that manual handling of weight and slipping and tripping were the main causes of injuries. It was noted that work was being undertaken to address manual handling injuries in particular.

It was stated that Covid had affected the health of staff in general and the Occupational Health Unit had seen the highest number of referrals since the Unit was established and this was true in terms of the Medra Counselling Service and physiotherapy with stress, mental health and musculoskeletal problems the main reasons for the referrals.

The Service Manager added that this report was reporting on the situation last year, and it was noted that it was pleasing to be able to report that great progress was being made to catch up with risks that had been highlighted over the years. It was explained that there was currently a specific project on Mental Health as referrals to Occupational Health had been higher, along with training for Managers and Team Leaders on Mental Health.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was highlighted that an event would be held in December that would be mandatory for Managers and Team Leaders specifically on Mental Health, where half the session would focus on normalising a conversation about Mental Health with Staff.
- Attention was also drawn to training in January for Councillors on identifying the deficiencies of Mental Health.

11. NORTH WALES MARKET STABILITY REPORT - DRAFT REPORT 2022

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

The North Wales Market Stability Report for 2022 was approved and recommended for adoption by the Full Council.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the North Wales Population Needs Assessment had been submitted back in March this year and that this report was a follow-up. It was explained that it was on a journey through the Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet and the Full Council before proceeding to the Regional Partnership Board and then being submitted to the Government. It was emphasised that the report currently remained as a draft as they were awaiting up-to-date data in order to update it.

It was expressed that this report was important and would be used in order to steer the decision-making process not only in Gwynedd but also on a regional level. It was highlighted that a number of the fields highlighted in the report were matters that had already been identified by the Council.

The Senior Business Manager added that the Regional Needs Assessment listed the needs while this report was a market assessment introducing how to deliver to meet the needs. It was stressed that the findings corresponded with matters highlighted in Gwynedd such as a lack of nursing homes.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was stated that members were often suspicious of reports that were forced on the Council but this report demonstrated interesting findings that highlighted supply patterns and an increase in demand. It was noted that the fragile situation was beyond the Council's work in terms of funding and staffing but it was enquired whether further action would be taken by the Government after receiving the report. It was explained that the Government signalled that it was attaching more importance to this type of report and that it would place an emphasis on regional partnership boards.

12. COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM ON SECOND HOMES AND LONG-TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas

DECISION

Hold a public consultation on the possible proposal to increase the Council Tax Premium on Second Homes and Long-term Empty Properties beyond 100% and

up to 300% for the 2023/24 financial year.

To delegate the right to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to prepare a public consultation pack in accordance with the report and any recommendations by the Cabinet.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that this report requested a public consultation. It was noted that the Full Council must make an annual decision on the rate of the Premium, and in order to comply with legal requirements, if the Premium level was to be increased, a public consultation on the proposal must be undertaken.

It was explained that the Local Government Finance Act 1992 had allowed a discretion for the Council to charge a premium of up to 100% on the Council Tax of some classes of second homes and long-term empty properties but it was noted that this maximum would increase from 1 April 2023 and that local authorities would have the power to charge a premium of up to 300%. It was stated that getting to grips with the lack of affordable housing in Gwynedd, along with the high number of second homes, was a priority for the Council and charging a Council Tax Premium was one of the tools available to deal with the situation.

It was reiterated that the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) Regulations (Wales) 1998 noted that 'second homes' had been categorised into two classes, namely

classes A and B, whilst class C referred to empty property:

- Class A - An unoccupied dwelling, which is substantially furnished, where the occupation of which is prohibited by law for a continuous period of at least 28 days in the relevant year.
- Class B - An unoccupied dwelling, which is substantially furnished, where there is no legal restriction on its occupation.
- Class C - An unoccupied dwelling which is not substantially furnished.

On 13 July, it was noted that over 4600 houses were subject to the Premium on second homes (Class B), 200 of them did not pay the premium as they were subject to exceptions and 760 within Class A where occupation was prohibited for a period of at least 28 days in the relevant year. Since the Premium was introduced, it was stated that the Council had determined annually to charge the same level of premium on long-term empty properties and second homes, but it was possible to charge different levels if local circumstances justified it.

In terms of legal requirements, it was explained that the decision was made annually by the Full Council and that an Impact Assessment on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh Language and the Socio-Economic Disadvantage needed to be submitted to the Cabinet and the Full Council. It was added that it was required to hold a consultation and engage with stakeholders before charging any premium and it was noted that the department intended to hold it for 28 days in October. Following this, it was added that a report would be submitted to the Cabinet in November before it would be discussed at the Full Council

meeting in December. It was emphasised that the matter would also be scrutinised by the Governance and Audit Committee.

The Monitoring Officer added that any Cabinet decision was subject to a Scrutiny call-in period, but it was explained that the Cabinet under section 7 of the Constitution had the right to make an Urgent Decision in discussion with the Chair of the Council. The Cabinet was asked to treat it as an urgent decision so that the department could proceed immediately, noting that this would be reported at the Full Council.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Support was noted to proceed to consultation and the urgent need for the decision to be made was understood.
- The need was stated to send a letter to the Welsh Government to enquire about the exceptions for those who paid the Premium.

13. REVIEW OF THE GWYNEDD STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) CONSTITUTION

The report was submitted by Cllr Beca Brown

DECISION

The recommendation of the Education Department and Gwynedd SACRE Committee

to change the membership of Group B as noted, was approved:

- Group A - Christianity and other Beliefs
- Group B - representation of Teachers and Headteachers - keep the number of seats at 5

The seats would be allocated as follows:

- 3 seats to be divided between the Teaching Unions recognised by Cyngor Gwynedd (NAS/UWT; UCAC; NEU; ASCL and NAHT - to be determined by the Gwynedd Teaching Unions Forum)
- 1 seat to be filled by the Primary and Special Catchment Area Advisory Group (GYDCA)
- 1 seat to be filled by the Gwynedd Secondary Headteachers Group (GSCU)
- Group C - Elected Members - keep at 7
- Co-opted - SACRE Committee to retain the right to co-opt members

(3 votes, which is 1 for each Group; Co-opted members do not have a vote).

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that the report was a request to review the constitution of Gwynedd SACRE. It was explained that the Council had not considered the constitution since 2019, and there had been a change to the unions since then. It was stated that the Constitution needed to be revised in order to strengthen the representation of teachers on the Committee.

The Assistant Resources Officer added that SACRE had been created from three groups - the first was Christianity and Other Beliefs, which was the subject of the review back in 2019, the second group was Representation of Teachers and Headteachers and then the final group, namely Elected Members. It was explained that there was a request here to revise the second group, as one of the unions now did not exist and, as a result, seats needed to be revised. It was requested for the five seats to be divided as follows:

- 3 seats to be divided between the Teaching Unions recognised by Cyngor Gwynedd (NAS/UWT; UCAC; NEU; ASCL and NAHT - to be determined by the Gwynedd Teaching Unions Forum)
- 1 seat to be filled by the Primary and Special Catchment Area Advisory Group (GYDCA)
- 1 seat to be filled by the Gwynedd Secondary Headteachers Group (GSCU)

14. TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE GWYNEDD COUNCIL AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS

The report was submitted by Cllr Beca Brown

DECISION

The Agreed Syllabus for Religion, Values and Ethics was approved and adopted in accordance with the recommendation of the Education Department and the Gwynedd Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and the Welsh Government's Guidance.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that this report highlighted the change in the syllabus, which will change the traditional Religious Education into Religion, Values and Ethics Education. It was explained that the new syllabus would include non-religious philosophical viewpoints in addition to religion. This change was welcomed highlighting that it was an opportunity for young people to identify what everyone had in common and for interesting discussions about differences that would promote respect for all.

The Assistant Resources Officer added that the report was being submitted in light of establishing the Curriculum for Wales. It was noted that every authority in Wales had a legal duty to hold an Agreed Syllabus Conference to review the syllabus and it was held by Gwynedd on 15 February 2022. The unanimous decision of the Conference was to adopt the Welsh Government's Guidance on Religion, Values and Ethics.

15. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

The report was submitted by Cllr Beca Brown

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it had been a busy period for the department and that the report highlighted a range of work that was being undertaken. Although there was an attempt to bring everything together, it was stated that one theme could be seen throughout the report, namely well-being, attainment and inclusion. It was explained that this field had always been important but the pandemic had highlighted the challenges facing the county's children and young people. In light of all the challenges, it was emphasised that the Cabinet Member had been amazed at the resilience of young people and that the department was seeking to mitigate the challenges and to support the children and young people to reach their full potential.

Attention was drawn to some schemes as follows, it was noted that all schools implemented an Accelerated Learning programme as a result of the pandemic and that exceptional work was being undertaken to target the pre-school and post-16 learning period. It was emphasised that the work of transforming the Additional Learning Needs service continued and that a preparedness pre-survey showed very strong progress across the county in terms of preparations that had already been made.

There was pride in the work that had been undertaken on the Digital Strategy with an electronic device now provided to every child from years 3 to 11 in order to reduce the inequality between children, who had the freedom to take the device home with them. In terms of the Free School Meals scheme, it was stated that the county was ahead of schedule and proud that it was working.

Pride was highlighted in the Immersion Education system as several financial sources had enabled the department to commission work to create a virtual town, which would provide children with an opportunity to speak Welsh virtually before venturing to use it in the 'real world'. It was explained that this made the work of teaching the language more similar to a game rather than a lesson.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The county's young people were congratulated on their GCSE and A Level results.
- In terms of the Digital Education Strategy, it was enquired whether every child had now received their devices. It was confirmed that they had shared the final supply over the past few weeks.
- If the devices were part of the Digital Strategy, it was asked whether pupils were allowed to take them home. It was stated that the right to take them home was crucial for the scheme to ensure that every child received the same opportunity and had the opportunity to do their homework without any challenges.
- It was enquired how the Catering and Cleaning department coped with the additional requirements in terms of providing school meals across the county. It was noted that there was substantially higher demand but

considerable work had been undertaken to secure the right equipment and facilities. In terms of staffing, it was noted that the department had been able to cope with demand thus far but it was excellent to see families taking advantage of the opportunity.

16. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the member was on the whole proud to note that the performance of the department was generally good. Attention was drawn to some headings, starting with Delivering Savings. It was explained that this part of the report did not mention savings within the Finance Department but savings across the Council, and it was noted that some departments could not deliver £0.5 million of savings that were expected this year. It was stated that the settlement for 2023/24 from the Government was expected to be lower and that it was increasingly likely that it would not be possible to slip schemes in order to get a balanced financial plan. It was noted that a further report would be submitted over the next few months.

In terms of the Internal Audit Service, it was noted that capacity pressures had been an issue, but over the first few months of the year the service had been carrying out internal audits on approximately 70 Community Councils. Attention was drawn to the good work undertaken by the Taxation Service ensuring the distribution of £150 to households across the county, and it had managed to deliver it to 99% of households by the end of June. It was noted that this was the best figure in Wales. It was stated that the Council's draft Statement of Accounts had been submitted in June this year and the department's ability to complete it within such a short period of time had been astounding.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The success of the department in ensuring payments of £150 to households across the county was highlighted and that the service also deserved praise following the delivery of payments during the Covid period.
- It was stated there had been a reduction in the benefits processing period and it was enquired how long it took to process claims. It was noted that it took 13.5 days for a new claim and 5.5 days to process amendments.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 2.50 pm

CHAIRMAN



Report to a Meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 25 October 2022
Cabinet Member: Councillor Menna Jones
Contact Officer: Geraint Owen
Contact Telephone Number: 01286 679335
Title of Item: Annual Complaints and Service Improvement Report 2021/22

1. PURPOSE (DECISION SOUGHT)

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council's arrangements and performance in relation to dealing with complaints and improving services during 2021/22, highlighting successes, challenges and developments.

An analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is submitted, which is a measure of the Council's performance in this context.

The Cabinet is asked to accept the report and to offer any relevant observations or suggestions.

2. ROLE OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet is required to ensure that there are effective arrangements for dealing with complaints within the Council.

The Cabinet is invited to consider the information submitted, and offer any relevant observations or suggestions.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 Background

The Council's "Complaints and Service Improvement procedure" was introduced in 2015, drawn up under the supervision of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. It corresponds with Welsh Government guidelines and is therefore in line with the complaints procedures of other public bodies.

The Cabinet adopted the procedure with the aim of bringing specific benefits to the citizen by focusing on the solution instead of the process, and allow Officers to deal quicker with complaints.

The ownership over responding to complaints was moved to the individual Departments, but with the function of harmonizing and offering guidance continuing under the leadership of the Monitoring Officer with the support of the Service Improvement Officer.

The *Concerns and Complaints Policy* was updated on 1 April 2021, and responsibility for the implementation of the *Complaints and Service Improvement* procedure was transferred to the Corporate Support Department under the care of the *Service Improvement Officer* within the *Organisational Learning and Development* team.

It should be noted that this procedure is not relevant to Social Services users as there is a statutory procedure for them. Schools also implement their own complaints procedures.

3.2 Responding to Complaints - An explanation of the terminology that is used

3.2.1 Resolving Informal Complaints

Complainant informally contacts the Service Improvement Officer or the relevant service to resolve the concern.

3.2.2 Investigating Formal Complaints

The complaint is investigated within the relevant Department, by an officer who is senior enough and is independent from the source of the complaint.

3.2.3 Complaint to the Ombudsman

The complainant could go to the Ombudsman if they are not satisfied with the Council's formal response.

After looking at the complaint, the Ombudsman may decide on one of the following:

- *No Investigation* – where the Ombudsman is satisfied with the way the authority has dealt with the matter, and feels that there is no need for a further investigation. It could also be a matter beyond its jurisdiction.
- *Premature* - if the Ombudsman is of the opinion that the authority has not yet had an opportunity to consider the matter.
- *Hold a further investigation* - where the Ombudsman feels that further investigation is needed, to assess how the authority has dealt with the matter.
- *Settlement* – where there is an agreement with the complainant and they accept the resolution.

4. FREQUENCY OF THE REPORT

Due to the unique circumstances of the past few years, the period of reporting to the Cabinet has varied from between 6 and 12 months. The *Concerns and Complaints Policy* notes that a report should be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team every quarter and to the Cabinet twice a year and this is the intention for the future.

'Live' data is available to Heads of Department, the Senior Leadership Team and the Cabinet at any time upon request.

This Report summarises the developments for the period 01.04.2021 - 31.03.2022, focusing on Valid Formal Complaints and complaints submitted to the Ombudsman.

