

# Complete Agenda

# CABINET

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD

<b>DATE</b>	Tuesday, 11th July, 2023
<b>TIME</b>	1.00 pm
<b>LOCATION</b>	Hybrid Meeting - Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH and on Zoom
<b>CONTACT POINT</b>	Rhodri Jones 01286 6796656 cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

### GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

<b>Members</b>	
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, Engineering 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 Trenholme	Cabinet Member for Corporate Support

## AGENDA

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## THE CABINET, TUESDAY, 13 JUNE 2023

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### **Present -**

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

### **Also present -**

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Geraint Owen (Corporate Director), Huw Dylan Owen (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dewi Aeron Morgan (Head of Finance Department) and Rhodri Jones (Democracy Services Officer).

- Item 6: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department) and Rebeca Angharad Jones (Planning Manager (Joint Planning Policy)).
- Item 7 Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department) and Heledd Jones (Team Leader (Joint Planning Policy Unit - Gwynedd and Anglesey)).
- Item 8 Gareth Jackson (Head of Education Department), Debbie Anne Jones (Assistant Head of Education Department: Corporate Services) and Gwyn Tudur (Assistant Head of Education Department: Secondary).
- Items 9 and 10 Ffion Madog Evans (Assistant Head of Finance Department - Accountancy and Pensions).
- Item 11 Carys Fôn Williams (Head of Housing and Property Department).

### **1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

The 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**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2023 were accepted as a true record.

### **6. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE NEW LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND JOINT PLANNING POLICY MATTERS**

The report was submitted by Cllr Dafydd Meurig.

## **DECISION**

To approve the Model of Governance in Appendix 1 for the preparation of the Local Development Plan for inclusion in the Draft Delivery Agreement.

To agree to establish a 15-member Planning Policy Working Group with the Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) to support the preparation of the New Local Development Plan.

To delegate authority to the Head of Environment Department in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to make linguistic adjustments and minor editorial corrections to the Terms of Reference.

## **DISCUSSION**

It was reported on the need to establish a new governance arrangement to prepare a New Local Development Plan and planning policy matters for the Cyngor Gwynedd Planning Authority, following decisions to bring formal joint working arrangements with the Isle of Anglesey County Council to an end.

It was explained that the process of establishing the new Local Development Plan was part of a joint duty between the Cabinet and the Full Council. It was noted that this process was an approximately four-year period of work and there was a need to monitor the Local Development Plan, prepare Supplementary Planning guidance as well as undertake general planning policy work. The importance of all members taking ownership of the developments of this work was noted.

A suggestion was made to establish a Planning Policy Working Group with a membership of 15 Cyngor Gwynedd Members, based on political allocation, to support the process of forming and maintaining the Local Development Plan. It was noted that some of the main functions of the terms of reference would be:

- Provide opinion and guidance on the draft documents of the Planning Policy Service as well as the draft documents of the Supplementary Planning Guidance, before the service makes arrangements to seek public feedback.
- Provide opinion and guidance on the observations received by the public and any stakeholder group or forum during periods of public engagement or other consultations in the processes of the Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Provide opinion and guidance on the Annual Monitoring Report of the Local Development Plan and any document that is prepared as part of the process of reviewing the Local Development Plan.

It was confirmed that the Cabinet, the Full Council and the Communities Scrutiny Committee would have a role within these processes and a timetable of the process was shared. It was confirmed that there was a statutory requirement for this process to be submitted to the Full Council twice within the four-year period. It was elaborated that Service officers had timetabled for the updates to be submitted to the Full Council four times within this period, in order to correspond with key steps and to ensure that Members took ownership of the development process.

It was noted that all Council members would receive awareness raising sessions throughout the process when it would be timely to do so.

It was reported that this governance process would be a reflection of the previous joint-arrangement with the Isle of Anglesey County Council. It was elaborated that a large number of other local authorities used a similar arrangement to what had been recommended in the report.

## **7. INTRODUCING THE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO ENABLE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TRANSFER IN USE FROM RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS TO HOLIDAY USE (SECOND HOMES AND HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION)**

The report was submitted by Cllr Dafydd Meurig.

### **DECISION**

1. To approve the Justification Paper on the Introduction of an Article 4 Direction in Appendix 1.
2. To approve the making of an Article 4 Direction which does not come into effect immediately but after 12 months (Appendix 2) for the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area in order to revoke the permitted development rights for the following uses:
  - a. Change of use from C3 (primary residence) to C5 (second home) or C6 (short-term holiday let) and specific mixed uses;
  - b. Change of use from C5 (second homes) to C6 (short-term holiday let) and specific mixed uses;
  - c. Change of use from C6 (short-term holiday let) to C5 (second home) and specific mixed uses.
3. It was agreed that the Article 4 Direction notice as was presented in Appendix 3 be published and served in accordance with the requirements, (accepting that it was not practicable to present individually to each owner and occupier within the area because of its size) for a period of no less than six weeks to allow the public to submit responses to the proposal.
4. It was agreed to receive a further report to consider any responses received (following the engagement period) in order to make the decision to confirm the Article 4 Direction.
5. The right was delegated to the Head of Environment Department in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to make editorial adjustments to the notice prior to publication.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was reported that, historically, it had not been possible to control whether or not a home was converted for use as a second home or self-contained holiday let. It was explained that the Welsh Government had introduced new use classes (C5 - second home and C6 - short-term holiday let), but there was no current requirement for planning permission before changing the use class of a house.

It was explained that introducing an Article 4 Direction would enable the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority to impose a requirement for planning permission before owners could amend the use class of their home. It was emphasised that there was no requirement for planning permission if the owner intended to amend the use class of their home from C5 or C6 back to primary residence (use class C3), unless an original application had previously been submitted to the Authority for C5 or C6 use.

It was emphasised that the main intention of the Council when introducing an Article 4 Direction was to gain control over changing use classes, not to prevent developments from proceeding.

An overview of the Justification Paper on the Introduction of an Article 4 Direction was provided, which noted the following main points:

- The current situation was analysed detailing how the use of holiday homes had developed over the past four years.
  - It was reported that there had been an increase in the number of holiday lets over this period. It was also noted that there had been a reduction in the number of houses paying the second home premium.
- It was confirmed that 7509 houses (12% of the housing stock) were second homes or holiday lets. It was considered that there was a possibility for this figure to be quite conservative as the Bed Stock Survey completed by the Council in 2019, jointly with information from Visit Wales, had suggested that provision of holiday lets alone was 3700-4500 in peak periods.
- It was noted that a change had been seen in the Bangor area over the past four years. It was explained that there had been a percentage increase of 143% within this period of houses being used as second homes or holiday lets (from 0.97% to 2.38%), suggesting that there had been a change in the provision of second homes and holiday lets in urban areas of the county as well as coastal areas.
- Consideration was given to the impact on the Welsh language, community facilities and house prices in communities with a high number of second homes or holiday lets.
- It was confirmed that approximately 65.5% of the Gwynedd population, on average, had been priced out of the housing market. It was explained that this statistic could change from area to area - such as Abersoch, where 96% of the population had been priced out of the housing market due to a high density of second homes and holiday lets.
- It was concluded that introducing an Article 4 Direction was essential to try to reverse the side-effects of holiday lets and second homes on our communities and to ensure fairness and opportunities for Gwynedd residents.

It was noted that consideration had been given to four potential options to justify the introduction of an Article 4 Direction, namely:

- Option 1: Dwyfor (Government pilot area)
- Option 2: Areas where the current provision of holiday homes is greater than 15% of the housing stock.
- Option 3: Vulnerable Areas (areas under threat)
- Option 4: The whole of Gwynedd (Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area)

It was confirmed that Option 4 (The whole of Gwynedd - Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area) had been selected to implement an Article 4 Direction. It was explained that this option had been selected as implementing the Direction was an unprecedented process and it was impossible to fully anticipate the side-effects of its introduction. It was elaborated that it was important to protect the housing stock to ensure that suitable houses were available for Gwynedd residents and introducing an Article 4 Direction in this way would help to ensure that objective.

It was explained that it was intended to issue a notice of the proposal to introduce an Article 4 Direction and it would be possible for the public to voice an opinion on this proposal. It was noted that a specific website had been set up for this matter, where all the

relevant documentation had been uploaded, and it would be possible to visit the website at Siop Gwynedd and Gwynedd Libraries. Furthermore, it was noted that an awareness raising session would be held for all Council members when appropriate.

It was explained that the Article 4 Direction order would come into force on 1 September 2024 to ensure that the Council complied with Governmental requirements and to ensure that the Council was not open to compensation claims.

A concern was shared that Eryri National Park areas were not introducing an Article 4 Direction at present. Despite this, it was assured that officers collaborated closely with the Park but it was acknowledged that the Park's situation was different to Gwynedd as it was located over two different local authorities.

All officers of the Joint Planning Policy Unit were thanked for their innovative work to introduce an Article 4 Direction. It was noted that officers led on this work over the whole of Wales and there was regular communication with other authorities to introduce similar requirements in other counties.

## **8. RESPONDING TO A WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION - PROPOSALS FOR A WELSH LANGUAGE EDUCATION BILL**

The report was submitted by Cllr Beca Brown.

### **DECISION**

To approve the Council's response to the White Paper consultation – Proposals for A Welsh Language Bill, Welsh Government.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was explained that this Welsh Language Education Bill offered a foundation to provide a Welsh language education for every child in Wales. It was noted that this would increase the number of confident Welsh speakers and normalise the Welsh language in schools.

It was noted that Gwynedd had already managed to normalise the Welsh language by offering Welsh-medium education to all children in the county, and had developed a successful immersion education system to ensure that everyone can assimilate to this Welsh environment.

It was explained that Cyngor Gwynedd's aspiration was often higher than the statutory requirements provided by the Welsh Government and this laid the foundation for other authorities to assimilate to the language.

It was a source of pride that this Bill led other authorities to a direction similar to Gwynedd as offering Welsh language education to everyone would eliminate linguistic inequality problems and lack of opportunities for Welsh speakers.

## **9. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2022/23 – REVENUE OUT-TURN**

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

### **DECISION**

1.1 To note the final financial position of the Council's departments for 2022/23.



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

DEPARTMENT	£'000
Adults, Health and Well-being	100
Children and Families	76
Education	(96)
Economy and Community	0
Highways and Municipal	100
Environment	6
Gwynedd Consultancy	0
Housing and Property	0
Corporate Management Team and Legal	(17)
Finance	(10)
Corporate Support	(16)

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

- In the Education Department, that £1,304k of additional electricity inflation and salaries of school assistants and administrative staff costs that is above the budget is funded from the balances of individual schools.
- In the Housing and Property Department, that £2,482k of the Council Tax Premium Fund is used to fund the additional pressure in the Homelessness field.
- Financial assistance of £550k to the Economy and Community Department as the effects of Covid have affected the income levels of Cwmni Byw'n Iach.
- The following departments that are over-spending to receive one-off partial financial assistance to limit the overspend that will be carried forward by the Department to £100k:
  - a. £3,785K - Adults, Health and Well-being
  - b. £2,434k – Highways and Municipal
- On Corporate budgets:
  - a. Use (£2,851k) of the Corporate net underspend to assist the departments that have overspent in 2022/23.
  - b. That (£3,899k) relating to capital costs allocated to a capital programme fund.
  - c. With the remainder of the net underspend of (£952k) on Corporate budgets being transferred to the Transformational Fund to fund the Council's priorities.

1.4 To approve the financial virements from specific funds as outlined in Appendix 3 following a review of the reserves, harvesting (£3,918k) from reserves to be used in its entirety to assist the departments that have overspent in 2022/23.

## DISCUSSION

It was explained that the report elaborated on the Council's expenditure in the 2022/23 financial year, as well as the out-turn position of the underspend or overspend.

It was confirmed that 7 departments had an overspend at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. It was elaborated that several factors had contributed to this, including increasing energy prices, failures to realise savings and salary inflation. Details were provided about the most prominent overspend in 5 departments:

- Adults, Health and Well-being Department - it was explained that there was a £3.9 million overspend due to the department's staffing costs and use of agency staff. In addition, there were pressures on supported accommodation and direct payment packages in the Older People's Services. It was confirmed that the department had experienced difficulties to realise savings.
- Education Department - it was explained that there was a £1.2m overspend following inflation on the salaries of assistants and administrative staff, as well as higher electricity prices. Despite this, it was confirmed that the department had been able to use savings from the Covid lockdown periods to assist with the financial pressures.
- Economy and Community Department / Byw'n Iach - It was confirmed that Byw'n Iach had experienced the side-effects of the pandemic throughout the 2022/23 financial year. The Cabinet was reminded that the company received £1.4 million from the Welsh Government in 2021/22 and the Council had extended the financial assurance period to support the company until the end of the 2022/23 year. It was explained that the company needed the Council's assistance to fund £550,000. It was a source of pride that the public had returned to use leisure centres following the pandemic.
- Highways and Municipal Department - It was reported that there was £2.5 million overspend within the department and that waste collection and recycling services contributed towards this figure. It was also emphasised that there had been one-off spending by the department within the relevant financial year and that it had faced difficulties in realising savings.
- Housing and Property Department - It was explained that the department had received £1.5 million from the Council's post-Covid arrangements fund. Despite this, the impact of the Homelessness act had led to substantial financial pressure for the department, causing an overspend of £2.5 million. It was recommended that the Council Tax Premium Fund was used to meet the overspend.

It was ensured that plans had been put in place to address these matters of overspend in future financial plans.

It was recognised that departments faced pressures to provide the best service for Gwynedd residents and staff of the departments were thanked for their work. All staff of the Finance Department were also thanked for their work to collate the figures for the final accounts.

## **10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - END OF YEAR REVIEW (31 MARCH 2023 POSITION)**

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

## **DECISION**

1. To accept the report on the end of year review (31 March 2023 position) of the capital programme.
2. To note the £37,131,000 spend on the capital programme during the 2022/23 financial year, which has been included in the statutory financial statements for 2022/23.
3. To approve the revised financing as shown in part 4 of the report, namely:
  - £68,000 increase in the use of grants and contributions
  - £30,000 increase in the use of capital receipts
  - £701,000 increase in the use of revenue contributions
  - £797,000 increase in the use of renewal funds and others

## **DISCUSSION**

It was explained that the main purpose of the report was to present the amended capital programme (31 March 2023 position), and the Cabinet was asked to approve the relevant funding sources. An analysis was shared per Department of the £142.2 million capital programme for the 3 years between 2022/23 - 2024/25.

Details were provided about sources to fund the net increase, which was approximately £1.6 million since the last review.

It was concluded that the Council had managed to spend £37.1 million in 2022/23 on capital schemes, with £17.1 million (46%) of it funded through specific grants. It was noted that the impact of recent financial challenges remained on the capital programme and it was seen that a further £17 million of proposed spending, in addition to the £41 million reported upon in previous reviews, had been re-profiled from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

It was explained that the 2023/24 Capital Programme had been submitted to the Full Council in March as part of the annual Budget. The programme included a number of schemes in the field of Housing, as well as developments in the field of Education such as Bangor Secondary School and Ysgol Treferythyr. In addition to this, capital spending had slipped from 2022/23 to 2023/24 (as outlined in Appendix 3), which included:

- £11.8 million - Housing Strategy and Homelessness Plans
- £9.3 million - Schools Schemes (Sustainable Learning Communities and Others)
- £5.4 million – Vehicle Renewals
- £5.2 million - Grants and Housing Schemes
- £3.5 million - Penygroes Health and Care Hub Scheme

It was explained that the Council had managed to receive additional grants since the last review, which included:

- £2.2 million - 2022/23 School Maintenance Grant
- £0.3 million - Grants from Welsh Government and the National Trust towards the coastal protection scheme in Porthdinllaen

- £0.2 million – Flying Start and Childcare Grants from the Welsh Government.
- £0.2 million - Regional Integration Fund Grant

## **11. REVIEW OF THE CYNGOR GWYNEDD HOUSING ACTION PLAN**

The report was submitted by Cllr Craig ab Iago.

### **DECISION**

1. To approve the financial additions to individual projects within the Housing Action Plan as noted in the table in paragraph 6.4 of the Report.
2. To approve the amendment to the original business case for borrowing in order to buy houses to let to local residents, approved by the Cabinet at its meeting on 16 February 2021, by making use of £5.6m from the Council Tax Premium.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was reported to members that there was currently a homelessness crisis in Wales. Details were provided on a number of figures to outline the situation, which included:

- There were currently 657 homeless people in Gwynedd and over 7,000 children living in poverty.
- 3000 Gwynedd residents were on a waiting list for social housing
- The price of a house, on average, was eight times higher than the usual salary.

It was explained that the Council was aware of this crisis and a video was shared to introduce the five key aspects of the Housing Action Plan, namely:

1. Tackling homelessness
2. Building new houses
3. Purchasing homes
4. Bringing empty homes back into use
5. Ensuring that Gwynedd housing are eco-friendly

It was reported that the original Housing Action Plan was based on the council tax premium percentage of 50%. Members were reminded that the premium had been increased to 100%, which generated approximately £20 million additional funding for housing and homelessness schemes, over the period of the plan.

It was noted that the Housing Action Plan had now existed for two years and so far had been able to complete nearly 600 units through various projects, which would benefit over 4000 Gwynedd residents. It was elaborated that an extra 313 additional units were currently in the pipeline.

It was explained that £34 million funding had been allocated to various projects for the 2023/24 financial year.

It was confirmed that eight houses had been purchased as part of the Buy to Let scheme, with the potential for 32 individuals to benefit from these houses. It was elaborated that a number of other houses were currently in the process of being purchased. It was also stated that 15 applications had been approved as part of the Homebuy Scheme, since it was launched in September 2022.

## **THE CABINET Tuesday, 13 June 2023**

It was reported that the Empty Houses scheme had managed to bring 104 houses back into use across Gwynedd and the department had also managed to construct 173 social housing, with 88 new houses currently being constructed. It was elaborated that money had been earmarked to construct another 113 social housing units within this financial year.

It was a source of pride that the department currently helped to support 40 people in the county, by collaborating with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to establish a provision to support individuals who are at risk of becoming homeless due to mental health issues, to continue living in their homes.

It was explained that the costs of construction, labour and materials had increased significantly since the original Housing Action Plan was established in 2021. It was elaborated that these costs had increased by approximately 30% and it was detailed that interest rates had also increased. It was noted that this increase in prices had created difficulty to purchase houses on the local market and had affected the development of various projects.

Details were provided on the logic behind increasing the contribution of the Council Tax Premium Fund to housing and homelessness schemes, which included:

- Supported housing for the homeless schemes - 45 units were ready in Caernarfon and Pwllheli to reduce dependency on temporary accommodation.
- Purchase of former social housing and renting them to Gwynedd residents and purchase private housing.
- Develop our own housing scheme - to increase the opportunities for Gwynedd residents.

Officers of the department were thanked for their continuous work with the Housing Action Plan.

## **12. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE DELEGATION SCHEME: MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT**

The report was submitted by Cllr Menna Trenholme.

### **DECISION**

To approve the amendments to Section 13 (3) of the Constitution Officers' Delegation Scheme shown in Appendix 1.

### **DISCUSSION**

It was reported that the advent of new grant funds such as the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and ARFOR fund had highlighted the need to update the delegated rights to the head of Economy and Community Department to process applications effectively.

It was noted that these new funds had led to the need to process applications of higher amounts, together with an increased turnover of applications to deal with. It was recommended to amend this section of the Constitution and it was explained that the nature of some funds relied on very rapid turnover to process applications and, therefore, these changes were necessary.

The meeting commenced at 1:00pm and concluded at 2:55pm.

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CHAIR

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



### Report to the Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet

<b>Date of meeting:</b>	11 July 2023
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Beca Brown
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gwern ap Rhisiart, Assistant Head of Education Department: Primary Sector
<b>Title of Item:</b>	Issuing a statutory notice on the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023, and to transfer the current pupils to a nearby alternative school, Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, in accordance with the parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.

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#### DECISION SOUGHT:

- 1) To approve commencing the process to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023 under section 43 of the Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013.
- 2) Approve the publication of a statutory notice, on the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023, allowing a statutory objection period of 28 days in accordance with the requirements of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the guidance of the Schools Organisation Code 011/2018, and to transfer the current pupils to a nearby alternative school, Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, in accordance with the parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.
- 3) Approve transport arrangements for the transitional period only, which would offer free transport to those pupils who are currently registered at Ysgol Felinwnda, and live in Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area, to Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, for the remainder of the learners' period at one of those schools, in accordance with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.
- 4) Subject to the Cabinet's decision regarding the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda, allow a consultation to be held on revising the catchment area boundaries of schools that border Ysgol Felinwnda's current catchment area.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Based on the PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) January 2023, Ysgol Felinwnda is the smallest school in the county, with only 8 learners. Consequently, the Education Department submits this report to Cabinet requesting permission to hold a statutory objection period on the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda in accordance with the guidelines of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the Welsh Government statutory code (School Organisation Code 011/2018).
- 1.2 Section 48(3) of the 2013 Act provides that the requirement to consult does not apply to proposals to close a 'small school' as defined in the Act, and the School Organisation Code 011/2018 states:

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*"If a school has less than 10 registered pupils (or if there are no pupils left in a school) when the census is held in January, the 2013 Act allows governing bodies/local authorities to follow a simpler procedure in order to close the school officially.*

*The only thing they would be required to do under that procedure would be to issue the closure notice - the requirement to consult generally would be waived, if enough places in equivalent schools had been identified which would be reasonably accessible to those pupils who have been displaced or may be displaced."*

As there are less than 10 registered learners at Ysgol Felinwnda in PLASC January 2023, the School Organisation Code allows the authority to follow a simpler procedure to close the school. In particular, the requirement to consult in general is waived, and the only thing that would be required would be to publish the statutory notice. Following that there would be the usual objection period, and any objections received would need to be considered before reaching a final decision. It would not be possible to refer such a decision to the Welsh Ministers as with other schools.

