



Gwynedd Council Plan

2018 - 2023

2021/22 Review





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Or visit our website – www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/Council/Plan

COUNCIL LEADER'S FOREWORD

The Foreword will be included in the Plan to be submitted to the Council meeting on 4 March 2021.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

The Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23 was adopted by the Council in March 2018 (and reviewed annually following that). It was produced based on evidence within the well-being assessment conducted by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, and feedback from engagement sessions held with communities, elected members, staff and partners.

In accordance with the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act)**, the Council has adopted well-being objectives, which simply summarise the Council's ambition to see every community in Gwynedd thriving. This means that Gwynedd's residents:

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable them to do what they want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment

These objectives have previously been published in our [well-being statement](#), which also explains how they contribute to the national well-being goals set by Welsh Government in the Act. This Plan notes how the Council's work contributes to the realisation of our ambition through a combination of the day-to-day work of our departments and specific projects that have been identified in order to address the areas that need the most effort to develop. These projects have been noted under Improvement Priorities. Each of the Improvement Priorities contribute to several of our well-being objectives, and the plan notes which ones under each project.

As part of this action we will also give appropriate consideration to the sustainable development principle by considering the long-term, prevention, integration, collaborative working and being inclusive of people of all ages. We will do this by adopting the "Ffordd Gwynedd" approach of working, which focuses on placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do. The plan refers to several examples of where we are working preventatively, where we involve the people of Gwynedd by consulting and working with our communities and where we consider future needs. There are also examples of where we collaborate and work in integration to achieve what is important to the people of Gwynedd – for example through our work as a member of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, or internally through our programme boards such as the Supporting People Board.

Although steps have already been taken to show how we contribute to the principles of the Act, we recognise that further work is needed to evidence this and the impact on the residents of Gwynedd. Consequently, we intend to strengthen our arrangements to challenge and report on performance in order to highlight our contribution to the principles of the Act.

We have reviewed the content of the Plan over the past months in order to ensure that we continue to do the things that matter to the people of Gwynedd and to examine the social, economic, environmental and policy issues which influence the Council, and which are likely to have an impact on the people of Gwynedd in the future. Of course, there are some significant changes in the needs

of our communities following the Covid-19 emergency and the lives of the people of Gwynedd look quite different when compared with the last time we reviewed this scheme.

As a Council, we have therefore reviewed the contents of the plan and the priorities previously set by us. The 2021-22 review of Gwynedd Council's Plan 2018-2023 includes a continuation of schemes already in the plan, as well as a collection of new priorities; many of which have arisen directly as a result of the Covid-19 emergency, and others that have arisen indirectly as different needs were brought to the surface as a result of the emergency and the living conditions and restrictions that came with it. Many of the areas included within some of the projects, for example 'The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates' and 'Native Welsh Place Names', have of course been being addressed as part of the council's work for some years. However, specific challenges that have arisen as a result of the Covid-19 emergency have increasingly highlighted the problems, and so some things that were already in place are now included among the plan's main priorities.

This version of the Plan, the 'Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023: 2021/22 Review', will supersede the current version. Below is an attempt to summarise the main adaptations made following the review:

The following projects have been added:

- **Regeneration: creating regeneration plans for our areas**
- **The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People**
- **Digital Learning Strategy**
- **The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates**
- **Native Welsh Place Names**
- **A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the future**
- **Keeping Families Together Strategy**
- **Ensuring specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs**
- **Ensuring that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive**
- **Public Protection Capacity**
- **Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively**
- **Realising Savings**
- **Clean and Tidy Communities**
- **Strengthening Communication and Engagement**

In addition, the scope or content of the following projects has changed:

- **Benefiting from Tourism** has now been extended and re-named **Tourism – creating a Sustainable Tourism Plan**
- The scope of the **Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper** project has been extended as a result of the need for additional support for businesses following the challenges of the Covid-19 crisis
- **Post-16 Provision, Bangor Catchment Area, Trefferthyr Catchment Area (Cricieth), Meirionnydd Strategic Collaboration** has been split into four individual projects, namely:
 - Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon
 - Bangor Catchment Area
 - Cricieth Catchment Area and

- Meirionnydd Collaboration
- The scope of the **Supporting People's Well-being** project has been extended in light of different needs emerging in our communities during the Covid-19 crisis
- The scope of the **More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the World of Work** project has been extended as a result of increased unemployment following the Covid-19 crisis
- The **'Homes for the People of Gwynedd' Strategy 2019-24** has been changed to focus on three additional projects that are covered by the strategy, namely:
 - **A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin action;**
 - **Easy and clear access enquiry services and advice on housing matters: Establish 'one front door' and helpdesk for the public to help them with housing problems; and**
 - **Letting social housing to local people: Create a new allocation policy for the county which will give greater priority to local people.**
- The scope of the project titled **Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People** has been changed because of the need take into account the impact of lockdown on Welsh learners' skills and confidence
- The **Community Resilience** project has been incorporated as part of the **Supporting People's Well-being** project
- The scope of the **Apprenticeships Scheme** has been extended and re-named **Planning the Workforce**
- The project titled **Gwynedd Businesses to use the Welsh Language** is now being addressed as part of the day-to-day work of the Corporate Support and Economy and Community Departments.

The plan also includes information about our achievements in response to matters raised as Local Priorities by Councillors back in the autumn of 2017. Any changes to these priorities, along with any action plans intended for the future, are addressed within the relevant Departmental Plan.

The precarious financial position of Wales and Britain sets us as a Council a significant challenge as we plan our services for the future. Inadequate increases in Government grant mean that continuing to provide a number of services is difficult. We must, therefore, be creative and consider all possible ways of providing the services that the people of Gwynedd deserve. We make it clear however that any change will be based on the need to see all communities in Gwynedd thrive and to improve the well-being of our residents for the future.

Since the original plan was adopted, the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board adopted its [Well-being Plan](#) during the spring of 2018. The well-being goals and the priorities highlighted within the Well-being Plan are consistent with the ones in the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023. The Council Plan focuses on the day to day services and the matters that the Council has prioritised while the Well-being Plan will focus on the fields where it is felt that public organisations could make more of a difference to the well-being of the people of the area by working together.

Well-being Objectives

Our vision is for every community in Gwynedd to prosper, and for us as people to...

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in quality homes within our communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible

Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment

We will achieve this by pioneering innovative ways of working, whilst focusing on...

Creating a viable and prosperous economy

Every pupil having the opportunity to reach his or her potential

Reducing inequality within the county

Ensuring access to suitable housing

Assisting people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh

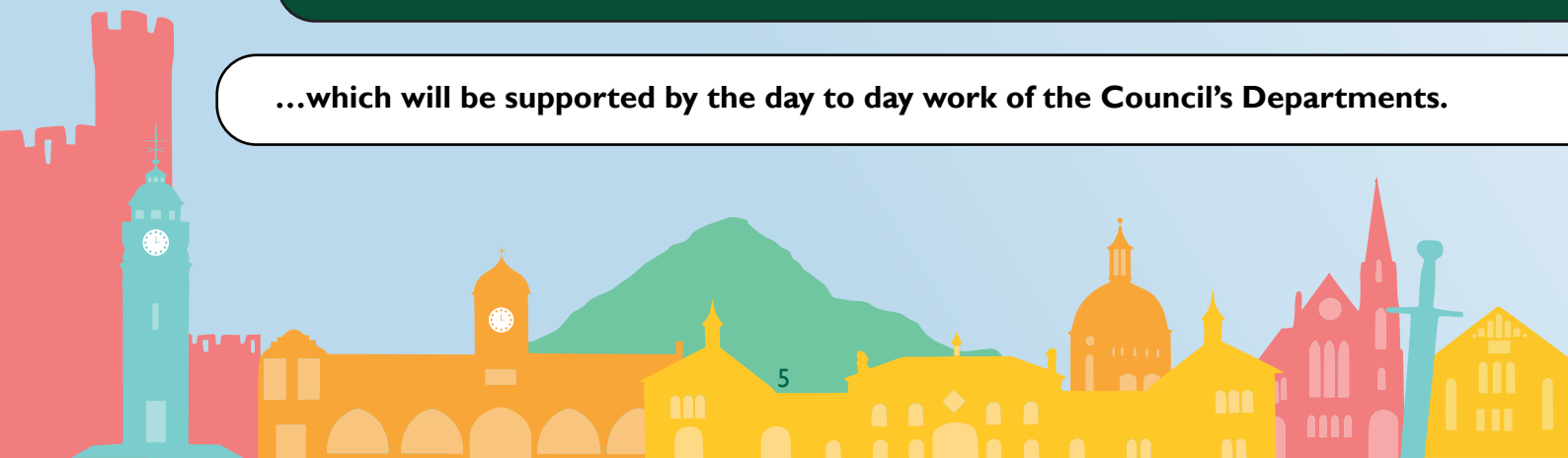
Assisting people who need help to live their lives as they wish

Putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do

Responding to the climate change emergency

...which will be supported by the day to day work of the Council's Departments.

Improvement Priorities



Improvement Priorities

Our Improvement Priorities are the areas we believe we need to focus on in order to increase or improve the current situation. Below, you will find descriptions of the 8 Improvement Priorities, followed by the individual projects that will contribute to each of them.

There are some priority projects where it will be absolutely necessary for us to deliver them, and of course, the Council intends to deliver all of the projects within this plan and commits to putting every effort into doing so. However, it should be noted that the Covid-19 crisis, as we have seen since March 2020, is causing difficulties that can limit our ability to achieve fully on some things. We will report on any such difficulties in our next review of this scheme and in relevant performance reports.

Improvement Priority I Create a viable and prosperous economy

Ensuring that there are suitable jobs available in the county that pay salaries that enable people to support themselves and their families is the foundation to allowing the people of Gwynedd to thrive.

How will we achieve this?

I. North Wales Growth Vision Economy and Community Department

A lack of growth is a weakness in the economy of the whole of north Wales, and particularly the north-west. In an attempt to overturn the situation, the six counties in north Wales, and other stakeholders such as education institutions in the region and the private sector, came together to establish the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

The Board's main scheme is the 'North Wales Growth Deal' and in December 2020 an agreement was signed between the Ambition Board, the Welsh Government and UK Government, which paves the way to delivering the Growth Deal. The bid will lead to an investment of £945m in the north Wales region over the next 15 years and create up to 4,000 jobs across north Wales.