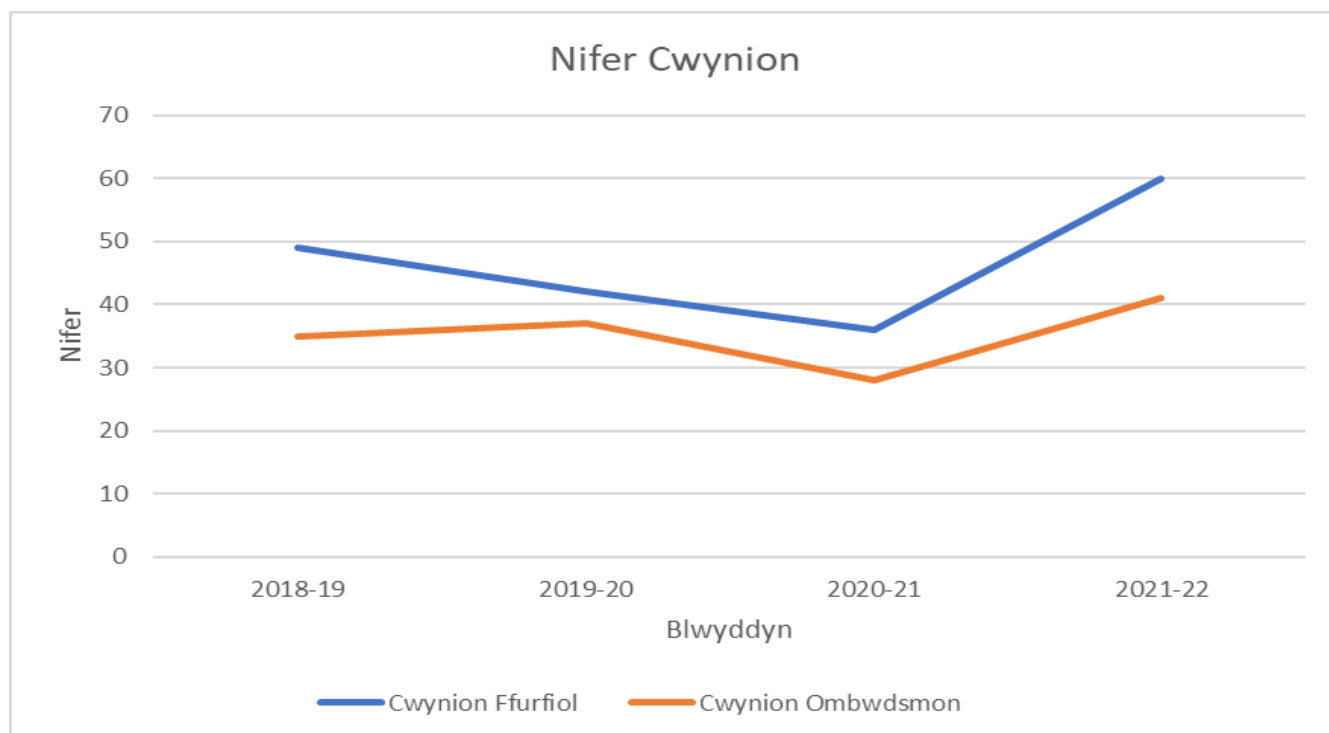
5. QUANTITATIVE DATA

5.1 Number of Complaints: Current Situation

Type of Complaints	Number 2020/21 (01/04/2020 - 31/03/2021)	Number 2021/22 (01/04/2021 - 31/03/2022)
Formal Complaints (Valid)	36	60
Complaints to the Ombudsman	28: 15 No Investigation 5 Premature 0 No response 6 Settlement 0 Enquiry 1 Investigation closed 1 Report 0 Complaint withdrawn	41: 33 No Investigation 2 Premature 0 No response 5 Settlement 0 Enquiry 0 Investigation closed 0 Report 1 Complaint withdrawn

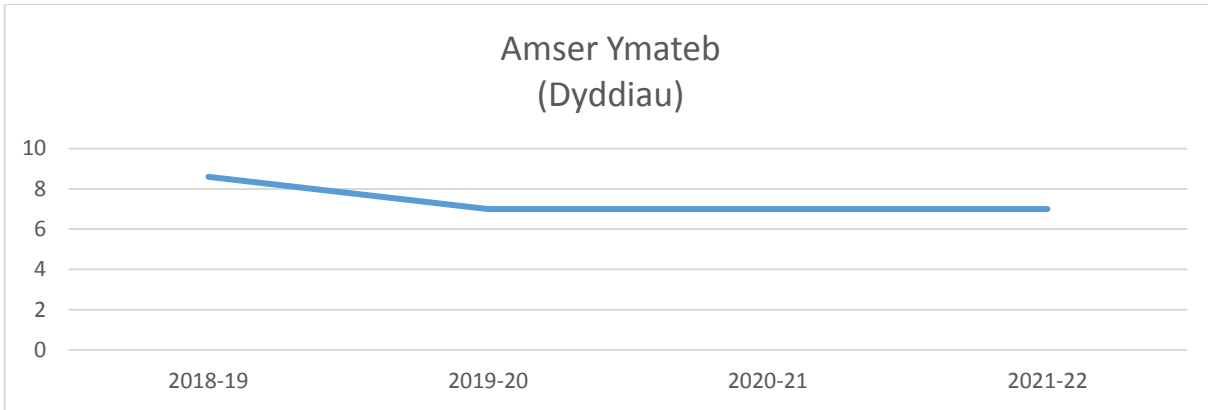
5.2 Number of complaints: Situation over a Period Since 2018-19

Type of Complaints	Number 2018-19	Number 2019-20	Number 2020-21	Number 2021-22
Valid Formal Complaints	49	42	36	60
Complaints to the Ombudsman	35	37	28	41



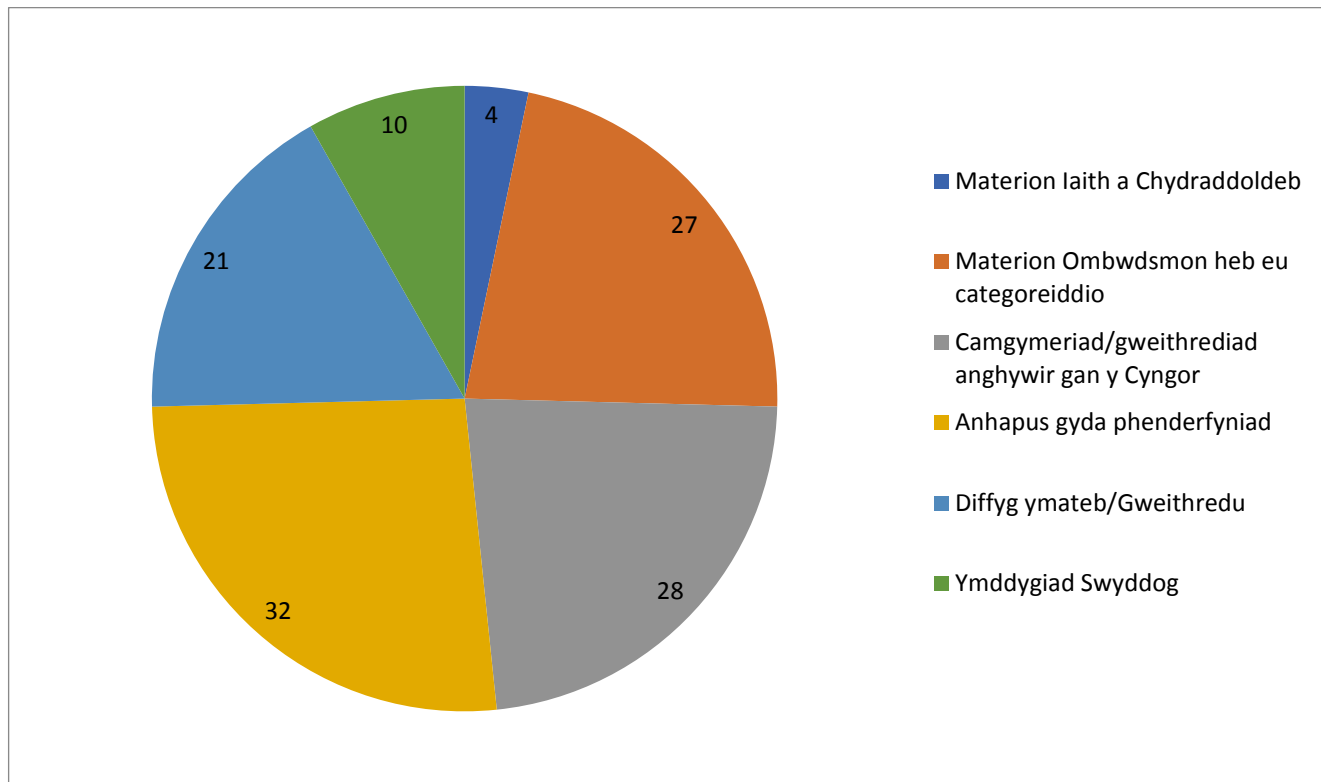
5.3 Response Time over a Period Since 2018-19

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
<i>8.6 days</i>	<i>7 days</i>	<i>7 days</i>	<i>7 days</i>

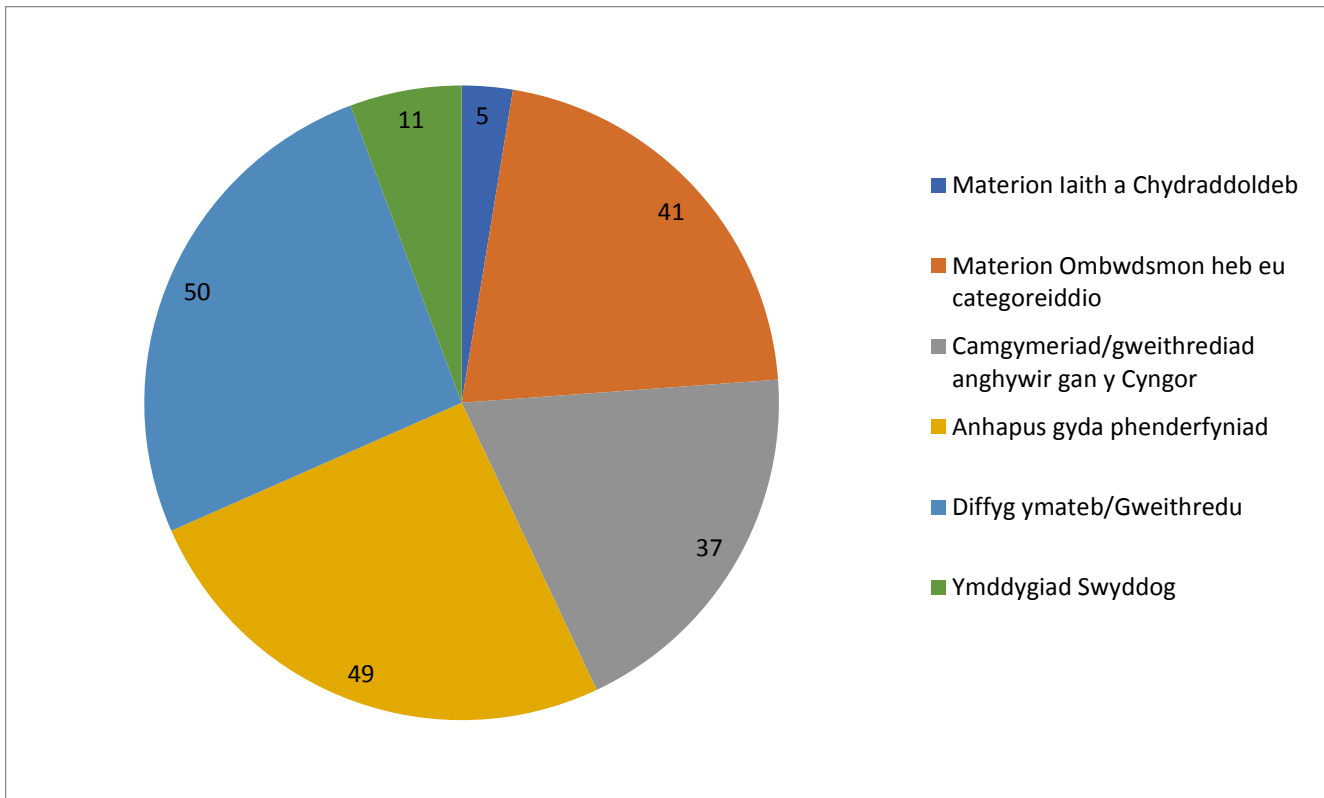


6. ANALYSIS OF THE COMPLAINTS (General)

Per Category 2020/21 Year Quarter 1 – 4



Per Category 2021/22 Year Quarter 1 – 4



Analysis per Department – See Appendix 1

Detailed information can be provided about specific Complaints if needed.

7. MAIN MESSAGES

- Initially, a reduction was seen, followed by a substantial increase in Formal Complaints during the pandemic period; however, the number of Ombudsman Complaints have remained consistent.

COMMENT: *The majority of Authorities are seeing a similar pattern (confirmed by the Ombudsman).*

- The pattern / trend over a longer period shows that the number of Formal Complaints has reduced gradually since 2018-19, but has increased recently.
- The response time has remained consistent on 7 days (8.6 days in 2018-19).
- A change in culture was seen, with Services on the whole receiving complaints in a more positive and constructive way in order to learn from them, with the response time reducing.

8. THE OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL LETTER AND NATIONAL DATA

The Ombudsman's Annual Letter (2021/22) to Gwynedd Council has just been received (**Appendix 2**).

The letter is intended to assist members to scrutinise the Council's complaints performance and identify any steps to be taken as a result.

As requested in the letter, we will:

- Engage with the Ombudsman's Complaints Standards work
- Give training to staff
- Provide data on complaints
- Inform the Ombudsman about the outcome of considerations and proposed Council actions in relation to the above matters by 30 September

As it was not possible to report to the Cabinet before this, a message has already been sent to the Ombudsman to explain the situation. Please note the reporting dates and our actions, in order to ensure that we comply with the requirements of the Annual Letter.

National data was published by the Ombudsman's Office as appendices to the Annual Letter, which summarises the Complaints figures reported by Welsh Authorities.

We contacted the Ombudsman Officer to ask for an interpretation of the figures. They welcomed our enquiry and noted that they wished for every Authority to consider the data as carefully as we do.

The following was noted (verbally):

- The table should not be considered as a 'league table'
- The low numbers do not mean that Councils are better than those with higher numbers, and it was possible that Councils did not record their complaints in the same way
- Gwynedd's figures appear to be realistic
- The complaints procedure in Gwynedd is obviously working, and we are ready to learn lessons from Complaints

9. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE/NEXT STEPS

For information, the situation to date this year is -

- 20 Valid Formal Complaints between 01/04/22 and 31/08/22
- 15 Ombudsman Complaints between 01/04/22 and 31/08/22

(11 No Investigation; 2 No Investigation – Premature; 1 Settlement; 1 Investigation)

Due to the way that the Ombudsman's Office records its data, the fact that the Recycling and Waste Service is transferring to the Environment Service will make it easier to reconcile figures with the Ombudsman's Annual Letter from now on. Previously, considerable analysis work had to be done as we were unfortunately unable to record them in the same manner.

We have collaborated closely with the Ombudsman Office's Training Officer on the development of 'Customer Care' training, by using complaints as a learning tool. We received very positive feedback from the attendees of the pilot course and a further session that was held, and a programme of dates are in place for the year to come.

We intend to continue to work with Departmental management teams and officers within the Service to ensure an understanding of the Complaints procedure and their commitment to implement them. In light of this, we hope to reduce the time we take to respond to Complaints, and continue to improve services.

Work is currently underway to create new "Responding to Correspondence" Training, as a recent investigation into this has highlighted that not everyone appreciates the importance of a timely response.

The Successes Wall is still growing, and it is very good to see that a large number of Thanks/Compliments have come in from the public. Seeing the public's appreciation is a great help in raising staff morale, especially front-line staff.

10. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer:

It's incorporated into the Complaints process that the Cabinet receives reports on the Councils complaints arrangements from the perspective of maintaining the quality of services. With the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – Section 115 giving the Audit and Governance Committee the function of reviewing and assessing the authority's ability to handle complaints effectively the arrangements will need to be reviewed to address this change.

Head of Finance Department:

Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety

APPENDIX 1

	DEPARTMENT	SERVICE	PERIOD	CATEGORY OF COMPLAINT	NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT / OBSTACLE	LESSONS LEARNT	RESPONSE TO THE COMPLAINANT	SERVICE IMPROVEMENT STEPS	OBSERVATIONS Please note that the Complaints have been noted under a "Category", not necessarily because their nature are all exactly the same
1	Housing and Property	Housing	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer felt she was let down as she had not received any response to her request for a house from the Housing Options team. No way of speaking to the relevant officer - left messages but the officer did not call back.	Need to maintain regular contact with clients to ensure they are aware of any developments or changes in circumstances.	Apologised to the customer for the lack of timely response and explained the situation. Assured the customer that the officer in question was in the best position to deal with her application as he/she was aware of her background and situation. Offer a meeting with the customer and other officers to try to progress the matter. Updated the customer that her application was on the system and which Band she was in.	Staff to create reminders on 'Outlook' calendars - to remind them to contact clients at least once every three weeks. Staff allocate time every day to respond to phone calls and enquiries. Carry out a full 'Service Review', and study the steps in providing a service - after an application from a homeless client.	10 complaints under this category
2	Housing and Property	Housing	01/04/2021- 31/03/2022	Behaviour of an Officer	Customer unhappy with how she was treated on the phone after contacting the Service.	Need to ensure that staff provide the best Customer Care that they can at all times. We must be sensitive to the customer's feelings and show empathy when possible, although, at times, we understand that customers can be beyond challenging.	The Service's Senior Manager has sent to the customer, apologising for the delayed response and explaining that the Manager is currently off sick and that he will get back to her as soon as he will be back in work. After returning to work, the Manager responded to the customer, again, he apologised for the poor customer care service received. Also offered for her to appeal against the decision if she so wished. Note that he had committed for all staff in turn to attend the Customer Care training available from the Organisational Learning and Development Service.	The Service Manager enquired about Customer Care Training for his staff and arranged for them to commit to attending this Training in turn.	1 complaint under this category
3	Housing and Property	Housing	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	Customer complaining about the correct operation from the Homelessness and Housing Options Services in relation to her application for a property. Therefore, she feels that she has lost out on being on a list for	Continue to review the implementation of the relevant National Policies in the field on a regular basis. Ensure that the grant payments are still	Senior Manager contacted the customer to give her assurance that the matter is being addressed by the Service. The Policies and/or relevant links to the National Policies was sent to the customer. The Officer responded to the customer explaining that a grant	Need to ensure that customer grant payments are still being paid without delay when an emergency situation arises.	1 complaint under this category