## 2. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Council has implemented the 'Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd' strategy since it was adopted by the Full Council in April 2009. It is noted in the strategy that there is a need to ensure a way of giving attention to the situation of some vulnerable schools.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 18 December 2018, the Cabinet approved the "Principles of an Education System which is Fit for Purpose" which now provides a basis to realise the Education Department's vision and develop the system to ensure a high-quality education for the children and young people of Gwynedd for the twenty first century. These principles work towards rationalising age-ranges within primary classes and ensuring sufficient non-contact time for headteachers to focus on leadership matters in the primary schools.

## 3. THE CURRENT SITUATION AT YSGOL FELINWYNDY

- 3.1 Ysgol Felinwnda is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and areas. It provides education for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years. Children are admitted to the nursery class on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday, and on a full-time basis in the September following their fourth birthday.

### 3.2 Number of learners

The table and graph below show the reduction in the numbers of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda over the past 10 years:

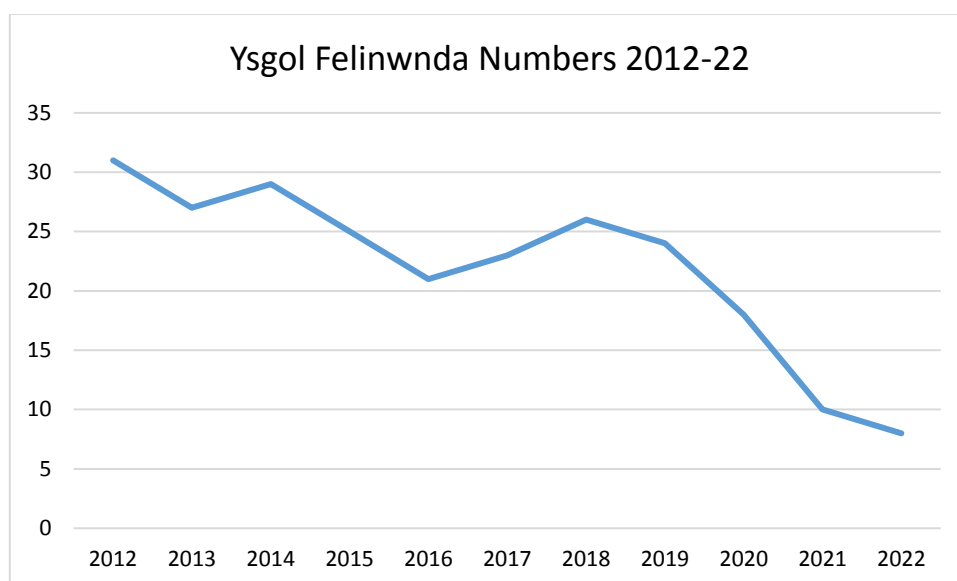
Year	Number of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda
2012	31
2013	27
2014	29



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2015	25
2016	21
2017	23
2018	26
2019	24
2020	18
2021	10
2022	8



As can be seen, the number of pupils at the school has reduced substantially since 2018 and has been vulnerable for some time.

### 3.3 Broad age range within small classes

According to the PLASC in January 2013, 8 learners were recorded at Ysgol Felinwnda, which is the lowest number of learners at any school in Gwynedd. The learners are taught in two small multi-age classes with one class for year 1-3 learners and another for year 4-5. There are no nursery age, reception class, or year 6 pupils at the school:

	Year								Total
	N	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Felinwnda	0	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	8
Classes	Class					Class			

### 3.4 Projections

The table below shows the current position of the school and the projected numbers over the next 3 years:

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Capacity (N-Yr6)	Numbers January 2023 (N-Yr6)	Surplus Places	Projections September 2023	Projections September 2024	Projections September 2025
61	8	87%	8	5	3

As can be seen from the projections, it is likely that the numbers at the school will continue to reduce to levels that are even more vulnerable than the current situation over the next few years.

### 3.5 High percentage of surplus places

Based on the figures for January 2023, there were over 87% of surplus places at the school (a total of 53).

## 4. FINANCE

4.1 The following table shows the financial allocation of Ysgol Felinwnda for 2022-23:

	School's Financial Allocation 2022-23	Cost Per Head 2022-23	Safety Net 2022-23
<b>Ysgol Felinwnda</b>	£138,226	£14,643	£54,924
<b>Gwynedd Schools Average</b>	£478,000	£4,509	£34,456*

\* Average of the 21 primary sites in the safety net.

### 4.2 Cost Per Pupil


The total allocation for the 2022-23 financial year (based on the numbers in September 2021) is £138,226, which means that the cost per head at Ysgol Felinwnda is £14,643 (2022-23). The county average for the cost per pupil in the same year is £4,509, which means that the cost per head at Ysgol Felinwnda is over 3 times more than the county average.

### 4.3 Safety Net

Ysgol Felinwnda receives a sum of £54,924 for 2022-23 through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and teacher at every school, and a headteacher and assistant at schools with fewer than 15 learners).

### 4.4 Future challenges

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Ysgol Felinwnda is facing a challenge to set a balanced budget for 2023-24 since the school will receive an allocation based on the number of learners, and this, along with a protected sum allocated to them will only enable them to employ a headteacher and assistant.

For 2023-24, Ysgol Felinwnda can make extensive use of balances to be able to continue with the current staffing arrangement for another year. However, it will not be possible for the arrangement to continue for 2024-25, since they will not have remaining balances and therefore, it would be mandatory to implement a staffing structure of headteacher and assistant for the whole range of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda.

Consequently, sharing a headteacher with Ysgol Llandwrog, as currently happens, would be impossible, and the teacher employed at Ysgol Felinwnda would face compulsory redundancy.

## 5. SPECIFIC FACTORS WHEN CONSIDERING SCHOOL CLOSURES

Although a process to close a school with less than 10 pupils omits the requirement to consult in general, the School Organisation Code 011/2018 states that relevant issues that are included in the Code must be considered. It notes that particular attention should be given to the following options when considered whether closing a school is appropriate:

a. Whether the establishment of multi-site schools might be considered as a means of retaining buildings, or the reasons for not pursuing this option?

As there are only 8 learners in the school, Ysgol Felinwnda is facing an increasing challenge to set a balanced budget as the school receives an allocation based on the number of learners, and that, together with a minimum staffing protection sum allocated to them, will only enable them to employ a headteacher and a teaching assistant. Because of this, Cyngor Gwynedd is of the opinion that establishing schools with more than one site could not be considered as a way of keeping the school open.

b. Whether alternatives to closure, such as clustering, collaboration or federation with other schools, might be considered (taking account of the scope for use of ICT links between school sites) or the reasons for not pursuing these as an alternative

As clustering, collaborating, or federalisation with other schools would mean continuing with the current school, and therefore there is a high probability that the current challenges will continue and intensify over the next few years, the Council is of the opinion that this is not an option that would address the challenges facing Ysgol Felinwnda now and into the future.

c. Whether the possibility of making fuller use of the existing buildings as a community or educational resource could be explored

As Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door to the school and runs many activities such as the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi, it is not anticipated that the community will require another community

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resource in the area. However, if the proposal is implemented, Cyngor Gwynedd has a post-use policy for school sites and this policy would be followed when considering the future use of the site.

d. The overall effect of closure on the local community (including the loss of school based facilities which are used by the local community)

There is no community use of the school at present. Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door and runs many activities such as the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi. Cyngor Gwynedd is of the opinion that as the centre is independent of the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school would have any effects on local community events.

e. How parents' and pupils' engagement with the alternative school and any facilities it may offer could be supported

To mitigate any possible negative impact on the learners, we will encourage discussions between the alternative school or schools with the parents of Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area learners so that they can take advantage of their facilities and after school activities, and to encourage the collaboration between the schools and the community at Felinwnda.

## 6. OPTIONS CONSIDERED TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES

6.1 It is obvious that many challenges are facing Ysgol Felinwnda, which means that the school's position is unsustainable in the future. The Education Department has considered 3 options for the future of education in the Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area and has evaluated every option against the following criteria, which corresponds with the "Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd" Strategy.

- Number of learners
- Class sizes
- Financial resources
- Geographical factors
- Leadership and staffing
- The community
- The Welsh language

6.2 See below a collection of the outcomes of the evaluation for the 3 options. The full evaluation can be seen in **Appendix A**.

### 6.2.1 Do nothing

Although the case for change has already been established, the 'Do Nothing' model has been included for comparison purposes.

This model would mean that there would be no change to the current provision in the Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area.

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## **Conclusion**

It is believed that the current situation of Ysgol Felinwnda will continue and intensify over the next few years, and as a result, we are of the opinion that continuing with the status quo is not an option for the future.

### **6.2.2 Federalisation with a nearby school**

This model would ensure the continued presence of the school in Felinwnda by means of a collaboration agreement with a nearby school under the leadership of a headteacher or headteachers and one governing body. The governing bodies of the individual schools would be revoked, and a (new) federal governing body would be formed. The identity of the school in question (including name, ethos, and school uniform) would continue, and it would enable the possibility of sharing staff, resources, IT, buildings, and expertise.

If schools are federalised, they are required to be of the same status, therefore in the case of Ysgol Felinwnda they would need to federalise with another community school. The nearest community school is Ysgol Bontnewydd.

## **Conclusion**

As this option involves continuing with the current school within the federation, it is anticipated that there is a high likelihood that the current challenges would continue and intensify over the next few years. Therefore, we are of the opinion that federalisation is not an option that would address the challenges facing Ysgol Felinwnda now and in the future.

### **6.2.3 Close Ysgol Felinwnda and offer a place to the learners at a nearby alternative school**

This model would mean closing Ysgol Felinwnda and offering a place for the current learners to be educated in a nearby alternative school, or schools of the parents' choice, in accordance with the proposal in this report.

Should the Cabinet decide to implement the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda, then the Education Department will review the catchment area boundaries in the area by holding a consultation to collect the opinion locally, before reaching a decision on adjusting the school, or schools, catchment area to include Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area for the future.

## **Conclusion**

It is anticipated that this option will solve the challenges of low numbers, small classes, and high costs by:

- offering more opportunities to take part in activities with several other learners
- offering education in more suitable class sizes
- offering teaching in classes with more children of the same age
- reducing cost per head

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The nearby alternative schools have enough space and equally good buildings and rooms for Ysgol Felinwnda's current pupil numbers.

## 7. THE PREFERRED OPTION

After conducting the options appraisal, the preferred option for the proposal for the future education of learners in the Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area is to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023, and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.

Should the Cabinet decide to implement the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda, then the Department of Education will review catchment area boundaries in the area by holding a consultation to collect the opinion locally, before coming to a decision on Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area in the future.

Based on the Cabinet's decision on the future of Ysgol Felinwnda, it is anticipated that the consultation would be held early in the Spring term of 2024.

Subsequently the area served by Ysgol Felinwnda would form part of the catchment area of an alternative school or schools, and access to the school, or those schools, would be offered in accordance with the county's access policy, and transport would be provided to the school in accordance with the County's School Transport Policy.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

As part of the process of developing the proposal, a range of options for the school were considered and evaluated and a series of impact assessments were undertaken, including:

- Assessing the Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh language, and the Socio-Economic Disadvantage
- Impact Assessment Report of The Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Community Impact Assessment Report
- Assessment Report of the Probable Impact on Travel Arrangements
- Quality and Standards of Education Assessment Report


The above assessments can be seen in **Appendix B**.

### 8.1.1 Equality Assessment

The assessment gives specific attention to different equality elements such as race, gender, disability, language, religion or belief and age. The assessment identifies the current situation and shows that policies and arrangements are in place which would ensure that the proposal considers and is compatible with equal rights.

Following a weighing of the relevant factors it is concluded that learners will receive more equal opportunities when placed in an alternative school because the learners will receive learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including

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working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range, together with lessons that are appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

The children of Ysgol Felinwnda will have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, it will ensure that they make the most of their education and allow access to more activities relevant to their age and level ability.

Ysgol Felinwnda children will benefit from mixing with more age-related peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities.

The Council will follow normal processes by supporting and monitoring, to ensure compliance of each school with the equality characteristics.

## 8.1.2 Welsh Language Impact Assessment

The Welsh Government guidance (School Organisation Code 011/2018) states that a Welsh language impact assessment must be conducted as part of any proposal involving school reorganisation. A Welsh Language Impact Assessment was completed, by assessing the impact of the language on every option in the options appraisal.

The Gwynedd Education Language Policy has the same aim for all the county's primary schools, and every primary school (except one school) fall into category 3 in accordance with the school categorisation guidance according to the Welsh medium provision, Welsh Government. This means that the learners at Ysgol Felinwnda will be able to continue to receive their education through the medium of Welsh in accordance with the Education Language Policy in the alternative primary schools noted.

It is not anticipated that there would be a negative impact should the proposal be implemented, but it is possible that it could have a positive impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Felinwnda learners benefit from additional opportunities to use Welsh with a broader range of peers in the classroom and socially.

## 8.1.3 Impact Assessment on socio-economic disadvantage

Following an assessment, it is anticipated that the proposal will reduce the inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities in the alternative schools. Learners will receive more equal opportunities because the learners will receive learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range together with lessons that are appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

Ysgol Felinwnda children will have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, and it will ensure that they make the most of their education. The children will benefit from having more age-related peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities.

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## 8.2 The Well-being of Future Generations Act

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

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

It is acknowledged that this proposal leads to the loss of a school in the community of Felinwnda, however, a vast number of the children living within the school's catchment area already attend the nearby alternative schools, and therefore a link already exists between the schools and the community of Felinwnda. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will be held to discuss the possibility that the alternative school's community activity includes the Felinwnda community where appropriate.

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

## 8.3 Community Impact Assessment

Welsh Government guidelines (School Organisation Code 011/2018) state that a community impact assessment needs to be carried out as part of any proposal to reorganise schools.

The assessment shows that there is no community use of the school. Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door to the school and hosts several activities including the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi. As the centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school would have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin, Cylch Ti a Fi, or other events to continue.

If the option of closing Ysgol Felinwnda and offering learners a place in an alternative school were to be realised, it is not anticipated that it would have a negative impact on the Felinwnda community. To mitigate any possible negative impact on the learners, we will encourage discussions between the alternative school, or schools, and the parents of Ysgol Felinwnda learners so that they can take advantage of their facilities and activities after school, and to encourage collaboration between the school and the Felinwnda community.

## 8.4 Assessment of the Impact on Travel Arrangements

Welsh Government guidance (Schools Organisation Code 011/2018) states that a community impact assessment must be held as part of any proposal for schools' reorganisation. An impact



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assessment on travel arrangements and travel impact assessment on each option was completed in the options evaluation.

It is stated in the assessment that, if the proposal were to be implemented, 3 learners of Ysgol Felinwnda at the moment, namely those who live in the catchment area of the school, would be offered transport to the alternative school from January 2024, in accordance with the county's Schools Transport Policy.

If the proposal were to be implemented, learners who currently attend Ysgol Felinwnda, and live within the catchment area, would be offered free transport to an alternative school from 1 January 2024, in accordance with County's Schools Transport Policy, at an annual cost of between £7,400 - £22,200 depending on the number of taxis required.

## 8.5 Assessment of the Quality and Standards of Education

Based on the result of the above assessment, and comparing Estyn's reports, it is concluded that the standard of education provided in the 2 nearby alternative schools is higher (Excellent) in one, and at least as good (Good) in the other, compared to the standard of education at Ysgol Felinwnda (Good). As a result, it is anticipated that there would be a likely positive impact in terms of the quality and standards of education resulting from the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda and transfer the learners to a nearby alternative school or schools.

## 9. IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

### 9.1 Current learners

If the Cabinet decides to implement the proposal, Ysgol Felinwnda will close on 31 December 2023 and current pupils will transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.

### 9.2 Transport

If the Cabinet decides to implement the proposal, Ysgol Felinwnda will close on 31 December 2023 and transitional transport provision would be available for current Ysgol Felinwnda pupils (who also live in the school's catchment area) to either Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.

### 9.3 Staffing Considerations

Should the proposal be implemented, it is anticipated that there would be staffing implications that could lead to redundancies. Discussions have already been conducted with staff and Unions to inform them that a report is being taken to Cabinet, requesting formal permission to hold an objection period on the option to close Ysgol Felinwnda.

Cyngor Gwynedd has developed a detailed staffing policy, in conjunction with Trade Unions and headteachers. Any redundancies resulting from this proposal will have to be in line with that policy. Clear and open communication will play a fundamental part in implementing any proposals.

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## 10. REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS ORGANISATION CODE 011/201

Any statutory process will be conducted in accordance with the Welsh Government's guidelines (School Organisation Code 011/2018) which provides:

*"The requirement to consult is not applicable to proposals to terminate a small school..." (section 48(3))*

and the Welsh Government Statutory Code (Schools Organisation Code 011/2018), which states:

*"Where a school has fewer than 10 registered pupils (or there are no pupils remaining at a school) at the January census point the 2013 Act permits governing bodies/local authorities to undertake a streamlined procedure to bring about official closure.*

*This consists solely of the issue of the notice of closure – the requirement for general consultation being waived, provided sufficient equivalent school places have been identified which would be reasonably accessible to those pupils actually or potentially displaced."*

## 11. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

Timetable	Steps
<b>11 July</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> - decide whether to go ahead and approve the issuing of statutory notices and hold an objection period.
<b>September – October</b>	If the Cabinet approves the proposal, a statutory notice will be issued, and an objection period (28 days) will be held where anyone will have the opportunity to submit an objection to the proposal in the notice
<b>November</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> - discuss and consider the objection report and decide whether to approve the proposal.
<b>31 December</b>	Subject to Cabinet decisions, implement the proposal
<b>Spring Term 2024</b>	Subject to a Cabinet decision - conduct a consultation on adjusting the boundaries of neighbouring school/s to include Ysgol Felinwnda's current catchment area
<b>Spring Term 2024</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> - consider a report on the consultation and decide to approve the proposal or not
<b>September 2024</b>	Dependent on Cabinet decision - implement the proposal

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## VIEWS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

### **The Monitoring Officer:**

The contents of this report has been the subject of legal advice by the Legal Service. No further comments regarding propriety.

### **Head of Finance Department:**

From a financial point of view, it is clear that Ysgol Felinwnda's current situation is not sustainable, given that 87% of places in the school are empty. The report shows that an assessment has been carried out of the options available, and I am satisfied with the robustness of the financial estimates contained therein. I therefore support the decision sought.

### **Local Member:**

I would like to thank the Cabinet of Gwynedd Council for postponing making a decision on this matter last March, in order to maintain a period of local engagement.

Nevertheless, I express disappointment that there has been an engagement rather than a consultation process. Engagement did not provide an opportunity to consider public opinion, and the engagement sessions could have been better promoted as there was very little, if any, reference to the engagement on the Council's website and social media.

I accept that a quicker process can be followed in order to close schools with less than 10 children, but this does not prevent consultation being carried out.

I remain concerned about the possible impact of closing the school on Ganolfan Bro Llanwnda and Cylch Meithrin Llanwnda, and therefore on the wider community. Although Ganolfan Bro Llanwnda is independant, losing the hustle and bustle of a school next door can reduce the community link that has existed between the school and the Centre. In addition, there would be an impact on numbers in the Cylch Meithrin, not only harmful to the Cylch itself, but also to the Centre, as one of the main users.

I welcome the fact that Ysgol Llandwrog is named as an alternative school together with Ysgol Bontnewydd. However it can be argued that the alternative school should only be Ysgol Llandwrog, as there is collaboration and sharing of a Headteacher between Ysgol Felinwnda and Ysgol Llandwrog, and the nature and feel of the two schools are similar.

I also welcome the intention of Gwynedd Council, (if there is a decision to close), to look again at Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area. If this were to happen, I very much hope that that process would include a full and purposeful consultation.

The opinion locally is that Ysgol Felinwnda provides good education and is an asset to the community, but there is no dispute that the current numbers of pupils and future projections are fragile.

It must be accepted that sometimes difficult decisions have to be made, but I trust that Gwynedd Council, (if it proceeds to issue a statutory notice), will sincerely consider any objections received as part of that process.