As a member of the Ambition Board, our aim as a Council is to ensure that the people and businesses of Gwynedd maximise the benefits from this financial investment, especially at a time when there will be a need to respond to the side-effects of Brexit.

In future, we will continue to contribute to the Ambition Board's work programme, including improving the availability of superfast broadband, developing the Trawsfynydd Power Station site, and developing a Rural Innovation Hub in Glynllifon. We will also contribute to the development of the North Wales Economic Framework, which is being prepared by Welsh Government to identify the main regional investment programmes in the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

2. Keeping the Benefit Local

Corporate Support Department

The Council is responsible for procuring, or purchasing, a number of goods and services and is eager to try to ensure that local businesses can compete for and win these contracts in order to ensure that as much of the Council's expenditure as possible **remains local**.

The local market cannot always respond to opportunities due to restrictions in terms of size or other existing barriers. This then leads to businesses losing the desire and ability to compete for work, and consequently, it is not possible to maximise the Council expenditure that is kept locally.

We are seeking to support local businesses with the changes to procurement rules as a result of leaving the European Union, taking advantage of the opportunities to procure locally.

We will address the following fields:

1. Completing a project in order to assess the practicality of delivering a '**Social Value Portal**' or similar to Gwynedd, i.e. sharing the method of assessing tenders currently being set by measuring Price and Quality to one that measures Price, Quality and Local Value.
2. Plans to **develop the market ability** to win the Council's procurement contracts - Respond to the Well-being Act's questions in tenders, support to gain health and safety accreditations.
3. Assess opportunities to award tenders to local companies as a result of **Brexit** and the freedom to act outside European procurement regulations.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh society

3. Creating High Value Jobs (£28,500 + salary)

Economy and Community Department

Salaries in Gwynedd are among the lowest anywhere in Britain. Weekly pay in the County was the lowest in Wales in 2020 (£500 on average) and the low pay is at its worst in our rural communities (£418 - the lowest in Britain). Low salaries will inevitably lead to higher levels of poverty and rural depopulation, which in turn affects our communities, the future of our young people, and the Welsh language as a healthy community language.

The Creating High Value Jobs project has already taken steps to improve the situation, securing European funding to realise a plan to develop space for businesses to locate at Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr, implement a plan to increase the number of school pupils who study the subjects

desired by businesses within well-paid sectors and have influenced the decision to continue with the decommissioning work on the Trawsfynydd Power Station site.

In future, we will continue with these schemes, and we will also lead on other schemes such as supporting the development of the creative and digital industries sector, supporting the development of the health and medical sector and develop a scheme by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to prepare the Trawsfynydd Power Station Site to produce low-carbon energy and medical isotopes in the future. Such schemes will ensure the continuation of high-value local jobs.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society

4. Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig Economy and Community Department

The nature of our rural economy means that 79% of Gwynedd businesses do not employ more than one person and there are too many jobs within sectors that do not pay well. This leads to threats in terms of the sustainability of our rural communities with these challenges having increased as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and Brexit.

The Council is seeking to strengthen the foundation of the rural economy by encouraging local enterprises to develop, create and maintain jobs across Gwynedd. A financial package has been identified via Europe to implement the Rural Development Programme in the area, which includes a package of projects to promote enterprise.

Ensuring digital connectivity for our rural communities, and that the workforce and rural businesses have the skills to take advantage of them are matters that have already received attention. We have held a pilot scheme to provide public Wi-Fi in eight rural towns, and to increase access to computer equipment. We are also a part of the ARFOR programme, a Welsh Government investment to create more and better jobs in areas in west Wales where a high percentage of the population speaks Welsh.

In the future, we will continue to extend the digital provision in communities and will work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the private sector to establish a rural innovation hub in Glynllifon, giving particular attention to the food and drink sector, and we will work to develop the foundation economy and support our rural businesses to adapt and develop as a result of Covid-19 and Brexit.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society

5. Promoting Town Centres **Economy and Community Department**

Lively town centres are able to make substantial contributions to the economic and social success of local areas and offer a broad range of services to our communities.

However, the "high street" areas of our town centres are currently facing substantial challenges with a number of national chain stores closing and trading being restricted as a result of Covid-19. There is a need to promote and support the development of town centres to ensure that they are able to adapt and thrive in the future; to maintain and create employment, provide a broad range of goods and services required by residents and visitors and provide new residential units.

We have already been collaborating with businesses in Bangor and Caernarfon to promote the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and to attract resources from Welsh Government's Regional Regeneration Programme. We were successful in establishing a loans scheme for the upgrading of redundant buildings in the areas of Caernarfon, Bangor, Bethesda and Penygroes and the scheme will extend to all Gwynedd towns in 2021.

During 2020, a cross-departmental group was established to develop a programme of improvements and short-term measures in response to the Covid-19 crisis. In future, we will continue with this work, and will prepare plans for 13 catchment areas in Gwynedd, based on what matters to the residents within these communities.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh society

6. Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage **Economy and Community Department**

During 2020, a full nomination from Gwynedd was presented to the UK Government and to UNESCO for a World Heritage Site designation for the Slate Landscapes of North-West Wales. The nomination gives us an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the traditional slate industry on an international platform, and to celebrate and protect the Welsh culture associated with those areas.

We have already used the World Heritage Site nomination as a tool to regenerate our slate communities and to increase the value of the tourist industry. £1m of additional resources have been attracted to the county through the Heritage Fund, Welsh Government, the European Union and Snowdonia National Park through the LleCHI project.

In future, we will collaborate with the slate communities, via the LleCHI project, to create a programme of regeneration activities in these areas that will improve the appearance and look of communities, improve the quality of the visitors' experience, and will lead to an increase in residents' ownership of their heritage, language and culture.

The World Heritage Committee will meet in June / July 2021 and we will continue to engage and collaborate with communities, landowners, businesses and partners to ensure that we are ready to take advantage of the opportunities that will come as a result of the designation, in the interests of the people of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh Society

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

7. Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper Economy and Community Department

It is currently an uncertain time for businesses as a result of Covid-19 and Brexit and changes in trading and competition arrangements. Gwynedd Council is determined to help local enterprises to adapt and respond to the challenge and we have already made an unprecedented effort to support local businesses by providing financial aid, advice and support.

The county's businesses work with many Council Departments and they receive a service from them, including rates, planning, trading standards, building control and procurement. We have already consulted with the county's businesses to see whether the assistance and support they receive from the Council is the best it can be.

We have already supported and collaborated with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's Programme Office on a package of Growth Deal projects in order to create opportunities for businesses in Gwynedd's economy in the future. In addition, we have collaborated with the Corporate Support Department team to develop a programme to promote buying locally, and have reviewed the need for space by businesses (Pre Covid-19)

In the future, we will continue to prioritise resources and efforts to support our local businesses, ensuring that all parts of the Council consider how they can offer assistance to support businesses. We will also encourage Gwynedd businesses to make the most of the support available from others, and to powerfully convey the needs of Gwynedd businesses when discussing with our partners, in particular in light of the pandemic and Brexit.

We will also implement:

- High Value and Quality Jobs Programme in order to safeguard and create jobs on the sites of Trawsfynydd, Llanbedr and key sectors which create quality jobs across Gwynedd.
- Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig and Arfor Programmes in order to encourage the small businesses in the foundation economy to innovate and thrive.
- Improving Business for All Programme across Gwynedd Council services.
- Business Communication Programme in order to engage with businesses and share information.

In addition, we will implement Business Support Packages on behalf of Welsh Government in order to offer financial assistance to Gwynedd businesses in response to Covid-19 trading restrictions.

In future, we will need to evaluate the Council Plan's priority programmes in order to develop the economy and support businesses and that as a side-effect of Covid-19 and Brexit. We will also need to review the Council's role in the field with partners locally and regionally and agree on work priorities for the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

8. Tourism - creating a sustainable tourism plan **Economy and Community Department**

We have concerns that the people of Gwynedd do not benefit as much as they should from tourism and the Covid-19 crisis has underlined how the negative impacts of the industry can sometimes outweigh the advantages.

Work has been done to understand the change in tourism trends over the years and identify the benefits to Gwynedd, along with the risks, including the impact on the communities, language and culture of the area and second homes.

Over the past year, work has been done to draw up sustainable tourism principles for Gwynedd, which will form the basis of a future management plan.

We will complete the work of establishing a vision and principles for tourism in the future and will develop the Gwynedd Visitor Economy Management Plan in cooperation with communities and the sector in order to ensure the best benefits for the people of Gwynedd and tourists. The Plan will set a direction for policies and activities across the Council's departments in the future, but it will also acknowledge the long-term need to respond to the impact of Covid-19.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh Society

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

9. Regeneration: Creating regeneration plans for our areas **Economy and Community Department**

There is a risk that every service implements its own programmes in accordance with grant guidelines, but possibly does not respond to the actual needs and regeneration opportunities of Gwynedd. We have established the Regeneration Board with the intention of developing a Regeneration Plan for the County's communities. The Programme will incorporate cross-departmental activities, along with the Council Plan's priorities.

We will establish a new Regeneration Framework and develop 13 Regeneration Plans for the Gwynedd areas.

We will consult with stakeholders in order to understand how communities want to see their areas develop in the next 10-15 years, and identify local priorities. These schemes will give particular attention to the needs of town centres and the future of the 'high street' across Gwynedd over the coming years.

We will ensure that activities across the Council's Departments will contribute to the development and implementation of these Regeneration Schemes.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
Live in a natural Welsh Society

Improvement Priority 2

Every pupil is given the opportunity to achieve their potential

If we are to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise, it is crucial that Gwynedd has a sustainable quality education system in place, which gives our residents the skills to take advantage of those opportunities.

How will we achieve this?

1. Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon Education Department

The variety in the quality of the education and experiences of learners across the post-16 education system in Arfon affects outcomes and learning pathways.

The Cabinet has already given permission to commence engagement with stakeholders to discuss the vision for post-16 education in Arfon. The informal engagement was held during the Autumn Term 2020.

In 2020/21, we will use the conclusions of the engagement with stakeholders to proceed to establish draft proposals that will lead to proposing a favoured option to the Cabinet in the autumn.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh Society

2. Bangor Catchment Area Education Department

The children's learning environment is unsuitable as a number of primary schools in Bangor (and specifically in the Penrhosgarnedd area) are full or over-full.