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					more than one house. Customer drew in an officer from Shelter and her Member of Parliament into the matter as well. Also, enquired about a grant payment she was promised.	being arranged urgently for customers if they genuinely need them.	payment was on the way to her. The customer was dissatisfied with the response she received therefore she took her complaint forward to the Ombudsman. The matter is currently being addressed by the Ombudsman.		
4	Finance	Revenue and Income	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer complained about no response to their correspondence from the Service for over three months.	Everyone to seek to ensure that correspondence is acknowledged and responded to within a realistic timetable, seeking to comply with the Council's Responding to Correspondence Policy	The Assistant Head of the Service investigated and offered a full apology to the customer for the lack of response. Also explained the situation on Council Tax to him in full and clearly.	Everyone to try to respond at the first opportunity to correspondence from customers. If it is not possible to respond in full soon for whatever reason, then another acknowledgement should be sent to the one that is sent immediately from the system, explaining that the matter is being addressed.	3 complaints under this category
5	Finance	Income and Revenue	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	Customer complained that she received a summons due to a mistake on the Service's behalf	There is a need to remind staff to be careful and take a step back sometimes when they act and place themselves in the customer's shoes.	The Assistant Head of the Service and the relevant Manager within the Service investigated the matter and realised there was an error in the account. Have explained this to the customer and have sincerely apologised for the mistake and the hurt caused.	Remind staff of the implications of such mistakes. Ask them all to be very careful when making any changes to avoid such complaints in future.	5 complaints under this category
Page 23	Economy and Community	Maritime	01/04/2021 - 31/03/2022	Language and Equality matters	A complaint was received by a customer who used a "mobility" scooter to get around. His complaint was that he was unable to access beaches. Where he was able to have access, he was not able to take dogs there.		The Manager responded to the customer explaining the Beach Access Policy. Explaining that it was possible to access all beaches but 2 at the moment. Note also that the Policy was about to be reviewed therefore the situation might change.	An Equality Assessment is usually carried out when making Policies.	1 complaint under this category
	Economy and Community	Maritime	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Unhappy with a decision	Customer complained immediately to the Head of Service as he had received an invoice to pay launching fees. He did not believe that he was required to pay the fees in question and indeed he believed that GDPR rules had been breached, as he alleged that a member of staff had shared his details with another Service. Also, he complained about the lack of response received to his previous correspondence to the Service.	Although no GDPR rules had been breached, it was good to remind everyone of the rules in question. Also, it was important to remind the staff of the necessity to keep to the requirements of Responding to Correspondence, which is to acknowledge within 7 days and respond within 15 working days where possible. If unable to keep to the timetable, then a further note to be sent out after the	Service Manager has investigated the various complaints in full. There were no grounds to the GDPR complaint, since the details are clear on the company's website, therefore, no rules had been breached in this case. The Manager apologised for the lack of response to the previous correspondence, admitting that the Service had failed on this occasion. Also, a full explanation had been offered to the customer regarding the reasoning behind having to pay launch fees.	Reminded staff of the necessity to comply with the Responding to Correspondence Policy. Also, staff reminded of GDPR rules.	1 complaint under this category

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						acknowledgement note to the customer, to give an update on the situation.			
8	Education	Learning Disabilities	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Officer Conduct	A complaint from a customer that an officer called at her home without notice and no appointment. Noted that she had not received any correspondence on the matter.	Arrange to e-mail customer if appropriate from now on to avoid such problems again of no letters reaching them.	An officer from the Service contacted the customer to apologise for any hurt caused by the matter for her and her family. Explained that a letter was sent out and apologised that she did not receive the letter for some reason.	Arranged to contact the customer via e-mail from now on to avoid any further difficulties with the post. The officer also offered to arrange meetings on Teams at a time that would be convenient for both parties.	1 complaint under this category
9	Education	Learning Disabilities and Schools	01/04/2021- 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	A customer complaint that they did not feel that a School Headteacher and Governing Body were doing enough to assist her with a problem she was having of children bothering her during school time and outside school hours. Therefore, she contacted the Council through the Complaints procedure to escalate her complaint as the School procedure had failed.	The need for officers in the Service to accept and understand there was a Corporate Complaints procedure in place and they needed to comply with that procedure when a complaint arrives and where the School procedure has failed to address it.	Officer from the Service went back to the customer explaining that there was a new Policy in place at the School and suggested that she should follow the procedure again and resubmit her complaint. The new Headteacher at the School is seeking to move the matter forward. The Head of Service has also taken an interest in the matter and has contacted the customer to apologise for the previous misunderstanding relating to her complaint.	Need to ensure that the Officers understand the Corporate Concerns and Complaints procedure and realise that the procedure is there for a reason to assist both sides to reach a solution and to identify opportunities to Improve Service.	3 complaints under this category
10	Education	Schools	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Unhappy with a decision	Parent unhappy with the fact that her son does not receive interim alternative education as he is unable to attend school. Felt they were being let down by the Service.	Need to realise the needs of every child, something that suits most might not suit everyone.	The Service explained to the customer that they will arrange for all officers involved with the case to convene after the holiday period to what support would be best for the family	Ensure that the Service realises the importance of supporting families. Try to arrange better communications with families if they are uncertain of their requirements.	2 complaints under this category
11	Environment	Planning	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer complaining about the lack of response from the Enforcement Service	Need to ensure that files are opened for every case on time	The Assistant Head has arranged an investigation and has sincerely apologised to the customer for the lack of response. Explained that it was an in-house error but that the matter has now been corrected. Also explained that the Service was unfortunately under immense work pressure.	Have arranged for an external expert provider to follow up on the matter in order to address the matter soon and offer a solution to the customer.	8 complaints under this category
12	Environment	Footpaths	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	A complaint from a customer that they were not told about a footpath development crossing their land. Council officers had not consulted them on the matter	Realise the importance of engaging with everyone when such a case affects them	Service Manager has contacted the customer and apologised sincerely for the lack of engagement in this case. Noted that he would ensure that the relevant officer would contact the customer at the first available opportunity after returning from annual leave	Seek to ensure that such a situation does not happen again by reminding relevant staff of the importance of engagement.	1 complaint under this category
13	Environment	Transport	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Unhappy with a Decision	A Taxi Company had presented the matter under a procurement arrangement to the complaints procedure.	The matter was referred to the appropriate process and a response was	Head has contacted the customer explaining the situation and the requirements of the tendering process.	Procurement and Transportation have been reviewing the tendering process to ensure that the documentation is clearer from now on.	1 complaint under this category

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						provided to the company.			
14	Environment	Transport	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Language and Equality matters	Customer complaining that the taxi taking his child to school and back was changed at short notice. Due to the type of special needs the child has, these changes created serious problems for them as a family.	Realise the importance of contacting customers in every case, as something that might appear trivial to one person could cause a serious problem for someone else	The Service contacted the customer and has apologised for the problems caused due to the tendering process that took place. Noted that there were deficiencies in the procedure and that they, alongside the Procurement Unit, were reviewing the process with the intention of improving it.	Reviewed the tendering arrangements to ensure that no such problems would arise again. Discuss extending the tendering period to three years from now on.	1 complaint under this category
15	Environment	Licensing	01/04/2021- 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	Customer complaining that his personal details had been shared with others by the Service and thus breaching GDPR Rules.	Service had referred itself to the Data Protection Officer for an investigation immediately when the error had been identified. Staff need to be reminded of the implications of GDPR and the need to send a hidden copy (BCC) if sending an e-mail to many at the same time.	The Service Manager sent an apology to everyone involved with this at the first opportunity once the Service realised that a mistake had happened. Also had explained to them that the Service had contacted the Data Protection Officer voluntarily, asking her to investigate the situation regarding the GDPR breach. Data Protection Officer had confirmed that she had conducted a full investigation and intending to revisit the matter again within 3 months to ensure that things have improved.	Need to remind everyone of the importance of complying with the Data Protection Act. No breaching the conditions of the Act, etc. Also asked staff whether they had made a mistake in order to be able to look at the situation immediately.	1 complaint under this category
Page 25	Adults, Health and Well-being	Adults	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Officer Conduct	Care Providers complaining about the behaviour of an officer and the lack of further communication with them on the matters they raised.	Need to ensure better communication with Service Providers.	Customer Care Officer has investigated the matter and contacted the customer to apologise for any defects in the system. And noted that they had learnt lessons from the complaint.	Record that calling the Provider to discuss a matter was often better than sending an e-mail. It would be good practice to confirm the conversation/relevant points on e-mail as a follow up.	1 complaint under this category
17	Adults, Health and Well-being	Adults	01/04/2021- 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	The customer felt that the Service was not giving the family enough clarity on financial matters when arranging a support package for a member of the family.	Need to ensure in the future that a robust procedure is in place to discuss financial matters like this with the family at the first opportunity, to avoid another similar complaint.	Customer Care Officer has investigated the matter in full and apologised for any lack of discussion and explaining to the customer what had happened. Customer got back to say thanks for the response and explanation, and saying that he was satisfied with the response but asked the Service to seek to ensure that this did not happen to anyone again.	Head of Service thanked everyone who was involved in the investigation/response. He certainly saw this as an opportunity to learn lessons and prevent similar complaints in the future. Therefore, he would be asking the Senior Managers to ensure that a clear message about the need to explain and discuss the financial elements in full with individuals and/or families being shared with all relevant staff within a fortnight.	1 complaint under this category
18	Highways and Municipal	PAB	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer complaining about the lack of response from the Highways Service He was waiting for an answer about work that was being carried out near his home.	Ensure that officers were trying to get back to customers at the first opportunity after investigating their enquiries /concerns/complaints	The matter was passed to the Service in the first instance through Galw Gwynedd. Due to the lack of response from the Service the matter turned into a complaint. Area manager contacted the customer to find a solution to the situation.	Remind everyone of the importance of responding to customers promptly.	7 complaints in this category


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19	Highways and Municipal	PAB	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Mistake/incorrect action by the Service	Customer complaining that she still has not received waste and recycling equipment despite requesting it some time ago.	Ensure that the equipment that is available is distributed at the first opportunity. Realise the importance of always letting the customer know what is happening	The Manager has arranged an investigation and has responded to the customer and apologised that she did not receive the equipment sooner. He explained to the customer that there was a shortage of some equipment at the moment due to the demand for them but he note that this was not an excuse and she should have received what was available as soon as possible.	Try to ensure that the equipment is consistently available so that customers do not have to wait a long time for them. Ensure also if not all of the items on the order are available at the same time, the remainder should be delivered and the customer notified when to expect to receive the items on the order.	4 complaints in this category
20	Highways and Municipal	PAB	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Officer conduct	Customer complaining that two recycling lorries had parked on the road side by side, and it appeared that the crews were chatting. According to the customer, this caused a hazardous situation for other people who were trying to travel on the road.	Ensure that staff are reminded of relevant policies in terms of behaviour etc.	Team Leader contacted the customer and apologised for the situation. Explained the reason why this situation had arisen and also confirmed that the staff had been reminded about road safety, etc.	Seek to ensure that no such incident happens again. Although the crews were trying to help each other out after changes in the routes, they should not have stopped side by side on the highway to discuss this and thus creating a hazardous situation for themselves and to others.	2 complaints in this category
21	Highways and Municipal	PAB	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Unhappy with a Decision	Complaint received by a customer who noted that she and her neighbours have been complaining about bins being left out on the pavements from one week to the next by residents. This was attracting seagulls etc. to the street. The matter has been ongoing for over two years.	Try to educate residents to take responsibility to recycle more and to put away their bins after collections. Remember to update customers on developments	Waste and Streetcare Service has worked on a solution for the situation. They have corresponded with the residents and issued a notice that if the bins are not put away then the Council will take them from the street on a specific date. This has been followed up.	If there is a similar problem in another location, look back to see what worked well and take the same steps if needed. Remember to keep in touch with the customers.	1 complaint in this category
22	Highways and Municipal	PAB	01/04/2021 – 31/03/2022	Language and Equality matters	A complaint was received from a customer as the facilities in the men's toilets were unsuitable for baby changing. This was in breach of Equality regulations.	Try to ensure that the Service complies with equality rules from now on by providing resources where possible. Realise the importance of going back to customers to give them an update on the situation	The Service has offered an apology to the customer for the lack of facilities and explained there was a Strategy in the pipeline to include resources in more toilets in future. It was also unfortunate that not all buildings are suitable to install such equipment due to the type of building, the age of the building etc. It was explained that some toilets were now under the care of Community Councils.	Ensure that officers realise the importance of following up on matters and updating the customer regularly on any developments.	2 complaints in this category
23	Corporate Support	Customer Contact	01/04/2021 - 31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer complaining about how she was treated on the phone by a staff member of the Service. She was passed from one officer to the next.	There was a need to remind all staff of their behaviour on the phone with customers. Also to remind them what to do in such circumstances in case a similar situation happens again.	The manager contacted the customer on the phone in the first place and apologised for the situation. Explained to the customer that the self-service system was in place to make the type of payment they mentioned on the day. The Service only receives such payments in times of emergency. The Service had not been notified that there were problems with the system by another Service and therefore the message was	Team Leader to contact the relevant Service to seek to get better communication to avoid the same from happening again. Should the Service have been notified of the problems they would have been more prepared for the situation. Ensure that all staff are trained on what to do with the system in such a situation.	1 complaint in this category


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							not shared with the staff to say that they might receive enquiries on the matter.		
24	Legal	Legal	01/04/2021-31/03/2022	Lack of response/action	Customer complaining about the lack of response from the Service to four pieces of correspondence he had sent to them	Reminding all staff about the importance of getting back to the customer with a regular update if they were unable to respond in full	After receiving 4 reminders from the SIO, the Head of Service confirmed that a response had been sent out to the customer.	Seek to ensure better communication within the Service with the customers. Reminding them of the Responding to Correspondence Policy and the Responding to Concerns and Complaints Policy.	1 complaint under this category

Ask for: Communications

 01656 641150

Date: August 2022

 communications@ombudsman.wales

Cllr. Dyfrig L. Siencyn

Gwynedd Council

By Email only: cynghorydd.dyfrigsiencyn@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Annual Letter 2021/22

Dear Councillor Siencyn

I am pleased to provide you with the Annual letter (2021/22) for Gwynedd Council which deals with complaints relating to maladministration and service failure, complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Councillors and the actions being taken to improve public services

This is my first annual letter since taking up the role of Public Services Ombudsman in April 2022, and I appreciate that the effects of the pandemic are still being felt by all public bodies in Wales. Our office has not been immune from this, with records numbers of cases being referred to us over the last two years. The strong working relationships between my Office and local authorities continues to deliver improvements in how we are dealing with complaints and ensuring that, when things go wrong, we are learning from that and building stronger public services.

Complaints relating to Maladministration & Service Failure

Last year the number of complaints referred to us regarding Local Authorities increased by 47% (compared to 20/21 figures) and are now well above pre-pandemic levels. It is likely that complaints to my office, and public services in general, were suppressed during the pandemic, and we are now starting to see the expected 'rebound' effect.

During this period, we intervened in (upheld, settled or resolved at an early stage) a similar proportion of complaints about public bodies, 18%, when compared with recent years. Intervention rates (where we have investigated complaints) for Local Authorities also remained at a similar level – 14% compared to 13% in recent years.

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Complaints relating to the Code of Conduct for Councillors

We also received a high number of Code of Conduct complaints last year, relating to both Principal Councils and Town and Community Councils. A record number (20) were referred to either the Adjudication Panel for Wales or local standards committees, due to evidence of a breach of the Code.

Supporting improvement of public services

In addition to managing record levels of complaints, we also continued our work using our proactive powers in the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2019. Specifically undertaking our first Own Initiative Investigation and continuing our work on the Complaints Standards Authority.

October 2021 saw the publication of the first own initiative investigation in Wales: [Homelessness Reviewed](#). The investigation featured three Local Authorities and sought to scrutinise the way Homelessness assessments were conducted. The report made specific recommendations to the investigated authorities, as well as suggestions to all other Local Authorities in Wales and Welsh Government. Some of these recommendations will bring about immediate change – updating factsheets and letter and assessment templates to ensure that key equality and human rights considerations are routinely embedded into processes for example – all the recommendations were designed to bring about tangible change to people using homelessness services in Wales.

The Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) continued its work with public bodies in Wales last year. The model complaints policy has already been adopted by local authorities and health boards in Wales, we have now extended this to an initial tranche of Housing Associations and Natural Resources Wales. The aim being to implement this work across the Welsh public sector.

In addition to this, the CSA published information on complaints handled by local authorities for the [first time](#) – a key achievement for this work. The data for 21/22 showed:

- Over 15,000 complaints were recorded by Local Authorities
- 4.88 for every 1000 residents.
- Nearly half (46%) of those complaints were upheld.
- About 75% were investigated within 20 working days.
- About 8% of all complaints closed ended up being referred to PSOW.

The CSA has now implemented a model complaints policy with nearly 50 public bodies, and delivered 140 training sessions, completely free of charge, during the last financial year. The feedback has been excellent, and the training has been very popular - so I would encourage Gwynedd Council to engage as fully as possible.

Complaints made to the Ombudsman

A summary of the complaints of maladministration/service failure received relating to your Council is attached, along with a summary of the Code of Conduct complaints relating to members of the Council and the Town & Community Councils in your area.

In light of the new duties on political leaders and standards committees to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members, we look forward to working with you, your Monitoring Officer and standards committees to share any learning from the complaints we receive and to support your authority's work.