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## Appendices

**Appendix A:** Options Appraisal Table

**Appendix B:** Impact Assessments:

- Assessing the Impact on Equality Characteristics, the Welsh language, and the Socio-Economic Disadvantage
- Impact Assessment Report of The Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Community Impact Assessment Report
- Assessment Report of the Probable Impact on Travel Arrangements
- Quality and Standards of Education Assessment Report

Options assessments for the future of Ysgol Felinwnda

	Do nothing	Federalisation with Ysgol Bontnewydd	Close Ysgol Felinwnda and offer a place to learners in a nearby alternative school
<b>Numbers of learners</b>	There are only 8 learners at Ysgol Felinwnda.  53 surplus places (87%)  The school's projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.	There are only 8 learners at Ysgol Felinwnda.  53 surplus places (87%)  The school's projections continue to appear fragile in terms of numbers.	Offer more experiences for pupils to socialise and work together on a daily basis with peers.  Plenty of space for Ysgol Felinwnda's current learners in the nearby alternative schools.
<b>Class size</b>	Ysgol Felinwnda class sizes remain small - 2 classes of 3 and 5 (January 2023).  Age range of 3 years in the 2 classes. No nursery, reception, or year 6 children.	Ysgol Felinwnda class sizes remain small - 2 classes of 3 and 5 (January 2023).  Age range of 3 years in the 2 classes. No nursery, reception, or year 6 children.	Learners are taught in more suitable class sizes.  Learners are taught with more children of the same age group.
<b>Financial resources</b>	Ysgol Felinwnda remains financially unsustainable and receives a minimum staffing allocation (£54,924 in 2022-23) from the Authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels.  The average cost per pupil remains high, at £14,643, which is over three times higher than the county average, and the highest in the county.	Ysgol Felinwnda remains financially unsustainable and receives a minimum staffing allocation (£54,924 in 2022-23) from the Authority to ensure appropriate staffing levels.  The average cost per pupil remains high, at £14,643, which is over three times higher than the county average, and the highest in the county.	It may lead to an increase in transport costs for the Authority.  Removing one school from the staffing safety net.  There will be a range reduction in the cost of the learner for all pupils in the County.
<b>Geographical factors</b>	No change	No change	It will be necessary to offer transport to the alternative school/schools in accordance with the County School Transport Policy.
<b>Leadership and staffing</b>	Ysgol Felinwnda is facing a challenge to set a balanced budget for 2023-24 as the school will receive an allocation based on the numbers of learners and that together with the amount of minimum staffing allowance allocated to them will enable them to employ only a headteacher and an assistant.	Ysgol Felinwnda is facing a challenge to set a balanced budget for 2023-24 as the school will receive an allocation based on the numbers of learners and that together with the amount of minimum staffing allowance allocated to them will enable them to employ only a headteacher and an assistant.	The alternative schools will be able to employ a suitable headteacher and teachers to teach the learners.  One of the nearby alternative schools has a headteacher who spends 100% of his time managing the school.  Implementation of the proposal would lead to staff redundancies at Ysgol Felinwnda.
<b>Community</b>	A high percentage of Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area pupils already attend schools outside the catchment area.	A high percentage of Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area pupils already attend schools outside the catchment area.	36 learners from Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area already attend the 2 nearest alternative schools.
<b>The Welsh Language</b>	No change	No change - the 2 schools are Welsh medium schools	No change - the nearby alternative schools are Welsh-medium
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there will be no need to organise additional transport for any learner</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <p>This proposal will not respond to the challenges facing the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low numbers</li> <li>significant surplus places</li> <li>small classes with an age range of 3 years</li> <li>the cost per head is 3 times more than the county average</li> <li>most children in the catchment area choose to attend other schools</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>there will be no need to organise additional transport for any learner</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <p>This proposal will not respond to the challenges facing the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low numbers</li> <li>significant surplus places</li> <li>small classes with an age range of 3 years</li> <li>the cost per head is 3 times more than the county average</li> <li>most children in the catchment area choose to attend other schools</li> </ul>	<p><b>Advantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enough space at nearby alternative schools for Ysgol Felinwnda learners</li> <li>more opportunities to take part in activities with a number of other learners</li> <li>learners are taught in classes of a more suitable size</li> <li>learners being taught in classes with more children of the same age</li> <li>cost per head is less</li> </ul> <p><b>Disadvantages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>staff will need to be made redundant</li> <li>it is likely that transport will need to be arranged for some learners at a cost to the Authority</li> </ul>

# Assessing the Impact on Equality 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](mailto: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 onwards, the Council has a duty to give tackling socio-economic disadvantage in strategic decisions due regard.

## 1) Details

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

Proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023 and offer a place for the pupils in a nearby alternative school from 1 January 2024 onwards.

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

Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located near the village of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the surrounding villages and area. Ysgol Felinwnda's situation has come to the attention of the Education Department since the September 2022 School Census, as this is the school with the smallest number of learners in Gwynedd. There has been a significant reduction in the numbers of Ysgol Felinwnda learners over the past 10 years, from 31 pupils in 2012 down to 8 pupils today, which leads to uncertainty about the future of the school.

As there were less than 10 registered learners in the school in PLASC (Pupil Level Annual School Census) January 2023, it is considered a "small school" under the Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. This allows the authority to follow a simpler procedure to close the school. In particular, the requirement to consult in general is not needed, and the only thing required is to hold an objection period following the publication of the statutory notice, this will give 28 days for anyone to object to the offer. We will then create an objection report allowing the Cabinet to consider any objections before reaching a final decision.

As part of the process of developing a proposal/proposals for the reorganisation of a school/schools, the authority is required to carry out an assessment of the likely impact on equality, the Welsh language and socio-economic disadvantage

### **1.3 Who is responsible for this assessment?**

Gareth Richard Jones (Education Modernisation Officer)

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

Version 1: 8 February 2023  
Version 2: 6 March 2023  
Version 3: 9 March 2023  
Version 4: 14 June 2023

## **2) Action**

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

Education Department and Officers from other Cyngor Gwynedd departments  
Governors and Headteacher of Ysgol Felinwnda

### **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?**

A conversation has been held with the Local Member, the Headteacher of Ysgol Felinwnda and the Governing Body.

Consultation sessions on the proposal under consideration were held at Canolfan Dinas Llanwnda, Ysgol Felinwnda, Ysgol Llandwrog and Ysgol Bontnewydd.

As there are less than 10 registered learners at Ysgol Felinwnda in the January 2023 census, it is considered a "small school" under the Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. In accordance with the Schools Organisation Code this allows the authority to follow a simpler procedure in order to close the school. In particular, the requirement to consult in general is not needed, and the only thing that is required is to hold an objection period. We will do this by publishing a statutory notice on the proposal and allowing 28 days for parents, learners, staff and other stakeholders to respond to the proposal. We will then submit an objection report and submit it to the Council's Cabinet to decide on the next steps.

### 2.3 What was the result of the engagement?

Following a conversation with the Headteacher and the Governing Body, the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda will be presented to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet on 11 July 2023, and subject to the Cabinet's decision it will be possible to proceed to hold the objection period in accordance with the requirements of the School Organisation Code.

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

- **Number of learners** - In the January 2023 PLASC census, there were only 8 full-time pupils on the school register with 3 from the Felinwnda catchment area and 5 from Bro Llew and Bro Llifon catchment areas.
- **Children going outside the catchment area** - 45 going outside the catchment area including 31 to Ysgol Bontnewydd and 5 to Ysgol Llandwrog and the remaining learners travelling to other schools further away.
- **Number projections** - Figure projections suggested that numbers will continue to decrease: September 2023= 8; September 2024 = 5; September 2025= 3
- **High percentage of surplus places** – Based on the January 2023 figures, there are approximately 87% of surplus places in the school (53 in number)
- **Small class sizes** – there are 2 classes with 3 in one and 5 in the other (January 2023)
- **Wide age range within classes** – one class is for year 1–3 learners and the other for year 4–5. There is not a single child of nursery age, reception class or year 6 in the school.
- **Additional funding to the allocation** - Ysgol Felinwnda receives £54,924 for 2022-23 through the minimum staffing policy (which guarantees at least a headteacher and a teacher in every school, and a headteacher and an assistant in schools that have less than 15 pupils).
- **Cost per learner** - the total allocation for the financial year 2022-23 (based on September 2021 numbers) is £138,226 which means that the cost per head of Ysgol Felinwnda is £14,643 (2022-23). The county average for cost per pupil in the same year is £4,509.
- **Challenge to the future** - Ysgol Felinwnda is facing a challenge to set a balanced budget for 2023-24 as the school will receive an allocation based on learner numbers and that together with the amount of care allocated to them will enable them to employ a head teacher and assistant only.



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

We will continue to gather evidence during the objection period.

## 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?
<b>Race (including nationality)</b>	None	<p>Gwynedd schools have policies in place to protect individuals from any discrimination based on race, such as Equality, Inclusion and Anti-Bullying Policies. The Anti-bullying Policy provided by Cyngor Gwynedd sets out anti-bullying guidelines and procedures based on factors such as race at school. In addition, the Equality Policy implemented by Gwynedd primary schools states that the schools:</p> <p><i>“...opposes to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives.”</i></p> <p>It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would have an impact on this feature.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	None	<p>It is not anticipated that the change would have a negative impact on this feature. An accessibility assessment of any relevant alternative school would be carried out and we will ensure that any transport required will be suitable for the needs of the individual. The needs of any disabled child will be considered in accordance with the Education Department's Accessibility and Equality policies.</p>
<b>Sex</b>	None	<p>Implementation of the proposal would not affect this feature. The implementation of the proposal will mean that everyone will be treated according to their needs regardless of their gender. Ysgol Felinwnda and nearby alternative schools implements an Equality Policy which states that the school:</p> <p><i>“...opposes to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives.”</i></p>

<b>Age</b>	Positive	<p>Ysgol Felinwnda provides education for pupils between the ages of 3-11. Ysgol Felinwnda's children will benefit from having more age-relevant peers in a school with more learners at nearby alternative schools, which will ensure educational and extracurricular experiences suitable for their age together with access to more extracurricular activities.</p> <p>We believe that learners will receive more suitable opportunities for their age when they are placed at nearby alternative schools because the learners will receive learning experiences in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually within their specific age range together with lessons differentiate them appropriately for the age range.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Positive	<p>Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework and is published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role to play in the education of learners and it is essential to form and maintain a range of relationships, which are all based on mutual trust and respect, at the core of relationship and sexuality education. These relationships are crucial to develop emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers learners to understand themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and form relationships. We believe that learners will receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class at an alternative school.</p> <p>It is stated in the Equality Policy which is implemented by Gwynedd's primary schools that the schools are <i>"...opposes to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p>
<b>Religion or belief (or non-belief)</b>	None	<p>Each school has an Inclusion Policy that would deal with any discriminatory incident that might occur in the school, related to religion or belief.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	None	<p>It is stated in the Equality policy which is implemented by Gwynedd's primary schools that the schools <i>"...opposes to all types of prejudice and discrimination and acknowledges that pupils have different needs, requirements and objectives."</i></p>

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	None	Not applicable.
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	None	Not applicable.
<b>The Welsh language</b>	None	<p>The goal of the Gwynedd Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the county, and all primary schools (except one school) fall into category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's guide for categorising schools according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that Ysgol Felinwnda learners will be able to continue receiving their education in Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Language of Education Policy at the alternative school.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that there would be a negative impact if the proposal were to be implemented, and it is likely that the proposal will have a positive impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Felinwnda learners benefit from more opportunities to use the Welsh language with a wider range of peers in class and socially. Both nearby alternative schools, namely Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog serves areas that are strongholds of the Welsh language.</p>
<b>Socio-Economic Disadvantage</b>	None	It is not anticipated that the nearby alternative schools, which are within 2.5 miles of Ysgol Felinwnda will create a socio-economic disadvantage. The proposal will reduce social disadvantage by ensuring more experiences and diversity of learning, more resources and access to more services and activities.

\* Delete as appropriate

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

<b>General Duties of the Equality Act</b>	<b>Does it have an impact?*</b>	<b>In what way? What is the evidence?</b>
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<b>Abolishing illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	No	It is not anticipated that the proposal will have an impact on the school's statutory duty to protect learners from any discrimination, harassment or persecution.
<b>Promoting equal opportunities</b>	Yes	<p>The aim is to promote equal opportunities and encourage the alternative schools to continue following equality policies and procedures.</p> <p>We believe that learners will receive more equal opportunities when placed at an alternative school because the learners will receive learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individual within their specific age range together with lessons differentiated appropriately for the age range.</p>
<b>Encouraging good relationships</b>	Yes	<p>As a number of children who live in Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area already attends Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog, a connection has already been formed between the schools and the Felinwnda community. However, opportunities are promoted for the school to build on its current connections with the Felinwnda community.</p> <p>Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) is a statutory requirement in the Curriculum for Wales framework and is published under section 71 of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and is mandatory for all learners from ages 3 to 16. RSE has a positive and empowering role in learners' education and plays a vital role in helping learners to form and maintain a range of relationships, which are all based on mutual trust and respect, are at the core of relationship and sexuality education. These relationships are critical to the development of emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers learners to understand themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and form relationships. We believe that learners will receive more opportunities to develop relationships and learn collaboratively as part of a larger class.</p>

\* To be deleted as appropriate

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

Our expectations are that all learners in the County have balanced bilingualism and relevant ability so that they can be complete members of the bilingual society of which they are a part. The proposals for changing local arrangements will need to take full account of all the linguistic effects. Maintaining and increasing the use of Welsh as an educational and social language among the learners will be a key consideration when drawing up the proposal.

The goal of the Gwynedd Education Language Policy is the same for all primary schools in the County, and all primary schools (except one school) fall into category 3 in accordance with the Welsh Government's guide for categorising schools according to Welsh-medium provision. This means that Ysgol Felinwnda learners will be able to continue receiving their education in Welsh and bilingually in accordance with the Language of Education Policy at the alternative schools.

It is not anticipated that there would be a negative impact if the proposal were to be implemented, and it is likely that the proposal will have a positive impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Felinwnda learners benefit from more opportunities to use the Welsh language with a wider range of peers in class and socially.

From the perspective of the community, 1,145 (83%) Welsh speakers live in the Llanwnda ward while 1,015 (82%) Welsh speakers live in the Bontnewydd ward (Census Source 2021) and 1247 (75%) of Welsh speakers live in the Llandwrog ward.

As can be seen from the table below, a high percentage of learners at the 2 schools speak Welsh at home:

School	Speak Welsh fluently at home	Percentage	Do not speak Welsh at home but fluent	Speak Welsh at home but not fluent	Do not speak Welsh at home and are not fluent	Do not speak Welsh at all	Total
Felinwnda	6	75%	1	0	1	0	8
Bontnewydd	167	84%	5	17	6	4	199
Llandwrog	28	88%	0	1	1	2	32
	Fluent Welsh			Some Welsh		No Welsh	

In the period between 2011 to 2022, 29 residential units have been completed in the Felinwnda catchment area and children from the houses are already attending primary and secondary schools of their parents' choice. If the proposal is implemented, we are confident there will be enough space at Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog for any additional learners in the future.

It is not anticipated that the closure of Ysgol Felinwnda will have a negative impact on the community or the Welsh language as only 8 children attend the school, 3 of whom are from the Felinwnda catchment area. 45 primary children in the catchment area already attend other schools for their education with 31 attending Ysgol Bontnewydd a 5 attending Ysgol Llandwrog.

Canolfan Bro Llanwnda Community Centre is located next door to the school and hosts several activities including the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi. As the Centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any negative impact the continuation of it's Cylch Meithrin, Cylch Ti a Fi or other events.

The Cylch Meithrin figures over the last 6 years:

2017	7
2018	5
2019	3
2020 *Closed due to covid	0
2021	3
2022	3

*Sources: Childcare Offer Data*

As shown above, the Cylch Meithrin numbers have remained constant for several years. Unfortunately, it is not possible to predict whether there will be an impact on the numbers attending the Cylch if Ysgol Felinwnda were to close.

**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?**

It is likely that the proposal will have a positive impact on the Welsh language as the learners of Ysgol Felinwnda benefit from more opportunities to use the Welsh language with a wider range of peers in the classroom and socially.

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

The proposal will reduce the inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that the learners have more experiences and access to more services and activities at the alternative school. Learners will receive more equal opportunities because the learners will receive learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individually from

within their specific age range together with lessons that are appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

Ysgol Felinwnda's children will have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, and it will ensure that they make the most of their education. The children will benefit from having more age-related peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities.

**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?**

We will continue collecting information following the outcome of the objection period to ensure that we have given great attention to reducing inequality.

**4) Analysing the Results**

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

We believe that learners will receive more equal opportunities when placed at an alternative school because the learners will receive learning experiences that are based on national learning principles, with a variety of styles including working in mass groups, smaller groups, partner work and individual within their specific age range together with lessons that are appropriately differentiated for the age range in question.

Ysgol Felinwnda's children will have a better learning environment in a school with more learners of the same age, it will ensure that they make the most of their education and allow access to more activities relevant to their ability level.

The children of Ysgol Felinwnda will benefit from having more age-relevant peers in a school with more learners, which will ensure suitable educational and extracurricular experiences for them together with access to more extracurricular activities.

**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?**

The proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on any of the equality features or the General Duty. All schools in Gwynedd have equality and anti-bullying policies, as Ysgol Felinwnda currently has.

Like Ysgol Felinwnda, the alternative schools serve an area of linguistic significance, with over 70% of the population able to speak Welsh, therefore the learners will join a Welsh-language

school. As no community activities are held at Ysgol Felinwnda, and Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door, closing the school will not affect the community's ability to host community activities, including the Welsh language activities in the area.

#### 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?

It is recognised that the loss of a school as an institution within the community can have an impact on community cohesion, and the need to mitigate this is anticipated by fostering links between the nearby alternative schools and the community of Felinwnda.

There is a community centre in Felinwnda, therefore it is unlikely that the community will need another community resource. However, Cyngor Gwynedd has a school post-use policy which gives the offer to communities of schools that are closing to submit a proposal for the ownership of sites for community use.

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

The school (and their Governing Body) is responsible for implementing its equality policy and the Authority, through its usual support and monitoring procedures, will ensure compliance.

Relationship and sexuality education has a positive and empowering role to play in the education of learners and is essential to forming and maintaining a range of relationships, all based on mutual trust and respect, at the core of relationship education and sexuality. These relationships are crucial to develop emotional well-being, resilience and empathy. An understanding of sexuality with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and fairness empowers

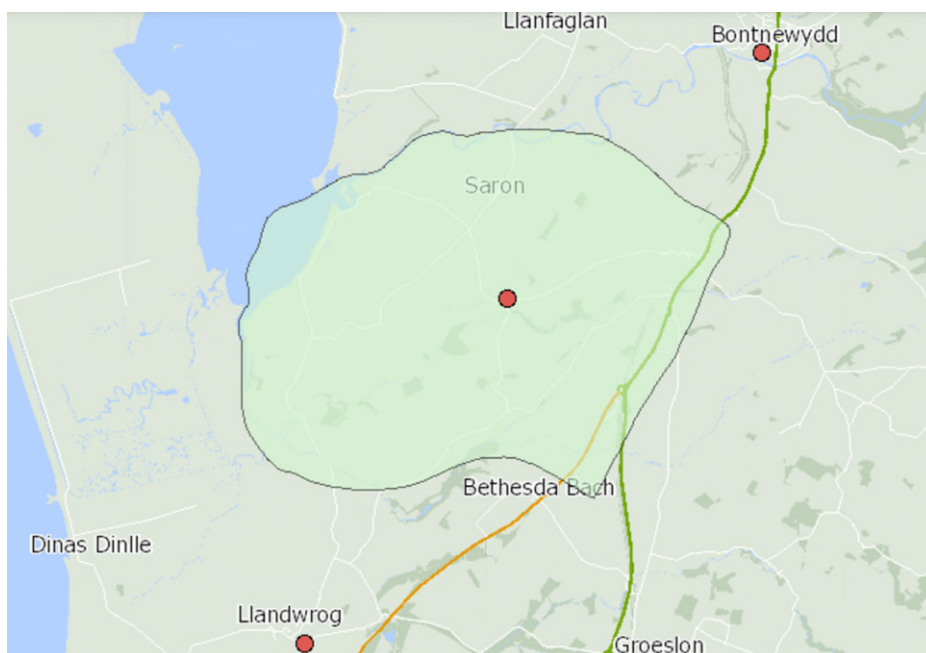


learners to understand themselves, take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviours and form relationships.

## **5) Monitoring**

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

The intention is to hold an objection period subject to the decision of the Cabinet, and we will adjust the assessment following any comments received as a result of the objection period, and any discussions with stakeholders.



# **Impact Assessment Report of the Well-being and Future Generations Act**

- June 2023

## **CONTENT**

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- 4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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

The Council's vision is:

*Our vision as a Council is to support all the people of Gwynedd to flourish and to live a complete life in their community in a county that is one of the best counties to live in.*

The Council has adopted well-being objectives which complement the national well-being goals ensuring that the residents of Gwynedd are:

- Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life
- Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary
- Supporting Gwynedd residents to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities
- Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities
- Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community
- Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis
- Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently

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

	Prosperous	Resilient	Healthier	Equal	Cohesive Communities	A vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Globally responsible
<b>TOMORROW'S GWYNEDD</b> Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life	■						
<b>A PROSPEROUS GWYNEDD</b> Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary	■	■		■	■		
<b>A HOMELY GWYNEDD</b> Supporting Gwynedd residents to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities		■	■	■	■		
<b>A CARING GWYNEDD</b> Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities	■		■	■	■		
<b>A WELSH GWYNEDD</b> Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community					■	■	
<b>A GREEN GWYNEDD</b> Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis	■	■			■		■
<b>AN EFFICIENT GWYNEDD</b> Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently	■			■			

The Education Department has a role to promote the well-being goals of the Act among learners through their activities and projects. The Act places a duty on public bodies in Wales to improve economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being. As part of the duty the Council has published well-being objectives which outline how it will improve in the "Gwynedd Plan 2023-2028"

## 1.1 Context

Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located near the village of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the surrounding villages and area. Ysgol Felinwnda's situation has come to the attention of the Education Department because, according to the September 2022 Census, this is the school with the least amount of learners in Gwynedd. There has been a significant reduction in the numbers of Ysgol Felinwnda learners over the past 10 years, from 31 pupils in 2012 down to 8 pupils today, which leads to concerns about the school's future.

## 1.2 The proposal in question

Due to the low numbers and other worrying issues with the school, an evaluation was carried out of a number of options that would respond to them, coming to the decision that the preferred option would be a **proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023, and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

## 2. HOW DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S WELFARE OBJECTIVES?

Objectives	Details:
<b>Giving our children and young people the best possible start in life</b>	The proposal will ensure that children in the area foster experiences by socialising with a wider range of age-related peers and receiving a quality education in a school that can offer a learning environment and experiences to a wider range of learners.
<b>Strengthening the economy and supporting the people of Gwynedd to earn a decent salary</b>	It is anticipated that the implementation of this option would lead to staff redundancies. A detailed staffing policy was developed by Cyngor Gwynedd in collaboration with Trade Unions and head teachers. The policy will form the basis of any change to staff employment resulting from any proposal. Clear and open communication will be central to the successful implementation of any proposals.
<b>Supporting Gwynedd residents to live in suitable and affordable homes in their communities</b>	No effect.
<b>Supporting the residents of Gwynedd to live full and safe lives in our communities</b>	Ensuring that the learners receive a first class education will be at the core of the proposal, ensuring that they will receive an education of the same quality and standard in the alternative schools.
<b>Ensuring that we give our residents every possible opportunity to use the Welsh language in the community</b>	Ysgol Felinwnda's learners live in a Welsh-medium society and are educated in a Welsh-medium school, such as Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog. It is likely that the proposal will have a positive impact on the Welsh language as Ysgol Felinwnda learners benefit from more opportunities to use the Welsh language with a wider range of peers in the classroom and socially. Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog serve an area that is a stronghold of the Welsh language with over 70% of the population able to speak Welsh.
<b>Protecting the county's natural beauty, and responding positively to the climate change crisis</b>	No effect.
<b>Putting the residents of Gwynedd first and treating them fairly and ensuring that the Council performs effectively and efficiently</b>	No effect.