The work of constructing a new school for Ysgol y Garnedd that will have a capacity to accommodate up to 420 learners will be completed by November 2020. During 2021/22, we will complete the work of building an extension and ensure community care on the Ysgol y Faenol site in Penrhosgarnedd with capacity to accommodate 315 learners.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh Society

3. Cricieth Catchment Area

Education Department

The condition of the building and the current learning environment of Ysgol Treferythyr in Cricieth is poor, which affects the learners' experience. We will therefore build the new school in Cricieth in order to improve the learning environment and ensure the best resources for the learners to thrive.

In 2021/22, as a result of the process of publishing a statutory notice, we will proceed to engage on the plans, and ensure planning permission and the appointment of contractors.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh Society

4. Meirionnydd Collaboration

Education Department

There is a risk that matters relating to the current procedure affects the experiences of Meirionnydd learners, e.g. the Meirionnydd secondary schools find it difficult to recruit teachers, middle managers and leaders. Unless there will be a solution to the situation, the impact on the resilience of the education system and leadership conditions in the area will continue.

Work has been commissioned to conduct research to identify creative solutions that will lead to collaboration between the primary schools of Meirionnydd in order to ensure that the quality of the education is consistently good and sustainable for the future.

In 2021/22, we will establish an amended procedure jointly with Chairs, Vice-chairs and Heads in Meirionnydd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh Society

5. Transforming the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

Education Department

There is a risk that we will be unable to make suitable provision for each pupil with Additional Learning Needs because no resources were received from the Government to meet the increase in the need for statutory provision (ALN and Tribunal Act, 2018).

It is also possible that children and young people will not have the correct access to specialist staff (e.g. bilingual Educational Psychologists, Sensory Teachers) and key roles in terms of statutory jobs within the code (Early Years Lead Officer, ALN Coordinator), due to the combination of recruitment and funding difficulties and an increased workload.

During 2021/22, we will establish:

- Continue to prepare for the legislative change, focusing on the early years, post-16, the partnership with parents and agencies, and the most suitable funding method for the legislative requirement
- Processes and Provisions in the Early Years, this includes mapping the demand in workload (e.g. the number of children requiring specialist attention/support)
- Processes and Provisions in the post-16 sector - close collaboration with the Further Education colleges
- Funding method - review the funding method in order to obtain a model that provides better stability in terms of provision
- National discussions - continue to transfer the message regarding concerns about the training and recruitment of specialist staff.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

6. The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People Education Department

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment; and some of them need additional help to close that gap as well as support with their welfare.

Parents are concerned about sending them to school or they decide to home school, and there is an increase in safeguarding concerns.

We are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown period have highlighted the vulnerability of the early years sector. During 2021-22, we will focus on understanding the impacts of lockdown on the welfare of young children and we will review our arrangements and provisions to ensure the best start for families and 0-5 year old children. During 2021-22, we will focus our efforts on the 5-16 year old age group by supporting the schools to implement the Accelerated Learning Programme with funding from Welsh Government. This will allow us to respond to the impact of lockdown on the welfare and attainment of some specific groups of learners.

Beyond school, we also realise that the 16-24 year old age group has been disproportionately affected by the crisis compared to any other age group. There are more referrals for well-being, mental health and homelessness assistance among this age group. Alongside the increase in the number of young people not in employment, education or training, there is an intention to give specific attention to this field in order to mitigate against any side-effects, ensuring that our young people have support and appropriate provision to enable them to thrive.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.
Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
Live in a natural Welsh society
Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

7. Digital Learning Strategy

Education Department

There is a risk of providing a sub-standard education for the children of Gwynedd due to a failure to maximise the opportunities afforded by digital learning. The aim of the strategy is to give the best digital provision to support our learners and teachers to foster a range of skills to use technology confidently, creatively and critically.

As a result of amending the curriculum, digital competence is a statutory responsibility across all learning fields and it needs to be considered in all aspects when designing and introducing the curriculum. The quality of school networks and the quality and number and availability of devices for teachers and learners is varied. There is a varied understanding of the medium amongst teachers. The procedure of maintaining the equipment does not ensure seamless access.

Work is taking place to draw up a new strategy and by 2021/22, we will have published the strategy and put it into practice during 2021/22.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.
Live in a natural Welsh society

Improvement Priority 3

Reduce inequality within the county

It must also be recognised that, currently, not everyone in our society has the opportunities to fulfil their potential. Certainly, as in every county in Wales, inequality exists within the county at different levels, with inequality created by poverty high in terms of the damage which is caused.

It is obvious that poverty can also have a significant devastating effect on well-being, and in particular on the future offered to children. Whilst we have services, which endeavour to mitigate the effects of poverty, it is our responsibility to consider if there is more we could do.

We also have a responsibility to maintain a good standard of services to look after those children who find themselves in situations where there is a need for the Council to take responsibility for them. Ultimately, none of them wants to be in such a situation.

How will we achieve this?

I. More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the world of work

Economy and Community Department

A large number have lost their jobs in Gwynedd over the past year as a result of Covid-19. Unemployment levels have increased substantially and projections show that it will increase again over the next months. A number of the people of Gwynedd are also unable to achieve their full potential as they are underemployed or excluded from employment.

Unemployment and a reduction in household income can affect the health and welfare of individuals and families and increase the demand on public resources. Preventing this is a key part of the anti-poverty agenda. There are direct benefits from being in work in terms of increasing earnings, but there are also wider benefits in terms of health, children's life opportunities and pride in communities.

We have already diverted priorities in order to be able to respond within existing resources by:

- extending the Communities for Work programme in order to support more unemployed individuals who have been referred by Government agencies to receive support to overcome barriers to work.
- working with employers, especially within the tourism industry, to ensure that more Gwynedd residents benefit from the employment opportunities available, and support the residents of Gwynedd to foster the digital skills required to access work.
- supporting workforces that are being made redundant to support them to gain access to the relevant information by various services and that during a period of Covid-19 restrictions
- collaborating with partners to develop the Government's 'Kickstart' programme in Gwynedd to support businesses and local employers to employ young people for a 6-month period and develop their work skills.

In future, we will continue with the above plans and collaborate closely with our partners across north Wales and with the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions to improve the

coordination of our services. We will provide a programme to offer work experiences for unemployed young people in businesses across Gwynedd and task force established will consider whether there are further steps that Gwynedd Council can take to respond to the huge challenge of supporting the people of Gwynedd back into work as soon as possible.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh society

2. Supporting People's Well-being

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some residents are finding it difficult to cope with life challenges as a result of the crisis; and the vulnerable situation of some other residents has worsened during the emergency. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to be healthy.

The residents find it difficult to gain access to services and discover information about what is available to assist them, particularly through virtual media and on-line and therefore face being socially and economically excluded.

Some residents are facing financial hardship, losing their job and losing their home. Residents are finding it difficult to obtain the help that they need to deal with these challenges and maintain their well-being, both locally and in a timely manner.

We have broad and numerous networks throughout the county's communities which help and support residents to cope and respond to their various needs. That networks need support to sustain that voluntary effort.

During 2021/22, we will:

1. Prioritise our efforts and we will focus on supporting residents:-
 - who are facing homelessness;
 - who are unpaid carers to their loved-ones;
 - who are facing financial poverty and food poverty;
 - who are digitally excluded.
2. We will work across services and with our partners on
 - well-being interventions for children, young people and people of all ages;
 - supporting communities and
 - maintaining the resilience of communities and supporting volunteers/community spirit.
3. We will also look at models to ensure that residents obtain access to the broad and new range of support available in a timely, coordinated and local way.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in a natural Welsh society

3. Women in Leadership

Corporate Support Department

The Council is firm that it adheres to equal pay, however the Council acknowledges that the number of women who have a managerial role within the Council is disproportionate with the split within the entire workforce i.e. 70% women 30% men.

We will introduce a programme to develop potential for women, carrying out an audit of our recruitment and appointment methods for managerial posts and creating a forum for female leaders and prospective leaders within the Council.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

4. Implementing the Equality Plan (Ensuring Fairness for Everyone)

Corporate Support Department

We are eager to ensure that equality is deeply rooted within the Council's work in order to improve our services for all the people of Gwynedd.

By the end of 2020/21, we will have held a thorough investigation of the views of the people of Gwynedd who have protected characteristics (as noted in the 2010 Equality Act) about the services offered by the Council as well as identify any barriers that exist. The outcome of this investigation will be the basis to a number of further activities within the Action Plan for the five Objectives within the 2020-24 Strategic Equality Plan.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Develop a training and awareness-raising programme for staff and managers in order to gain better understanding of the needs of the people of Gwynedd and the act for its introduction from September 2021 onwards.
- We will also continue to offer support and facilitate the ability of managers to carry out Equality Assessments.
- Encourage staff to complete the monitoring questionnaire in order to obtain reliable evidence to help to improve the diversity of our workforce and with work to reduce any pay gaps.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Improvement Priority 4

Access to suitable homes

The Housing field has a vital role in helping the Council fulfil its ambition. We know that having a suitable, high quality home leads to better health, more resilient communities and a population that can contribute fully to society. It is important that we develop varied, innovative and green housing proposals - houses that people can live in for their whole lives - and also offer early support to those in need.

As a Local Authority, we will intervene to encourage a range of support and accommodation options to respond to the needs of the population today, and for future generations. Alongside this, we must ensure that the steps taken respect the culture of the county's communities.

How will we achieve this?

I. A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin action

Housing and Property Department

In order to reach the ambition in our Housing Strategy of "Ensuring that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable home of a high standard, which is affordable and improves their quality of life", we have adopted a Housing Action Plan which contains over 30 specific schemes and an investment of £77 million.

These schemes will aim to fulfil the following objectives:

No one is homeless in Gwynedd

Social housing available to all who need one

Everyone's home in Gwynedd is affordable to them

Gwynedd Housing are environmentally friendly

Homes having a positive influence on the health and well-being of the people of Gwynedd

During 2021/22, we will start to implement these plans in order to increase the opportunities for local people to have suitable homes within their communities.

The demand on our homelessness service has increased during the past months as a result of the pandemic and we will aim to prioritise a number of the schemes which would increase the supply of housing available to the homelessness service.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

2. Easy and clear access to enquiry services and advice on housing issues: Establish 'one front door' and help-desk for the public to help them with housing problems

Housing and Property Department

Currently, there are many points of contact within the Department for the public to be able to access various services within Housing and Property. Our Housing Action Plan includes a project for establishing a single point of contact by creating a Housing Help Desk.