I would also welcome feedback on your Governance & Audit Committee's review of your authority's ability to handle complaints effectively so that we can take this into account in our work and support its work on the handling of complaints.

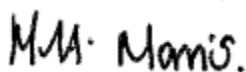
Finally, can I thank you and your officials for the positive way that local authorities have engaged with my Office to enable us to deliver these achievements during what has been a challenging year for everyone. I very much look forward to continuing this work and collaboration to ensure we further improve public services across Wales.

Further to this letter can I ask that your Council takes the following actions:

- Present my Annual Letter to the Cabinet and to the Governance & Audit Committee to assist members in their scrutiny of the Council's performance and share any feedback from the Cabinet and the Governance & Audit Committee with my office.
- Continue to engage with our Complaints Standards work, accessing training for your staff, fully implementing the model policy, and providing complaints data.
- Inform me of the outcome of the Council's considerations and proposed actions on the above matters by 30 September.

This correspondence is copied to the Chief Executive of your Council and to your Contact Officer. Finally, a copy of all Annual Letters will be published on my website.

Yours sincerely,



Michelle Morris

Public Services Ombudsman

cc. Dafydd Gibbard, Chief Executive, Gwynedd Council.

By Email only: dafyddgibbard@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

Factsheet

Appendix A - Complaints Received

Local Authority	Complaints Received	Received per 1000 residents
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	14	0.20
Bridgend County Borough Council	55	0.37
Caerphilly County Borough Council	60	0.33
Cardiff Council*	182	0.50
Carmarthenshire County Council	54	0.29
Ceredigion County Council	52	0.72
Conwy County Borough Council	27	0.23
Denbighshire County Council	34	0.36
Flintshire County Council	99	0.63
Gwynedd Council	39	0.31
Isle of Anglesey County Council	29	0.41
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	27	0.45
Monmouthshire County Council	20	0.21
Neath Port Talbot Council	45	0.31
Newport City Council	40	0.26
Pembrokeshire County Council	39	0.31
Powys County Council	55	0.42
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	51	0.21
Swansea Council	71	0.29
Torfaen County Borough Council	18	0.19
Vale of Glamorgan Council	61	0.46
Wrexham County Borough Council	71	0.52
Total	1143	0.36

* inc 17 Rent Smart Wales

Appendix B - Received by Subject

Gwynedd Council	Complaints Received	% Share
Adult Social Services	1	3%
Benefits Administration	0	0%
Children's Social Services	0	0%
Community Facilities, Recreation and Leisure	1	3%
Complaints Handling	7	18%
Covid19	6	15%
Education	2	5%
Environment and Environmental Health	1	3%
Finance and Taxation	9	23%
Housing	5	13%
Licensing	0	0%
Planning and Building Control	7	18%
Roads and Transport	0	0%
Various Other	0	0%
Total	39	

Appendix C - Complaint Outcomes (* denotes intervention)

County/County Borough Councils	Out of Jurisdiction	Premature	Other cases closed after initial consideration	Early Resolution/ voluntary settlement*	Discontinued	Other Reports- Not Upheld	Other Reports Upheld*	Public Interest Report*	Total
Gwynedd Council	10	8	17	5	0	0	1	0	41
% Share	24%	20%	41%	12%	0%	0%	2%	0%	

Appendix D - Cases with PSOW Intervention

	No. of interventions	No. of closures	% of interventions
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	0	13	0%
Bridgend County Borough Council	7	54	13%
Caerphilly County Borough Council	7	58	12%
Cardiff Council	45	159	28%
Cardiff Council - Rent Smart Wales	1	16	6%
Carmarthenshire County Council	7	49	14%
Ceredigion County Council	13	46	28%
Conwy County Borough Council	2	24	8%
Denbighshire County Council	4	33	12%
Flintshire County Council	15	94	16%
Gwynedd Council	6	41	15%
Isle of Anglesey County Council	3	28	11%
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	2	26	8%
Monmouthshire County Council	2	21	10%
Neath Port Talbot Council	5	45	11%
Newport City Council	4	36	11%
Pembrokeshire County Council	2	40	5%
Powys County Council	7	55	13%
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	3	45	7%
Swansea Council	10	76	13%
Torfaen County Borough Council	2	20	10%
Vale of Glamorgan Council	9	62	15%
Wrexham County Borough Council	4	67	6%
Total	160	1108	14%

Appendix E - Code of Conduct Complaints

County/County Borough Councils	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Gwynedd Council	1	2	1	1	0	0	5

Appendix F - Town/Community Council Code of Complaints

Town/Community Council	Discontinued	No evidence of breach	No action necessary	Refer to Adjudication Panel	Refer to Standards Committee	Withdrawn	Total
Bangor City Council	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Caernarfon (Royal Town) Council	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Llanbedrog Community Council	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Penrhyndeudraeth Town Council	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Porthmadog Town Council	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Tywyn Town Council	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Information Sheet

Appendix A shows the number of complaints received by PSOW for all Local Authorities in 2021/2022. These complaints are contextualised by the number of people each health board reportedly serves.

Appendix B shows the categorisation of each complaint received, and what proportion of received complaints represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix C shows outcomes of the complaints which PSOW closed for the Local Authority in 2021/2022. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix D shows Intervention Rates for all Local Authorities in 2021/2022. An intervention is categorised by either an upheld complaint (either public interest or non-public interest), an early resolution, or a voluntary settlement.

Appendix E shows the outcomes of Code Of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Local Authority in 2021/2022. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for the Local Authority.

Appendix F shows the outcomes of Code of Conduct complaints closed by PSOW related to Town and Community Councils in the Local Authority's area. This table shows both the volume, and the proportion that each outcome represents for each Town or Community Council.

Agenda Item 7

CYNGOR GWYNEDD'S CABINET

Meeting Date:	25 October 2022
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Ioan Thomas
Contact Officer:	Bleddyn Jones, Taxation Manager Catrin Thomas, Assistant Head Supporting Families
Contact Number:	01286 682684
Item Title:	Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme

DECISION SOUGHT

Adoption of the Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme included in Appendix 1.

REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

Background

1. As part of the Welsh Government's Supplementary Budget on 15 February 2022, it was announced that a scheme would be put in place to support households with the cost of living by providing a payment of £150 to certain households. Although this was the Government's scheme, local authorities were expected to administer it as eligibility was based on the Council Tax status of the property.
2. In order to qualify for payment under the scheme a household had to meet one of the following conditions, as set by the Welsh Government:

A: Council Tax Reduction Scheme entitlement condition

If the householder(s) was in receipt of support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme on 15 February 2022, they are automatically assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 regardless of the valuation band in which their property is placed.

B: Council Tax Band condition

Households occupying properties in council tax Bands A to D are assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 provided they satisfy all of the following criteria:

- *liable for council tax on a property on 15 February 2022*
- *not in receipt of an exemption for that property on 15 February 2022*

- *living in that property as their main or primary residence on 15 February 2022*
 - *responsible for paying the associated utility and other regularly incurred bills for that property on 15 February 2022.*
3. The Council's Taxation Service has administered these payments by distributing them either as a direct payment to bank accounts if we already had that information (i.e. Council Tax is paid by direct debit) or, where we did not have the bank account information, a bespoke letter containing a unique code was sent to the households so that the resident could receive their money at a Post Office.
 4. Through a combination of direct payments to the bank and payments at the post offices, by 30 June the Taxation Service had assisted in distributing £150 each to 39,486 eligible households within Gwynedd. This was approximately 99% of eligible households, and work has continued to identify and communicate with the remaining 1%.
 5. Apart from the above, the Welsh Government has also provided local authorities with a discretionary fund of £25m. This will allow councils to help people they deem in need of support, by providing discretionary support as deemed appropriate to address local needs.

RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR REACHING THE DECISION

6. A decision is sought to implement Gwynedd Council's Optional Living Support Scheme which is a combination of the following:
 - Payments of £150 based on Council Tax
 - Funding the Supporting People Hub Network and Food banks
7. The Network of Gwynedd Supporting People Hubs and Foodbanks has seen an increase in demand since March 2022; with more people using them for access to emergency fuel vouchers, essential household goods and food or feeding provision. Foodbank uptake has increased and they have all reported the challenges of obtaining adequate stock to greet the increase. The number of referrals to the Foodbanks and to the Citizens Advice Service continues to increase. We are keen to use local networks within our communities to ensure that people have easy access to services, advice and vouchers and food provision. Glyndwr University's evaluation of the network impact of hubs in 2022 has shown that people are more willing to seek help, and receive it, if it is available in an informal, community and local setting to them.

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

8. Each local authority needs to decide how it will use the available funding. In developing the Gwynedd local plan, a basic principle was to extend the scheme to provide support to those residents who would have been eligible to receive £150 under the original master plan, but that the Council Tax account was exempt due to the individual's personal circumstances, but still face serious challenges in paying for food, heating etc. Cyngor Gwynedd's proposed Discretionary Scheme therefore extends this support to households receiving exemptions and discounts relating to individual / family vulnerability or a financial situation where household circumstances limit the taxpayer's income. These exceptions are:

- Class N exception– property occupied by full-time students
- Class S Exception – Property occupied by under-18s
- Class U Exception – Property occupied by residents that have been identified as having a "Severe Mental Impairment"
- Class W Exception – Annex occupied by dependent relatives under conditions
- Class X Exemption – Individuals under 25 who have left care
- Band F-I Property which is eligible to a band reduction due to disability
- Band E-I Property where there is a discount due to "Severe Mental Impairment"
- Band E-I Property where there is a discount due to care responsibility
- Band E-I Property where the second person is an 18 or 19 year-old in education
- Band E-I Property Eligible for Single Resident Discount

9. **Further details of the Discretionary Scheme to make payments of £150 based on Council Tax can be found in Appendix 1.**

10. It is estimated that the costs of this element of the Optional Scheme will be as follows:

Exemption / Discount / Disregard	Number	Amount
Class N exception– property occupied by full-time students	1,061	£159,150.00
Class S Exception – Property occupied by under-18s	12	£1,800.00
Class U Exception – Property occupied by residents that have been identified as having a "Severe Mental Impairment"	272	£40,800.00
Class W Exception – Annex occupied by dependent relatives under conditions	18	£2,700.00
Class X Exemption – Individuals under 25 who have left care	25	£3,750.00

Band F-I Property which is eligible to a band reduction due to disability	33	£4,950.00
Band E-I Property where there is a discount due to "Severe Mental Impairment"	62	£9,300.00
Band E-I Property where there is a discount due to care responsibility	74	£11,100.00
Band E-I Property where the second person is an 18 or 19 year-old in education	32	£4,800.00
Band E-I Property Eligible for Single Resident Discount	2,654	£398,100.00
Estimated total based on Council Tax data		£636,450.00

Supporting People Hub Network

11. In addition to the £150 payments to individuals, the conditions of the Discretionary Scheme allow local authorities to use a proportion of the money to fund external bodies that support individuals experiencing dire challenges from the cost of living crisis. Accordingly, therefore, £300,000 of the scheme is planned to be transferred for use by the Supporting People Hub Network located across Gwynedd. This will be for the provision of food and household goods support, advice and support on personal finance and small 'one time' emergency payments.
12. It is mandatory that this money is spent / shared out within the current financial year.
13. The groups funded through the Supporting People Hub Network will have to account for the expenditure in line with their normal monitoring processes. The Welsh Government has established the Discretionary Scheme in order to provide financial support to those households excluded from the original scheme, but also to provide support to Wales' most vulnerable households based on their characteristics.
14. The Finance Department has discussed the most effective use of this funding with colleagues in the Anti-Poverty Unit within the Children and Family Support Department.
15. **Further details of the Discretionary Scheme can be found in Appendix 1.**

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

16. An Equality Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 2. The outcome of the Assessment is that there will be a positive overall impact from the implementation of the scheme, although it is not believed that this positive impact will be significant due to the financial amounts involved. The financial support (individual payments of £150) provided does not meet the gap households face as a result of rising costs.
 17. The impact assessment has not identified any negative impacts on any protected groups or cohorts of the population, so there will be no need to take steps to reduce or mitigate such a situation.
-

OPINION OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

Monitoring Officer

It is appropriate that the Cabinet considers the appropriate way of awarding these particular payments. It is noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and regard should be had to its findings in coming to a decision.

Head of Finance

I have worked with the Cabinet Member to prepare this report and I confirm the accuracy of the content.

Local Member(s) – Not applicable

Gwynedd Council Cost of Living Support Scheme (COLSS) Discretionary Fund

As part of the Welsh Government's Supplementary Budget on 15 February 2022, it was announced that a scheme would be put in place to support households with the cost of living by providing a payment of £150 to certain households. Although this was a Government scheme, local authorities were expected to administer it as eligibility was based on the Council Tax status of the property.

In order to qualify for payment under the scheme a household had to meet one of the following conditions, as set by the Welsh Government:

Council Tax Reduction Scheme entitlement condition. If the householder(s) was in receipt of support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme on 15 February 2022, they are automatically assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 regardless of the valuation band in which their property is placed.

Council Tax Band condition. Households occupying properties in council tax Bands A to D are assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 provided they satisfy all of the following criteria:

- liable for council tax on a property on 15 February 2022
- not in receipt of an exemption for that property on 15 February 2022
- living in that property as their main or primary residence on 15 February 2022
- responsible for paying the associated utility and other regularly incurred bills for that property on 15 February 2022.

Discretionary Scheme

In addition to supporting the eligible categories outlined above through the main scheme, each local authority may use the funding provided under the Discretionary Scheme to provide support to households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. This support may take the form of a payment to a household not already covered in the main scheme, or it may cover the cost of essential services provided to the household, for example extending the provision of free school meals or meals-on-wheels.

Each local authority will determine how it utilises the available funds.

Gwynedd Council's Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme follows on the next few pages, and is divided into two elements:

- **Payments of £150 based on Council Tax.**
- **Funding a network of Supporting People Hubs and Food Banks.**

PAYMENTS OF £150 BASED ON COUNCIL TAX

Eligible date 15/02/2022

Eligibility for payments will be as follows:

A payment of £150 to be made based on Council Tax data. Most payment categories below would have seen a payment of £150 made to the taxpayers under the two main schemes had they not been exempt from paying Council Tax due to their personal circumstances.

Class N Exemption – Property wholly occupied by students.

Class S Exemption – Property occupied by under 18's,

Class U Exemption – Property occupied by residents designated as having a “Severe Mental Impairment”*

Class W Exemption – Occupied Annex used by certain dependant relatives

Class X Exemption – Care Leavers under 25

Property in Band F-I qualifying for a band reduction due to disability,

Property in Band E-I where there is a disregard due to “Severe Mental Impairment”*

Property in Bands E-I where there is a disregard due to caring responsibility,

Property in Band E-I where there is a disregard due to the second qualifying person being an 18 - 19 year old person in Further Education

Properties in Band E-I eligible for a Single Occupier Discount

These exemptions and reductions listed below deal with circumstances of vulnerability for the individual / family or circumstances where income is restricted.

* as defined by the Local Government Finance Act 1992

Where live current bank details are available on the Council Tax account a direct payment will be made into this account.

If there are no live bank details a letter will be issued authorising the eligible person to claim a payment from the Post Office (within 28 days).

If the eligible person does not claim the money a second letter will be sent asking if they require a second Post Office letter or wish to provide their bank details.

If there is no response the money may be placed on the Council Tax account where the individual may claim the £150 as a refund (up to the 31 March 2023).

Any unallocated funds which remain from the expenditure which cannot be set against a Council Tax account will be shared to the Food Bank Hubs by way of a second payment.

NETWORK OF SUPPORTING PEOPLE HUBS AND FOOD BANKS

Below is set out the use to be made of £300k of the Support People Hubs and Foodbanks element of the Cost of Living Discretionary Fund in line with the definition of "Wider use of discretionary funding" in the guidance.

The activities below will all be carried out before the end of March 2023.

1. Contribution towards improving support and support capacity and supporting access to support and assistance.

We currently have 11 supporting people hubs in communities in partnership with Community Groups and Third Sector Organisations. The Hubs bring partners and some of the Council's support services together into one place to be able to help people with the following:

- Financial and debt advice (CAB, Housing Socialisation, Council Benefits Unit)
- Advice on fuel and household costs (Warm Wales, Housing Department, Groundworks, Housing Associations)
- Access to food vouchers and emergency food packages (Community Pantries, Community Fridge, Food Clubs)
- Access to emergency energy vouchers
- Access to clothing
- Access to household goods and emergency hygiene
- Befriending schemes, keeping in touch and connecting people together for vulnerable residents.
- Access to community transport for appointments, arrival of essential services such as doctor and hospital, shopping and statutory services in towns.
- Support for those most at risk of poverty e.g. unpaid carers, people with disabilities.
- Mental health support to deal with stress, anxiety, depression (Social services, I-can Centres, Mental Health centres, GP Clusters)
- Practical grassroots support to help people to apply for services, schemes, grants on their behalf (welfare workers) from various agencies staffing the hubs.