### 3. DOES THE PROPOSAL MEET THE WELFARE AIMS OF THE ACT?

Objective	Does the proposal contribute to this goal?	Measures to mitigate negative effects on this goal:
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> An innovative society that uses resources prudently, educated people, that create wealth and work.</p>	<p>The implementation of the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda and teach the children in a nearby alternative school means that the learners build experiences by socialising with a wider range of peers, age-related and receiving a quality education in a school that can offer a learning environment and experiences to a wider range of learners.</p> <p>Introducing this option can lead to staff losing their jobs.</p>	<p>Staff and representatives of the Unions in particular will have the opportunity to express an opinion during the statutory objection period. Gwynedd Council has developed a detailed staffing policy, jointly with Trade Unions and headteachers. Any redundancies as a result of this proposal will have to be in line with that policy. Clear and open communication will play a key role in implementing any proposals.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> A nation that maintains and enhances biodiversity and healthy ecosystems that support resilience and adaptability to change (for example climate change).</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> A society where people's physical and mental well-being is as good as possible, and people understand what affects their health.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> A society that enables people to achieve their potential regardless of their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).</p>	<p>The proposal will improve the Authority's ability to <i>"offer education of the highest possible quality which will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence and enable them to develop into bilingual, successful citizens and complete"</i> in accordance with the vision of the Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd Strategy.</p>	<p>The Equality Assessment stated that it is not anticipated that the proposal would have a negative impact on equality. In addition, it was noted that there are solid policies and arrangements in place that would ensure that the proposal considers and is compatible with equal rights. It is noted that measures are already in place to ensure that there will be no illegal discrimination or harassment.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Attractive, viable and safe communities that are well connected.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>An assessment of the likely impact on the community was carried out where it is noted that, although there is some negative impact on the community, that 31 learners who live in the Felinwnda catchment area already choose to attend Ysgol Bontnewydd and 5 attend Ysgol Llandwrog, and therefore there is already a link between the school and the wider area. It is also noted in the assessment that discussions would be held in order to discuss the possibility that any community activity in the alternative schools includes the Felinwnda community.</p>

<p><b>Wales and a vibrant culture where the Welsh language flourishes</b> An association that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language and encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and leisure activities.</p>	<p>Completing the proposal will mean that Ysgol Felinwnda learners will continue to be educated in a Welsh-medium school, and in an area of linguistic significance, with over 70% of the population able to speak Welsh.</p>	<p>Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door to the school and hosts several activities including the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi. As the Center is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi or other events to continue.</p>
<p><b>Wales responsible at a global level</b> A nation that, as it does anything to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, considers whether doing such a thing could contribute positively to global well-being.</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that the proposal would be likely to have an impact on this aim.</p>	<p>No effect.</p>

#### 4. PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Principles of Sustainable Development	Does the proposal consider the principle?
<p><b>Long Term</b> Balancing short-term needs with long-term ones and planning for the future.</p>	<p>The pattern of decreasing numbers of learners has been constant since 2012, with projections showing that the number of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda will decrease further over the next few years, and therefore shows that the current challenges facing the school will be long term and that the matter needs to be responded to as soon as possible.</p>
<p><b>Prevent</b> Allocate resources for preventing problems from occurring or getting worse. We will address problems by preventing and intervening early rather than by reacting.</p>	<p>The needs of the pupils will be prioritised during each stage of the process.</p>
<p><b>Integration</b> Have a positive impact on people, the economy, the environment, and culture.</p>	<p>The authority has decided to look at Ysgol Felinwnda's future due to the critical situation facing the school.</p>
<p><b>Cooperation</b> Work with other partners to provide services.</p>	<p>Collaboration with other relevant departments and the alternative schools will be an important part of achieving the objectives for the benefit of the school and the children of the catchment area.</p>
<p><b>Content (Communication and Engagement)</b> Involve the people of Gwynedd in trying to complete our plan and ensure that those people reflect the diversity of the area.</p>	<p>Should the Cabinet decide to proceed with the proposal, the authority will comply with the statutory requirements set out in the School Organisation Code, which means that we would hold an objection period following the publication of the statutory notice, in order consider any objections before reaching a final decision.</p>

## 5. CONCLUSION

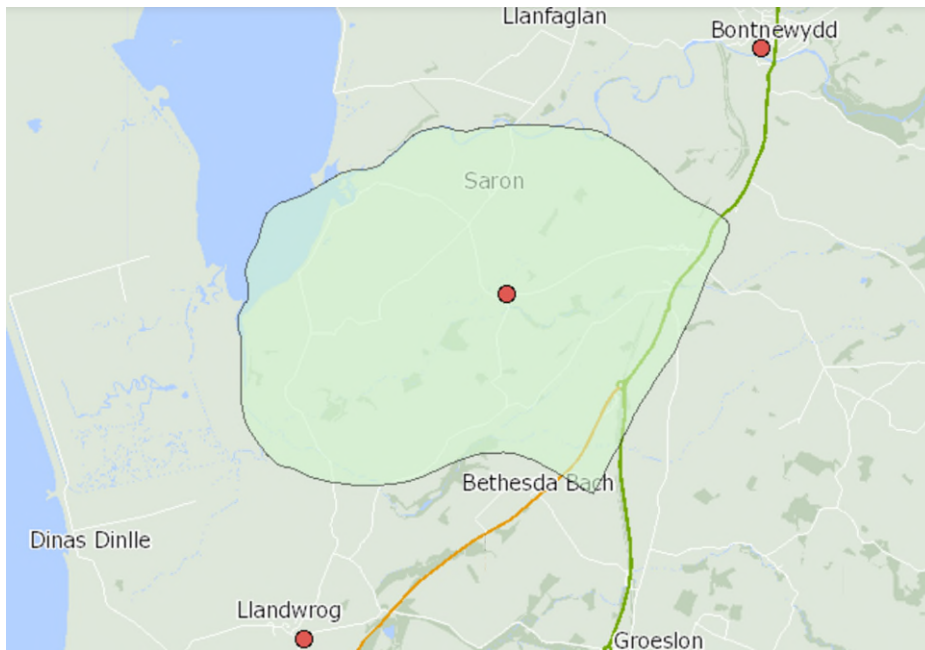
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Following consideration and assessment in accordance with the requirements of the well-being act, the 7 goals of the well-being act and the Council's well-being objectives were considered, and it is concluded that the proposal meets the requirements.

It is recognised that this proposal leads to the loss of a school in the Felinwnda community, however many of the children who live within the school's catchment area already attend the nearby alternative schools, and therefore there is already a link between the schools and the Felinwnda community. Every effort will be made to mitigate the impact on the community by encouraging links between the communities. Should the proposal be approved, discussions will be held to discuss the possibility that the alternative school community activity includes the Felinwnda community where appropriate.

The proposal will ensure that the children of the area are educated on a site that is suitable and in a natural Welsh language society, increasing opportunities to socialise and collaborate with others and give them a fair chance to flourish among their peers.





# Community Impact Assessment Report – Ysgol Felinwnda

- June 2023

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. THE PROPOSAL**
- 3. SUMMARY OF THE AREA**
- 4. SCHOOLS IN THE CATCHMENT AREA**
- 5. ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY**
- 6. CONCLUSION**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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As part of the statutory process, when developing a proposal for the reorganisation of a school, the Authority must carry out an assessment of the likely impact on the community, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018). This assessment is derived from the Welsh Government's national guidelines for the reorganisation of schools, including considerations regarding the unique needs of rural areas. It is stated in the Code:

*"In some areas, a school may also be the main hub for community activity, and its closure could have implications beyond the provision of education. This can be a specific feature in rural areas if school buildings are used as a place to provide services to the local community."*

*"The case that will be prepared by those who present the proposals should show that the impact of closing the school on the community has been assessed by drawing up a Community Impact Assessment and show how it could be carried out any community facilities currently provided by the school."*

Source: School Organisation Code 011 /2018

### 1.1 Background

Ysgol Felinwnda Primary School is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and areas. The situation at Ysgol Felinwnda has been brought to the attention of the Education Department as according to the September 2022 Census, this is the school with the lowest numbers of learners in Gwynedd. There has been a significant reduction in the number of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda over the past 10 years, from 31 pupils in 2012 down to 8 pupils by today, and this leads to concerns regarding the school's future.

## 2. THE PROPOSAL

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Following an evaluation of different options against the factors of the Strategy, it was concluded that the preferred option is:

**Ysgol Felinwnda to close on 31 December 2023, and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

## 3. SUMMARY OF THE AREA

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### 3.1 The Area

Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located in the rural village of Llanwnda near the village of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon in Gwynedd, with approximately 2000 residents. It is located 3.9 miles from Caernarfon. According to the 2011 census, 1,994 people live in Llanwnda ward.

### 3.2 The Economy

72.4% of people aged between 16 and 74 within the Llanwnda ward are economically active, and 2.9% of these are unemployed. 27.6% of people in the same age group are economically inactive with 13.8% of these being ill or disabled for a long period of time.

The type of industry in which the population is active is varied in the area, with the highest rate (18.5%) working in the health and social work field.

According to data from the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation Wales (2014)' the employment rate of Llanwnda ward compared to other wards in Wales gives a rank of 1254 out of 1909 wards. Felinwnda ward is therefore not within the most deprived 50% in Wales.

### 3.3 Deprivation

Llanwnda Ward is ranked within the least deprived 50% in Wales (rank 1046 out of 1909 wards).

A number of areas comprises this overall index, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, community safety, physical environment and housing.

It is noted that Llanwnda ward is within the 20-30% of the most deprived areas in Wales in the 'Housing' field. The indicators in this area are the proportion of people living in overcrowded homes (use of bedrooms), and the proportion of people living in homes without central heating.

In addition, Llanwnda ward is within the 10% of the most deprived areas in Wales in the area of 'access to services', i.e., deprivation because people are unable to access a variety of services that are considered essential for day-to-day living. The indicators include average public and private travel times to a number of services such as food shops, doctor's surgery, primary and secondary schools, post office, public library, pharmacy, leisure centre and private travel time to a petrol station.

Below is a summary of how the Llanwnda area is situated in the context of other areas in Wales according to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (2014):

Field	Rank in Wales, out of 1909 areas. (1 = most deprived and 1909 = least deprived)	Most deprived % in Wales
Employment	1254	
Income	1092	
Health	1435	
Education	1437	
Housing	388	Within the 20-30% most deprived
Physical environment	1020	
Access to services	116	Within the 10% most deprived
Community safety	1513	

### 3.4 The Community

A number of activities are held in the Llanwnda Ward, including;

- Sensori Sara
- Reading club
- Rhostryfan Race
- Coffee morning
- Cylch Ti a Fi
- Cylch Meithrin
- Merched y Wawr
- Zumba
- Y Gymdeithas

In addition, there are several facilities in the catchment area, including a community centre, shops, a garage, public transport, a small train station and a children's playground.

## 4. CATCHMENT AREA SCHOOLS

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### 4.1 The context of the schools according to the Estyn Inspection Reports

As part of Estyn's reports, the schools are placed in context, and their community relations are detailed. This is the context given to Ysgol Felinwnda by Estyn inspectors.

#### **Ysgol Felinwnda**

*"Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located near the village of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the surrounding villages and area."*

Source: Estyn Report, June 2017

### 4.2 Statistical information of the schools

The table below shows the numbers of Ysgol Felinwnda and the two nearby schools, namely Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog. This table also shows the capacity of the schools and the number on the register in January 2023. Both schools teach through the medium of Welsh.

School	Full Capacity (N – Yr6)	Number on the register September 2022 (N – Yr6)	Legal Category
Felinwnda	61	8	Community School
Bontnewydd	208	210	Community School
Llandwrog	75	32	Ecclesiastical, The Church in Wales

Source: PLASC January 2023

### 4.3 Information about the location of pupil's dwellings and choice of school

Each school has a specific catchment area which it serves, and which is important in terms of the Council's access and transport policy. Learners do not have to attend their catchment area school, the choice is up to parents (in accordance with the admission policy).

Compared to other catchment areas in the area, the number of Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area learners who choose to attend an out-of-catchment school is high. The latest data shows that 48 children aged 3-11 (September 2022 data) live in Felinwnda catchment area; with only 3 of them attending Ysgol Felinwnda. This means that 94% of children who live in Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area attend schools outside the catchment area, including 31 who attend Ysgol Bontnewydd and 5 who attend Ysgol Llandwrog.

The table below shows the complete information in terms of learners' living locations and their choice of school.

		Home Catchment Area (September 2022)									School Total (N-Y6)
		Bontnewydd	Felinwnda	Llandwrog	Maesincla	Rhosgadfan	Rhostryfan	Y Gelli	Yr Hendre	Other	
Attend School (September 2022)	Bontnewydd	94	31	1	10	6	12	3	26	26	209
	Felinwnda	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9
	Llandwrog	0	5	20	0	0	0	0	0	8	33
	Maesincla	0	1	0	212	1	1	5	44	9	273
	Rhosgadfan	0	0	0	0	38	0	0	0	7	45
	Rhostryfan	4	0	1	0	20	50	0	0	1	76
	Santes Helen	0	0	0	14	0	0	7	6	8	35
	Y Gelli	0	0	0	55	1	0	132	36	5	229
	Yr Hendre	3	5	2	131	2	0	18	232	4	397
	Other	11	3	7	20	16	12	9	19		
<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>363</b>		

Source: September 2022 Census

#### 4.4 Summary of the various facilities in the rural communities (March 2023)

	Felinwnda
Community Centre / Village Hall	✓
Chapel/Church	✓
Public Transport	✓
Shop	✓
Cafe/Pub	
Post Office	
Pharmacy	
Library	
Park	✓
Bank	
Care Home	
Leisure Centre	
Garage	✓
Tourist Attraction	✓
Cylch Ti a Fi + Meithrin	✓

#### Community Centre

Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next to Ysgol Felinwnda and hosts several community activities including:

- Sensori Sara
- Cymdeithas Hanes y Tair Llan
- Zumba

- Merched y Wawr
- Cylch Meithrin
- Cylch Ti a Fi

The Mudiad Meithrin website shows that the Cylch Meithrin meets Monday to Friday between 9:00-12:50 and the Cylch Ti a Fi that Wednesday afternoon (13:15 - 15:30). As the Centre is independent to the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi to continue.

According to the Headteacher, there is no community use of Ysgol Felinwnda outside of school hours.

#### 4.5 A summary of activities or groups that the school is regularly involved in:

	Felinwnda
Cylch Meithrin/Ti a Fi	
Eisteddfod (Local/County/National)	✓
Urdd Community	✓
Other activities (sports, clubs)	✓

#### 4.6 If buildings, rooms, facilities, or services are provided by a school on behalf of the community, where would they be provided if the school is closed?

School	Where facilities will be provided if it closes
Felinwnda	There is no community use of the school and Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is available for holding activities in the area.

#### 4.7 Information about distance and travel time to other schools in the catchment area

The table below indicates the distance and travel time between schools in the area. We see that Ysgol Bontnewydd is the closest to Ysgol Felinwnda. The travel times below consider the nature of the lanes and the effect that can have on travel time in a rural area.

School		Felinwnda	Bontnewydd	Llandwrog
Felinwnda	Miles			
	Minutes			
Bontnewydd	Miles	1.8 miles		
	Minutes	4 minutes		
Llandwrog	Miles	2 miles	3.9 miles	
	Minutes	8 minutes	8 minutes	

Source: Google Maps 2023

## 5. ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

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

**Ysgol Felinwnda to close on 31 December 2023, and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Impact Criteria	Description	Status of the impact and the work
Impact on Health and well-being	<p>As over 50% of the learners from the Felinwnda catchment area live within 2 miles of Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog and with a safe route to the school they will have the opportunity to walk to school.</p> <p>Being in a larger school will offer more opportunities to play and take part in team sports and therefore contribute to the health and well-being of learners.</p>	Positive
The implications of the change on public transport provisions	There is no anticipated impact on public transport provision as any transport to an alternative school as a result of the change will be arranged specifically for learners in the catchment area who are eligible.	Neutral
Impact on other facilities / services provided at the school	<p>There is no community use of Ysgol Felinwnda so the proposal will not have any negative impact on this.</p> <p>Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi are located in Canolfan Bro Llanwnda which is located next door to Ysgol Felinwnda. As the Centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi to continue.</p>	Neutral
Impact on wider community safety	No impact on wider community safety is anticipated.	Neutral
Would the option encourage families and school age children to leave the community, or that young families are less likely to move into the community	As a high number of children from the catchment area already attend the alternative schools it is not anticipated that families and young children would leave the community. As the alternative schools are only around 2 miles from Ysgol Felinwnda, it is not anticipated that it would have an impact on families and the school aged children leaving the community.	Neutral
Impact on other services provided locally	Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi are located in Canolfan Bro Llanwnda. Several other events are also held at the Centre. As the Centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi or other events to continue. As a high number of children in the catchment area already attend other schools, it cannot be concluded that closing the school would have an impact on other services.	Neutral
Adverse effect on the wider economy of the community	As most children in the catchment area attend other schools, it is not anticipated that the closure of Ysgol Felinwnda would have an impact on the wider economy of the community.	Neutral



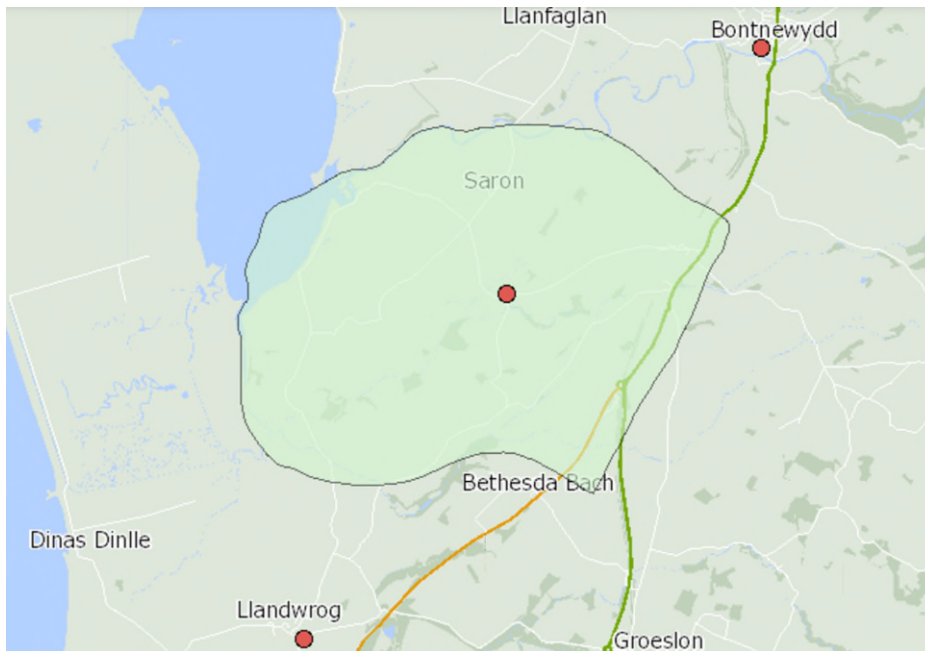
General impact on the local community	As a high percentage of children in the catchment area already attend other schools, we do not anticipate that closing the school would have a negative impact on the local community.	Neutral
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## 6. CONCLUSION

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The assessment shows that there is no community use of the school. Canolfan Bro Llanwnda is located next door to the school and hosts several activities including the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi. As the Centre is independent from the school it is not anticipated that the closure of the school will have any effect on the ability of the Cylch Meithrin and Cylch Ti a Fi or other events to continue.

If the option of closing Ysgol Felinwnda and offering a place to learners at an alternative school were to be pursued, it is not anticipated that it will have any negative impact on the Felinwnda community. In order to mitigate any possible negative impact on learners we will encourage discussions between the alternative school and the parents of Ysgol Felinwnda learners so that they can take advantage of their facilities and activities after school, and to encourage collaboration between the school and the Felinwnda community.



# **Assessment Report on the Probable Impact on Travel Arrangements – Ysgol Felinwnda**

- June 2023

## Contents

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd's Transport Policy

1.2 The context of Ysgol Felinwnda

### **2. THE OPTIONS IN QUESTION**

### **3. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

3.1 Alternative schools' locations

3.2 Free transport option

3.3. Financial impact

### **4. CONCLUSION**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and areas. The situation at Ysgol Felinwnda has been brought to the attention of the Education Department as according to the September 2022 Census, this is the school with the lowest numbers of learners in Gwynedd. There has been a significant reduction in the number of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda over the past 10 years, from 31 pupils in 2012 down to 8 pupils by today, and this leads to concerns regarding the school's future.

As part of the process of developing a proposal(s) for school reorganisation, the Authority must carry out an assessment of the likely impact on different travel arrangements, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Due to the low numbers and other matters of concern regarding the school, an appraisal of several options that would respond to these was undertaken before coming to the decision that the preferred option was to **close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023 and offer a place for the pupils at a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

### 1.1 Cyngor Gwynedd Transport Policy

The '*Excellent Primary Education for the Children of Gwynedd Strategy*' aims to restrict travel from home to school to a one-way journey of no more than 30 minutes.

Cyngor Gwynedd provides free transport for learners who live two or more miles from the school in their catchment area, or the nearest school (not including nursery pupils). Learners who receive primary education are expected (except for learners with additional learning needs or disabilities), to walk up to two miles to meet any modes of transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd. The transport policy can be seen in the parents' handbook:

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

### 1.2 Context of Ysgol Felinwnda

Ysgol Gynradd Felinwnda is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and area. It provides education for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years and has capacity for 61 (N-Yr6).