During 2021/22 we will research different models of providing a help desk and commence the work of establishing some sort of Housing Help Desk that can advise the public on how best to resolve their housing needs.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

3. Letting social housing to local people: Create a new allocation policy for the county which will give greater priority to local people

Housing and Property Department

We have introduced a new Housing Allocation Policy which has been in operation since the summer of 2020. This policy prioritises local people, and replaces the old points system for allocating housing.

The new system means that applications for social housing are put into one of four 'bands' depending on their housing needs and their connection with Gwynedd or not.

During 2021/22, we will need to ensure that there are effective arrangements for implementing the new allocations policy, and establish a procedure for monitoring that this policy is being implemented throughout the County to ensure the best opportunities for the people of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

4. The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates

Finance and Information Technology Department

The Council is investing the income generated from the Council Tax premium in our Housing Action Plan in an attempt to alleviate the detrimental impact that second homes are having on the availability of housing for local people. We have concerns around losing resources due to holiday units being transferred from Council

Tax to business rates. Gwynedd Council has been pressing continuously the Welsh Government for a review of this form of local taxation, in order to ensure that any property that is a dwelling-house pays Council Tax, whatever its use may be.

Work has been done to try to demonstrate to the Government the need for a change in legislation, but the response to date from the Government has been disappointing and has focused more on the alleged harmful effect on tourism rather than the actual harmful effect on the residents of Gwynedd.

Towards the future, we will aim to secure a meeting with the Minister in order to press the Government to change the legislation relating to holiday homes, and we will conduct a wider campaign to promote this.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Improvement Priority 5

Living lives through the medium of Welsh

One of the unique features Gwynedd has as a county is its Welshness. Gwynedd Council itself is dedicated to working through the medium of Welsh, but that in itself is not sufficient if we are to keep the unique nature of the county alive.

How will we achieve this?

1. Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services Corporate Support Department

Gwynedd Council has been prominent in terms of ensuring that services for residents are available through the medium of Welsh as we operate through the medium of Welsh internally. It is continual work to **Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's Services**, and we are aware that there is a need to continue to maintain our staff's language skills.

In future, we will focus on working with the rest of the Council services - especially front-line services - to complete the assessment and develop the skills of new staff.

We will also develop an apprenticeship plan to attract and develop staff with the appropriate linguistic ability and will continue to develop the learning provision that is already in place (with flexibility to adapt to the needs of specific teams)

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

[Live in a natural Welsh society](#)

2. The Welsh Language in Public Services

Corporate Support Department

At present, there is inconsistency in the provision of bilingual services by public bodies in Gwynedd, which means that it is not always possible for residents to use the Welsh language naturally when communicating with public bodies.

Through the Welsh Language Sub-Group within the Public Services Board, we will draw up a joint plan with our partners on the Board to try to move to a situation where using the Welsh language naturally, straight away, is not only possible but also encouraged.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

[Live in a natural Welsh Society](#)

3. Native Welsh Place Names Corporate Support Department

We are concerned that native Welsh place names are disappearing from the landscape of Gwynedd as a result of a lack of use of Welsh names and an increase in renaming places in English.

We will draw up a work programme and prioritise the fields to be addressed and in what order. We will also consider what can be done as a work programme with regards to Council buildings, street names and place names.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Live in a natural Welsh society

4. Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People **Education Department**

The skills and confidence of learners (more specifically in non-Welsh-speaking homes) in Welsh have deteriorated as a result of lockdown and Covid-19.

In 2021/22, we will establish a baseline of the current situation of the Welsh language as a result of the impact of lockdown and Covid-19 and will draw up a Strategy and Action Plan in response to the situation.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh society

Improvement Priority 6

Helping people who need support to live their lives as they wish.

As a Council, we provide direct care to children and their families and to adults who need specialist support, but our vision is that everyone of all ages receives the support they need in the most suitable and convenient way for them.

As the needs of each individual and family are bound to be different, in order for them to continue to live their lives as they wish we need to adapt our services to be more closely tailored to the real needs of those who need our support. To succeed, we will need to continue to work with other providers, such as the Health Board, always remembering to put the needs of the individual at the centre.

How will we achieve this?

I. A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the Future Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted a number of factors that can affect our ability to **continue to provide suitable care services for the people of Gwynedd**. In order to ensure that we are able to continue, in 2021/22, we will:

- seek to understand the "actual cost of care" to consider possible options for our care commissioning arrangements in the future
- ensure that we understand the need for nursing beds provision in the county, and proceed with the Penrhos Site project in order to address the shortages in Pen Llŷn.
- work towards further increasing the number of dementia beds in the county
- consider whether our support services, e.g. day care and respite continue to be suitable to address the needs of the people of Gwynedd, or whether we need to do something differently
- consider how we can improve the suitability of our care provider buildings whilst attempting to satisfy additional infection control measures

We are also committed to **improve the quality of our care provision across the county**. During 2021/22, we will:

- open a bespoke dementia unit that has been completed at Llan Ffestiniog, but has been unable to open due to the Covid-19 crisis
- complete the work of building an additional dementia unit at our home in Barmouth
- complete modifications to our home in Dolgellau in order to be able to offer more bespoke care for individuals with severe physical needs
- collaborate with the Adra housing association on the development of Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli and seek to identify opportunities for similar developments in other parts of the county, with priority being given to the Dolgellau and Meirionnydd area more broadly
- strengthen our quality assurance services to ensure sufficient support to care providers to help to maintain quality services for the residents of Gwynedd

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

2. Re-designing our Care Services

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The county's care needs are changing, and we have been collaborating with the Health Board to transform our community services. We need to facilitate the ability of our staff and Health Board staff to collaborate as one team within specific areas. This will lead to ensuring that individuals who require health and care support in the community will have one point of contact, in order to ensure the best outcomes and a seamless service. We are also working to change our way of providing domiciliary care across the county in order to facilitate our ability to ensure that the care is tailored based on what matters to the individual.

During 2021/22, we will:

- empower the integrated teams (teams that include care staff as well as health staff), to be able to achieve what matters to the adults of Gwynedd. This will include looking at appropriate training and removing any technological barriers.
- award new home care contracts in each area, with the aim of implementing the new model early in 2022/23.
- strengthen our Occupational Therapy service, including developing a specialist manual handling service to enable individuals to live as independently as possible
- add to the network of community hubs that support and create opportunities for individuals with Learning Disabilities by developing plans for Canolfan Dolfeurig in Dolgellau
- re-open our community mental health hub in Pwllheli, after it had to close as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, and look at options to develop further hubs across the county
- look at options to develop an emotional and practical support provision for the younger cohort in the Arfon area

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

3. The Workforce and Recruitment in the Care Field

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

Recruiting to the Care field is challenging for various reasons. We have an effective and committed workforce, and this has been especially evident during the Covid-19 crisis. However, we must ensure that we have sufficient workers with the necessary skills to cope with the increasing need that is likely to arise in the future. During 2021/22, we will:

- review the arrangements of the recent #GalwGofal recruitment campaign in order to consider how we will approach recruitment in the future
- consider our registration and training arrangements as well as staff development arrangements, in order to increase flexibility and resilience in the field
- develop a Grow our Own scheme to address the lack of expertise in some fields, such as Occupational Therapy

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

4. Keeping Families Together Strategy

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some families need specific support at times to help them bring up their children so that those children are able to stay with their family, to thrive, to be healthy and to be safe. No children are brought into care unnecessarily in Gwynedd and we wish to ensure that this does not happen. Sometimes, it is inevitable that a child is brought to our care as it is dangerous for them to remain at home. Our arrangements and decisions when that happens are based on the risk and needs of the family. When a child comes into care, every effort needs to be made so that the child receives appropriate, suitable and local care; and that the child and his/her family are supported so that the child can return to his/her family.

The 'Effective Child Protection' Transformation Programme will be operational in Gwynedd, and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. We will also share this model with other North Wales Authorities.

We will complete the Ffordd Gwynedd work, working across the department's services and jointly with the Education Department to understand what matters to the families of Gwynedd and we will agree on principles, and ways of improving what we do and how we work in order to provide the required support.

We will introduce and adopt a "Keeping Families Together" strategy, which shows our aim, our arrangements and our approach towards avoiding children from coming into care unnecessarily; however, if care is required, then ensure that the child is cared for in a suitable, appropriate and local placement; and that every effort and support is provided in order to return children to their families.

We will receive feedback from Welsh Government on our "Keeping Families Together" strategy.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

5. Ensure a specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some children and young people who come into our care have complex and severe needs. Some of these children have to receive care and support in an expensive placement outside Gwynedd / Wales, far from their family and community. We wish to ensure that we have a variety and sufficient number of suitable placements available locally, and that we have specialist workers and support locally to address these children's needs.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Implement a specialist training programme for staff so that they are able to appropriately support children with complex needs and their families.
- Develop and agree upon a business case, across local partners, for operating and practising as one multi-disciplinary team so that the support for families and children is more effective and efficient.
- Develop a plan for identifying local residential provision for children with complex needs
- Increase the number of foster carers by recruiting and providing resources to assess carers in order to secure a sufficient number of placements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

6. Ensure that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive

Children and Supporting Families Department

Children and young people with autism and high skill abilities; and children with autism and no learning disability, find it difficult to access the specialist support that they require. The experiences of these children and their families show that there is room to improve our current assessment arrangements; that there are gaps in the provision and that they require help during the transitional period to other services such as adults and health.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Launch an Autism Plan for the county, jointly with the Health Board, third sector partners and across the Council's services.
- Appoint a role in the Council for working in the field, giving specific attention to the transitional period from childhood to adulthood in the field.
- Review the arrangements for accessing the integrated disabled children's service (DERWEN).

- Improve arrangements for collaborating, sharing information and providing support in the field with our health partners and with specialist providers in the third sector.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Improvement Priority 7

Placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do

As previously noted, the Council already provides a wide range of activities which seek to ensure that we achieve our vision. However, there is always room for improvement. We recognise that there are examples where we do not always look at things through our residents' eyes, and we need to ensure that this happens everywhere within the Council.

Of course, this does not mean doing everything for everyone, as our resources do not permit us to do that. It means that we prioritise those things which are of most importance to our communities, and ensure that the limited resources available contribute to doing what is most important to the people of Gwynedd (whilst accepting that prioritisation could mean not achieving everyone's aspirations).

This consideration will also have to take place at a time when the funding available for services is significantly reduced. In that respect, there will be a need to ensure that the funding available is used to deliver the most important things.

How will we achieve this?