The hubs support people in specific catchment areas; and open to any person.

The existing hubs are located at –

Caernarfon
Maesgeirchen
Penygroes
Pwllheli (and Nefyn)
Llanaelhaearn (Trefor and Llithfaen)
Botwnnog
Blaenau Ffestiniog (Penrhyndeudraeth and Trawsfynydd)
Bala
Bethesda
Barmouth
Tywyn

The contribution will go towards setting up local satellites to the above hubs, extending hours, extending staffing capacity, extending the provision of emergency vouchers (food, fuel or goods to the hub's discretion); financial advice provision and feeding provision.

2. "Warm Welcome" scheme

The scheme is an attempt to provide a warm and safe space for residents over the winter months. The space is intentionally somewhere for people to go to keep warm due to the risks of not being able to heat the home.

The Library Service, Youth Service and Housing Associations have signed on to the scheme. Contribution from the fund will go towards providing the space, tea / coffee and promoting the venues to residents.

We will specifically target 3 groups – total population (libraries); people over 55 (community space accommodation and support); young people 16-25 (youth service).

3. Food and Feeding Schemes

We will make a financial contribution to the 5 Food Banks in the county to maintain the food supply, and also to ensure that no food bank turns away a household that needs help due to lack of supply.

We will also be adding to the Food Grant to provide a financial contribution to the various Feeding Groups / Supper Clubs / Lunch Clubs / Meals on Wheels Schemes throughout the county.

4. Charis Grant Fund and Aid (fuel poverty)

Extending capacity to provide fuel poverty advice, fuel vouchers, and access to emergency fuel vouchers from individual energy providers and external charities.

5. Gwynedd Anti Poverty Programme

Contribution towards the costs of employing a Coordinator and Poverty Officer.

Contribution towards cross-partner promotion and marketing activities to raise people's awareness of an existing cost of living support service.

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?

Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme.

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

The Welsh Government announced a package of measures to help people with the cost of living crisis. The package includes £152m to provide eligible households with a cost of living payment of £150 (the main scheme) and £25m to provide discretionary support for other cost of living related purposes. Funding allocations for each part of the scheme were given to local authorities on 25 March 2022.

The plans are designed to provide immediate support to households as Wales recovers from the pandemic and deal with the impact of rising energy and other living costs.

In developing a Local Discretionary Scheme, each local authority has complete autonomy to target the funds to support its residents in the best possible way and to ensure that its approach best suits the needs of individual households.

The Change being considered:-

Using part of Gwynedd Council's element of the Discretionary Fund to make payments to households who had not received payment through the original statutory scheme on the basis of their household Council Tax ("Payments of £150 based on Council Tax").

Utilise the remaining funding by transferring it to Foodbank Hubs to deliver specific projects that will mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis on the most vulnerable households. ("Foodbank Hub Scheme").

Guidance for the Discretionary Scheme has been set by WG which limits the scope of the council's actions.

1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?

Dewi Morgan, Head of Finance

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

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

February– April 2022

- Identify the households eligible for payments under the original scheme –households either receiving support under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, or living in band A – D properties and meeting certain criteria.

May - June 2022

- Distributing payments of £150 to eligible households, either through payments directly into their bank accounts or by distributing vouchers for use in post offices.
- Commencement of identification of categories of vulnerable households and/or with restrictions on their income but not eligible for payment under the original scheme.

July - August 2022

- Assess the number of households in each category and confirm the soundness of the criteria
- Update the Discretionary Plan through support services.

Foodbank Hubs

May 2022

- Identifying individual payment groups
- Identify potential groups to receive direct discretionary payments
- Identify potential services for discretionary fund use.

July 2022

- WG final guidance received
- Review the priority groups to match the guideline (competency / ineligible)

August 2022

Update the Discretionary Scheme through support services.

2) Action

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

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

Council Internal Services – Finance, Housing, Adults, Children, Economy.

Foodbank Hubs

Council Internal Services – Finance, Housing, Adults, Children, Economy.

Users:

Operational partners – food banks, community schemes,

Strategic Partners – Cynefin, Adra, CAB, Mantell Gwynedd, Welsh Government.

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?

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

No consultation has taken place. According to Welsh Government guidance for the discretionary scheme:

“In addition to supporting the eligible categories outlined above through the main scheme, each local authority may use the funding provided under the Discretionary Scheme to provide support to households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. This support may take the form of a payment to a household not already covered in the main scheme, or it may cover the cost of essential services provided to the household, for example extending the provision of free school meals or meals-on-wheels.

Each local authority will determine how it utilises the available funds and some areas for consideration in the local discretionary scheme are listed below:

- *Payments (or other support) may be provided to households who do not fall into one of the eligible classes A or B in the main scheme but who live in a property which is exempt from council tax, for example care leavers and people with a severe mental impairment exemption.*
- *Payments may be made to separately identifiable households living in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).*
- *Households who are receiving housing support services and/or are living in temporary accommodation or a refuge may be awarded a payment..”*

We have endeavoured to adhere as closely as possible to these requirements in designing the following:

In terms of the £150 payments based on Council Tax, it was clear that some households had been excluded from the original scheme because statutory exemptions meant that council tax did not need to be paid on the property. However, residents of such properties would surely be at risk of financial hardship as the nature of the exemption is typical of the specific household situation, where a lack of income would mean

- Class N Exemption – Property wholly occupied by students.
- Class S Exemption – Property occupied by under 18’s,
- Class U Exemption– Property occupied by residents designated as having a “Severe Mental Impairment” (note – this is the terminology used in the relevant legislation, the Local Government Finance Act 1992)
- Class W Exemption –Occupied Annex used by certain dependant relatives
- Class X Exemption –Care Leavers under 25
- Property in Band F-I qualifying for a band reduction due to disability,
- Property in Band E-I where there is a disregard due to “Severe Mental Impairment” (note – this is the terminology used in the relevant legislation, the Local Government Finance Act 1992)

In addition to the above, the following have also been known as circumstances in which the household income has been cut due to the circumstances, thus receiving a payment of £150.

- Property in Bands E-I where there is a disregard due to caring responsibility
- Property in Band E-I where there is a disregard due to the second qualifying person being an 18 - 19 year old person in Further Education
- Properties in Band E-I eligible for a Single Occupier Discount

Foodbank Hubs

Eligible household criteria are set by the guide so there has been no engagement with them. However previous experience in payment administration (Winter Fuel Payment / Self Isolation COVID Payment) has informed the local procedure that has been put in place for ensuring people's access to this support e.g. a bank refund through the council tax account; a request for payment to tax-payers who do not pay through DD; online application, telephone application etc.

There has been engagement with residents through the CELyn commission – portraits of living with a cost of living crisis in Gwynedd. Those portraits show that access to local help, financial help, advice, income maximisation, vouchers and goods are key for them.

Engagement with food banks and bank users indicates increased demand. People are choosing to pay rent and bills with nothing left for food are messages that have come to the local banks and food groups and in its wake the increased use and demand on those services.

Engagement with Citizen's Advice and the Housing Associations' Wellbeing Teams indicates an increased demand from people for practical help around poverty, but also help with the effects of poverty on mental health e.g. isolation, anxiety and stress.

2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

Adapt procedures to ensure accessibility to direct payments.

Set up a Network of Support Hubs in 11 communities that draw support services into one place. The MoU also notes that the hub is open to all, but that the hubs are expected to target some groups most at risk – economic – socio -affected, people with disabilities, unpaid carers as the groups most likely to be affected by the cost of living crisis.

Establishing a Food Grant Fund for ensuring adequate food supply and emergency feeding throughout the county particularly in rural areas where the cost of getting to shops, and shops tend to be more expensive.

Setting up a Network of buildings to provide a warm space for people outside their homes.

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

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

Fund Guidance from WG.

Council Tax Data.

Foodbank Hubs

Fund Guidance from WG.

Local Deprivation Data.

Local Fuel Poverty Data.

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

Payments of £150 based on Council Tax

No – the payments are based on the Property's Council Tax position.

Foodbank Hubs

What other provisions are available locally to guarantee avoiding duplication / unintentional discrimination – the context changes suddenly and new campaigns arise daily.

There is no current mapping in terms of all possible interventions to specific groups / whole population available.

Deprivation and poverty data through the WIMD dates to pre-COVID so the evidence base is outdated and incomplete.

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	No effect has been identified
Disability	Positive	<p>Disabled people are more likely to suffer poverty. Some disabled people also spend more on fuel for maintaining medications / treatments / condition management. The fund has a discretionary element that gives councils the right to give payments to specific tax bands, and relief for the disabled / mentally impaired.</p> <p>In addition, the adoption of this scheme will enable support to be provided to households where one or all of the residents receive a one-time payment of £150 if they receive a reduction to their Council Tax due to disability.</p>
Sex	None	No effect identified. Although evidence shows that women are more susceptible to poverty, the fund has been set up on the basis of payment to a dwelling.
Age	Positive	<p>Although age groups eg Children / those over 65 are more likely to suffer from poverty – the fund is set up on a payment to dwelling basis regardless of age.</p> <p>The scheme offers a payment of £150 each to residents in E-I band properties who receive a single person discount, but they would not receive support without adopting this scheme. A significant proportion who are in this category of support are older people. They are in an "<i>asset rich, cash poor</i>" situation.</p>
Sexual orientation	None	No effect has been identified
Religion or belief (or non-belief)	None	No effect has been identified

Gender reassignment	None	No effect has been identified
Pregnancy and maternity	None	No effect has been identified
Marriage and civil partnership	None	No effect has been identified
The Welsh language	None	No effect has been identified
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	Positive	It is estimated that over 4,200 additional households will receive financial support from a one-time payment of £150 through this scheme.

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	<p>The effect mentioned in 3.1 is not thought to be sufficient to lead to discrimination, harassment or persecution.</p> <p>The payments are made based on council tax bands so there is no discrimination based on the tenure of the property; property holder demography.</p> <p>The discretionary elements expand support services to the whole population.</p>
Promoting equal opportunities	No	We do not believe that one-off payments of £150 under this scheme are going to have an impact in terms of promoting equality of opportunity.

Encouraging good relationships	Neutral	The establishment of the scheme is being carried out within clear bounds and government guidance.
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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?

One-off payments of £150 to around 4,200 households are covered here in line with the government's plan. In this context, we do not see that the proposal in any way contravenes the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

Similarly, we believe that the package of support that will be offered to the food banks will assist in supporting Welsh-speaking households within Gwynedd without creating disadvantages for non-Welsh speaking households.

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?

This is financial policy, and we believe that current policy goes to the best of our legal and statutory ability in that regard in terms of caeg positive impact on the 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)?

In developing this scheme, particular attention has been paid to ensuring that the one-time payments of £150 are directed to households who had not received support due to the limitations of the original scheme but who are nevertheless residents of properties where a Council Tax exemption or discount suggests that they may face difficulties paying their living costs over the coming months. Addressing inequality from socio-economic disadvantage is at the core of this scheme, although we recognise that a single payment of £150 will not in itself want to make a significant difference.

The support for Foodbank Hubs will allow a range of bodies to provide support to Gwynedd's most vulnerable individuals and families.

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?

Since the nature of these payments is based on Council Tax accounts, and government guidance largely dictates that, we believe we have taken the necessary steps to use the Discretionary Scheme to support the tier of households who are at risk of struggling to pay their bills, but who were not supported under the original scheme.

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?

There will be a positive overall impact of implementing the scheme.

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?

An impact has been identified, and will be positive, but it is not thought to be significant due to the financial amounts involved. The financial support (individual payments) provided does not meet the gap due to cost increases.

Payment and support services are a temporary arrangement until March 2023, and there is no fund or policy for the period thereafter should the cost of living continue a thing or worsen again.

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?

We do not anticipate any negative effects.

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

The scheme involves distributing cash sums to households that have been identified. This does not mean cutting service and we do not think that deserving households have been left out.

5) Monitoring

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

As part of the financial monitoring of the scheme, we will identify outstanding funds and strive to spend it within Gwynedd, in line with what is permitted by the scheme.

REPORT TO THE CABINET

25 OCTOBER 2022

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ioan Thomas, Cabinet Member – Finance

Subject: Revenue Budget 2022/23 - End of August 2022 Review

Contact officer: Ffion Madog Evans, Senior Finance Manager

1. Decision sought

The Cabinet is requested:

- To accept the report on the end of August 2022 review of the Revenue Budget, and consider the latest financial position regarding the budgets of each department/service.
- To note that the financial impact of Covid on some fields continues in 2022/23, although the impact is not as substantial in 2022/23 compared to the last two years, which are a combination of additional costs, income losses and a slippage in the savings programme.
- To note that significant overspend is anticipated in the Adults, Health and Well-being Department, Education Department, Economy and Community Department, Highways and Municipal Department and the Housing and Property Department this year. The specific reasons that affect departments are detailed in section 5 of the report, but the impact of increased inflation and electricity prices is a particularly prominent factor.
- Given the significant overspend anticipated by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department and the Highways and Municipal Department, to note the Chief Executive's intention to call a meeting of relevant officers in order to get to the root of the overspend. To ensure that definite steps are taken to bring the situation within control before the end of the financial year, and report to the Cabinet on the response plan.
- Although it is premature to transfer money from funds until the financial position is finalised at the end of the year, it is recommended that the procedure in terms of using funds to fund the financial deficit at the time will be:
 - initially use School Balances to fund the increase in electricity prices in schools
 - secondly, use £4.5 million from the post-Covid recovery arrangements fund established to fund the associated financial challenges that face the Council
 - finally, finance the rest from the Financial Strategy Reserve.

2. Introduction / Background

It is the Cabinet's responsibility to take action, as necessary, to secure appropriate control over the Council's budgets (e.g. approval of significant virements or supplementary budgets).

This end of August report is submitted on the latest review of the Council's revenue budget for 2022/23, and a summary of the position per Department is outlined in **Appendix 1**. The current projections suggest that the Departments of Adults, Health and Well-being, Children and Families, Education, Economy and Community, Highways and Municipal and Housing and Property will overspend by the end of the year. The impact of increased inflation, particularly electricity prices that are above the budget, is detailed in Appendix 1. Significant overspend by five of the six departments is reported, while other Council departments are operating within their budget.

In **Appendix 2**, further details are provided relating to the main issues and the budget headings where significant variances are anticipated, along with specific recommendations where appropriate.

3. Covid

The financial side effect of the Covid crisis has been substantial to the Council, with a combination of additional costs along with loss of income, to the value of over £20 million in 2020/21 and a further £17.5 million in 2021/22. Local Authorities were able to claim from Welsh Government's hardship fund for compensation in 2020/21 and 2021/22, but as the fund has now come to an end, pressures fall on the Council in 2022/23.

Although the impact is not as substantial in 2022/23 compared to the last two years, additional costs, income losses and a slippage in the savings programme as a result of Covid continue in some fields.

4. The Savings Situation

After reviewing the savings situation, it appears that over £33.4 million, namely 94% of the amended savings schemes since 2015, have now been realised. Without a doubt, a delay was seen in the realisation of some savings schemes as a result of the Covid crisis.

It was seen that the delay in realising the savings was most prominent in the Adults, Health and Well-being Department with schemes to the value of £930k, whilst the Highways and Municipal Department had £533k.

5. Council Departments

Increased prices, particularly the impact of higher electricity prices, seem to be very prominent in departments. There are significant overspend projections for various reasons in five departments this year. The main issues within the departments are as follows:

5.1 Adults, Health and Well-being Department

Latest projections suggest over £1.9 million of overspend, which is a combination of many factors including failure to realise savings to the value of £930k. Pressures on supported accommodation and direct payment packages are issues in Older People's Services. Staff costs and lack of income are problematic within Community Care.

5.2 Education Department

An overspend of £1.3m is anticipated by the Education Department which results from the impact of higher electricity costs for a six-month period from October 2022 onwards on the schools. Considering that the schools have already benefited from almost a million in energy savings which have derived from Covid and the associated lockdown periods, it is therefore considered appropriate to use school balances to fund the additional pressures this year.

5.3 Byw'n Iach

Due to the side effect of Covid, the Byw'n Iach Company received financial aid from the Welsh Government's hardship fund valued at £1.4 million in 2021/22 and £2.7 million in 2020/21. Such support is not available from the Government this year. However, as the side effect of Covid continues in 2022/23 and disrupts the ability to generate income, the Council confirmed necessary financial support to maintain Cwmni Byw'n Iach services by extending the assurance period provided to the Company until the end of 2022/23. According to latest projections, the value of the aid required is £842k. Higher electricity costs are responsible for the remaining overspend of Byw'n Iach.

5.4 Highways and Municipal Department

The annual trend of overspend in the municipal field continues, with the most prominent problems in the field of waste collection and disposal. The department is also facing difficulty in realising savings in a number of fields to the value of £533k.