In September 2022, 48 learners aged between 3-11 lived in the Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area with three of those pupils attending Ysgol Felinwnda. This means that 45 learners in the catchment area (between 3-11) attend out-of-catchment schools, with 31 of these attending Ysgol Bontnewydd and 5 attending Ysgol Llandwrog.

## 2. THE PROPOSAL IN QUESTION

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Close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 August 2023 and offer a place for the learners in the Felinwnda catchment area at a nearby alternative school from 1 January 2024 onwards.

The nearby alternative schools are located approximately two miles from Ysgol Felinwnda. In accordance with the Cyngor Gwynedd transport policy, the authority would offer transport to the learners of the current Ysgol Felinwnda catchment area choosing to attend an alternative school and living more than two miles from the school.

In addition, in terms of the learners who would choose to attend an alternative school but who live less than two miles away from the school and therefore not entitled to free transport, but because of the fact that they would travel to school along a road considered by the Council to be very dangerous, then free transport will be provided to those learners.

## 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

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### 3.1. Location of the alternative school

Both nearby alternative schools are located approximately 2 miles from Ysgol Felinwnda.

### 3.2. Free transport options

In line with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy, learners who receive primary or secondary education (with the exception of learners with additional learning needs or disabilities), are expected to walk up to two miles to meet any modes of transport provided by Cyngor Gwynedd along the shortest route.

The shortest route available is the route which is not deemed by the Council to be especially dangerous, after assessing the other routes available for the journey, and these routes would be assessed in line with Cyngor Gwynedd's transport policy.

As the route to Ysgol Felinwnda is considered dangerous to some learners, the authority already provides a free taxi to two of the three learners eligible from the catchment area attending Ysgol Felinwnda and it is anticipated that this arrangement will need to be continued for the alternative schools if the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda is implemented on 31 December 2023.

The numbers for whom unpaid transport will need to be organised in the long term will depend on the result of the reviewing the boundaries of the school catchment area.

### 3.3. Financial impact

**The cost of closing Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023 and the transfer of current pupils to nearby alternative schools, in accordance with parents' choice, will be dependent on the parents'**

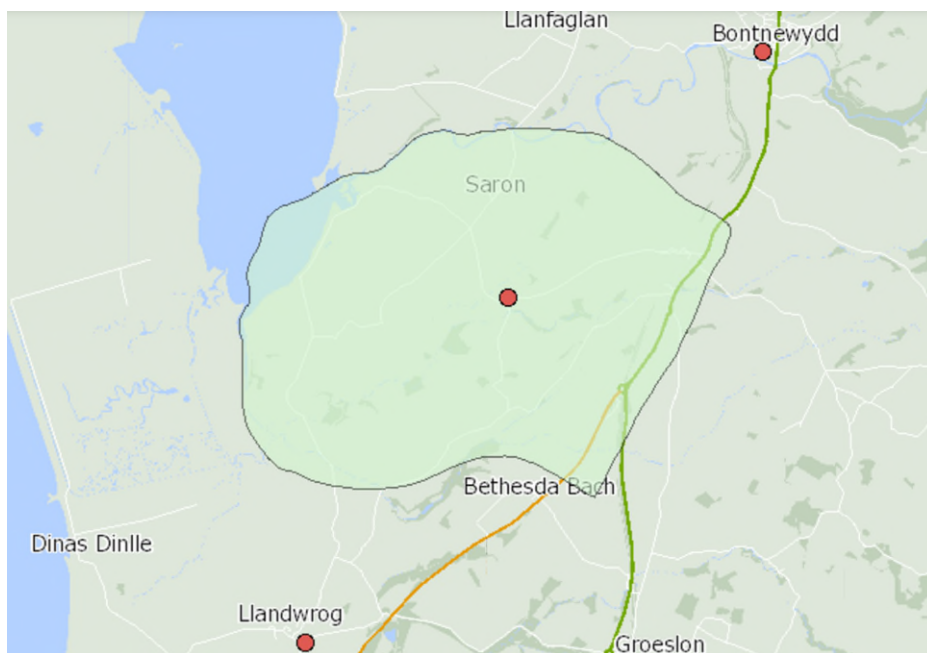
**choice, from 1 January 2024** will be dependent on the parents of the 3 children living in Ysgol Felinwnda's catchment area's choice of alternative school.

Based on September 2022 cost, 3-seater taxis costs £40-60 a day, therefore costing around £7,400 - £11,000 per annum. If the 3 children will require taxis to 2 schools, then the cost will be £14,800 – £22,000 per annum.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

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Should the proposal be implemented, the learners currently attending Ysgol Felinwnda, and living within the catchment area, will be offered free transport to the alternative school from 1 January 2024, in accordance with the Schools Transport Policy, at an annual cost ranging from £7,400 - £22,200.



# **Quality and Standards of Education Assessment Report - Ysgol Felinwnda**

- June 2023

## Contents

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1. INTRODUCTION
2. SUMMARY
3. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION
4. CONCLUSION



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Ysgol Felinwnda Primary School is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and area. The situation at Ysgol Felinwnda has been brought to the attention of the Education Department as according to the September 2022 Census, this is the school with the lowest numbers of learners in Gwynedd. There has been a significant reduction in the number of learners at Ysgol Felinwnda over the past 10 years, from 31 pupils in 2012 down to 8 pupils by today, and this leads to concern regarding the school's future.

As part of the process of developing a proposal(s) for school reorganisation, the Authority must assess the likely impact on the quality and standards of education, in accordance with the School Organisation Code (011/2018).

Due to the low numbers and other matters of concern regarding the school, an appraisal of the number of options that would respond to these was undertaken coming to the decision that the preferred option was to **close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023 and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

The Council is committed to providing an education of the highest possible quality that will give the County's children the experiences, skills and confidence that would enable them to develop to be bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens.

It continues to be a high priority to provide the best possible learning experiences for every learner within the County, and ensuring an exciting and broad curriculum, as well as extra-curricular activities that motivate them to learn and understand, that will lead to improving standards.

## 2. SUMMARY

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Following the last Estyn inspection in 2017, it was concluded that the performance of the current Ysgol Felinwnda was 'Good'.

See below a summary of Ysgol Felinwnda's latest surveys.

Ysgol Felinwnda Primary School is located near the villages of Saron and Dinas on the outskirts of Caernarfon and serves the nearby villages and area. It provides education for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years and has capacity for 61 (N-Yr6).

School	Inspection year	How good are the outputs?	How good is the provision?	How good is the leadership and management?
Felinwnda	June 2017	Good	Good	Good

## 3. THE OPTION IN QUESTION

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**Close Ysgol Felinwnda on 31 December 2023, and the current pupils to transfer to a nearby alternative school, in accordance with parents' choice, from 1 January 2024.**

This option means that Ysgol Felinwnda will close, and that the current pupils would be offered a place at a nearby alternative school. Transitional transport provision would be available for current Ysgol Felinwnda pupils (who also live in the school's catchment area) to either Ysgol Bontnewydd or Ysgol Llandwrog, in accordance with the County's Transport Policy.

## CLOSE YSGOL FELINWENDA AND OFFER LEARNERS A PLACE AT A NEARBY ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

### ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON QUALITY AND EDUCATION STANDARDS

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Impact Criteria	Description			Status of the impact and the work
Standards and general progress of specific groups and in terms of skills	<p>'Good' was the outcome of the Estyn inspection for the standards indicators at Ysgol Felinwnda, whilst Ysgol Bontnewydd was 'Excellent' and Ysgol Llandwrog was 'Good'. Therefore, based on the outcome of these inspections, it is concluded that there would be a positive or at least neutral impact on this criterion by teaching the learners in nearby alternative schools.</p>			Positive / Neutral
Well-being and attitudes to learning	<p>'Good' was the outcome of the 'Well-being' indicator at Ysgol Felinwnda, Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog in their previous inspections in 2017. Therefore, based on the outcomes of these inspections, it is concluded that a neutral impact is anticipated on this field by teaching the learners in nearby alternative schools.</p>			Neutral
Teaching and learning experiences	<p>'Good' was the outcome of the 'Learning Experiences' indicator at Ysgol Felinwnda, Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog in their last inspections in 2017. However, due to the size of classes, Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog can offer an opportunity to learn in larger groups with age-relevant peers to expand their experiences. Therefore, based on this, it is concluded that there would be a positive impact on the teaching and learning experiences by teaching Ysgol Felinwnda's learners in nearby alternative schools.</p>			Positive
Care, support and guidance	<p>'Good' was the outcome of the Estyn inspection for the 'Care Support and Guidance' indicator at Ysgol Felinwnda in their last inspection in 2017, whilst the outcome at Ysgol Bontnewydd was 'Excellent' and Ysgol Llandwrog was 'Good'. Consequently, it is deemed that the option would have a positive or at least neutral impact on the care support and guidance to transfer Ysgol Felinwnda learners to nearby alternative schools.</p>			Positive / Neutral
Leadership and management	<p>In the previous Estyn report for Ysgol Felinwnda it was noted that the leadership and management of the school was 'Good', while it was judged that leadership and management at Ysgol Bontnewydd was 'Excellent' and Ysgol Llandwrog was 'Good'. Therefore, based on the outcome of these inspections, it is concluded that there would be a positive or at least neutral impact on leadership and management by educating Ysgol Felinwnda's learners in nearby alternative schools.</p>			Positive / Neutral
Vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)	<p>Support is provided to vulnerable groups, including children with additional learning needs, in accordance with the Authority's policy and the requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education (Wales) Act 2018 as in every school in Gwynedd.</p>			Neutral
A provision that at least equates to what is available to learners at the time (including those with ALN)	<p>'Good' was the outcome of the Estyn inspection for the 'Standards' indicators at Ysgol Felinwnda, the same as Ysgol Bontnewydd and Ysgol Llandwrog. Therefore, based on this, it is concluded that there would be no impact on the standards of learners by teaching learners from Ysgol Felinwnda in nearby alternative schools.</p>			Neutral

*The above assessment has been carried out based on information in the Ysgol Felinwnda Estyn report, June 2017, Ysgol Bontnewydd, February 2017 and Ysgol Llandwrog, July 2019.*

## **4. CONCLUSION**

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Based on the conclusion of the above assessment, it is concluded that the standard of education provided at both nearby alternative schools is higher (Excellent), or at least equal to (Good) the standard of education at Ysgol Felinwnda (Good). Consequently, it is anticipated that there would be a positive impact in terms of the quality and standards of education deriving from the proposal to close Ysgol Felinwnda and offer the learners a place in a nearby alternative school.

# Agenda Item 7

## GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



### Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 July 2023</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Menna Trenholme</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Dylan Owen, Social Services Director</b>
<b>Title of Item:</b>	<b>Strategic Safeguarding Panel Annual Report 2022-23</b>

#### **1. THE DECISION SOUGHT**

- 1.1 The Cabinet is asked to accept the report on the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel for the year 2022-23.

#### **2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION**

- 2.1. It is essential that Cabinet members are aware of the Panel's work on safeguarding and are satisfied that the Panel has undertaken the required work in a thorough and conscientious manner.
- 2.2. The Statutory Director is required to consistently and regularly report upon safeguarding matters to members.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on what has been achieved by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel during the year.
- 3.2. It is considered that the report accurately and fairly summarises the work of the Panel, and also includes references to reports or observations made by external inspectors in relation to this work.

#### **4. Views of the Statutory Officers:**

##### **i) The Monitoring Officer:**

As a member of this Panel, I welcome this report that appropriately summarises its work. It provides the Cabinet with assurance about this key responsibility.

##### **ii) Head of Finance:**

Nothing to add from the perspective of financial propriety



**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING  
PANEL  
2022-23**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The report gives an overview of the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel over the period April 2022 until March 2023 outlining the work undertaken by the Council themselves, and by the Council in partnership with others.
- 1.2. The report considers the arrangement that was in place and the intention regarding panel arrangements for the future.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 2.1. The aim of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel is to ensure that appropriate arrangements and procedures are in place at a corporate level across the Council to ensure the safety of children, young people and adults. Since 2017/18 the Panel is also responsible for an overview of wider safeguarding issues across Gwynedd, such as Community Safety.
- 2.2. The Panel in turn is accountable to the Statutory Director of Social Services, who has the final accountability for safeguarding issues.
- 2.3. The Chair of the Panel for the period in question was Councillor Dilwyn Morgan until October 2022, and then Councillor Menna Jones, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support. See the Terms of Reference in Appendix 1, which includes a list of the Panel's current members.
- 2.4. The Safeguarding Operational Panel supports the Strategic Panel to implement its priorities and to deal with practical issues in this area of work. This is an internal panel of officers, with the safeguarding champion of each Council department serving on it, to ensure ownership of safeguarding issues by the whole Council.
- 2.5. Parts of the Council's performance in the safeguarding field are assessed by independent external inspectors as part of their work in assessing wider performance. Reference is made to relevant reports within this report.

## **3. PROGRESS AGAINST SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

- 3.1. An increase was seen in the number of safeguarding referrals to social services in Gwynedd since the start of the pandemic lockdown period (2020 onwards).

### 3.2. Safeguarding Children

- 3.2.1. The number of referrals made to the children's services increased from around 5,000 before the pandemic to **7,175** during 2022-23. The work pressure on the service was overwhelming and the workforce was extremely busy supporting our children and families.
- 3.2.2. However, the increasing pressure meant that the Children and Supporting Families Department found it difficult to recruit and retain qualified staff. The Statutory Director of Social Services leads a group which considers recruitment challenges and the current salaries of the workforce.
- 3.2.3. The fact that 84% of child protection reviews have been held within the statutory timetable during the year is evidence of the excellent work of the workforce during this period. The percentage of risk assessments submitted to a Case Conference which were considered as exhibiting quality in decision making was also **98%**.
- 3.2.4. Gwynedd is the only authority to hold all its Child Protection Case Conferences face to face following the pandemic, something that has been identified as very good practice by Care Inspectorate Wales.
- 3.2.5. At the end of the year there were **68** children on the Child Protection Register and **281** children in care and 65% of these were being looked after in a foster placement, with 36% of foster carers being either friends or family and 22% of looked after children were placed with their parents, and therefore remained at home.

### 3.3. Safeguarding Adults

- 3.3.1. There was an increase in the number of reports of Adults at Risk received from **654** during 2021/22, to **714** in 2022/23. However, on average, **95%** of the initial s.126 enquiries into safeguarding referrals are completed within the statutory period of 7 days.
- 3.3.2. From the Adults at Risk reports received, the risk was managed in **98%** of cases compared to **84%** for the previous year. However, it is felt that the increase mainly derives from the improvements in recording outcomes rather than a change in practice.



- 3.3.3. Regular visits were held to monitor the county's care homes, with a small number of homes being considered under the 'Escalating Concerns' procedure for various reasons, mostly including lack of management, documentation problems, and lack of overview. There are concerns about the human resources of the Quality Assurance team and their ability to visit every service, especially domiciliary care, and we rely on specific reports in this field regarding the quality of care and its provision.
- 3.3.4. There was concern about the DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) service during the year as some individuals were on the waiting list for up to 3 years. Whilst this type of experience and situation is shared with other counties, it is not good practice and the service must prioritise individuals according to their risk.
- 3.3.5. It was expected for the Government to introduce a new system which would be easier to operate, but this was delayed due to the pandemic. The Safeguarding Adults Senior Manager was part of the national Liberty Protection Safeguards Steering Group and a LPS Database Questionnaire was completed for Social Care Wales.
- 3.3.6. However, we have now received confirmation that the new LPS system will not be introduced and the challenge of managing the DoLS applications will need to be considered further.

#### 3.4. **Education**

- 3.4.1. The **Annual Safeguarding Survey** was held by the Designated Lead Officer for Safeguarding in Education in March 2023. It was noted that:
- **87%** of the "Main Safeguarding Persons" in schools had received specific safeguarding training over the past two years;
  - **70%** of Gwynedd School's Designated Governors had also received the relevant training for their role in the last two years;
  - **97%** of Gwynedd schools had introduced Basic Safeguarding Training for all staff before the end of the Winter Term;
  - **100%** of Gwynedd Schools noted that they were confident that all school staff and volunteers know what to do if a child discloses information about abuse.
- 3.4.2. There was a change to the management team of the Education Department, and a new Well-being and Equality Officer was appointed. This role will promote Equality and Well-being across Gwynedd's Education Services.

3.4.3. Efforts have started regionally to review the **Reasonable Force Policy** following a few cases that have emerged recently. This work-stream will be important during 2023/24 in order to reconcile what is meant by reasonable force.

3.4.4. At the end of March 2023, **183** parents were choosing to home school their children, following an increase seen during the pandemic. It was noted that the main reasons for home-schooling were anxiety and mental health problems of the parent and pupil. For safety and well-being reasons, it is important for the authority to keep contact with these families, and we managed this with **146** children. However, **9** families objected any contact (in accordance with their rights).

### 3.5. Domestic Abuse

3.5.1. There is good co-operation between the Council and relevant Organisations and efforts to promote the importance of reporting and identifying domestic abuse continue. In May 2022, the Council received the 'White Ribbon' accreditation which acknowledged the effort of engaging with men and boys, changing culture and raising awareness on violence against women. Officers from the Corporate Support Department took the lead in securing the accreditation and then set up the action plan together with the 'White Ribbon' organisation.

3.5.2. By now, the Domestic Abuse e-module is mandatory for all members of staff. It is vital that the workforce receives the training to ensure that the Council is doing everything within its ability to support individuals and to raise awareness. 'Ask and Act' training is also promoted in order to give staff confidence to help individuals who experience violence, domestic abuse or sexual violence.

3.5.3. We must remember that not all Council staff members have easy access to the Council's IT systems, and this creates a barrier. The Corporate Support Department is looking at the induction programme to try and ensure that everyone completes the e-modules on their first days of starting their job.

3.5.4. The Community Safety Partnership works closely with the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Regional Advisor (North Wales). Following a Domestic Homicide Review the Partnership monitors the action plan quarterly to ensure that everyone that was part of the review implements the agreed changes.

3.5.5. Currently, the Welsh Government are in consultation on the Domestic Homicides Review arrangement and are looking to establish a Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR). This process would simplify the current arrangement by combining the current processes of the Adults Practice Review, Child Practice Review, Mental

Health Homicide Review, Domestic Homicide Review and Offensive Weapons Homicide Review.

### 3.6. **Crime**

3.6.1. As a result of the cost-of-living emergency an increase of **14.7%** was seen in cases of offending by theft locally. This was driven mainly by an increase in Shoplifting, that falls within the Theft and Handling category. The Partnership works with the Police and external agencies to respond and to see what support is needed in the community.

3.6.2. The Community Safety Partnership is preparing for the Serious Violence Duty, that will become statutory in January 2024. The Duty makes it a requirement for specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, and the types of serious violence that take place in the area would need to be recorded, the causes of such violence (as far as is possible), and to prepare and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area. A regional task and finish group has been established recently to implement the duty and prepare a strategy.

### 3.7. **Modern Slavery and Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Declaration**

3.7.1. The cases of Modern Slavery in the area relate mainly to drug misuse. The North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner Office raise awareness of Modern Slavery amongst authorities and businesses across the region.

### 3.8. **Counter Terrorism**

3.8.1. Cyngor holds a Public Places Group: Preparedness to Safeguard and Protect, as well as being a member of the equivalent regional groups. The purpose of the Group is to:

- Collaborate with organisations to provide effective and efficient protective security arrangements in Gwynedd;
- Provide an integrated security approach, that corresponds with the national standards and guidelines, to identify and provide proportionate actions to keep communities safe in Gwynedd;
- Improve and support the preparedness to safeguard and protect in accessible public locations in Gwynedd.

### 3.9. **Atal/Prevent**

3.9.1. The Home Office has created new training for Prevent, and by now the e-module is mandatory for all members of staff. In Gwynedd, the e-learning portal is used to track the numbers that complete the training which means that it can be specifically addressed to encourage staff in some departments or fields. The rest of North Wales authorities have reported that collecting data is an obstacle for them as they, differently to Gwynedd, use the external link.

3.9.2. Following the success of the three benchmarks last year, during 2023/24 the Community Safety Partnership will concentrate on:-

- 1) Create a Training Plan to increase the number that take advantage of the Prevent training
- 2) Work with regional partnerships to develop a Prevent Communication and Engagement Plan
- 3) Develop a Venue Hire Policy for the Council and partnerships

### 3.10. **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

3.10.1. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is responsible for processing criminal checks. The purpose of DBS checks is to help employers make safer recruiting and licensing decisions, although the check is only one part of the recruitment process. When the check has been processed and completed by the DBS, the applicant receives a DBS certificate.

3.10.2. The Operational Group has undertaken some significant work to verify, challenge and revisit the corporate procedure regarding the DBS. As a result, Departments now own more of the DBS procedures and this has transformed how the Operational Group reports on its compliance with departmental disclosures.

### 3.11. **Refugees**

3.11.1. With Russia starting to invade Ukraine in February 2022, during the year refugees that had to flee the country were welcomed. A Welcome Centre was opened in the county to provide accommodation for up to 80 individuals, as well as working with residents and local charities to offer accommodation for up to 200 others in homes across the county.

3.11.2. Robust arrangements are in place to protect the refugees, and to also safeguard those that were offering accommodation. All who offer accommodation for a refugee are subject to safeguarding checks, accommodation assessment, safeguarding training, information packs and contact with a support worker.

3.11.3. In addition, every individual from Ukraine seeking asylum in Gwynedd are subject to safeguarding checks, receive safeguarding training, welfare visits, contact from support workers and they are offered trauma support, resettlement and mental health support.

3.11.4. The safeguarding arrangements in place have meant that the Council with the support of the Police and Home Office were able to prevent 5 cases of unsuitable sponsorship on the basis of safety.

3.11.5. In addition, 1 case was seen where a child had arrived in Gwynedd unaccompanied by a parent / guardian and the Council called for the support of the Aftercare Team to ensure the safety and support of the young person while arrangements were put in place to reunite them with their family.