1. Implement Work Programme Plan Ffordd Gwynedd (*Empowering Units to Implement Ffordd Gwynedd*)

Corporate Support Department

As a Council, it is our responsibility to ensure, as we provide our services, that it is the **needs of the people of Gwynedd** which steer how we will offer those services. In doing so, we should avoid any unnecessary working arrangements. We are already challenging service teams to reflect on their current working arrangements, to challenge whether they are placing the people of Gwynedd centrally and whether there is room for improvement.

We will develop training to assist managers to understand the close link between the culture of Ffordd Gwynedd and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and present that session to the Managers Network during the first half of 2021, whilst releasing the job description to team leaders and the rest of the Council staff that will confirm the behaviours expected of them.

We will establish methods of measuring the progress with the culture sought through a combination of regular self-assessment and challenging.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

2. Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively **Corporate Support Department**

We need to ensure that our arrangements for protecting Health and Safety are robust and whilst we have mature arrangements within the Council, we are concerned that there are pockets where there is an opportunity to improve operational arrangements.

In order to respond to the situation, we will hold a discussion with heads / senior managers / managers in each Department in order to understand their needs and identify the most effective way of resolving the situation.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

3. Planning the Workforce **Corporate Support Department**

The People Plan prioritises improving arrangements for nurturing talent within the Council, improving our Workforce Planning arrangements, and ensuring that our learning and development arrangements focus on the necessary elements. To ensure that the Council is in a position to provide services that always place the residents of Gwynedd at the centre, we must ensure that we have the right staff in place with the correct skills. This means that we need to continuously train staff, evaluate their performance and foster and develop their talents. Staff training arrangements are an important way of promoting and dissipating the mindset of Ffordd Gwynedd across the Council, and of course, it is vitally important that the Council has officers with the skills to carry out their posts.

The work of identifying gaps and acting pro-actively, which has commenced with the Adults Department, will be disseminated to the rest of the Council during 2021. We will also extend the number of apprentices and professional trainees across an increasing number of services across the Council.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

4. Realising Savings **Finance and Information Technology Department**

The Council has good financial planning arrangements, and the objective of those arrangements is to attempt to maximise the number of efficiency savings that can be achieved in order to avoid service cuts as much as possible. This means that there will be a need to continue to identify opportunities and ensure that the schemes adopted are delivered.

The work already achieved over a number of years suggests that we have harvested a vast proportion

of the efficiency savings available but we continue to search for opportunities. However, after a long period of identifying savings, there are now far fewer opportunities or they are more difficult to achieve. In attempting to reduce the repercussions for the people of Gwynedd by achieving efficiency savings, it is proving far more difficult than undertaking service cuts.

We will continue to monitor the ability of departments to operate within the resources they have, and will press them to look for opportunities to introduce actual efficiency savings, rather than cut public services. Supporting departments as they introduce new working arrangements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

5. Strengthening communication and engagement Highways and Municipal Department

The Highways and Municipal Department is very visible with aspects of the services reaching each resident throughout the County. Value can be added to the department's work by means of effective communication and engagement plans; for example, campaigns to prevent littering or dog fouling, or campaigns and guidelines to encourage re-use, re-purposing and reducing waste. It is also very important that residents are confident in the department's services and that their concerns and enquiries are dealt with effectively. We will ensure that timely and meaningful response arrangements are in place and we will:

- review current arrangements for communicating and responding to enquiries
- highlight where there are shortcomings/improvement places
- establish a task group with representation from officers together with Galw Gwynedd
- identify measures for monitoring

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

6. Public Protection Capacity Environment Department

As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the importance of our Public Protection Services has become increasingly apparent, in their role of protecting the health of our communities, as well as advising and supporting the county's businesses. There is also an expectation that we use our enforcement powers as a result of allegations of coronavirus regulations breaches.

The experiences during the emergency period has highlighted the lack of resilience in the Public Protection Services as a result of years of cuts. It is believed that a short-term and long-term solution is required to provide a sustainable and effective service to support and protect the residents and businesses of Gwynedd.

It is intended to carry out a full review of the structures of the Public Protection Services during 2021-22 in order to fully assess the need and consider the staff capacity required in the long-term

(whilst noting that it is difficult to anticipate when the current crisis will end), in order to support and protect the residents and businesses of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

7. Clean and Tidy Communities

Highways and Municipal Department

We will collaborate with the residents and communities of Gwynedd by engaging in order to develop an Action Plan to correspond with this priority by expanding and developing community partnerships to improve the quality and appearance of the county, e.g.

- Clean and tidy streets.
- Roads and walking paths in a good condition.
- Local work teams to complete the work.
- Discussion about the principles and actions by engaging with the community and staff.
- Draw up an action plan and identify aspirations and possible stakeholders on a community level.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

Improvement Priority 8

Respond to the Climate Change emergency

At its meeting on 7 March 2019, the Council considered a motion relating to climate change and it was resolved to do our utmost to ensure that the county remains a vibrant, viable and sustainable home for our children and their children for generations to come. We do this by means of:

- Declaring a Climate Emergency;
- Committing to taking decisive action to reduce carbon emissions and strive for a zero-carbon future;
- Looking for innovative means to achieve zero carbon targets;
- Reporting back within 6 months on positive steps the Council has taken to reduce carbon emissions; and
- Call on Welsh Government and the Westminster Government to provide the requisite powers and resources to achieve the target of a carbon-free Gwynedd by 2030.

How will we achieve this?

I. Climate Change Action Plan

Environment Department

As a result of the Council's decision to declare a climate change emergency, we have attempted to draw up a Climate Change Action Plan; however, unfortunately, the Covid-19 emergency interrupted that work.

It is intended to ensure that we have an initial document that highlights what the departments intend to achieve so that this becomes a basis to a workshop for members to be held virtually, early in 2021, so that this in turn leads to the adoption of the Action Plan before the end of the current financial year.

Once the Action Plan is adopted, it will be published and we will start implementing the plans contained within it.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

Finally...

The Council's Financial Strategy, and budget, will be discussed by the Council at its meeting on 4 March 2021. These will be our basis for being able to deliver the Improvement Priorities above, while also trying to cope with the continued increase in demand for our services.

Inevitably, the Financial Strategy is going to be dependent on the priorities set out above. The full Financial Strategy will be available on the Council's website following adoption by the Council.



Departmental Plans



The first section of the plan, the Improvement Priorities, has focused on the Council’s vision along with the Improvement Priorities for the plan’s remaining period.

This next section includes the plans for the Council Departments. The plans describe the ‘day to day’ work of the departments, much of which is a statutory responsibility such as safeguarding children and adults or providing education.

In addition to the Improvement Priorities and the ‘day to day’ work, Local Priorities have also been identified by Elected Members as the issues that are of the highest importance to their constituents. These were discussed as part of the process of preparing the original Council Plan, and any developments on these are explained in the departmental plans that follow. The Local Priorities have been highlighted within a frame with a background colour.

Below is a list of all the departments along with information about their main responsibilities. Financial information about departmental budgets can be found together at the end.

If you wish to contact the department or the Head of Department you can phone 01766 771000 or follow the links below to our website.

	Head of Department	Page
1. Education Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the daily running of Gwynedd Schools ▪ Support, maintain and improve educational standards within modern facilities ▪ Provide support and a service for Additional Learning Needs ▪ Lead the implementation of the Siarter Iaith and the Secondary Education Language Strategy 	Garem Jackson Contact Details	37
2. Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enabling the adults of Gwynedd to “Live my life as I wish” ▪ Provide care services through partnerships and collaboration ▪ Provide home care, day care and residential care 	Aled Davies Contact Details	43
3. Highways and Municipal Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect the recycling, food and residual waste of Gwynedd residents ▪ Highways and street maintenance ▪ Grass cutting and play and leisure grounds maintenance 	Steffan Jones Contact Details	47
4. Children and Supporting Families Department <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Safeguarding children and young people from harm ▪ Working to provide stability for families, children and young people ▪ Youth Services 	Marian Parry Hughes Contact Details	55

5. Environment Department

Dafydd Wyn Williams
[Contact Details](#)

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- Protect and promote access to the countryside
- Food hygiene and trading standards inspections; licensing and planning services
- Education and public transport, and developing beneficial transport opportunities
- Traffic and parking management service
- Covid-19 Track, Trace and Protect Service in Gwynedd

6. Economy and Community Department

Sioned E Williams
[Contact Details](#)

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- Develop Gwynedd's economy by supporting businesses, tourism, marketing and regenerating communities
- Libraries, Museums and Archives

7. Housing and Property Department

Dafydd Gibbard
[Contact Details](#)

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- Support homeless families and identify priorities for social housing and affordable homes
- Ensure safe and adequate housing for social and private housing tenants
- Bring empty houses back into use
- Maintain and develop the Council's property portfolio, whilst aiming to reducing carbon emissions.

8. Ymgynghoriaeth Gwynedd Consultancy

Huw Williams
[Contact Details](#)

88

- Commercial consultative service which provides planning and management of infrastructure projects
- Building management service
- Local flood lead authority

9. Corporate Support Department

Geraint Owen
[Contact Details](#)

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- Galw Gwynedd contact centre and Siopau Gwynedd
- Human resources, registration, communication and staff development
- Administrative and support services

10. Finance (and Information Technology) Department

Dafydd L Edwards
[Contact Details](#)

98

- Financial support to all the Council's services
- Council Tax and Gwynedd Pension Fund
- Support and development of the Council's information technology provision

11. Legal Services

Iwan Evans
[Contact Details](#)

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- Legal support for all the Council's services
- Administration of Gwynedd elections
- Support the work of the Coroner for north west Wales



Education Department



The purpose of the Education Department is to ensure that Gwynedd's children and young people receive the best education in our schools to enable them to reach the highest standards and to nurture the qualifications and skills that enable them to live and prosper.

Together with the day-to-day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Digital Learning Strategy – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Transforming the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion provision – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Meirionnydd Collaboration – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Bangor Catchment Area – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Cricieth Catchment Area – (Improvement Priority 2)
- Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People – (Improvement Priority 5)

SCHOOLS SERVICE

Support for Leadership, Management and Effective School Governance

It is the responsibility of the Education Department to promote leadership, management and the effective governance of our schools by supporting, equipping and holding governing bodies and school management teams accountable. This is done in several different ways depending on the needs of individual schools.

Support is given in terms of the effective leadership and management of our schools via a series of professional programmes that offer a path for professional development of teachers, middle management and senior leadership. This is also done via an incentive programme drafted jointly between the Education Department and Learning and Development for heads, management teams and middle managers in schools. In addition, the Education Department seeks to identify opportunities to give leaders valuable experiences to build a resilient organisation.