5.5 Housing and Property

Implications of a change in legislation relating to Homelessness involve significant financial pressures this year. Although an allocation of £1.5m from the Council's post-Covid arrangements fund was provided to assist the situation, a net overspend of £3.2 million is anticipated this year.

5.6 Corporate

Prudent projections when setting the 2022/23 budget are responsible for additional tax outputs and also contributing to the underspend on Council Tax Reductions. The latest increase in interest rates means that the projections of receiving £1.1 million interest is more favourable.

6. General Conclusion

Overspend position is as a result of many factors including failure to realise savings, the financial side effect of Covid, increasing electricity prices and a number of other prominent matters within the departments this year. It is anticipated that use must be made of Schools and Council reserves to fund the financial deficit of £7.1 million projected for 2022/23.

7. Next steps and timetable

To act on the recommendations submitted and present a follow-up report to the Cabinet on 24 January 2023 regarding the situation at the end of November 2022.

Local member's views

Not relevant

Views of the statutory officers**The Monitoring Officer:**

Nothing to add regarding propriety.

Head of Finance Department:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Summary of departmental budgets' net positions

Appendix 2 - Details of budgets and the significant variances

Revenue Budget 2022/23 - Summary of the position per Department

	End of August Review				<i>Impact of Inflationary Increases Above the Budget 2022/23</i> £ '000
	Proposed Budget 2022/23 £'000	Gross Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23 £ '000	Recommended Adjustments £'000	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23 £ '000	
Adults, Health and Well-being	64,424	1,920	0	1,920	287
Children and Families	21,286	88	0	88	0
Education	102,043	1,312	0	1,312	1,668
Economy and Community	5,928	1,231	0	1,231	757
Highways and Municipal	28,244	1,836	0	1,836	528
Environment	4,268	(13)	0	(13)	75
Gwynedd Consultancy	9	(30)	0	(30)	0
Housing and Property	9,389	3,283	0	3,283	273
Corporate Management Team and Legal	2,163	(27)	0	(27)	0
Corporate Support	8,155	(42)	0	(42)	19
Finance (and Information Technology)	7,449	(21)	0	(21)	0
Corporate Budgets <i>(Differences only)</i>	*	(2,483)	0	(2,483)	2,400
Totals (net)	253,358	7,054	0	7,054	6,007
<i>Use of General Funds / Balances</i>				(7,054)	
				(7,054)	0

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Adults, Health and Well-being Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Adults Services</u>						
Older People's Services						
Residential and Nursing - Homes	18,257	17,703	(554)		(554)	(676)
Domiciliary Care	7,978	7,789	(189)		(189)	366
Others	294	1,550	1,256		1,256	739
	26,529	27,042	513	0	513	429
Physical Disabilities Services	2,794	2,284	(510)		(510)	(125)
Learning Disabilities Services	23,893	24,108	215		215	284
Mental Health Services	4,141	4,399	258		258	443
Other Services (Adults)	3,784	3,743	(41)		(41)	(108)
<u>Adults Services Total</u>	61,141	61,576	435	0	435	923
<u>Provider Services</u> <u>(shows net budget)</u>						
Residential Care	0	122	122		122	(399)
Day Care	0	(165)	(165)		(165)	(135)
Community Care	0	1,550	1,550		1,550	950
Others	0	35	35		35	(10)
<u>Provider Services Total</u>	0	1,542	1,542	0	1,542	406

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Adults, Health and Well-being Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Other Services</u>						
Departmental Central Services (<i>including Department savings</i>)	3,224	3,564	340	0	340	370
Covid-19 expenditure in the Adults Care field	0	0	0	0	0	0
Care Workforce Additional Expenditure due to Covid-19	59	59	0		0	164
		(397)	(397)		(397)	0
<u>Other Services Total</u>	3,283	3,226	(57)	0	(57)	(1,398)
<u>Adults, Health and Well-being Total</u>	64,424	66,344	1,920	0	1,920	(69)

Adults, Health and Well-being

Older People's Services - In 'Other' impact of the increasing demand on supported accommodation and day services reduced by underspend on residential and nursing and domiciliary care. Difficulties in realising savings also contributes to this picture.

Physical Disabilities Services - reduced demand for domiciliary care; however, increased pressure on direct payments.

Learning Disabilities Services - new cases in the field and increasing pressure on direct payments which is being reduced by fewer support plans.

Mental Health Services - the trend of increased pressures on residential and nursing continues with new costly cases.

Provider Services - staffing above budget level and lack of income are issues in community care. Whilst the increasing prices of electricity has led to an overspend by residential homes. The impact of Covid continues to disrupt the Day Care provision and it is therefore underspending.

Departmental Central Services - savings to the value of £545k still not realised, but the impact being reduced by staff turnover.

2022/23 Budget - this year, the department received bids to the value of over £3.4 million for the increased pressures on the 2022/23 budget, including for the Residential and Nursing, Learning Disability, and Older People fields.

Savings - failure to achieve savings is a prominent factor in the department's overspend, with savings to the value of £930k still not realised.

The department has used £397k of its underspend fund to reduce the overspend reported to £1.9 million.

Given the substantial overspend anticipated by the Adults, Health and Well-being Department this year, to note the Chief Executive's intention to call a meeting with the relevant officers in an attempt to get to the root of the Department's overspend, so that definitive steps are taken in an attempt to bring the situation under control before the end of the financial year, and to report to the Cabinet on the response plan.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Children and Families Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Service Management	605	562	(43)		(43)	(53)
Operational	2,462	2,608	146		146	57
Placements						
Out-of-County Placements	5,064	4,729	(335)		(335)	342
Agency Fostering	1,696	1,680	(16)		(16)	(129)
Fostering – Internal	2,613	2,513	(100)		(100)	(32)
Support Services and Others	1,772	1,889	117		117	(14)
	11,145	10,811	(334)	0	(334)	167
Post-16	1,358	1,553	195		195	24
Specialist/Derwen	2,265	2,592	327		327	162
Youth Justice	266	227	(39)		(39)	(51)
Early Years	140	119	(21)		(21)	(74)
Youth	919	711	(208)		(208)	(247)
Others	2,126	2,191	65		65	(82)
Children and Families Total	21,286	21,374	88	0	88	(97)

Children and Families

Operational - expenditure is higher as the numbers who receive the support of support plans are higher and therefore have implications on other costs, including travelling.

Placements - reduction in the average number of Out-of-County Placements this year, namely 23 in comparison with 23.25 for 2021/22. Although the average number of Agency Fostering is 34.5 at the end of August in comparison with 31 in 2021/22, it is anticipated that the cost will be within the budget. In Internal Fostering, a combination of permanent bid receipts and income from the Home Office means that an underspend of (£100k) is anticipated. In Other Support Services, salaries above the organisation in the Placements Team and higher costs of the North Wales Adoption Service are responsible for the overspend.

Post-16 - increase in the pressure on the service with 5 individuals receiving support to the value of £100k each per annum.

Specialist/Derwen - the increasing overspend trend continues as a result of an increase in the demand for support plans and specialist support. A change in the emphasis in terms of how the service is provided, and the increased pressure on direct payments is now obvious.

Youth Justice - staff turnover means that there is an underspend on this heading.

Early Years – the use of grants funding core expenditure, with the receipt of grants in the childcare field responsible for the underspend.

Youth - a grant receipt against the core expenditure as well as an underspend after remodelling the service. The service's activity has been disrupted by the impact of Covid and there is less expenditure as a result.

Others - employment costs and higher costs for services.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Education Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Devolved Schools	85,493	87,001	0		0	0
Devolved Schools - Additional Electricity Costs			1,508		1,508	0
Schools Quality Services	(1,046)	(1,161)	(115)		(115)	(345)
Infrastructure and Support Services						
Transportation	6,017	6,228	211		211	106
Ancillary Services	738	778	40		40	423
Others	3,158	3,065	(93)		(93)	(87)
	9,913	10,071	158	0	158	442
Leadership and Management	2,469	2,241	(228)		(228)	(129)
Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion	5,214	5,203	(11)		(11)	(28)
Education Total	102,043	103,355	1,312	0	1,312	(60)

Education

Devolved Schools - Additional Electricity Costs - for the six months from October 2022 onwards, the impact of higher electricity costs on the schools. Considering that the schools have already benefited from almost a million in energy savings which have derived from Covid and the associated lockdown periods, it is therefore considered appropriate to use school balances to fund the additional pressures this year.

Schools Quality Services - grant receipts, staff turnover, reducing expenditure and a reduction in the demand on some budgets are responsible for the underspend.

Transportation - although £146k of permanent additional funding has been allocated to the school taxis and trains in 2021/22 and a further £150k in 2022/23, an overspend of £208k is anticipated this year. Additional pressure was seen on the budget after Grŵp Llandrillo Menai educational courses were moved to Llangefni as well as the increase in the demand for taxis for the special school pupils of Hafod Lon and Pendalar.

The Transport field has been the subject of a strategic review to try to control the increase in expenditure, it is suggested that the need for further work by the Education Department and Environment Department continues, so that it is possible to take advantage of opportunities for efficiencies.

Infrastructure and Support Services - Ancillary Services - a Welsh Government plan to fund free school meals for reception and Year 1 children from September 2022 and Year 2 from January 2023, means that the income deficit trend that was seen over the past years on school meals is not apparent this year. An increase in food costs, lack of income and higher staffing costs can be seen in the care element of the breakfast clubs. Vacant posts and less pressure on other budgets reduces the level of overspend.

Infrastructure and Support Services - Others - less demand on a number of various budgets.

Leadership and Management - staff turnover and underspend on a number of budget headings.

Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion - mixed picture which is a combination of vacant posts and underspend on several varied headings, while circumstances involving one specific centre continue and responsible for an overspend of £217k.

The Cabinet is asked to note that the overspend of the Education Department is as a result of an overspend on electricity costs at the schools, it is recommended that the Cabinet considers whether the additional electricity costs for this year should be funded from the balances of the individual schools.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Economy and Community Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	383	383	0		0	0
Community Regeneration and Support Programmes	1,009	1,024	15		15	66
Maritime and Country Parks	3	(86)	(89)		(89)	(189)
Byw'n Iach and Other Leisure Contracts	1,596	2,774	1,178		1,178	(12)
Economic Development Programmes	71	71	0		0	111
Marketing and Events	296	301	5		5	11
Gwynedd Libraries	1,689	1,665	(24)		(24)	(77)
Museums, Arts and Gwynedd Archives	881	1,027	146		146	18
<u>Economy and Community Total</u>	5,928	7,159	1,231	0	1,231	(72)

Economy and Community

Maritime and Country Parks – a combination of reasons responsible for the underspend including exceeding income in the beaches and Hafan Pwllheli following favourable weather and therefore a busy season. Staff turnover at the Harbours and Hafan, Pwllheli has also assisted the situation but the increasing electricity costs is reducing the underspend reported.

Byw'n Iach and Other Leisure Contracts - the Leisure provision was transferred to the Byw'n Iach Company on 1 April 2019, but responsibility for the running costs of properties remained with the Council. Due to the side effect of Covid, the Byw'n Iach Company received financial aid from the Welsh Government's hardship fund valued at £1.4 million in 2021/22 and £2.7 million in 2020/21. Such support is not available from the Government this year. However, as the side effect of Covid continues in 2022/23 and disrupts the ability to generate income, the Council confirmed necessary financial support to maintain Cwmni Byw'n Iach services by extending the assurance period provided to the Company until the end of the 2022/23 financial year. According to latest projections, the value of the aid required is £842k. Higher electricity costs are responsible for the remaining overspend.

Gwynedd Libraries - a combination of underspend on staff, travelling and office costs.

Museums, Arts and Gwynedd Archives - it is not anticipated that plans to the value of £70k in Neuadd Dwyfor will be realised this year as the side-effects of Covid has had a negative impact on Neuadd Dwyfor's income levels and since it will also be closed for a two-month period during the financial year for phase 2 work on the building. Problems in Storiol continue, with a deficit of £49k projected for the year. The increasing cost of electricity also contributes to the overspend reported.

The Cabinet is asked to note that the overspend in the Economy and Community Department is as a result of financial aid to the value of £842k to Byw'n Iach, as well as an increase in electricity costs.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Highways and Municipal Department (including Trunk roads)	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Highways Services (including Trunk roads)	10,585	10,603	18		18	267
Engineering Services	384	593	209		209	23
Municipal Services						
Waste	12,215	13,366	1,151		1,151	362
Others	5,060	5,518	458		458	94
Highways and Municipal Total	28,244	30,080	1,836	0	1,836	0

Highways and Municipal (including Trunk roads)

Highways Services - a reduction in the works commissioned by the main clients along with a delay to realise savings schemes.

Engineering Services - failure to realise savings schemes including CCTV, Aber bridge and Barmouth Bridge savings but discussions are continuing to seek a resolution.

Waste - number of matters responsible for the overspend, but mainly waste collection and recycling. Additional circuits have resulted in overspending on employment and fleet costs. Sickness and overtime levels are also problematic, while there are additional costs in terms of vehicle hire. Overspend on the costs of handling recycling materials but the income on sales of recycling materials exceeds the budget. Reduction in residual waste means that the associated costs are lower. Higher electricity costs and problems in realising savings in the field also contribute to the level of overspend reported.

Following the increased overspend trend in waste collection in recent years, the Department has now received an external report from WRAP Cymru which provides recommendations on ways to improve this service. The report will receive managerial consideration by the Department.

Other Municipal Services - a mixed picture which is a combination of factors, with some of the main reasons including saving schemes still not found and land maintenance and public toilets income losses. Additional pressure on street cleaning, cleaning public toilets, commercial waste budgets and also rising electricity costs are evident. Higher incomes are predicted by the bereavement services which reduces the overspend reported.

Given the substantial overspend anticipated by the Highways and Municipal Department, to note the Chief Executive's intention to call a meeting with the relevant officers in an attempt to get to the root of the Department's overspend, so that definitive steps are taken in an attempt to bring the situation under control before the end of the financial year, and to report to the Cabinet on the response plan.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Environment Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Department Management	836	863	27		27	20
Planning and Building Control Service	586	491	(95)		(95)	(41)
Street Care and Transport Services						
Network Management (Transportation)	309	(68)	(377)		(377)	(481)
Parking and Parking Enforcement	(1,830)	(1,484)	346		346	190
Integrated Transport	1,803	2,070	267		267	195
	282	518	236	0	236	(96)
Countryside and Access	765	761	(4)		(4)	29
Public Protection	1,799	1,622	(177)		(177)	(103)
<u>Environment Total</u>	4,268	4,255	(13)	0	(13)	(100)

Environment

Planning and Building Control Services - the income projections have improved again this year after substantial applications were submitted over the past months. Underspend on various budgets including statutory notices, professional services and appeals.

Streetcare and Network Management (Transport) - exceeding the streetworks fees income, as well as vacant posts and underspend on many of the budget headings.

Parking and Parking Enforcement - lack of parking income of £270k and overspend electricity costs which is reduced by an underspend of staff and training budgets.

Integrated Transport - overspend of £366k and public bus contracts, but higher incomes and various underspend reduce the overspend reported. It is suggested that the review into the Transport provision should continue following a delay as a result of the Covid crisis.

Public Protection - empty posts and less expenditure on a number of the budget headings this year, including food and water samples, services and supplies.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW

Consultancy Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Roads and Engineering Services	(552)	(588)	(36)		(36)	(14)
Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Unit (SuDS)	0	0	0		0	0
Flood Risk Management Unit	607	607	0		0	(92)
Building Service	(46)	(40)	6		6	(3)
<u>Consultancy Total</u>	9	(21)	(30)	0	(30)	(100)

Consultancy

Roads and Engineering Services - vacancies and exceeded income from external organisations such as other Councils and Welsh Government.

Building Service - underspend on staff resulting in a lack of income generation.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Housing and Property Department	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	242	213	(29)		(29)	(49)
Housing Services						
Homelessness	3,270	6,480	3,210		3,210	28
Private Sector Housing	446	421	(25)		(25)	(44)
Others	436	361	(75)		(75)	(49)
	4,152	7,262	3,110	0	3,110	(65)
Property Services						
Property	5,015	5,209	194		194	(142)
Caretaking, Catering and Cleaning	(20)	(12)	8		8	(24)
	4,995	5,197	202	0	202	(166)
Closure of Accounts Adjustments					0	180
<u>Housing and Property Total</u>	9,389	12,672	3,283	0	3,283	(100)

Housing and Prope

Housing Services, Homelessness - the trend of significant pressure on the Temporary Accommodation service in Homelessness is intensifying. During the year, the Welsh Government compensated us for £2.9 million of the relevant additional expenditure of £3.3 million from the Covid hardship fund. However, this year the Welsh Government grant is worth only £475k towards the cost. The current financial year has seen a further increase in demand, along with higher average costs as landlords have increased prices and the availability of temporary accommodation in the county has reached capacity. The reported net overspend of £3.2m on Homelessness follows an allocation of £1.5m from the Council's covid recovery arrangements fund to the service.

Housing Services, Private Sector Housing and Others - underspend on staff costs and on a number of budget headings.