#### **4. PRACTICE REVIEWS**

4.1. Wales has developed a Child Practice Review (CPR) framework to improve the culture of learning lessons from child protection cases. 'Brief' or 'extended' reviews exist depending on the circumstances of the child in question. They are undertaken by the North Wales Regional Safeguarding Children Board with the aim of learning lessons to be shared in order to try and avoid such cases in the future.

4.2. The North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board also conduct Adults Practice Reviews, in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The purpose of these Reviews is to note the lessons to be learnt from complex and difficult Adult Safeguarding cases, and to implement changes to improve services as a result of these lessons.

#### **5. PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

5.1. Although the Strategic Safeguarding Panel focuses on corporate responsibilities regarding safeguarding issues within Gwynedd, it also receives information and guidance via Regional Safeguarding Boards for Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults working across north Wales. These are Statutory Boards with cross-agency membership and specific statutory and legal responsibilities. The Council is a member of these Boards and contributes to implementing their plans. Further information regarding the work of the Boards can be seen here - <https://www.bwrdddiogelugogleddcymru/>

5.2. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership has also shown that working in partnership across county borders is proving to be a success. The Community Safety Partnership Manager is also vice-chair of the Safeguarding Operational Group and is a member of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel. The Partnership's work in areas such as Prevent are essential if the Panel is to ensure the quality of safeguarding arrangements in Gwynedd.

5.3. Several organisations have a statutory duty to be part of the partnership, including Local Authorities, Police, Probation Services, Fire and Rescue Service and the Health Board. Information on all aspects of community safety that the Council is involved with is on our [website](#).

## **6. THE FUTURE**

6.1. Although excellent work is happening within the departments on safeguarding, the Panel intends to reflect on the working arrangements of the Strategic Panel and the Operational Group to ensure effective action.

6.2. In terms of the Panel's priorities for the coming year, it is intended to concentrate on the following priorities:

- Domestic Abuse and violence against women and work on a White Ribbon action plan;
- Re-establish the Operational Panel after the new membership and chairmanship is established in 2023;
- Ensure that safeguarding systems across the departments are effective and efficient.

## APPENDIX 1 – SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC PANEL

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Statutory Director has specific responsibilities in the safeguarding field. The Director's Protocol is also in place and sets out how the Director meets the requirements of the role. These matters relate to the safeguarding requirements set out in paragraphs 64-69 in Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Paragraph 65 highlights the need for the Director to have an overview of safeguarding matters but also the need to regularly report to Members on the arrangements for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults within the authority and how these arrangements work, and what needs to be improved.
- 1.2 There is also a need for every agency to establish internal arrangements to ensure that the counter terrorism, anti radicalisation and community safety matters agenda receives the appropriate attention.
- 1.3 For the purpose of this Panel, the term 'safeguarding' is relevant to adults, children and young people and means to protect them, prevent them from being abused or neglected and educate those around them to recognise the signs and risks. Safeguarding and promoting individuals' well-being, has a wider meaning than protecting individuals against abuse. It involves individuals and services identifying the risk factors and taking steps to prevent vulnerable individuals from being abused. Protection is part of the work of safeguarding and promoting well-being. It refers to activities to protect children, young people and adults who are suffering or at risk of significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

### 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL

- 2.1 The aim of the Panel is to give assurance to Members and the Statutory Director of Social Services, as the Senior Officer within the Council who has the full final accountability for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, that appropriate arrangements and procedures are in place on a corporate level to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. The Panel will satisfy three statutory duties, which are general corporate responsibility to safeguard, statutory duties of Social Services and the community safeguarding duties.
- Identify any gaps in relation to safeguarding on a corporate level and approve work programmes in order to respond to these
  - Identify lessons to be learnt, on a corporate level, from serious case reviews and from other relevant reviews and ensure their implementation. (APR, CPR)
  - Identify lessons to be learnt from external audits and ensure their implementation
  - Identify lessons to be learnt from internal audits and ensure their implementation
  - Notify the relevant lead members of matters/key developments in the field of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults
  - Act as a means to raise the awareness of every Council staff member and every Elected Member of their safeguarding responsibilities.
  - Act as a means to ensure that staff members and Elected Members receive timely appropriate training and monitor the attendance of this training.

- Ensure an interdepartmental working relationship and effective communication in the Council within the safeguarding field
- Ensure that the Council's arrangements coincide with the legal requirement to ensure that staff are eligible to work in the regulated posts
- Call for relevant projects to report on progress
- Receive performance management information - cross departmental
- Ensure an overview of broader Safeguarding matters including counter-terrorism, modern slavery, domestic abuse and community safety procedures

### **3. CHAIRMANSHIP**

3.1 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will Chair the Panel.

### **4. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS**

4.1 The meetings will be held every eight to ten weeks

### **5. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

5.1 The Strategic Safeguarding Panel is accountable to the Cabinet.


5.2 Business Management [i.e. creating a work programme, meeting agendas, secretariat, central communication point, organising additional professional advice if needed] through the function of the Corporate Director.

### **6 MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Title</b>
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being (also responsible for Community Safety)
Cabinet Member for Education
Chief Executive
Corporate Director (Statutory Director) for Social Services
Head of Children and Young People
Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department (also responsible for Community Safety)
Head of Education
Head of Corporate Support Department
Chair of the Operational Safeguarding Group
Head of Legal Services



## CYNGOR GWYNEDD CABINET



<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>11 July, 2023</b>
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Berwyn Parry Jones</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Steffan Jones, Head of Highways, Engineering and YGC</b>
<b>Contact Telephone Number:</b>	<b>32400</b>
<b>Item Title:</b>	<b>Adoption of Highway Maintenance Manual</b>

### Report to Cyngor Gwynedd's Cabinet meeting

#### 1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 That the Cabinet adopt the Highway Maintenance Manual included in Appendix 1.

The purpose of the Manual is to:

- ensure consistency in how the Council maintains its county roads,
- ensure that the Council adopts a risk-based approach to maintaining its county roads by taking into consideration, amongst other things, the road hierarchy and the arrangements for inspections and repairs,

#### 2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 Ensure that the Council's current highway asset maintenance procedures comply with the latest national guidelines (see Section 3 below).
- 2.2 That the changes proposed by the Department to Gwynedd's highway network hierarchy and its highway inspection and repair arrangements are adopted.

#### 3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Local highway authorities have a specific duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain their roads. Nevertheless, despite their best efforts, authorities are subject to claims or legal action by individuals seeking to prove non-compliance with this duty in order to obtain financial compensation.
- 3.2 Various national codes of practice have been issued over the years to encourage best practice and to adopt asset management procedures that take a more holistic approach to maintaining the highway network and thus defend authorities from claims or legal action.

- 3.3 In line with the recommendations in the prevailing code of practice 'Well-maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management 2005', the Council published its Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) in July 2010. Gwynedd's HAMP was considered to be comprehensive and few other highway authorities had adopted a similar plan at the time.
- 3.4 The HAMP has served its purpose over the years, not only as a daily guide to how to maintain the county's highways but also to protect the Council against third party claims and court cases. Between the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2016 and the 1<sup>st</sup> of April this year, the Council has received 343 third party claims and has been able to successfully defend 294 of them; a success rate of almost 86%. This compares very favourably with other highway authorities and the Risk Co-ordinator and Insurance Manager attributes this to the robustness of the Plan.
- 3.5 However, a new code of practice was introduced in 2016, namely '*Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice*'. The new code promoted the adoption of an integrated asset management approach to highway maintenance based on the establishment of local levels of service through risk-based management.
- 3.6 In order to ensure that all local authorities in Wales complied with the requirements of the new code, the County Surveyor's Society Wales (CSSW) commissioned specialist consultants to formulate a nationally consistent approach to the new guidelines. Consequently, rather than have one Highway Asset Management Plan to define how they managed their road networks (similar to the Council's existing HAMP), CSSW recommended that each authority publish a suite of documents that support their method of managing their highway asset. The Highway Maintenance Manual is one of these documents.
- 3.7 Highway Maintenance Manuals set out how councils meet their duties as the highway authority; confirm the methods used to ensure that the risk to users of the highway network is appropriately monitored and managed, and ensure consistency in how standards are implemented. In order to achieve all of these, CSSW proposed that authorities undertook the following:
- establish a network hierarchy
  - establish an inspection regime
  - establish a repair procedure
  - use risk to influence how the budget is allocated
- 3.8 The Council already had a network hierarchy, inspection regime and repair procedure in place, and the standards and practices in its HAMP were largely risk based. However, they were probably not entirely consistent with the requirements of the new code and CSSW's recommendations. Consequently, the Department reviewed its existing arrangements (hierarchy, inspection and repair) and established standards that were the same, if not better, than those proposed by CSSW. These are the standards included in the Council's new Highway Maintenance Manual.

#### **4. RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION**

4.1 Adopting the new Manual will ensure:

- that the Council's highway asset maintenance procedures comply with current national guidelines
- the delivery of a safe and well-maintained highway network
- that appropriate maintenance standards are implemented consistently throughout Gwynedd
- that the Council's standards and approach to implementation are consistent with other highway authorities within Wales.
- that the Council will continue to be able to defend third-party claims and legal action by individuals
- that future highway maintenance budget allocations are influenced by risk rather than by other factors

#### **5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

5.1 If approved by the Cabinet, the Manual will be implemented immediately by the Department's inspectors, engineers and other competent officers to ensure that the highway network is managed and maintained to the recommended standards as far as is reasonably practicable.

5.2 The Manual is only one document in a suite of documents that support the Council's method of managing its highway asset. The remaining documents, including an Asset Management Plan, will be prepared over the next 12 months.

5.3 The network hierarchy, inspection regime and repair procedure will be subject to continuous monitoring throughout the life of the Manual. However, the Department will undertake a formal review of the risks associated with managing the highway network every two years to take account of any substantial changes to the highway asset. Consequently, if approved now, the Manual will be formally reviewed in July 2025. Any revision to the Manual as a result of the formal review will be reported to the Leadership Team for information and approval.

#### **6. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015**

6.1 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act places a 'well-being duty' on public bodies aimed at achieving 7 national well-being goals for Wales - a Wales that is prosperous, resilient, healthier, more equal, has cohesive communities, a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and is globally responsible. The Manual has been prepared having regard to these requirements and in accordance with the 5 ways of working.

#### **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Whilst developing the Highway Maintenance Manual, no negative impacts were identified on the population.

## **8. VIEWS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS**

### **The Monitoring Officer:**

The manual provides guidance in relation to how the Council will implement its statutory duties in relation to the maintenance of the roads network. It is appropriate that the Cabinet considers the matter and decides on its' adoption.

### **Head of Finance:**

The adoption of the Highway Maintenance Manual will not create a spending commitment in itself, but it offers clear steps to identify and prioritise the vital work being undertaken by the Highway Maintenance Service. Relevant officers from the Finance Department have engaged with officers from the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department as they develop this manual. Having clear guidelines like this in place – which are adhered to – is key to defending the Council's interests.



# HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE MANUAL

Highways, Engineering and YGC Department  
Cyngor Gwynedd



### Document control

Version number	Amendments made	Date
V.1.0	Nil - Original	
V.1.1	Steffan Jones	21.06.23
<b>Next review due:</b>		

### Council Approval

Version number	Council Committee	Date
V.1.0	Cabinet	

### Responsibility for the manual

The responsibility for the delivery and updating of this plan are shown below.

Council Officer	Responsible for
Steffan Jones – Head of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department.	Setting direction and strategy for the Highways Maintenance Service to support compliance with, and the implementation of, the standards of the maintenance manual.
Meirion Williams – Assistant Head of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department.	
Osian Elis – Executive Officer, Corporate Leadership Team	Preparing Cyngor Gwynedd’s Highway Maintenance Manual.



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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Purpose**

The purpose of this manual is to outline the methods and standards used by Cyngor Gwynedd for managing the maintenance of highway assets (the highway infrastructure, including roads, footways, streetlights, street furniture, gullies, drains, trees, signs, road markings, bridges and other structures). The manual outlines how the Council will comply with its duties as a highway authority, ensuring that the risks to users are appropriately monitored and managed.

### **1.2. Scope**

This manual outlines how Cyngor Gwynedd maintains the highway assets under its control. It details the procedures used to plan and execute all work associated with managing, operating and maintaining highway assets, including how activities are monitored to ensure compliance with the Council's policies and statutory obligations.

### **1.3. Legal Requirements**

As a highway authority, Cyngor Gwynedd must comply with statutory duties, including the following legislation:

- **The Highways Act 1980:** This places a duty on highway authorities to maintain highways adopted as maintainable at public expense, and to keep them safe for public use.
- **New Roads and Street Works Act 1991:** This places a duty on highway authorities to co-ordinate all highway works for the purpose of ensuring safety, minimising inconvenience to highway users, and protecting the highway and apparatus in it.
- **The Traffic Management Act 2004:** This places a duty on highway authorities to ensure effective movement of traffic on the road network of the highway authority as well as the networks of surrounding authorities.
- **Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:** This requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decision, to work better with people, communities, and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.



- **Environment (Wales) Act 2016:** This requires local authorities to secure healthy and resilient eco-systems for the future whilst meeting the challenges of creating jobs, housing and infrastructure.

## **1.4. National Guidance**

In 2016, the UK Roads Liaison Group produced a new code of practice for managing highway assets. It recommended that highway authorities adopt a risk-based approach to how they maintain their roads. In response to this new code of practice, the County Surveyors' Society, Wales (CSSW) created a risk-based management method for use by highway authorities in Wales.

Current national guidance considered by this manual is found in the following documents:

- UK Roads Liaison Group – *Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice*, UK Roads Liaison Group (2016).
- CSSW – *Nationally Consistent Response to the Code of Practice, 2016* (2019).
- CSSW – *Highway Asset Management Planning: Risk-based approach – Method Summary* (2019).

## **1.5. Council Documents**

This manual is part of a suite of documents produced by Cyngor Gwynedd which support and outline the Council's approach to the management of its highway assets. The Council's initial approach to highway asset management was outlined in its *Highway Asset Maintenance Plan, 2010 (HAMP)*. This manual contains revisions of relevant sections of the HAMP which reflect the national guidance specified above.

This manual supports other departmental policies which address highway asset maintenance.

Relevant documents include:

- Cyngor Gwynedd – *Highways, Engineering and YGC Departmental Plans*.
- Cyngor Gwynedd – *Highways, Engineering and YGC Environmental Policy*.
- Cyngor Gwynedd – *Winter Maintenance Service Plan*.



## 2. Roles, Responsibilities and Competencies

The roles, responsibilities and competencies required of those involved in the management of Cyngor Gwynedd’s highway assets are specified below:

<b>Role:</b>	<b>Responsible for:</b>
Cabinet	Approving the use of this document as policy.
Councillors	Approving the use of this document as policy.
Corporate Leadership Team	Ensuring that the Council’s services meet the maintenance standards of this manual.
Head of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department.	Ensuring that the Highways Maintenance Service implements the asset maintenance standards of this manual. Monitoring results. Undertaking biennial risk assessments.
Assistant Head of the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department.	
Area Engineers	
Highway inspectors	Undertaking inspections in line with the inspection regime. The appropriate data is recorded for input into the asset management systems.
Work gangs	Carrying out repairs in line with the repair regime. The appropriate data is recorded for input into the asset management systems.
Contractors.	Carrying out repairs as instructed. Recording the appropriate data for input into the asset management system.

**Table 1. Roles and Responsibilities**

### 2.1. Competencies and training

CSSW manages a competency confirmation scheme for highway inspectors involved in highway maintenance (Highway Inspection Competency Scheme). The objective of the scheme is to ensure that highway inspections are completed according to the standards specified in this manual. The training addresses visual condition assessments of carriageways and footways. Relevant officers in the Council will have received the appropriate training to attain the CSSW accreditation.



### **3. Highway Maintenance and Risk Management**

The risks associated with maintaining highway assets are managed using the methods set out below. This includes how the Council makes use of a risk-based management approach as required in the new code of practice.

#### **3.1. Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice (2016)**

A revised code of practice for highway maintenance was published in October 2016 by the UK Roads and Liaison Group. It provides guidance that highway authorities are expected to utilise when formulating their approach to highway maintenance management. Highway authorities may use this guidance when defending against third party claims.

The most significant change proposed in the new code of practice is the requirement of a risk-based approach to all decision-making regarding the maintenance of highways.

CSSW developed a risk-based management method that it recommends highway authorities in Wales adopt. It proposes recommended minimum standards for inspection frequencies and defect repairs, and calls on the highway authority to establish:

- A network hierarchy.
- An inspection regime.
- A repair regime.
- Budget allocation according to risk.

The network hierarchy, inspection regime, and repair regime adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd – and where they meet and/or exceed CSSW recommended standards – are outlined in this manual.

The approach allows inspectors to use their discretion when judging the appropriate response to repairing a defect (see Section 6. Inspection Regime).

#### **3.2. Risk Reviews**

To verify the effectiveness of the risk-based approach and the appropriateness of the network hierarchy, inspection regime and repair regime adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd, a



review of this manual will occur every 2 years. These reviews will draw upon the CSSW method outlined in: *CSSW Highways Asset Management Framework Recommended Practices - Task 4 Annual Performance & Risk Review*.

## **4. Asset Register and Inventory of Highway Assets**

The Asset Register provides a definitive list of the highway assets that fall under the jurisdiction of, and are maintained by, the Council. The inventory of highway assets is based on the Asset Register and contains detailed information on the items held by each highway asset.

### **4.1. Asset Register**

The National Street Gazetteer is the definitive dataset of public roads and streets that highway authorities are responsible for maintaining. The part of the National Street Gazetteer covering Gwynedd is included in the Council's WDM Highway Integrated Asset Management System (WDM) and Mayrise Street Lighting Asset Management System.

### **4.2. Inventory**

Inventories of the Council's highway assets are held in multiple asset management systems. Asset information is handled continuously and updated as required. The assets are held on the following management systems:

- Carriageways and footways – WDM
- Structures – BridgeStation, Advanced Bridge Management Systems
- Street lighting and traffic signals – Mayrise

## **5. Network Hierarchy**

Highway assets have been divided into network hierarchy categories which reflect the relative significance of their use and function. This ensures that the inspection and repair regimes are proportionate to the risks posed by each category.

The Council has separate network hierarchies for carriageways and footways.



## **5.1. Establishing the Network Hierarchy**

Cyngor Gwynedd has employed a network hierarchy for many years. In line with the creation of this manual, the hierarchy has been revised in accordance with the recommendations in the CSSW document: *Nationally Consistent Response to the Code of Practice, 2016*. The revised network reflects the risks associated with each public highway based on traffic volume, other hazards and local knowledge from the Council's engineers and inspectors.

## **5.2. Network Hierarchy Categories**

A description of the relative significance of the use and function of each hierarchy category is outlined in Appendix A. Documented evidence of how the revised network has been established, and how the highway categories have been assigned, is available on the following spreadsheet: *Cyngor Gwynedd - RP1 Annual Highway Asset Risk Review*.

## **5.3. Regional Consistency**

To achieve regional consistency, CSSW recommends that neighbouring highway authorities agree on common hierarchy categories for assets which cross authority boundaries.

Cyngor Gwynedd neighbours the counties of Conwy, Denbighshire and Powys and has highway assets which connect with the highway networks of these other three counties. All assets maintained by Cyngor Gwynedd are classified with the same carriageway hierarchy as the neighbouring authorities. These assets are found in: *Carriageway Hierarchy – Neighbouring Authority.xlsx*.

## **5.4. Update and Review**

The network hierarchy is reviewed on a continuous basis, and formally at least every 2 years, to reflect any significant changes in the use of any highway asset, e.g. changes in the volume of traffic).



## 6. Inspection Regime

To monitor the repair needs and condition of highway assets, Cyngor Gwynedd uses a regime of inspections of varying types and frequencies. This includes the following inspection types:

- **Reactive Inspections:** Inspections undertaken in response to a notification to the Council of a potential defect.
- **Routine Inspections:** A regime of planned inspections to identify defects that have the potential to cause harm to users and to assist in choosing or confirming a repair intervention to prevent further deterioration and increased future maintenance needs that could otherwise be avoided.
- **Condition Surveys:** Where the condition of the components of the highway assets are surveyed so that a renewal programme can be derived. Condition surveys can be visual- or machine-based and may include testing where appropriate for the asset type.

### 6.1. Routine Inspections

Routine Inspection frequencies are based on the network hierarchy. These frequencies were established according to the CSSW Highway Asset Risk Review method. Appendix B provides the routine inspection frequencies along with the CSSW minimum recommended standards. Planned routine inspections are a combination of:

- **Driven Inspections:** Inspections of carriageways by a driver and a highway inspector/competent officer in a slow-moving vehicle. Refer to table 1 in Appendix B.
- **Walked Inspections:** Inspections undertaken by a highway inspector/competent officer on foot at a walking pace on the footway.

### 6.2. Inspection Tolerances

Due to adverse weather, sickness or leave, it is possible that the specified frequencies cannot be met in some circumstances. For this reason, the frequencies have been assigned a tolerance – either 5 or 10 working days. The tolerances for each routine inspection frequency are specified in Appendix B.





### **6.3. Inspection Schedule**

The WDM asset management system contains information on all previous inspections and the inspection regime. At the beginning of each month, highway inspectors/competent officers are assigned assets for inspection by the WDM system. The inspectors/officers decide on the scheduling of the inspections and consider the use and character of the asset to ensure that the time and date of the inspections are appropriate e.g. to avoid periods with higher numbers of parked cars or increased traffic. This minimises disruption and better ensures that inspections are effective and safe.

### **6.4. Reactive Inspections**

When a defect is notified to the Council by a third party, an inspection will be undertaken at a time deemed proportionate to the suggested severity of the issue and the hierarchy category assigned to the asset. Remedial action, if required, will be undertaken as per the Council's repair regime outlined in 7.0 below.