Support is given by the Education Department to governors by ensuring that they understand their role and act effectively, by giving them strategic and practical support according to need, advising them

appropriately, as well as by providing them with a programme of bespoke training to ensure the effective governance of our schools. The Education Department also has powers to intervene that may be used when a school is not governed appropriately.

Schools Improvement Service

It is the responsibility of the Education Department and GwE, in partnership with our schools, to educate our children, and our schools' results are consistently good. GwE is a schools improvement service, that works on behalf of the six Local Authorities in north Wales, to lead, organise and coordinate improvements in schools' performance.

The partnership between the Education Department and GwE provides our schools with both support and a challenge to improve the quality of classroom learning and teaching, to support leaders to improve the quality of leadership in our schools - all of this to further improve results for our children and young people.

In Gwynedd, there are 80 primary schools, 12 secondary schools, 2 special schools and 2 follow-on schools.

Performance

Schools provide inclusive education for children and young people up to 16 years of age. In Gwynedd, post-16 education is provided in partnership with the colleges and secondary schools in Arfon, by Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor (Grŵp Llandrillo Menai) in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, and Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn in the Bala area.

Welsh Government has given clear direction to Local Authorities not to publish the educational results, and discussions are ongoing with the Welsh Government regarding the manner in which Education Authorities may be held accountable for their performance in the absence of comparative data on performance across Wales.

Transforming the schools system

Following consultation on the sustainability of the education system in Gwynedd, along with general concerns that the current schools system is not sustainable, the Council's Cabinet adopted the following, fit-for-purpose educational principles that will form the basis for realising the Education Department's vision and develop the organisation to ensure high-quality education for the children and young people of Gwynedd in the twenty-first century, namely:

- A system of viable secondary schools
- No more than two age ranges within the same class in the primary sector

- Approximately 80% of non-contact time for the Headteacher to focus on leadership issues in the primary sector.

Having adopted these principles, this field will become a part of the Department's day-to-day work, as it is anticipated that implementing the principles across the system, during the period of this Council, will not be a swift process. We will proceed cautiously to ensure that the education system can respond to the enormous changes on the horizon, such as changes to the schools inspection procedure (Estyn), along with very significant changes to the curriculum and the organisation of our schools in light of the recommendations of Professor Donaldson.

EDUCATION MODERNISATION TEAM

Some of our school buildings are old and are unsuitable to meet the future learning and teaching needs of our children. The purpose of this service is to plan and realise innovative projects to adapt or build new schools for Gwynedd's children and young people to be educated in the best possible learning environment to enable them to thrive.

During the period from 2012-2021, the Council succeeded in investing £69 million to improve the condition and learning environments of the following schools for the benefit of the County's children:

- Ysgol yr Hendre, Caernarfon
- Ysgol OM Edwards, Llanuwchllyn
- Ysgol Craig y Deryn, Llanegryn
- Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn
- Ysgol Bro Llifon, Y Groeslon
- Ysgol Hafod Lon, Penrhyndeudraeth
- Ysgol Glancegin, Maesgeirchen
- Ysgol Bro Idris, Dolgellau Catchment
- Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn, Y Bala
- Ysgol y Garnedd and Ysgol y Faenol, Bangor
- Ysgol Trefferthyr, Cricieth.

The Education Modernisation Team is developing viable education provision models that seek to:

- ensure a first class learning environment for children and staff in Gwynedd schools
- improve the conditions and circumstances for headteachers to enable them to lead and manage schools effectively and efficiently
- ensure the most effective and best use of the Education Department's budget.



ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS SERVICE (ALN)

The service supports children and young people with Additional Learning Needs - which include specific areas of learning needs, communication and interaction, vision impairment, hearing impairment and medical/physical needs.

The service provides early intervention and support that is tailored for each individual pupil through a team of specialist teachers and assistants. Support is offered to schools through the Psychology Service. Every pupil has full access to Gwynedd schools therefore ensuring that every child reaches his or her full potential.

WELFARE AND INCLUSION SERVICE

The welfare and inclusion service supports schools to promote attendance, positive behaviour and support for children and young people who experience behavioural, emotional and/or social development difficulties. This support is delivered by a team of specialist teachers, welfare officers, school counsellors and specialist assistants.

We ensure that pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are fully included within Gwynedd schools through training, support in the classroom and providing behaviour support services outside mainstream schools. The welfare service promotes attendance by working with pupils, schools and families. Attendance at Gwynedd Schools over the last three years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic has been consistently good.

Although attendance is high and the rate of permanent exclusions is low, the challenge of maintaining and promoting welfare and inclusion is intensifying with an increasing number of pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour. The service will ensure that our schools receive appropriate training and support to meet the challenge. Underlying all of this, the service provides specialist guidance in the field of safeguarding. Specialist training and advice is provided to schools throughout the County.

THE GAP IN WELFARE AND ATTAINMENT

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment and welfare as a result of the impact of the lockdown period and the Covid-19 pandemic. In response, every school implements an Accelerated Learning Programme with funding from Welsh Government to respond to the impact of the lockdown period on the welfare and attainment of some specific groups of learners.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE

The Welsh language permeates through all of the Education Department's work and services. The statutory document 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan' sets out clear expectations for the Department and our schools in terms of Welsh as a subject and as a teaching medium. In 2020-21, in accordance with the new published regulations, we will prepare and consult upon a new document, the 'Welsh in Education Strategic Plan', which will replace the existing document in September 2022. The new plan will cover a period of 10 years in order to align with and support the Welsh Government's targets as stated in its Cymraeg 2050 strategy.



Gwynedd has led the pioneering work of influencing children's social use of the Welsh language in primary schools through the Welsh Language Charter. The purpose of the Charter is to encourage children to speak Welsh outside the classroom, and to ensure participation from all members of the school community in order to achieve this aim.

Gwynedd is the only county in Wales that has established a Secondary Sector Language Strategy as a continuation of the Language Charter, and both the primary and secondary schools were all eager to see clear continuity with respect to the Language Charter. One fundamental distinction in the context of the Secondary Sector Language Strategy is that it involves the promotion of both formal and informal use of the Welsh language.

The Department also maintains Language Centres that provide intensive Welsh language courses for incomers to enable them to learn Welsh and contribute to Gwynedd's educational and social life. These Centres are essential to help our primary and secondary schools implement the Welsh Language Policy.

SCHOOLS BUSINESS CENTRE

For some time now, there has been considerable concern among head teachers regarding their working conditions, as they have to fulfil a number of different roles; as leaders, managers, teachers and

administrators. Without exception, Estyn inspections have shown that effective leadership, together with adequate resources and time, results in a good education and high standards.

Since September 2019, the Schools Business Centre has been established to develop the support and assistance provided to our schools, to rationalise and share management requirements. The core function of the Schools Business Centre is to provide the SIMS service to primary schools, and there is also a focus on providing service level agreements to primary schools for services such as written and simultaneous translation for schools. There is also a focus on reducing the managerial and administrative workloads of headteachers and teachers.

RESOURCES SERVICE

The purpose of this service is to provide the necessary statutory support for Gwynedd schools to operate on a daily basis. The service includes access to schools, staff salaries and contracts, cleaning, catering and healthy eating schemes and school transport. It also provides support for schools with finance, human resources, health and safety and information technology and communications. The service also provides support to school Governors.

This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do.

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible



Adults, Health and Well-being Department



The Adults, Health and Well-being Department provides a range of social care services for residents aged 18 years old or over who require advice, information, support or care due to specific needs. The Department's purpose is to enable adults in Gwynedd to 'Live my life as I wish'.

In addition to the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

- Appropriate and Sustainable Care Provision for the future – (Improvement Priority 6)
- Re-designing our Care Services – (Improvement Priority 6)
- The Workforce and Recruitment within the care field – (Improvement Priority 6)

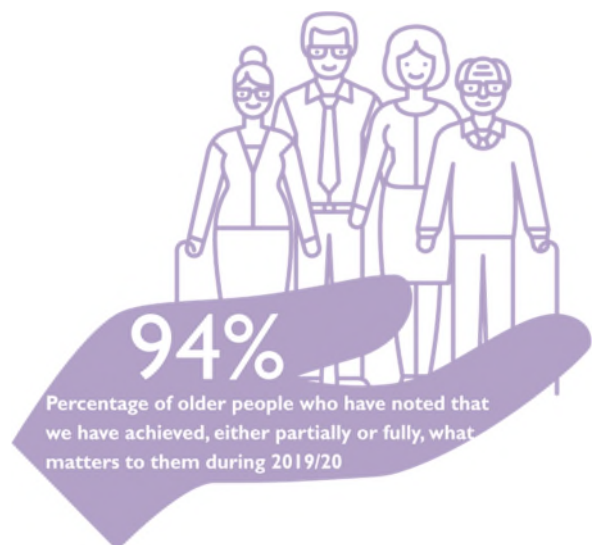
Naturally, the Covid-19 emergency has had a significant impact on all the department's services. Although we managed to sustain the vast majority of services, that has been in a somewhat different form with some services. The challenge of restoring some of these services will face us during 2021-22, and our options will need to be weighed up in terms of restoring the service in its original form or replacing it with a new service.

Older People and Physical and Sensory Disability Service

The purpose of this service is to help individuals to achieve what is important to them.

We work in partnership to try to deliver their personal aims by focusing on what is important to them. The service will assess needs in a manner that builds on individuals' strengths. The service provides information, advice and support in a simple and convenient manner within communities.

In order to continue to improve our seamless provision, we will build on the working relationship between us and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, statutory agencies and the third sector, in order to meet adults' personal objectives.



Mental Health Service

The purpose of this service is to offer support to individuals over 18 years of age who are experiencing mental health difficulties, by providing them with assistance to live full lives and to support recovery.

We are working alongside the Health Board to support individuals with mental health difficulties within the primary services and support individuals with more profound and complex needs, in order to promote recovery and assist them to live independently. We also offer assessment and support for mental health carers.

Learning Disabilities Service



The purpose of the service is to address the physical, emotional, mental and social well-being needs of individuals with learning disabilities.

We provide support which focuses on the individual's well-being. In order to ensure that we fully respond to the needs of individuals, a wide range of our services are frequently offered in partnership.

We wish to concentrate on provision that offers opportunities to socialise and maintain relationships. We focus on developing community services through the local hubs and local well-being plans.



Well-being Service

The main purpose of the service is to improve quality of life by connecting people, but the team also focus on supporting carers (unpaid).