Property Services - overspend resulting from an increase in electricity prices but reduced by vacancies within the Property service. Combination of reduced expenditure on services and supplies and income losses in the Caretaking, Catering and Cleaning field.

The Cabinet is asked to note that the overspend of the Housing and Property Department is as a result of a change in legislation in relation to Homelessness, with the implications leading to a net overspend of £3.2 million this year.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Central Departments	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management Team and Legal	2,163	2,136	(27)		(27)	(33)
Finance (and Information Technology)	7,449	7,428	(21)		(21)	(96)
Corporate Support	8,155	8,113	(42)		(42)	(63)
Total Central Departments	17,767	17,677	(90)	0	(90)	(192)

Central Departments

Corporate Management Team and Legal - the impact of vacancies of the two Corporate Directors for part of the year along with staff turnover and vacancies in Legal, which is reduced by the use of agency solicitors.

Finance (and Information Technology) – combination of reasons responsible for the underspend, including one-off underspend due to vacant posts, as well as income for administering various grants and higher income received in several fields.

Corporate Support - staff turnover and underspend on a number of headings across the department contributes to the general underspend position. The underspend reported is reduced by forecasts of a £66k income shortfall by the Printroom.

REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 - END OF AUGUST REVIEW						
Corporate (Reflects variances only)	2022/23 Proposed Budget	2022/23 Estimated Position	Estimated Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Use of Other Sources or Other Adjustments Recommended	Estimated Adjusted Over / (Under) Spend 2022/23	Net Over / (Under) Spend Final Position 2021/22
Field:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Tax	*	*	(962)		(962)	0
Council Tax Reductions	*	*	(913)		(913)	0
Capital Costs	*	*	(310)		(310)	0
Interest Received	*	*	(1,145)		(1,145)	0
Pay inflation above budget	*	*	3,544		3,544	0
Reserve provision for inflation	*	*	(1,637)		(1,637)	0
Savings provision	*	*	(1,200)		(1,200)	0
Requirements of Financial Side Effects of Covid	*	*	474		474	0
Others	*	*	(334)		(334)	0
<u>Corporate Total</u>	*	*	(2,483)	0	(2,483)	0
<i>Use of General Funds / Balances</i>				(7,054)		

Corporate

Council Tax - up to the end of August, the Valuer's Office permitted 139 properties to transfer from Council Tax to Non-domestic Tax (469 in 2021/20, 506 in 2020/21, 397 in 2019/20, 453 in 2018/19). Nevertheless, a favourable situation is anticipated from the output of the additional tax due to prudential projections when setting the 2022/23 budget. £6m of Council Tax Premium has been programmed to be received during 2022/23 to be earmarked for consideration for the Housing Strategy.

Council Tax Reductions - a reduction in the numbers who claim the reduction in Gwynedd compared with previous years as well as setting prudential estimates.

Capital Costs - current treasury management policy means that external borrowing can be avoided, consequently creating underspend.

Interest Receipts - the latest increase in interest rates means that the projections interest receipts exceeds the expected budget.

Chwyddiant Tâl Uwchlaw'r Gyllideb - mae'r ffigyrau diweddaraf yn awgrymu y bydd oblygiadau'r cynnydd cyflogau a argymhellir yn genedlaethol yn £3.5m, sydd yn sylweddol uwch na'r 4% a gynghorwyd i Gynghorau ei gyllidebu wrth sefydlu'r gyllideb am 2022/23 a ystyrid i fod yn ddarbodus ar y pryd.

Reserve provision for Inflation - a budget was provided to fund potential additional pressure stemming from inflation.

Savings Provision - following the failure of certain departments to realise savings in some fields, a corporate provision has been set up for the purpose, which is available for appropriate distribution.

Requirements of Financial Side Effects of Covid - the requirement above the £1.4m provided in the budget for Covid is £474k, which is to be funded from a fund.

Others - bids returned and pressures on a number of budgets not as much as what was projected.

Use of General Funds / Balances - in order to fund the Council's financial position, by the end of the year it is anticipated that £7.1m from the Council's funds will have to be used. The latest forecasts suggest that £1.5m needs to be used from Schools Balances for overspend on electricity in the schools, £4.5 from the post-Covid recovery arrangements fund and the rest, namely £1.1m from the Financial Strategy Fund.

Although it is premature to transfer money from funds until the financial situation is finalised at the end of the year, it is recommended that the procedure in terms of using funds to fund the financial deficit at the time will:

- firstly, Schools Balances to fund the increase in electricity prices in the schools
- secondly, use £4.5 million from the post-Covid recovery arrangements fund established to fund the associated financial challenges that face the Council
- finally, the rest to be funded from the Financial Strategy Fund.

Agenda Item 9

REPORT TO THE CABINET

Date	25 October 2022
Cabinet Member	Councillor Ioan Thomas, Cabinet Member – Finance
Subject	Savings Overview: Progress Report on Realising Savings Schemes
Contact Officer	Ffion Madog Evans, Senior Finance Manager

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To accept the information in the report and to note the progress towards realising the savings schemes for 2022/23, 2021/22 and previous years.
- 1.2 To note that the impact of Covid-19 contributed to slippage in the savings program, as the Council had given priority to responding to the crisis over the initial period of the crisis.

2. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report is an overview report on the Council's savings' position for 2022/23, 2021/22 and previous years.
- 2.2 Progress against savings schemes worth £595,000 in 2022/23 and £966,720 in 2021/22, together with the savings yet to be achieved from previous years, will be reported following a review of the position at the end of August 2022.
- 2.3 It can now be reported that savings of over £33.4 million have been realised since 2015/16, which is 94% of the required £35.4m over the period. We achieved to realise over 62% of the revised savings for 2021/22 with 41% of the savings for 2022/23 already realised or on track to deliver in a timely manner this year.
- 2.4 Delivering on the individual schemes is the responsibility of relevant Cabinet members, who challenge the performance of the departments, including the progress of the savings schemes. It is the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Finance to keep an overview of the full picture.

3. RE-ASSESS SAVINGS

- 3.1 The Council has financial planning arrangements that have already identified significant efficiency savings in order to minimise service cuts for Gwynedd residents. In January 2022, the savings schemes were reviewed to assess which historic schemes were now unachievable, and a revised program of savings was drawn up for 2022/23 following the writing off, slippage and re-profiling of the savings schemes.

3.2 With regard to the 2022/23 savings schemes, the Cabinet decided on 10 February 2022 to move the delivery profile for schemes worth £1,290,250 to 2023/24 and subsequent years, recognising that the situation has changed so much that savings schemes worth £489,750 cannot be delivered by deleting them from the budget, leaving £595,000 of savings to be realised in 2022/23. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Savings written off or deferred to 2022/23 :

	Original £	Deferred £	Written off £	Balance £
2022/23 schemes	2,375,000	1,290,250	489,750	595,000

4. DEPARTMENTAL SAVINGS SCHEMES 2015/16 – 2020/21

4.1 **Appendix 1** summarises each department's attainment at the point of closing the accounts for 2021/22 against the savings target that had been set for them from 2015/16 - 2020/21, **a total of nearly £34m. It can be reported that £32.5m, or 96% of these schemes have been realised**, but a risk of realising the savings on a few schemes remains.

4.2 This marginal slippage mainly derives from some 2019/20 and 2020/21 schemes, and the challenge of realising them continues.

4.3 There has been a slippage in 23 schemes with the majority being small, worth a total of £721k but the Departments do not foresee a problem in their realisation.

4.4 The remaining 7 schemes totalling £652k have risks to deliver. 4 schemes from the Adults, Health and Well-being Department (total of £449k), 1 from the Highways and Municipal Department (£133k) 1 from the Economy and Communities Department (£45k) and 1 from the Housing and Properties Department (£25k). Responding to the Covid crisis has meant slipping some elements of savings schemes, but it may now be necessary to consider whether the savings are truly achievable or whether alternative schemes and approaches need to be proposed to realise the savings.

4.5 Since the closing of the 2021/22 accounts and by the August 2022 review a further £199,620 worth of schemes from the period 2015/16 – 2020/21 have been realised.

5. DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES 2021/22

5.1 **Appendix 2** summarises the situation in terms of realising the savings schemes for 2021/22. Based on the closure of the accounts for the year, of the 24 schemes worth nearly £967k that have been profiled for the year, 13, **worth nearly £517k or 53% have been realised**. 11 schemes are either slipping or have some risks to achieve.

5.2 A total of £246k worth of savings schemes are slipping but are now moving forward while there are £204k worth of schemes where Departments are anticipating risks to achieve the savings.

- 5.3 Of the schemes at risk of delivering the Adults, Health and Well-being Department has 1 scheme with a target of £33,750, namely *To review the operating arrangements within the Adults Department*. The Department is working to move the scheme forward but there are still risks with elements of the work.
- 5.4 The savings from 1 scheme from the Highways and Municipal Department namely *Increasing fees for business waste collection* (£75k) had not been realised when closing the 2021/22 accounts but by the August 2022 review the Department has succeeded in realising it.
- 5.5 The scheme *Generating income by preventing fraud* worth £20k from the Finance Department has risks of realising. The Covid crisis led to a delay in realisation following the suspension of interviews relating to fraudulent claims in the Benefits area over the period of the crisis. They continue without being restarted as a result of the current circumstances, so a further delay in realisation is anticipated.
- 5.6 There is a risk of achieving the savings of the scheme *To reduce dependence on temporary accommodation by investing in purpose-built accommodation* by the Housing and Property Department which has a target of £75k in 2021/22. Since the introduction of this scheme, far-reaching changes have taken place within the field of homelessness. Before 2020/21 the Welsh Government's policy was to house according to need, but since the Covid pandemic the policy was changed so that Local Authorities house everyone. Although the Housing Strategy offers solutions in the long term, the financial situation due to homelessness in the short term is challenging for the Department.
- 5.7 Due to other priorities during 2021/22, there has not been as much progress on realising the year's savings schemes.
- 5.8 Since closing the 2021/22 accounts and by the August 2022 review, £107,500 worth of further schemes relevant to the 2021/22 period have been realised.

6. DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES 2022/23

- 6.1 **Appendix 3** summarises the position in terms of realising the savings schemes for 2022/23. The total savings target is £595k with a value of £133k, which is 22% of schemes already having realised and a further £113k, or 19% are on track to deliver on time by the end of the financial year.
- 6.2 Of the 8 savings schemes that have been profiled for 2022/23, 2 have already been realised with a further 2 on track to fully realise in a timely manner. There have been slippages on 2 schemes totalling £130k but they are progressing which includes 1 scheme from the Finance Department and 1 from the Highways and Municipal Department.
- 6.3 Risks are foreseen to deliver savings of 2 schemes worth a total of £220k which includes the *Dwyfor Arts Centre* scheme (£70k) by Economy and Community Department and *Change of waste collection work arrangements to smaller shifts and circuits* scheme (£150k) by the Department Highways and Municipal.

7. DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES 2023/24 ONWARDS

7.1 The savings schemes for 2023/24 onwards are listed, per Department in **Appendix 4**. These are savings schemes that have already been approved in previous savings programme, but it is currently premature to report on the status of these schemes.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 It is inevitable that realising £33.4m in savings (out of a total of £35.4m) since April 2015 has been challenging and I am grateful to all of the departments and Cabinet Members for ensuring this success.

8.2 The table below summarises the latest position of savings schemes since April 2015 with 94% of all schemes having been realised.

Table 2: Summary of the status of all savings schemes since April 2015

Status of Savings	Portal	£m	%
Have realised	1	33.4	94.4
On track to achieve savings in full and on time	2	0.1	0.3
Delay, but moving forward	3	0.8	2.3
Some risks to achieve - slip or fail	4	0.8	2.3
Significant risks to realise in full or partially	5	0.3	0.7
Total savings		35.4	

8.3 Therefore, I ask the Cabinet to note the achievement outlined in this report towards realising the savings schemes. In addition, to note that the impact of Covid contributed to slippage in the savings program and supporting the departments to move forward with the savings program.

Local Member's Views

Not relevant

Views of the Statutory Officers**The Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety.

Head of Finance:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Overview of 2015/16 - 2020/21 Savings Schemes per Department

Appendix 2 - Overview of 2021/22 Savings Schemes per Department

Appendix 3 - Overview of 2022/23 Savings Schemes per Department

Appendix 4 - Overview of 2023/24 onwards Savings Schemes per Department

OVERVIEW OF 2015/16 TO 2020/21 SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total Savings 2015/16 to 2020/21	Realised Schemes	Schemes that have slipped but in the process of implementation.		Schemes with some risks in achieving the savings		Head of Finance Department's comments
	£	£	£ - number		£ - number		
Education	1,691,360	1,691,360	-		-		All schemes of the period have been achieved.
Schools	4,235,000	4,235,000	-		-		All schemes of the period have been achieved.
Environment	2,751,213	2,695,593	55,620	3	-		There has been slippage on three schemes; <i>Achieve savings through cheaper purchasing</i> (£20k), <i>Increase water quality assessment fee to reflect the cost of providing the service</i> (£12.5k) and <i>Rationalisation and Integration of the back office in the Environment Department</i> (£23.12k).
Corporate Support	2,351,468	2,351,468	-		-		All schemes of the period have been achieved.
Finance	1,756,636	1,736,636	20,000	1	-		Slippage in realising savings of £20k on the <i>Income generation through fraud prevention</i> scheme.
Economy and Community	2,896,422	2,766,422	85,000	3	45,000	1	There has been a slippage with 2 schemes <i>Reconcile/review parking fees</i> totalling £60k and <i>Delete 1 post from the Tourism and Marketing Service</i> worth £25k. There is a risk of realising the remaining savings of £45k on the <i>Establish parking fees on Dinas Dinlle beach and increase launch fees across Gwynedd beaches from £10 to £15</i> scheme.

OVERVIEW OF 2015/16 TO 2020/21 SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total Savings 2015/16 to 2020/21 £	Realised Schemes £	Schemes that have slipped but in the process of implementation. £ - number		Schemes with some risks in achieving the savings £ - number		Head of Finance Department's comments
Adults, Health and Well-being Page 86	6,969,411	6,218,051	302,360	6	449,000	4	There are some risks of achieving the savings of 4 schemes namely <i>Integration and Transformation of Older People's Services</i> which has a target of £210k in 2019/20 and several factors are contributing to the ongoing challenge of achieving it, <i>Collaboration with the third sector to take over day care provision in Criccieth and Blaenau Ffestiniog</i> (£75k), <i>Reviewing physical disability care packages by meeting objectives in an alternative way</i> (£100k) and <i>Automate the Department's financial processes</i> (£64k) but the Department is working to progress these. A further 6 schemes totalling over £302k have slipped but the Department is acting to move these forward; the largest 3 being <i>Review of Continuing Healthcare packages</i> (£150k), <i>Improving work processes by undertaking the Ffordd Gwynedd review and using the finance modules of the new IT system within the Adults Department</i> (£40k) and <i>Restructuring the Business Service</i> (£49k).
Children and Supporting Families	2,295,738	2,295,738	-	-	-	-	All schemes for the period have been achieved.
Highways and Municipal	6,038,160	5,667,410	237,750	8	133,000	1	There has been a delay with the <i>Fleet Arrangements</i> scheme (£133k) due to the re-opening of negotiations with the Unions and then the Covid situation. This scheme is now receiving additional attention and it is hoped to move forward in 2022/23. A further 8 schemes totalling nearly £238k have slipped but the Department is working to move these forward, the largest schemes being <i>Recycling Centres: levy on traders and levy on disposal of DIY materials</i> (£90k) <i>Departmental Restructuring</i> (£50k).
Consultancy	602,670	602,670	-	-	-	-	All schemes for the period have been achieved.

OVERVIEW OF 2015/16 TO 2020/21 SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total Savings 2015/16 to 2020/21	Realised Schemes	Schemes that have slipped but in the process of implementation.		Schemes with some risks in achieving the savings		Head of Finance Department's comments
	£	£	£ - number		£ - number		
Corporate Management Team and Legal	403,240	383,220	20,020	2	-	-	There is a slippage on 2 schemes namely <i>Savings in the Coroner's budget</i> scheme, worth £13.8k, as it is based on a projection that was made a few years ago but it has not yet taken place and the <i>Two day reduction of administration support to the Election and Legal Services</i> scheme (£6.22k).
Housing and Property	641,180	616,180	-	-	25,000	1	There is a risk of realising savings of £25k in 2020/21 on the <i>Reduce reliance on temporary accommodation by investing in purpose-built accommodation</i> scheme. See point 5.6 in the report.
Sub-total	32,632,498	31,259,748	720,750	23	652,000	7	
Managerial Savings	1,200,360	1,200,360	-	-	-	-	All schemes of the period have been achieved.
TOTAL - 2021/22 FINAL ACCOUNTS	33,832,858	32,460,108	720,750	23	652,000	7	In financial terms (£), 96% of 2015/16 – 2020/21 savings schemes have been realised.
TOTAL - AUGUST 2022 REVIEW	33,832,858	32,659,728	501,130	14	672,000	8	In financial terms (£), 97% of 2015/16 – 2020/21 savings schemes have been realised.