### **6.5. Inspected Assets**

Assets inspected during routine inspections include, but are not limited to, the elements below:

- Carriageways;
- Footways;
- Covers, gratings and frames (inc., statutory undertakers' apparatus);
- Kerbs, edgings and channels;
- Drainage;
- Guardrails, fencing and restraint systems;
- Verges, trees, and hedges;
- Road studs and markings;
- Signage;
- Street lighting;
- Traffic systems, controlled crossings, illuminated bollards and cabinets;
- Cleanliness and weed growth.



## **6.6. Inspection recording.**

Data and information collected from inspections and subsequent observations are recorded in real time on the WDM system via mobile devices.

## **6.7. Condition Assessments.**

The following types of condition assessments on assets are undertaken:

### **6.7.1. Carriageways**

- SCANNER (Surface Condition Assessment of the National Network of Roads). SCANNER is a machine condition survey used from a vehicle moving at traffic speed. The results of the surveys are held offsite by WDM and accessed via the WDM/WIP interface.
- Griptester measures wet road skidding resistance. Data is kept by Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy (YGC).

### **6.7.2. Footways**

- Walked safety inspections are conducted on urban footways. Driven safety inspections are conducted on rural roads in slow-moving vehicles.

### **6.7.3. Structures**

Structures are inspected using two levels of inspection:

- General Inspections (GIs): GIs are visual inspections, possibly with some basic hands-on assessments e.g. hammer tapping and measurements. It involves the recording of the extent and severity of observed defect. The data is then entered into the Council's Bridge Management System - BridgeStation. GIs are undertaken on all bridges every 2 years in accordance with the inspection programme.
- Principal Inspections (PIs): PIs are detailed visual inspections with hands-on assessments on most elements as well as more high-tech assessments e.g. hammer tapping, half-cell, chloride measurements etc. It involves the creation of a detailed report alongside the recording of data. The results of these inspections are entered into the



Council's Bridge Management System - BridgeStation. PIs are undertaken on structures which are large enough to warrant a PI or on other special structures such as half-joints.

- **Special Inspections (SIs):** SIs are inspections which look at a particular element or problem with a structure that might occur at any moment. SIs are undertaken by qualified engineers and can be part of a monitoring regime. The results may be kept as a project file, on specialist software, or on the Bridge Management System – BridgeStation.

#### 6.7.4. Street Lighting

The condition of street lighting assets is assessed as follows:

- **Visual Condition:** Visual condition assessments are undertaken during maintenance visits on an *ad hoc* basis. Poor conditions and defects are recorded and actioned accordingly.
- **Electrical Safety:** Electrical testing is carried in-house by Cyngor Gwynedd. The results of the electrical testing are entered into the Mayrise asset management system.

**Lighting Column Structural Testing:** A programme of structural testing is delivered on all lighting columns using an external contractor. Results of structural testing provide the following condition ratings

- **Red:** Programmed for removal (normally within 4 hours).
- **Amber:** Retest within 6 months.
- **Green:** Retest within 5 years.

The results of the structural testing are entered into the Mayrise asset management system. The frequencies with which these condition assessments are used are found in Appendix B.

## 7. Highway Repair Regime

Defects identified via inspection or by third party notification are prioritised for repairs based on the risk they pose to users. The methods used to do this are outlined below.



## 7.1. Defect Categories

The data and information recorded during inspections are used to determine the category of the defect. A defect is classified according to its severity and nature, with critical defects being the most severe. The most severe defects are prioritised for repairs. The response times adopted by Cyngor Gwynedd for each defect category are specified as follows:

<b>Defect Categories:</b>	<b>Description:</b>	<b>Response Time:</b>
Critical Defect	A situation where the inspecting officer considers the risk to safety high enough to require immediate action e.g., collapsed cellar, missing utility cover, fallen tree, unprotected opening	<b>2 Hours.<sup>1</sup></b>
Safety defect (formerly Category 1).	Service requests or defects requiring a response as soon as possible to remove a potential risk of injury to users	<b>By the end of the next working day.<sup>2</sup></b>
Maintenance defect (formerly Category 2.1).	Other defects that warrant treatment in order to prevent them deteriorating into a safety defect prior to the next scheduled inspection	<b>1 month (CHSR, CH1 and CH2 roads).</b>  <b>3 months (CH3 and CH4 roads).</b>
Safety defects on CH5 roads	It will be the duty of the inspector to assign an appropriate response to each defect based on the type of road, its size, location and the level of use.	

**Table 2. Defect Categories**

<sup>1</sup> The response time for critical defects refers to the time to attend the site. The repairs and/or works to make the site safe will happen as soon as possible afterwards.

<sup>2</sup> Particular attention will be given to defects that arise on Fridays, over the weekend or on bank holidays since there is the possibility that they could be left until late Monday (or Tuesday in the case of bank holidays) until they receive attention (by the end of next working day). Consequently, if a safety defect is identified on a Friday, over the weekend or on a bank holiday, the highway inspector/competent officer will undertake a dynamic risk assessment of the circumstances to determine whether it will be safe to leave it unattended until the following Monday (or Tuesday in the case of bank holidays). If there is any doubt about the safety risk the defect could present to the public, then it will be attended to as soon as is reasonably practicable.



## **7.2. Defect Types and Interventions Levels**

A list of defect types and the dimensional criteria assigning them to each of the four defect categories is provided in Appendix C. Inspectors can exercise discretion in deciding which defect category is suitable to a defect. The dimensional criteria provide a minimum standard according to which a defect category is assigned. However, where circumstances specific to the defect – e.g., location, importance to the delivery of public services, and the potential to deteriorate in future – are judged to be such as to warrant a higher defect category, the inspector can do so.

This ensures two things: that the risk-based approach applied in this manual is not too heavily prescriptive, and that the defect categories assigned are appropriate to the specific conditions of each individual defect.

## **7.3. Emergency Service**

Cyngor Gwynedd operates an emergency highways maintenance service. This service can be accessed 24 hours a day by calling: 01766 771000.

Incidents are reported directly to the duty officers and a response is provided proportionate to the circumstances.

This service provides an immediate and co-ordinated response to maintain highway safety. Hazards dealt with include problems such as flooding, ice and snow, unsafe street works, traffic signal failure, electrical danger at street lighting installations, and clearing of the highway following a road traffic incident.

A log of calls is kept by the Duty Officer. When actions can be safely deferred, this log is used to initiate any additional action required in respect of incidents on the next working day.

## **7.4. Works Ordering**

Following the input of inspection records into Cyngor Gwynedd's WDM asset management system, work orders are generated automatically. Critical defects are reported immediately to the Works Unit who will receive a confirmation WDM Emergency Order via email.



## 7.5. Recording of Repair Records

On completion of repair works, details on the type of work undertaken, the materials used and, on occasion, the dimensions of the repair, are passed to the business support team. The business support team updates the WDM system with the supplied information. The defect is only be deemed ‘fully repaired’ once all records have been entered into WDM.

## 8. Cost Recording

The cost of the activities required to maintain highway assets are recorded to enable them to be monitored and managed. The coding used to record costs is shown below.

Highway maintenance costs are allocated to one of the following categories.

<b>Cost Category</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Planned Maintenance – (Preventative)	Planned maintenance activities that are designed to ensure that more expensive future repairs may not be needed.
Planned Maintenance – (Corrective)	Planned maintenance activities that correct the condition of the asset and which would not cost significantly more if delayed.
Routine Cyclic Maintenance	Scheduled works consisting of activities that are based on a prescribed time interval.
Routine – Reactive Maintenance (Emergency)	Reactive repair of potentially dangerous defects identified from inspection or customer complaint / notification.
Routine - Reactive Maintenance (Non-Emergency)	Other less urgent minor repairs
Routine – Inspection and Survey	Cost of specialist inspection and surveys
Operating Costs	Costs of operating elements of the asset
Overhead	Internal costs associated with the management of the asset. It is accepted that these costs may not be available at an asset group level
Loss	Money expended that is effectively “lost” to the Council from which no benefit to the asset or user is gained.
Improvements	Works that add new infrastructure to the asset.

**Table 3. Cost Recording**



## 9. Procurement

Maintenance is delivered through a mixture of in-house and procured services. Day-to-day highway maintenance services are primarily delivered by in-house Council resources. Where specialist skills are required, external contractors are employed.

The balance between in-house and procured services for each asset is outlined below.

Asset	Work Type	In-house or contractor	Contracts details
Carriageway	Routine and Reactive	In-house	
	Planned	Resurfacing – Contractor	Surfacing framework
		Surfaces dress / In-house and Contractor	
Footways	Routine and Reactive	In-house	
	Planned	Reconstruction - Contractor	Surfacing framework
		Resurfacing - Contractor	Surfacing framework
		Slurry Seal – Contractor	Tender process
Street Lighting	Routine and Reactive	In-house	
	Planned	Column (New / Replacement) – In-house	
		Luminaire (New / Replacement) – In-house	
Highway Structures	Routine and Reactive	In-house and Contractor	
	Planned	In-house and Contractor	
Traffic Signals	Routine and Reactive	Repairs/maintenance – Contractor	Tender process
	Planned	Annual inspection – Contractor	Tender process

**Table 4. In-house and/or procured delivery**



## **10. Budget allocation.**

The budget for highway maintenance is set annually by Cyngor Gwynedd. Status reports are provided to assist the Council in establishing the overall budget. The highway maintenance budget is allocated between asset groups and work types in accordance with the method set out below.

### **10.1. Annual Budget Setting**

The highway maintenance budget is split between routine and planned works. The routine budget is allocated to Gwynedd's three operational areas – Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd – and is based on the proportion of the highway network located within each area. The planned works budget is allocated in line with our scheme prioritisation system.

The Area Engineers are responsible for spending their respective budgetary allocations within the four categories specified below:

- Structural Capital Maintenance, 52% +/- 5% (Listed carriageway treatment and new provision).
- Structural Current Maintenance, 13% +/- 2% (Programmed service maintenance).
- Routine Current Maintenance, 20% +/- 3% (Cyclical maintenance, reactive maintenance).
- Current Winter Maintenance (15%).

## **11. Customer enquiries**

Cyngor Gwynedd welcomes communications from the public in relation to highway matters. As well as helping to identify specific defects, they assist with determining aspects of the highway network that may need to be improved.

Cyngor Gwynedd gains customer feedback on the highway service through its online public interface system and its call-centre (Galw Gwynedd). The online public interface system can be accessed online. Information about Galw Gwynedd is also available online.





## **11.1. Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS)**

When a problem on the highway network is reported by the public – either through Galw Gwynedd or the online public interface system – a notification is sent to the responsible officer or team via the Council's CRMS, known as FFOS.

If maintenance is required to address the issue reported by the customer, a works order is directly linked to the customer service request. This allows the lifecycle of the request to be captured at every stage. When the matter has been addressed, the customer is notified of the action undertaken and the request is closed in the CRMS.

## **11.2. Scheme Notification and Feedback**

For all major planned works undertaken on the highway, the Highways Maintenance Service distributes a pre-works notification to all properties affected by the works. The notification asks for information on issues anticipated by users and residents that may arise to help mitigate disruption as far as possible prior to and during the works.

## **11.3. Roadwork's Reports**

Public frustration can stem from delays caused by roadworks. To provide the public and others with information on where disruption to road traffic might be expected, a weekly Roadworks Report is circulated to the major motoring organisations, local media, and emergency services. Information on pre-planned roadworks is available online.

The weekly report includes confirmation of roadworks undertaken on all classified routes, including the nature and anticipated duration of the works and the methods of traffic management being employed. Additionally, publicity is provided where exceptionally severe traffic delays are likely. This includes social media, local radio and tv services, as well as local newspapers.

## **12. Statutory Undertaker Activity**

The condition of highway assets can be impacted by the work of third parties. The role of third parties in street works is addressed by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. The Act requires Cyngor Gwynedd to ensure coordination of all street works, including those delivered by third parties, to ensure safety, the minimisation of inconvenience to people using the street, and the protection of highway assets.



## 12.1. Procedures

The procedures used by Cyngor Gwynedd to comply with its duties as per the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 are as follows:

- **Street works license:** The license that statutory undertakers must apply for to work on public highways within Gwynedd
- **Street works register:** The register kept by the Council that records where and when utilities are working on the highway
- **Notices of works:** The notices that must be issued prior to the commencement of works and that should be issued by the organisation that is carrying out the works.
- **Restrictions on works:** Preventing works undertaken on roads that have been recently resurfaced for a period after the completion of those works
- **Co-ordination of works:** Co-ordinating works in an appropriate sequence and at appropriate intervals where more than one organisation needs to work on the same street
- **Designation of protected streets:** Where the Council can assign a protection on specific streets being used by utilities
- **Standards of re-instatement:** The Council's specification for what the standards of reinstatement should be on categories of road, including materials and depths etc.
- **Apparatus affected by highway works:** Where the Council notified utility organisations of planned roadworks to ensure that provision is made for the protection or diversion of the existing utility apparatus.

## 13. Claims by Third Parties

Third party claims are made against Cyngor Gwynedd when members of the public believe that negligence on the part of the Council has resulted in injury or property damage.

### 13.1. Processing the Claims of Third Parties

Details about the Council's handling process for claims by third parties can be acquired by emailing: [insurance@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:insurance@gwynedd.llyw.cymru).

The Risk Coordinator and Insurance Manager receives an annual report from the insurance team. The report covers:

- The number of claims;
- A breakdown of the type of claim (e.g., personal injury or property damage);



- The asset to which it refers;
- The specific details of the claim, and
- Whether the claim was successful or repudiated.

## **13.2. Reporting Claims Outcomes**

The Risk Coordinator and Insurance Manager reviews the information and includes a summary of the claims data.

## **14. Traffic Management**

As a highway authority, Cyngor Gwynedd has a duty to manage its road network to ensure the effective movement of traffic and to facilitate the same on the networks of surrounding highway authorities. These derive from the Traffic Management Act 2004, and the arrangements put in place by Cyngor Gwynedd to meet these duties are outlined below.

### **14.1. Traffic Manager**

The Council has appointed a Traffic Manager to undertake such tasks as the authority considers necessary to perform its network management duties.

### **14.2. Traffic Disruption.**

Cyngor Gwynedd has processes for ensuring that the authority identifies causes or potential causes of road congestion and other disruption, and acts in response to, or in anticipation of, anything so identified.

### **14.3. Policies and Objectives**

Cyngor Gwynedd has policies and objectives in relation to different roads or classes of roads and has procedures in place to monitor the effectiveness of decision-making processes, the implementation of these decisions, and to assess their performance in managing the network.



### 14.4. Traffic Sensitive Streets.

Gwynedd contains several streets that, due to the amount or make-up of traffic that uses them, have been designated as traffic sensitive and have working time restrictions placed upon them. A list of traffic sensitive streets is found in the following Excel Spreadsheet: *RP1 Highway Asset Risk Review*.

## 15. Routine Cyclic Planned Maintenance

Cyclic maintenance activities include gully emptying and verge maintenance. The frequencies which Cycle Maintenance activities are conducted are shown below.

Activity	Frequency
<b>Gully Cleansing</b>	
Standard Gullies	Once per year
Priority Gullies	Frequency increased at known trouble spots
Drainage channels, grillages to culvert inlets	Regular cleaning at known trouble spots.
<b>Grass Cutting</b>	
Designated areas of the verge are identified and exempted from the annual grass cutting regime to protect wildflowers. Where rare flowers exist in the verge, cutting is delayed until after the seeds have set.	
Urban Roads	Arfon – 5 annual cuts Dwyfor – 5 cuts Meirionnydd – 5 cuts
Rural Roads	1st cut, June – July 1m swathe increasing in width to incorporate visibility splays, forward visibility around bends, lay-bys, junctions and in front of signs. Cuts around signposts and other street furniture. For narrow rural lanes: One swathe at earth banks where the verge is less than 1m width extended to 2/3 swathe height at dangerous and narrow bends.



	2nd cut, September – October As first cut but increase in width to include flat areas of verge. The area beyond the flats to the highway boundary may be cut every 3 years to prevent overgrowth if practicable
<b>Weed Removal</b>	
Weed Spraying	2 times per year
Noxious Weed Removal	Ragwort removal in late July annually and other cuts dependant on type
Thorough Cleansing	Defined Urban Centre – 12 per annum Other Urban Areas – 6 per annum Rural Principal Roads – 2 per annum Class 3 Rural and Unclassified – 1 per annum

**Table 5. Routine Cyclic Planned Maintenance**

## **16. Highway Works Scheme Prioritisation Regime**

Assets identified as needing repairs or replacement are included on a works programme. The work needed to fix the assets are conducted on a prioritisation basis.

### **16.1. Scheme Prioritisation**

The WDM asset management system provides a list of works for completion and the SCANNER data identifies the more severe defects. However, these methods do not provide a prioritisation list for work orders and inspections. The work orders and inspections are prioritised at the discretion of the relevant highway maintenance staff.

This list contains more schemes than it is possible to fund. Consequently, a list of reserve sites is produced to be used if work orders on the originally selected sites cannot be undertaken due to unforeseen circumstances.

## **17. Performance**

To ensure that operational performance complies with the standards specified in this manual, the Council operates the monitoring regime outlined below.



## 17.1. Operational Performance Measures

Cyngor Gwynedd has multiple performance measures to monitor the operational effectiveness of its highway maintenance services. The table below contains our performance measures and targets.

<b>Performance Measure Title</b>	<b>Target</b>
% A, B, C roads in good condition	11.2%
% General structural inspections completed on programme	80%
% Highway inspections completed on time	100%
% Critical defects, identified on inspection, made safe within 2 hours	100%
% Safety defects, identified on inspection, made safe by the end of the next working day	95%
% Maintenance defects (CHSR, CH1 and CH2 roads) identified on inspection, made safe within 1 month.	95%
% Maintenance defects (CH3 and CH4 roads) identified on inspection, made safe within 3 months.	95%
% Streetlamp failures repaired within 5 working days	80%

**Table 6. Performance Measures**

The satisfaction/dissatisfaction of service-users as well as the number of complaints are also captured.

Performance next to these measures is reported to the Corporate Directorship team of Cyngor Gwynedd. These reviews are conducted on a tri-annual basis and are designed to enable the Council and service managers to take corrective action if performance deteriorates.



## **17.2. Benchmarking**

Cyngor Gwynedd welcomes benchmarking activities to measure relative performance. Benchmarking is facilitated via the CSSW project. However, highway authorities present and collect performance data differently, meaning any comparison of the performance of Cyngor Gwynedd with other highway authorities may not always be accurate or appropriate. Where circumstances are similar allowing for accurate comparison of performance, Cyngor Gwynedd works to share and learn good practice.



## Appendix A: Asset Hierarchy Categories

Carriageways		
Category	Description / approximate daily traffic volume	Roads
CHSR	<p><b>Strategic routes.</b> These are generally principal routes connecting primary locations. Routes for fast-moving long-distance traffic where speed limits are generally more than 40mph.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &gt; 20,000.</p>	A4087 A4212 A496 A497
CH1	<p><b>Main distributors.</b> Routes between strategic routes and linking urban centres to the strategic network. In urban areas, the speed limits are usually 40mph or less.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &gt; 10,000 – 20,000.</p>	A4085 A4086 A4087 A4244 A493 A496 A497 A4971 A498 A499 A5 B4405
CH2	<p><b>Secondary distributors.</b> Located in rural areas, these roads generally link the larger villages to the strategic and main distributor routes.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &gt; 5,000 – 10,000.</p>	B4354 B4366 B4391 B4401 B4404 B4407 B4409 B4410 B4411 B4412 B4413 B4415 B4416 B4417 B4418 B4419 B4501 B4547
CH3	<p><b>Local roads.</b> Located in rural areas, linking smaller villages to the distributor roads. The speed limits are usually 30mph or less.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &gt; 1,000 - 5,000.</p>	B4402 B4403 B4410 B4573





CH4	<p><b>Local access roads.</b> These roads serve small settlements with very few properties.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &gt; 200 – 1,000.</p>	<p><i>All remaining roads in class C or unclassified</i></p>
CH5	<p><b>Generally unmetalled roads.</b> In rural areas, these roads serve very few properties and can be unsuitable for general vehicles.</p> <p>Example traffic volume &lt; 200.</p>	

Footways	
Category	Description - approximate daily footfall
FH1	Footways within urban shopping areas and defined town or village centres (example daily footfall 5,000 – 10,000)
FH2	Footways feeding into primary routes and adjoining carriageway categories CHSR, CH1 and CH2 (example daily footfall 1,000 – 5,000)
FH3	Footways adjoining carriageway category CH3 (example daily footfall 500 – 1,000)
FH4	Footways primarily on residential estates, and footways adjoining carriageway category CH4.

Structures	
Category	Description
Vital Structure	A structure that is vital to the network. If restricted or out of service, it would cause a very significant adverse effect such as major traffic delays and/or a lengthy diversion route with the potential to impact other important services or community severance.
Important Structure	A structure that is important to the functioning of the network, i.e., if restricted or out-of-service, it would have an adverse impact on the operation of the entire network.
Standard Structure	All other structures.



There is no hierarchy for street lighting assets managed by Cyngor Gwynedd. All assets are inspected at the same frequency and repaired within the same response time

<b>Traffic Signals Hierarchy</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Vital Junction	A junction that is vital to the operation of the network, i.e., its failure would cause major traffic disruption
Important Junction	A junction that is important to the operation of the network, i.e., the failure of which would cause traffic disruption
Standard Junction	A signalised junction on the network
Pedestrian Crossing	A pedestrian crossing

Details of the hierarchy allocated to each individual asset are held in the asset management systems (WDM).



## Appendix B: Frequency of Inspections

Cyngor Gwynedd's routine inspection frequencies for carriageways and footways are outlined in the tables below, along with the CSSW minimum recommended standards.