We do this through schemes that are focused on the following elements:

- an emphasis on being sociable and involved in the community (reducing loneliness)
- promoting positive health and well-being
- promote working together with people and between people
- strengthening and developing services based on what is important for the people of Gwynedd

Supporting carers is central to our work and we strive to do this by offering new opportunities and many schemes have been developed to that end. Naturally, we have seen increased pressure on unpaid carers during the past year, and we will review the virtual arrangements that have been established following the Covid-19 crisis to consider whether it is possible to learn any lessons on how to better support carers in future.

Much of the service's work is addressed within the 'People's Well-being Scheme' priority led by the Children and Supporting Families Department.

Provider Service



We provide residential care, community care and day care for adults with profound and complex needs.

The service is responsible for the following areas:

- Residential Care and Dementia Residential Care provision
- Domiciliary Care provision
- Day Care Provision

Much of the service's work is addressed within the priority projects that are led by this department.

The Dolgellau area has been identified as a priority for developing appropriate care provision, and the effort to identify sites for development in the area continues. We are also looking at other locations in the wider Meirionnydd area.

There were also calls for appropriate units for Llŷn residents, and the work of constructing Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli has started in partnership with **Adra** housing association. It is expected that the 28 flat scheme will be completed during 2022.

This priority is addressed within the 'Appropriate and Sustainable Care Provision for the future' priority project.

The Covid-19 crisis has created new and different challenges for this service in particular, and as we consider the further development of the service it will be essential that we ensure that we learn the lessons that those challenges have provided.



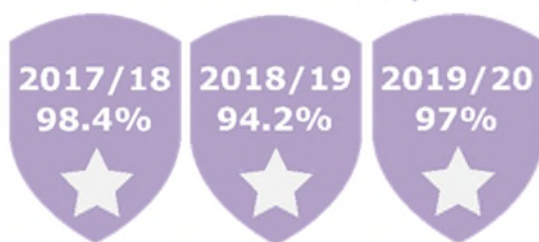
Safeguarding and Community Safety Service

The purpose of the **Safeguarding Service** is to safeguard individuals who have support needs and who are at risk or are suffering abuse, and to ensure the quality of the department's services by monitoring and investigating the experience of individuals.

We lead on cases of escalating concerns, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards arrangements (a procedure that supports and protects adults who are unable to make decisions themselves or are unable to grant permission for their care) and respond to complaints and concerns in a timely manner.

The Service is also responsible for leading on **Community Safety** partnership work, which is a statutory partnership. We work across two counties, namely Gwynedd Council and the Isle of Anglesey County Council.

Percentage of adults safeguarding referrals completed during the year where the risk has been managed (excluding those who refused intervention)



We will lead on the work on behalf of all the responsible members, namely the two Councils, the Police, the Fire Service, the Probation Service and the Health Board to tackle and reduce crime and disorder for the benefit of the safety and well-being of people in both counties. We will now work on the partnership's plan for 2021/22 to respond to the identified crime and disorder priorities in both counties.



Business Service

We provide support to the front-line teams of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department and the Children and Supporting Families Department, in order to enable them to achieve their purpose for the benefit of Gwynedd residents. We are responsible for:

- Telecare
- Workforce Development
- Client Finance
- Income and Welfare Unit
- Contracting and Commissioning
- Administrative Service
- Systems Support Unit

This department's work contributes to the following Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within their communities

Live in a natural Welsh society.

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



Highways and Municipal Department



This department provides frontline services that are important to Gwynedd residents, such as waste collection, bereavement services, road maintenance, fleet maintenance, playing fields and green spaces. Caring for the county's special environment is central to the department's work, and it contributes to the Council's Climate Change Action Plan. The Department has also managed to reach Accreditation Bsi 45001 (Health and Safety): 14001 (Environmental) and 9001 (Quality Control).

Together with the day-to-day work outlined below, this department leads on the following priority projects:

- Clean and Tidy Communities - (Improvement Priority 7)
- Strengthening Communication and Engagement - (Improvement Priority 7)

Waste and Recycling

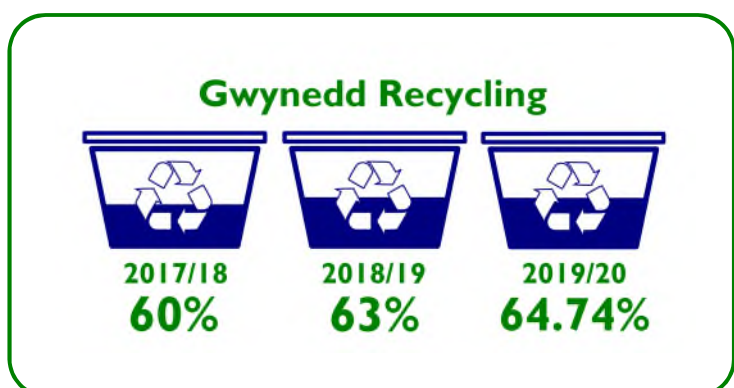


The department is responsible for undertaking over a million waste collections within any three-month period. Some of these collections are missed, and although the figure is low (less than 1%) we recognise the impact of these missed collections on our residents. The department now collects information in order to gain an understanding of why this happens and to enable it to respond to any relevant problems.

We are in the process of introducing new collection arrangements that will reduce the number of missed collections and provide the people of Gwynedd with an improved experience of the service by ensuring that the same crew works the same route every time.

The introduction of three-weekly bin collections, with weekly collection of food waste and recycling materials, has led to an increase in recycling and the Council achieved Welsh Government's statutory target of 64% of the county's waste being recycled by the end of March 2019/20, with Gwynedd's performance at 64.74%. The target will rise to **70% by March 2025**.

It is vital to deal with **waste** appropriately in order to protect our environment and avoid creating problems for our children and our children's children. Gwynedd Council is proud that we deal with our waste in a responsible manner, and that we give priority throughout this process to being as eco-friendly as possible.



Burying waste in the ground causes pollution to the land, water and the air. From 2020/21, Gwynedd Council will send almost no waste

to landfill due to treating our residual waste at the Parc Adfer waste-to-energy facility. Former landfill sites within the county, now defunct, are also producing green electricity.

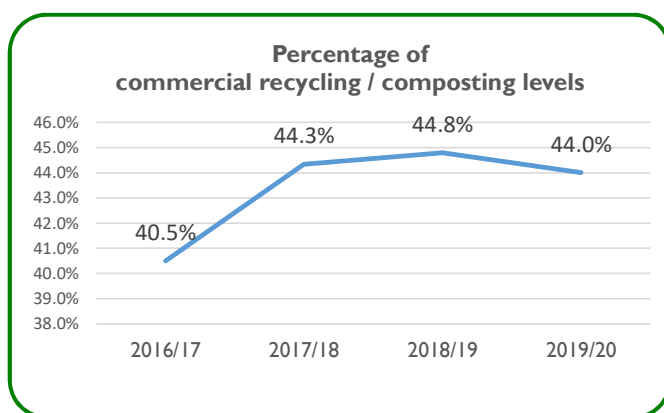
We are also responsible for arranging garden waste collections throughout the county, with the waste being converted to compost. The Department makes the compost available to Gwynedd residents at specific times of the year.

GwyrAD

GwyrAD is our in-county food waste treatment facility, which processes all the food waste collected from residents and businesses in Gwynedd. The facility can handle 11,000 tonnes of food waste, which is converted to green energy that supplies the national grid. This is enough to provide electricity for 850 homes.

Capacity exists on the site to increase the tonnages of food we collect in order to divert any waste from the residual waste bin, and we will be working towards this aim during 2020/21. 9200 tonnes of food waste was collected in 2019/2020.

Commercial Waste Services



We provide commercial waste and recycling collections to more than 2,000 businesses in the county. Some time ago we introduced food and recycling collections as part of the package offered to businesses, in order to ensure that businesses divert their waste from the residual bins and benefit from the recycling service. This has contributed to the Council's recycling performance as reported against our statutory targets, and performance has improved markedly since 2014. With statutory targets

becoming more stringent there is some work to do in order to improve things further, and a requirement will come into force to separate recyclable material, which is currently collected in one mixed bin. The new system will ensure that waste is treated appropriately for the benefit of the environment.

Over the plan period we will:

- complete the transition to Gwynedd's new waste collection arrangements in order to provide an enhanced service and experience to the county's residents, and reduce the number of missed collections
- develop a new waste strategy for the county
- consider innovative ways to encourage reuse and increase recycling in order to ensure we can achieve the new statutory target of 70% of all waste being recycled by 2025
- increase our domestic and commercial food waste collections for treatment in the GwyrAD facility and reduce the amount of this material found in the residual waste

- try to achieve the aim of sending zero waste to landfill
- promote the circular economy in Gwynedd (an economy which promotes reuse and recycling to reduce waste)
- look to increase our commercial provision in order to generate an income stream for the Council, and ensure that the county's waste is treated in a responsible and eco-friendly manner
- offer separated recycling collections to commercial customers.

The Appearance of Streets and the Public Realm

In terms of the local environment, it is vital that our streets are clean and safe, and they must therefore be cleaned regularly. The appearance of streets and public spaces is important to the residents of Gwynedd, and there is a small team of officers responsible for dealing with environmental crimes such as fly-tipping, graffiti and dog fouling. On average, we take 1.76 days to clear fly-tipped items after receiving notice of them. We apply a measure called the 'Cleanliness Index' (a combination of external and internal assessment) in order to assess the cleanliness and appearance of streets.



Keep Wales Tidy conducts a survey to determine how many 'defects' such as litter, weeds, dog fouling, chewing gum and cigarette butts can be found on any given street. According to the independent survey, the cleanliness and appearance of Gwynedd streets continues to be of a good standard, and it appears that a recent improvement in behaviour has led to less untidiness. Recently, Keep Wales Tidy conducted its cleanliness review for 2019-20. The score is noted on the left.

We also continue to collaborate on the *Bangor Image project*, which aims to enhance the appearance and environmental quality of the city. Bangor Image is a partnership which brings together representatives from the City Council, Bangor Business Improvement District, Bangor University and several other organisations, and serves as a template for working in partnership in order to improve the look of a community.

Since establishing the partnership we have:

- Done away with 'House to Let' signs
- Supported the *Plastic-free Bangor* campaign
- Enhanced the appearance of the High Street
- Trialled advertising on roundabouts

We are eager to establish similar partnerships throughout the county in order to work together with communities to improve the appearance and environmental quality of their neighbourhoods.