OVERVIEW OF 2021/22 SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total 2021/22 Savings		Realised Schemes		Schemes that have slipped but in the process of implementation.		Schemes with some risks in achieving the savings		Head of Finance Department's comments
	£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		
Schools	65,000	1	65,000	1	-		-		The one scheme that had a target in 2021/22 has been realised.
Environment	73,750	4	16,250	2	57,500	2	-		There has been a slippage on two schemes; <i>The Provision of electric car charging points in car parks</i> worth £37.5k and <i>Achieving savings by buying cheaper (e.g. office and IT equipment)</i> worth £20k.
Corporate Support	117,750	4 *	45,250	2	72,500	2	-		There has been a slippage on 2 schemes; <i>The Deletion of one HR officer post and one HR consultant post (20% staff reduction) by changing our operating model</i> (£60k in 2021/22) and <i>Deleting the Organisation Development Service</i> (£12.5k in 2021/22).
Finance	100,000	4	35,000	2	45,000	1	20,000	1	There are risks of achieving the savings of the <i>Generating income through fraud prevention</i> scheme (£20k in 2021/22). There has been a delay in realising £45k of savings on one scheme, namely <i>Tax savings on the new Additional Voluntary Contributions in the Pension field for Council employees</i> .
Economy and Community	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2021/22.
Adults, Health and Well-being	78,750	2	-		45,000	1	33,750	1	The Department anticipates some risks in realising the savings of the <i>Review the operational arrangements within the Adults Department</i> scheme (£33.75k) because barriers on other schemes and Covid have impeded the ability to move the scheme forward. The <i>Better co-ordination of service with the Department for Children and Families at the point of transfer age</i> scheme has been delayed but is progressing (£45k).
Children and Supporting Families	23,170	1	23,170	1	-		-		The one scheme that had a target in 2021/22 has been realised.

Department	Total 2021/22 Savings		Realised Schemes		Schemes that have slipped but in the process of implementation.		Schemes with some risks in achieving the savings		Head of Finance Department's comments
	£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		
Highways and Municipal	206,250	3 *	105,000	1	26,250	1	75,000	1	At the time of closing the 2021/22 accounts there was a delay in realising savings of £75k on the scheme <i>Increasing fees for waste collection from businesses</i> . Also, there has been a slippage in realising the savings of the <i>Barmouth Bridge - not paying Network Rail for the right of way over the bridge</i> scheme (£26.25k in 2021/22). The Department is still in discussions with Network Rail.
Consultancy	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2021/22.
Corporate Management Team and Legal	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2021/22.
Housing and Property	302,050	5	227,050	4	-		75,000	1	<i>There is a risk of realising savings of £75k in 2021/22 on the Reduce dependency on temporary accommodation by investing in purpose-built accommodation</i> scheme. See point 5.6 in the report.
TOTAL - 2021/22 FINAL ACCOUNTS	966,720	24	516,720	13	246,250	7	203,750	4	In financial terms (£), 53% of 2021/22 savings schemes have already been realised and there has been a delay with 25% of schemes but these are moving forward.

TOTAL - AUGUST 2022 REVIEW	966,720	24	624,220	16	213,750	5	128,750	3	In financial terms (£), 65% of 2021/22 savings schemes have already been realised and there has been a delay with 22% of schemes but these are moving forward.
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* scheme partially realised in one financial year but yet to be realised in full.

OVERVIEW OF 2022/23 SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	Total 2022/23 Savings		Realised Schemes		Schemes on track to be completed on time		Schemes slipping and with some risks in achieving the savings		Head of Finance Department's comments
	£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		£ - number		
Education	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2022/23.
Environment	12,500	1	-		12,500	1	-		The one scheme profiled for 2022/23 is on track for a timely delivery.
Corporate Support	100,000	1	100,000	1	-		-		The one scheme profiled for 2022/23 has been realised.
Finance	25,000	1	-		-		25,000	1	There has been a delay with the <i>Generating additional income from an In-house collection agency</i> scheme.
Economy and Community	70,000	1	-		-		70,000	1	The scheme relating to Neuadd Dwyfor has risks of realising the savings.
Adults, Health and Well-being	100,000	1	-		100,000	1	-		The one scheme profiled for 2022/23 is on track for a timely delivery.
Children and Supporting Families	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2022/23.
Highways and Municipal	287,500	3 *	32,500	1			255,000	2	There are risks of realising savings of £150k on the <i>Changing waste collection work arrangements to smaller shifts and circuits</i> scheme. The <i>Changing CCTV system monitored by officers into an 'officer free' system</i> scheme (£105k), has seen a delay.
Consultancy	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2022/23.
Corporate Management Team and Legal	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2022/23.
Housing and Property	-		-		-		-		No profiled savings target for 2022/23.
TOTAL	595,000	8	132,500	2	112,500	2	350,000	4	In financial terms (£), 22% of 2022/23 savings schemes have already been realised and a further 19% are on track to be delivered on time by the end of the financial year.

* scheme partially realised in one financial year but yet to be realised in full.

APPENDIX 4

OVERVIEW OF 2023/24 ONWARDS SAVINGS SCHEMES PER DEPARTMENT

Department	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total 2023/24 to 2025/26 Savings	
	£	£	£	£ - <i>number</i>	
Economy and Community	170,000	15,000	-	185,000	2
Adults, Health and Well-being	935,250	-	200,000	1,135,250	4
Children and Supporting Families	23,840	-	-	23,840	1
TOTAL	1,129,090	15,000	200,000	1,344,090	7

Agenda Item 10

REPORT TO THE CABINET 25 OCTOBER 2022

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ioan Thomas, Finance Cabinet Member

Subject: Capital Programme 2022/23 –
End of August Review (31 August 2022 position)

Contact Officer: Ffion Madog Evans, Senior Finance Manager

The decision sought

- To accept the report on the end of August review (31 August 2022 position) of the capital programme.
 - Approve the revised financing as shown in part 4 of the report, that is:
 - use of various sources, worth a total of £26,751,000, to fund actual slippages from 2021/22,
 - no change in the use of borrowing,
 - an increase of £7,396,000 in the use of grants and contributions,
 - no change in the use of capital receipts,
 - an increase of £2,156,000 in the use of revenue contributions,
 - an increase of £13,000 in the use of the capital reserve, and
 - an increase of £538,000 in the use of renewal and other reserves.
-

1. Introduction / Summary

This technical report is presented as part of the 2022/23 budget review procedure. The main purpose of the report is to present the revised capital programme and to approve the relevant financing sources. There is a summary in parts 3 and 4 of the report, with the recommendations in part 6:

Part 3: Analysis by Department of the £136.338m capital programme for the 3 years 2022/23 – 2024/25.

Part 4: The sources of finance for the net increase of approximately £36.854m since the opening budget with £26.751m of the increase due to slippages from 2021/22 (previously reported as part of the slippages in the year-end review on 14 June 2022).

Part 5: Detail on additional grants since the establishment of the original budget.

The Cabinet has the authority to adapt the capital programme. Approval is sought for the proposed programme (part 3) and financing (part 4).

The remainder of the report is for information.

2. Main Findings

The main findings that arise from the revised position are:

- There are firm schemes in place to invest approximately £79.8m in 2022/23 on capital projects, with £21.1m (27%) of it being financed by attracting specific grants.
- The effect of the recent financial challenges on the capital programme can still be seen in the reported figures in Appendix C, with only 11% of the budget having been spent by the end of August this year, compared to 16% for the same period a year ago and 13% two years ago.
- An additional £12.1m of proposed expenditure has been re-profiled from 2022/23 to 2023/24 and 2024/25, but no loss of funding was caused to the Council where schemes have slipped.

3. Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25

See below the revised proposed capital programme as at the end of August 2022.

DEPARTMENT	END OF AUGUST REVIEW				INCREASE / (DECREASE) SINCE THE OPENING BUDGET	SLIPPAGES ADJUSTMENT	OTHER CHANGES
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000			
Education	11,412	14,579	2,955	28,946	6,030	2,901	3,129
Environment	7,926	190	100	8,216	6,927	3,924	3,003
Corporate Support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Finance	1,828	837	619	3,284	546	546	-
Economy and Community	2,971	927	150	4,048	1,803	832	971
Housing and Property	28,201	8,577	7,007	43,785	8,565	5,772	2,793
Adults, Health and Wellbeing	4,151	2,875	-	7,026	3,041	3,011	30
Children and Supporting Families	1,421	250	-	1,671	1,189	1,004	185
Highways and Municipal	11,088	2,399	5,686	19,173	3,734	3,205	529
Consultancy	5,506	3,082	-	8,588	1,469	1,457	12
Corporate	5,267	3,271	3,063	11,601	3,550	4,099	(549)
TOTAL	79,771	36,987	19,580	136,338	36,854	26,751	10,103

4. Changes to the Sources of Finance

The budget for the three year programme shows an increase of £36.854m since the opening budget position. The proposed sources of financing for this are noted below:

SOURCE OF FINANCE	END OF AUGUST REVIEW				INCREASE / (DECREASE) SINCE THE OPENING BUDGET	SLIPPAGES ADJUSTMENT	OTHER CHANGES
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000			
Supported Borrowing	8,238	9,173	9,173	26,584	1,358	1,358	-
Other Borrowing	7,592	5,195	3,137	15,924	1,635	1,635	-
Grants and Contributions	21,143	8,258	54	29,455	16,440	9,044	7,396
Capital Receipts	774	39	0	813	63	63	-
Departmental & Corporate Revenue	3,261	30	0	3,291	2,253	97	2,156
Capital Fund	13,061	5,392	0	18,453	8,916	8,903	13
Renewals & Other Funds	25,702	8,900	7,216	41,818	6,189	5,651	538
TOTAL	79,771	36,987	19,580	136,338	36,854	26,751	10,103

5. Additional Grants

Since setting the original budget at the end of March, the Council succeeded in attracting the following additional grants totalling £7,422k. A number of adjustments including a reduction of £26k for schemes lower than the original forecast brings the total movement to £7,396k (see Appendix A for more information) :

- £1,570k Free School Meals Capital Grant
- £897k Sustainable Communities for Learning Grant – Community Use of Schools
- £850k Road Safety Capital Grant from Welsh Government
- £692k Grant from Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) towards countryside schemes
- £587k Local Transport Fund (LTF) and the Active Travel Fund Grant (ATF) Grants from Welsh Government
- £558k Brilliant Basics Grant from Welsh Government towards resurfacing of Y Glyn Car Park, Llanberis and other Country Park schemes
- £346k Placemaking fund Grant from Welsh Government – to improve properties
- £336k Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Grants towards a number of different countryside schemes including the Coastal Path
- £303k Welsh Government Grant towards countryside schemes

including sustainable landscapes

- £291k Housing Grants from Welsh Government including Phase 2 Homelessness Grant and Transforming Towns
- £247k Housing Enable Grant from Welsh Government to facilitate independent living
- £235k Gypsy and Travellers Grant from Welsh Government
- £184k Grant from Welsh Government towards a scheme to deal with Ash Dieback
- £169k Welsh Government Flying Start Grant - Maenofferen Nursery Scheme
- £157k Land Release Fund Grant from Welsh Government

6. Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- **accept the 2022/23 to 2024/25 revised programme, and**
- **approve the relevant sources of finance (part 4 above).**

7. Reasons for Recommending the Decision

It is necessary to ensure appropriate financing arrangements for the Council's plans to spend on capital, and the Cabinet must approve the capital programme and its sources of funding.

Incorporating funding via grant is a point of order, but it is also necessary to deal with situations where there has been a change in expenditure profiles between years and the value of capital receipts and contributions.

These are recommendations to ensure definite sources of funding for the 2022/23 – 2024/25 capital schemes.

8. Relevant Considerations

These are technical issues regarding the financing of schemes and relevant implications and debates have already been addressed when the individual schemes were adopted.

9. Next Steps and Timetable

To implement the recommendations to finance the programme.

View of the Local Member

Not relevant.

Views of the Statutory Officers**Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add from a propriety perspective.

Head of Finance:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Main changes per source of finance
 - Appendix B: Movement from 2022/23 to 2023/24
 - Appendix C: First 5 months' expenditure in 2022/23
-

Details of Main Changes

See below the relevant schemes that have caused the main changes to the sources of finance since the previous review :

	2022/23	2023/24- 2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Grants and Contributions		
• Free School Meals Capital Grant (<i>Education Department</i>)	1,570	
• Sustainable Communities for Learning Grant – Community Use of Schools (<i>Education Department</i>).	897	
• Placemaking fund Grant from Welsh Government – to improve properties (<i>Economy and Community Department</i>).	346	
• Brilliant Basics Grant from Welsh Government towards resurfacing of Y Glyn Car Park, Llanberis and other Country Park schemes (<i>Economy and Community Department</i>).	558	
• Welsh Government Flying Start Grant - Maenofferen Nursery Scheme (<i>Children and Families Department</i>).	169	
• Grant from Welsh Government towards a scheme to deal with Ash Dieback (<i>Highways and Municipal Department</i>).	184	
• Road Safety Capital Grant from Welsh Government towards several different 20 mph schemes (<i>Environment Department</i>).	850	
• Local Transport Fund (LTF) and the Active Travel Fund Grant (ATF) Grants from Welsh Government towards several different schemes (<i>Environment Department</i>).	587	
• Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Grants towards a number of different countryside schemes including the Coastal Path (<i>Environment Department</i>).	336	
• Welsh Government Grant towards countryside schemes including sustainable landscapes (<i>Environment Department</i>).	303	
• Grant from Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) towards countryside schemes including Local Places for Nature (<i>Environment Department</i>).	692	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Enable Grant from Welsh Government to facilitate independent living (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>). 	247
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gypsy and Travellers Grant from Welsh Government towards the Llandygai Gypsy Site (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>). 	235
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Release Fund Grant from Welsh Government (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>). 	157
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Grants from Welsh Government including Phase 2 Homelessness Grant and Transforming Towns (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>). 	291
Departmental and Corporate Revenue	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions from schools towards various schemes including vehicles (<i>Education Department</i>). 	112
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match funding contributions/additional funding towards several schemes (<i>Environment Department</i>). 	135
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring an element of the revenue budget to fund Repairs and Maintenance schemes which are now capital by nature (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>). 	1,879
Renewals and Other Funds	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match funding contributions/additional funding towards several schemes (<i>Economy and Community Department; Environment Department; Housing and Property Department</i>). 	177
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles and equipment renewals (<i>Children and Families Department; Highways and Municipal Department</i>). 	362

Details of Budget Re-profiling

See below the main schemes that have been re-profiled since the original budget:

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Schools' Schemes (Sustainable Communities for Learning and Others) (<i>Education Department</i>)	(5,114)	5,114
Caernarfon Town and Coastlines Regeneration (<i>Economy and Community Department</i>)	(140)	140
Maritime, Country Parks' and Leisure Schemes (<i>Economy and Community Department</i>)	(142)	142
Neuadd Dwyfor Investment Scheme (<i>Economy and Community Department</i>)	(465)	465
Maesgeirchen Integrated Centre Scheme (<i>Children and Families Department</i>)	(250)	250
Penygroes Health and Care Hub (<i>Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department</i>)	(1,625)	1,625
Residential Homes and Adults Day Care Establishments' Schemes (<i>Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department</i>)	(625)	625
Programme to Reduce Highways Deterioration (<i>Highways and Municipal Department</i>)	1,000	(1,000)
Flood Alleviation Schemes (<i>Consultancy Department</i>)	(3,039)	3,039
Car Park Resurfacing (<i>Environment Department</i>)	(69)	69
Disabled and Office Adaptation Schemes (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>)	(123)	123
Council's Carbon Management Schemes (<i>Housing and Property Department</i>)	(1,514)	1,514

Note:

The above re-profiling will not result in any loss in grant.

There is a variety of valid reasons behind the re-profiling in many cases, but the delay prior to implementing these schemes can mean that the services have to cope for longer with current assets which have not been improved.

Capital Expenditure First 5 Months 2022/23

SUMMARY	CAPITAL PROGRAMME FULL YEAR (reviewed August)	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE 5 MONTHS TO
	2022/23 £'000	31/08/2022 £'000
Education	11,412	1,759
Environment	7,926	323
Corporate Support	-	-
Finance (and Information Technology)	1,828	381
Economy and Community	2,971	742
Housing and Property	28,201	2,724
Adults, Health and Wellbeing	4,151	75
Children and Supporting Families	1,421	257
Highways and Municipal	11,088	2,791
Consultancy	5,506	68
Corporate	5,267	-
TOTAL	79,771	9,120

Note:

The percentage that has been spent this year (11%) is lower than the position this time last year (amount spent in 5 months in 2021/22 was 16%), and lower than two years ago (13% in 2020/21).