<b>1. Carriageways: Routine Inspection Frequencies</b>				
<b>Carriageway Hierarchy</b>	<b>Inspection frequency</b>	<b>Number of officers</b>	<b>Inspection Frequency Tolerance</b>	<b>CSSW Recommended Minimum Standards</b>
CHSR	Monthly driven	2	5 working days	Monthly
CH1	Monthly driven	2	5 working days	Monthly
CH2	Monthly driven	2	5 working days	Every 3 Months
CH3	Driven every 3 Months	1	10 working days	Every 6 Months
CH4	Driven every 6 Months	1	10 working days	Annually or 2 yearly dependent on condition
CH5	Reactive.	Dependent on circumstances and the risk assessment	N/A	Reactive Only



<b>2. Footways: Routine Inspection Frequencies</b>				
<b>Footway Hierarchy</b>	<b>Inspection frequency (urban)</b>	<b>Inspection frequency (rural)</b>	<b>Inspection frequency tolerance</b>	<b>CSSW Recommended Minimum Standards</b>
<b>FH1</b>	Monthly walked	N.A.	5 working days	Monthly
<b>FH2</b>	Walked every 3 months or driven in a slow-moving vehicle.	Driven every 3 months.	10 working days	Every 3 months
<b>FH3</b>	Walked every 6 months or driven in a slow-moving vehicle.	Driven every 6 months.	10 working days	Every 3 months
<b>FH4</b>	Walked every six months or driven in a slow-moving vehicle.	Driven every 6 months.	10 working days	Every 6 months

## Condition Assessments

### Carriageways

The SCANNER and Griptester assessments are undertaken at the following frequencies

<b>Carriageway Annual Inspection Coverage</b>		
<b>Road Class</b>	<b>SCANNER</b>	<b>Griptester</b>
A Roads	100% (one direction)	33% (one direction)
B Roads	100% (one direction)	33% (one direction)
C Roads	10% (one direction)	

Visual condition assessments for carriageways are undertaken at the following frequencies.



<b>Carriageway Category</b>	<b>Survey Coverage</b>
CHSR	100% annually
CH1	100% annually
CH2	100% annually
CH3	100% annually
CH4	100% annually
CH5	Reactive

### **Footways**

Visual condition assessments for footways are undertaken at the following frequencies.

<b>Footway Category</b>	<b>Survey Coverage</b>
FH1	100% annually
FH2	100% annually
FH3	100% annually
FH4	100% annually

### **Structures**

Condition assessments are undertaken at the following frequencies:

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Survey Coverage</b>
General Inspection	100% Every 2 Years
Principal Inspection	100% Every 6 Years (where required*)

\*For smaller structures with easy access a General Inspection is considered sufficient without the need for a Principal Inspection to be undertaken.



## **Lighting**

Condition assessments are undertaken at the following frequencies.

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Survey Coverage</b>
Electrical	100 % Every 6 Years
Column Structural Test	As per result of previous test (3 or 6 years)
Visual	Ad hoc (during each maintenance visit)

## Appendix C: Defect Types and Intervention Levels

The following is a list of examples of defect types and intervention levels used within the authority.

### Critical Defects

Asset Type	Defect	Magnitude	Hierarchy	Road Character	Response Time
All	A situation where the inspecting officer considers the risk to safety high enough to require immediate action, typically include items such as: Carriageway / footway / cycleway collapse with high risk of accidents / loss of control; Critically unstable overhead wires, trees or structures; Exposed live wiring; Isolated standing water with high risk of loss of control; Missing or seriously defective ironwork with high probability of injury to highway users.	Not Applicable. Critical defects are defined by their potential to cause immediate injury not by defect size	All	Not Applicable. Critical defects are defined by their potential to cause immediate injury not by defect size	2 hours

The response time for a critical defect is the time until the site is made safe. This may be achieved by closing all or part of the road, or by coning off the hazard. In some instances, repairs will occur immediately. In other instances, these will be later.



**Safety Defects (Category 1 response): By the end of the next working day**

Asset Type	Defect Type	Hierarchy	Dimensions Criteria		CSSW National Minimum Standard		
			Depth/Height	Extent	Hierarchy	Depth/Height	Extent
<b>Carriageways</b>	Pothole impacting vulnerable users, e.g., pelican crossings or bus stops etc	All categories (urban).	>20mm	>150mm	CHSR, CH1 and CH2.	>50mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm
	Pothole	CHSR (urban and rural), CH1 (urban and rural), CH2 (urban and rural), CH3 (urban).	>40mm	>150mm			
	Pothole	CH3 (rural), CH4 (urban and rural).	>60mm	>150mm	CH3, CH4 and CH5.	>75mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm.
	Trip or other abrupt level differences	CHSR (urban and rural), CH1 (urban and rural), CH2 (urban and rural), CH3 (urban).	>40mm	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Trip or other abrupt level differences	All categories (urban and rural).	>60mm	N/A			





	Slippery surface	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Standing water	CHSR (rural), CH1 (rural), CH2 (rural), CH4 (rural).	>20mm	>20% of lane	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Mandatory signs/white lines which are missing, broken, eroded and/or faded.	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Warning signs completely unserviceable	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Major debris or spillage	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Serious leaf fall	CHSR (rural) and CH1 (rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Damaged and/or exposed electrical wiring	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Missing or defective barrier	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Unstable embankments or cuttings	CHSR (urban), CH1 (urban), CH2 (urban).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Unstable trees or broken branches	All categories (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>



	Sight line obscured by trees and/or shrubs	CHSR (urban), CH1 (urban), CH2 (urban).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Broken or missing ironwork	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Damaged or loose roadstuds	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
<b>Footways</b>	Pothole	FH1 (urban and rural)	>20mm	>75mm	All categories	>40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm.
		All categories (urban and rural)	>40mm	>75mm			
	Gap or crack	FH1 (urban and rural)	>20mm	>20mm	All categories	>40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm.
	Gap or crack	All categories (urban and rural)	>40mm	>40mm			
	Trip and other abrupt level difference	FH1 (urban and rural)	>20mm	N/A	All categories	>40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm
	Trip and other abrupt level difference	All categories (urban and rural)	>40mm	N/A			



Slippery surface	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Major debris or spillage	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Damaged or exposed electrical wiring	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Missing or defective barrier	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Unstable embankments or cuttings	FH1 (urban and rural), FH2 (urban and rural), and FH3 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Unstable trees and broken branches	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
Broken or missing ironwork	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>



Maintenance Defects, High (Category 2.1 response): 1 month (CHSR, CH1 and CH2) and 3 months (CH3 and CH4).

Asset Type	Defect Type	Hierarchy	Dimensions Criteria		CSSW National Minimum Standard		
			Depth/Height	Extent	Hierarchy	Depth/Height	Extent
<b>Carriageways</b>	Pothole	CHSR (urban and rural), CH1 (urban and rural), and CH2.	>20mm	>150mm	CHSR, CH1 and CH2	>40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm.
	Pothole	CH3 (rural) and CH4 (urban and rural)	>40mm	>150mm	CH3, CH4 and CH5	>50mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 150mm.
	Trip or other abrupt level differences	CHSR (urban and rural), CH1 (urban and rural), CH2 (urban and rural)	>20mm	N/A			
	Trip or other abrupt level differences	CH3 (rural) and CH4 (urban and rural).	>40mm	N/A			



	Serious leaf fall	CHSR (urban), CH1 (urban), CH2 (urban and rural), CH3 (urban and rural), CH4 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Unstable embankments or cuttings	CHSR (rural), CH1 (rural), CH2 (rural), CH3 (urban and rural), CH4 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Sight-lines obscured by trees and shrubs	CHSR (rural), CH1 (rural), CH3 (rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Missing roads studs and/or white-lines	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
<b>Footway</b>	Pothole	FH2 (urban and rural), FH3 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A	All categories	25mm - 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm.
	Trip or other abrupt level differences	FH2 (urban and rural), FH3 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A	All categories	25mm - 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm.



	Gap	FH2 (urban and rural), FH3 (urban and rural).	>20mm	>20mm	All categories	25mm - 40mm	Maximum horizontal dimension greater than 75mm.
	Standing water	FH1 (urban and rural)	>20mm	>20mm	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Serious leaf fall	FH1 (urban and rural), FH2 (urban and rural), FH3 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		
	Unstable embankments or cuttings	FH4 (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A	<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>		



**Maintenance Defects, Low (Category 2 response): Response at the discretion of the inspector.**

Asset Type	Defect Type	Hierarchy	Dimensions Criteria		CSSW National Minimum Standard			
			Depth/Height	Extent	Hierarchy	Depth/Height	Extent	
Carriageways	Pothole	CH4 (urban and rural), CH5 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A				
	Trip or other abrupt level difference	CH4 (urban and rural), CH5 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A				
	Standing water	CH5 (urban and rural).	>20mm	>20mm				
	Information signs completely unserviceable	All categories (urban and rural)	N/A	N/A				
	Sightlines obscured by trees and/or shrubs.	CH4 (urban and rural), CH5 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A				
Footways	Pothole	FH4 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A				
	Trip or other abrupt level difference	FH4 (urban and rural).	>20mm	N/A				
	Standing water	FH2 (urban and rural), FH3 (urban and rural), FH4 (urban and rural).	>20mm	>20mm				<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>
	Serious leaf falls	FH4 (urban and rural).	N/A	N/A				<i>No CSSW minimum standard.</i>

### Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

<b>Date:</b>	11 July 2023
<b>Title of Item:</b>	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Elin Walker-Jones
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Marian Parry Hughes, Head of Children and Supporting Families Service.

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#### THE DECISION SOUGHT

To accept and note the information in the report.

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#### THE REASON WHY A DECISION IS NEEDED

In order to ensure effective performance management

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on developments in the fields within my remit as Cabinet Member for Children and Supporting Families. This includes outlining the latest developments to date in 2023-24 against the pledges within the Gwynedd Council Plan; issues and the progress of performance measures; and the latest on the savings and efficiency schemes.
- 1.2 I look forward to working with the department and members of the Scrutiny Committee during the coming year, to ensure that we do the best we can to put the people of Gwynedd at the heart of our children's and family support services.
- 1.3 The priority projects featured in the Council Plan are progressing well, which are the Autism Plan and the Developing Small Groups Home.

#### 2 GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN'S PROJECTS

- 2.1 Below, I outline the progress that has been made to date against the Department's priority projects. These priorities address the department's main risks. In general, I feel that both



priority projects are currently moving in the right direction against the pledges that we have made in the Council Plan.

## 2.2 Small Group Homes

We want to improve the experiences of children with complex needs that are in our but who currently have to leave the county or Wales in order to receive suitable places to live and be cared for. We will develop registered residential homes for small groups of children which will allow them to receive care in Gwynedd, attend local schools, and participate fully in the life of their communities. So far we have collaborated with the Property Department to identify suitable buildings for consideration, appoint a Project Manager through “Cynllun Yfory” and have started to work on the business case for securing the financial investment needed to buy and adapt the building to be a suitable and safe home.

## 2.3 Autism Plan

Autistic children, young people and adults find it difficult to get the specialist support they need. We will therefore improve our provision and make it easier for individuals and their families to transfer between different services. The plan is now in its second year, and we have now developed a comprehensive training programme for staff from varying services who come into contact with autistic individuals. We have also collaborated with the North Wales Autism Service to ensure that there is a series of information events and activities for families in various locations across the county. We have also created new jobs specifically to focus on autism and have been successful in recruiting a Practitioner and Social Worker.

## **3. PERFORMANCE AND MEASURES**

- 3.1 I wish to draw your attention to the following matters, which are unrelated to the Priority Projects, but are being addressed by the department because they are affecting the performance of services and/or causing us concern.
- 3.2 Workforce Capacity – The workforce situation remains a matter of serious concern. Through the Workforce Planning Priority Project and the support of We Care Wales we have started to undertake targeted recruitment campaigns.
- 3.3 Level and type of support - The department continues to see that the nature of the cases being supported shows that children's needs are complex, intensifying, and that they require a very comprehensive and specialist package of support and care.
- 3.4 The numbers coming into contact with us for Information, Advice or Assistance continue to be much higher than prior to the pandemic. 1102 contacted us during April and May 2023. We believe that this demand continues to be driven by the impacts of the pandemic, but also is partly driven by the impact of the ongoing cost of living crisis, putting unmanageable stresses on families.
- 3.5 We have been participating and supporting the national fostering campaign Maethu Cymru to attract people to think about fostering. These campaigns are one of the ways we

are trying to address and ensure enough care placements locally for children, should they need to come to care.

- 3.6 In terms of the department's measures, I am generally happy with their performance. None of the measures are currently a matter of concern but I will continue to work with the Head of Department via our monthly performance meetings to review and scrutinise their performance.

#### **4 FINANCIAL POSITION / SAVINGS**

- 4.1 The department has a £44,010 Savings Targets for 2023-24. These savings have been achieved.
- 4.3 For 2023/24, as part of the bidding process, the Department has received £130,000 as a one-off bid to continue to employ 3 social care practitioners. Further work on job evaluations and staffing structure needs to be completed during the year relating to these posts.

#### **5 Views of the Statutory Officers:**

##### **i. The Monitoring Officer:**

No observations to add in relation to propriety

##### **ii. Head of Finance:**

I am satisfied that the report presents a fair reflection of the financial position of the Children and Supporting Families Department.

##### **a. Views of the Local Member:**

- i. Not a local matter.

##### **b. Results of Any Consultation:**

- i. None to note.

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## **Appendices**

## Report to Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet meeting

<b>Date:</b>	11/07/2023
<b>Item title:</b>	Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
<b>Cabinet member:</b>	Cllr Dilwyn Morgan
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Aled Davies, Head of Adults, Health and Wellbeing

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### DECISION SOUGHT

To accept and note the information in the report.

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### REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

In order to ensure effective performance management.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on what has taken place in the areas within my remit as Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing. This will include outlining the latest developments against pledges within the 2018-2023 Gwynedd Council Plan; the progress of performance measures; and the latest on the department's financial situation.
- 1.2 I would remind you that all issues were discussed at a meeting between myself, the Corporate Director and representation from the Department of Adults, Health and Wellbeing. It should be noted it was the information for March and April 2023 that was scrutinised at that May meeting and therefore it is very soon to identify any trends for this year but I have outlined the areas that are to be congratulated or of concern to me at this time.

## 2 GWYNEDD COUNCIL PLAN PROJECTS 2023-28

- 2.1 Below is a brief project-by-project update to highlight the main areas that have seen progress or are of concern so far but it should be noted that I am not referring to every single workflow as the department's projects are very broad.

### Preventive Support Locally

- 2.2.1 The Dolfeurig planning application has been submitted to the National Park and an engagement activity has been carried out on the plans with a generally very positive response from service users and their families, staff and residents of the area.
- 2.2.2 A manager-level resource is now in place to lead the formulation of a communication and engagement plan for the field to ensure we involve our communities effectively in service

development and improve the accessibility of publicly available information. Work has been carried out to revamp, update and simplify the department's website pages over the past few months and the new version will go live in early September. There will then be permanent work to keep it up to date and continuously improved.

- 2.2.3 Work has now started towards gaining 'age friendly' accreditation following the support of the Cabinet, and the next step will be to put a work programme in place.

### **Byw'n Annibynno!**

- 2.3.1 In relation to Extra Care Housing, construction at Pwllheli has been significantly delayed and the department is working with the developer to ensure clarity on the timetable and on the model of care that will be in place. I have requested a very early meeting with Adra to discuss further.
- 2.3.2 I am delighted to report good progress on our work to expand suitable accommodation options for individuals with Learning Disabilities, with the hope to complete bungalow conversion works at Groeslon very soon and plans in place for a bungalow in Penrhyndeudraeth and in Harlech. The department is also working with partners for housing development and support in other areas of Llŷn and Meirionnydd.
- 2.3.3 Preparation for digital transformation by 2025 is well underway with the service having started piloting specific alternative technology for the first time in Gwynedd. They've also been testing telecare equipment to see what digital equipment we will commission and make available to Gwynedd residents by 2025.
- 2.3.4 I also note good progress in relation to the work to remodel our direct payments service. Sessions have been held with other councils to discuss what works for them and the work of evaluating the possible options for us is ongoing. A recommendation on the way forward is expected very soon.

### **Quality Specialist Care**

- 2.4.1 Unfortunately, the situation with not being able to open a dementia unit in Llan Ffestiniog continues due to recruitment problems. There are also further delays in the opening of our new dementia provision in Bangor and Barmouth as a result of slow construction work. I have asked for an early meeting with the Department of Housing and Property to understand the barriers.
- 2.4.2 We continue to try to understand the true cost of care and have now initiated discussions with some residential and nursing homes with a view to commissioning a block of beds. This will be a new commissioning regime in Gwynedd if successful, and will boost the supply of available beds in the county, with an emphasis on welyau nursing.
- 2.4.3 A strategic business case has now been made to the Welsh Government to receive confirmation of their contribution to the scheme to develop nursing beds in conjunction with the Health Board at the Penrhos site near Pwllheli.
- 2.4.4 In relation to undertaking a review of our mental health service delivery model, the department has embarked on engagement with staff and the Health Board to move forward to develop more detailed proposals. See a report that went to the Care Scrutiny Committee on 22/06/23 for more details.

2.4.5 Recruitment into the care and retention field continues to be extremely challenging, and the shortage is leading to the department's inability to meet all demands for care. The department has now acted on the results of reviewing and re-evaluating care workforce jobs and the majority of staff should have seen the change in their pay by now. The department continues to contribute to the corporate project but works on care-specific campaigns as well; including further promoting the recruitment video and installing relevant branding on 5 of the department's new electric fleet cars. The Director of Social Services also leads a task and finish group to look at professional salary options in the field.

### 3. PERFORMANCE AND MEASURES

3.1 I am very pleased with the progress that has been made by the department since the last time I reported in relation to developing measures and arrangements to report on their performance in a way that allows us to see the performance clearly and over time. There are many measures that we can report on but to try to keep concise, I will refer only to those that are of concern or show significant progress.

3.2 Within the **Older People, Physical and Sensory Disabilities Service** the department has a significant waiting list for receiving occupational therapy assessment with 42 individuals having been on the waiting list for more than 90 days at the end of April 2023. The cases are prioritised based on risk assessment. Two full-time occupational therapist positions remain vacant but the department has increased the resource of Social Work Practitioners in the short term to support the reduction of the list, and are looking at options to upskill these members of staff to be able to support with more cases into the future. I'll update you in my next report.

3.3 I am delighted to note that we have seen a fall in the percentage of unmet **home care** hours in April 2023 after some previously worrying months. The percentage fell from 15.6% in March to 12.1% in April. The waiting list remains high with 120 individuals waiting for new home care packages at the end of April 2023 (compared to 141 at the end of March) but it is a step in the right direction and I sincerely hope that the figures continue to fall as the new home care model takes root.

3.4 There has been a decline in the number of cases where **adult safeguarding** enquiries have been completed within the statutory 7 working days (down to 87.2% in April compared to 96.8% in March). I have discussed the reasons with the department and am aware that this coincides with a period of leave and illness within the safeguarding team and this highlights the impact of a lack of capacity within the teams. Although the enquiries have not been completed within 7 days, I have received assurances that the social work teams are responding to these queries during such periods and working with our partners to ensure that a safeguarding plan is in place and the percentage of cases where the risk has been managed remains very consistent (100% in April 2023).

3.5 The number of individuals awaiting a **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards** assessment is consistently concerning to me with the figure at 278 in May this year. The number on the waiting list means the service needs to prioritise assessments and deal with cases for emergency authorisation and complex cases. The situation is far from ideal and the department is reliant on grant money to undertake the work due to a lack of resource. The Government have now announced that the new arrangements that were in place will not come into force as we expected and this causes further concerns in terms of the capacity

and sustainability of the service as it stands. The department has confirmed that they will scrutinise their arrangements to ensure their processes are as efficient as possible.

- 3.6 Our occupancy rate for our internal **residential homes** remains concerning to me (80% in April 2023). I have received clarification from the department that this figure includes beds, many of which are dementia beds, which are currently unable to be used as a result of ongoing work on the homes. More on this is in paragraph 2.3.1.

#### **4. FINANCIAL SITUATION**

- 4.1 Based on the 2022/23 accounts, the Department overspent by £3.9 million. A number of factors contribute to this overspending, including a failure to realise historic savings plans (around £900k), overspending within the in-house Home Care Service, and the additional fees we have to pay to private rowand n yrsio homes in order to commission suitable placements within the county.

- 4.2 The first funding review of the year 2023/24 will take place during August 2023, and I have concerns about the current situation and the challenge we face. Dran is aware that the financial performance of 2022/23 has been of significant concern to me, and that the outlook for 2023/24 remains extremely challenging. Discussions have started between myself and some of the teams to challenge what is behind elements of the overspending, and it will be necessary to continue to scrutinise other elements and consider how we can address them. Regular meetings have been arranged by the department to discuss the savings plans in particular, including representation from the Department of Finance. These meetings will continue so we can come to a decision soon ond which of the savings plans are going to be greeted, and which ones are now unrealistic and need to be re-planned.

- 4.3 Significant one-off grants were received from the Government during 2021/22 and in the years before. Unfortunately, some of these grants were not abdicated during 2022/23, and this has highlighted the true scale of the task ahead of us without further financial support.

- 4.4 It is encouraging that a new RIF (Regional Integration Fund) grant, which is for investment to deliver services in different ways in collaboration with the Health Board and other partners, is getting itcommitted for 3-5 years. I would like to take the opportunity to thank our partners for their ideas and collaboration in planning to improve and sustain the sector. It is key that additional resources to the sector are provided on a permanent/long-term basis so that some of the changes that are really needed in the field can be funded. We as a Council will continue to emphasise to the Welsh Government the need for sustained investment in the sector.

- 4.5 In my next report, I will update you on the exact steps being taken to address overspending, and to greet historical savings, and provide a timeframe for doing so.

#### **5. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

Nothing to note.

##### **5.1 Opinion of the Statutory Officers:**

###### **i. The Monitoring Officer:**

No comments to add from a proprietary perspective

ii. **Head of Finance:**

I can confirm that the financial information contained in the report is consistent with the contents of the 2022/23 Revenue Out-turn report that was presented to the Cabinet on 13 June.

5.2 **Local Member's Views:**

Not a local issue.

5.3 **Outcome of any consultation:**

Nothing to note.