Grounds Maintenance



The Department is responsible for maintaining roadside verges and open spaces in order to improve the environmental quality of our towns and villages and to make them safer places for residents. Financial prudence has led by now to cuts becoming less frequent, but we are eager to take advantage of the opportunity to promote biodiversity whilst ensuring that our junctions and public spaces remain safe and attractive.

Children's Playing Fields

Children, parents and carers appreciate playing fields and we maintain 131 of them throughout the county. Playing equipment is very expensive and funding for the purchase of new equipment is exceedingly scarce.



We also maintain playgrounds so that they are safe for children and young people to be able to enjoy.



Over the plan period we will:

- adjust our grass-cutting patterns in order to promote biodiversity
- explore eco-friendly methods of dealing with weeds, and attempt to avoid the use of harmful pesticides wherever possible
- extend the development of community partnerships to improve the county's appearance and environmental quality
- look into alternative means of maintaining and retaining playing fields by collaborating with communities.

Bereavement Service



We manage the Crematorium in Bangor and 16 of the County's largest and busiest cemeteries.

The bereavement service is crucial to residents, and we shall ensure a bereavement service which is appropriate and dignified.

Public Toilets



The Department is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the county's **public toilets**. The Council is under no obligation to provide public toilets, and a scheme to close a number of the county's toilets was introduced following the Gwynedd Challenge consultation. Nevertheless, the department believes that appropriate provision of public toilets is important in terms of individuals' experiences of the county, and alternative means were developed to keep as many toilets open as possible - by working in partnership with community councils or supporting community toilets within Gwynedd businesses.



We wish to thank everyone who has worked in partnership with the Council to sustain the alternative provision. It is due to this collaborative working that we are among the counties with the highest numbers of public toilets in Wales.

CCTV



In order to protect and safeguard the community we maintain a network of CCTV cameras in the populated areas of the county, namely Bangor, Caernarfon and Pwllheli. These systems assist in the monitoring of criminal and antisocial incidents.

The Department has enhanced the network of CCTV cameras throughout the county in order to further the work of safeguarding the county's residents and property.

Over the plan period we will:

- offer to extend the network in collaboration with communities.

Fleet Service

The Department is responsible for managing and maintaining the Council's entire fleet of vehicles. The Fleet Service provides guidance and assistance to Council departments in order to ensure the appropriate, safe and lawful use of their vehicles.

In addition, the Service is responsible for maintaining over 400 vehicles to a high standard, which is done at three different locations across Gwynedd with workshops in Caernarfon, Pwllheli and Dolgellau.

The Department has been attempting to reduce the fleet's carbon emissions by investing in efficient vehicles, including electric vehicles. Fleet emissions were reduced by 19.8% between 2005/06 and 2018.

Over the plan period we will:

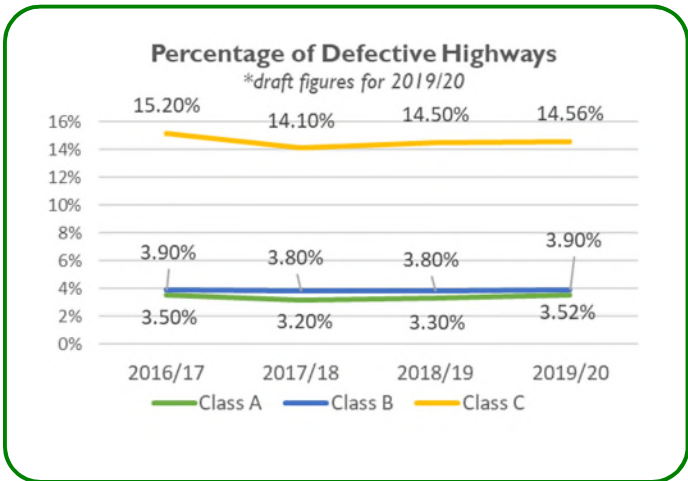
- prioritise the work on fleet decarbonisation
- explore the potential of using hydrogen as a carbon-free fuel on which to run our heavy fleet
- establish a pool vehicle system for the Council, and also look into offering community use.

Highways and Street Lighting



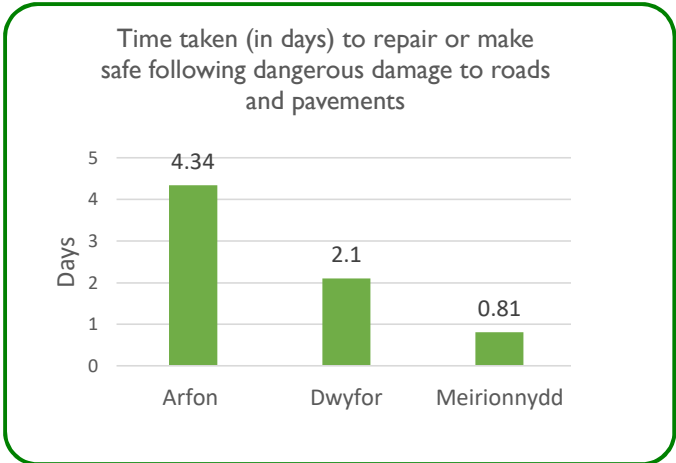
It is important that Gwynedd businesses and residents can move with ease and safely within the county and, in order to ensure this, the Council maintains 2,697km of **county roads** along with 199km of **trunk roads** (namely highways of national importance, on behalf of Welsh Government). Our highways in Gwynedd, which include the Class A and B roads, are currently in a good condition with fewer than 4% being defective and in need of attention.

With a reduction in the relevant budget, the condition of our Class C and unclassified roads has continued to deteriorate. Due to the financial pressures on the Council it is inevitable that there will be further pressure on the road maintenance budget, and it will be a challenge for us to prevent the deterioration in the quality of our roads, and in particular the lower priority Class C and unclassified roads.



There is a new national Code of Practice now in force which emphasises risk management. The Service is in the process of introducing changes to the Highways Asset Maintenance Plan in the interests of consistency and reform, and to ensure that we reflect the new code.

We seek to prevent any sudden deterioration in the quality of our roads. In doing so, we will reflect upon the contents of the new code of practice. The Service is also trialling the use of new materials or reusing materials to fill potholes. This will assist us in reducing waste and will contribute to our efforts towards reducing our carbon footprint.



North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency Highways Maintenance Agreement

Gwynedd Council is responsible for leading a partnership of seven councils in north and mid Wales which manages and maintains 1,100km of trunk roads (Welsh Government highways of national importance).



Asiant Cefnffyrdd Gogledd a Chanolbarth Cymru
North & Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent

It is our Highways Service that is responsible for the maintenance work, along with dealing with accidents and incidents that occur due to severe weather and outside normal working hours.



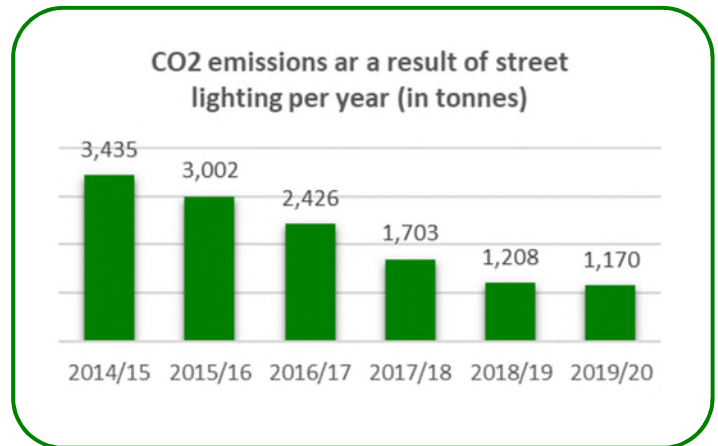
Maintenance of Bridges and Structures

We maintain 631 bridges throughout the county. They include 338 arched bridges and 96 that are listed and have additional requirements. In addition, we have 1,618 retaining walls throughout the county that are also maintained by the Department.

Street Lighting

We maintain 18,705 **street lights** and 6,067 illuminated **signs** in order to make our roads and streets safer. The lights use electrical power which has a detrimental impact on the environment in terms of carbon emissions and light pollution.

Over the last three years we have been converting street lights and signs to LED technology with the majority of them dimming or switching off when appropriate. This serves to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions, and to prevent light pollution today and for the future. In recent years we have contributed to carbon reduction by prioritising this work.



Over the plan period we will:

- introduce a new Asset Maintenance Plan with risk-based priorities
- trial new, eco-friendly surface treatment methods and encourage the reuse of raw materials
- introduce a mobile electronic system for our employees to receive and record their work. This will enable us to work more efficiently.
- complete the work of converting all street lights in the county to LED, which has ensured a carbon reduction of nearly 12,000 tonnes so far.

This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.



Children and Supporting Families Department



Our purpose is to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm; experience stability in their lives and receive the best opportunities for their health and well-being.

Together with the day-to-day work outlined below, this department leads on the following improvement priority projects:

- Support People's Well-being (Improvement Priority 3)
- Strategy to Keep Families Together - (Improvement Priority 6)
- Ensure a specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs (Improvement Priority 6)
- Ensure that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive - (Improvement Priority 6)

There are several teams within our service and we work within 3 tiers of need:

- 1. Early Intervention**
- 2. Care and support, safeguarding, and care needs**
- 3. Specialist Teams**

In Gwynedd, we believe that every child and young person should be given the opportunity to reach their full potential. We recognise that children develop best when they are supported to grow and succeed within their families and communities. We also recognise that providing early intervention is critical in helping children and their families to thrive and to reduce the need for more intensive services.

Promoting well-being and supporting families to thrive goes beyond the services of our individual departments, and consequently we intend to do further work across all the Council's preventative services to improve our ability to respond to the needs of Gwynedd residents, in a coordinated, integrated and efficient manner.

Early Intervention

The offer of early intervention is essential in helping children and their families to thrive and to reduce the need for more intensive services. We have a number of services providing early intervention, whether early on in the child's life so that they receive the support they need to thrive; or early on when

a challenge or concern first emerges and before the situation deteriorates; and we will intervene in this way by working with the whole family.

Early Years Service

Our purpose is to make a positive difference to the life opportunities of children under four years of age by supporting nursery education provisions, developing the childcare and play sector, and providing parenting packages to help families raise healthy, happy and secure children.

We also provide more intensive packages of support in specific areas of Gwynedd through the **Flying Start** programme. The programme supports families with raising children and parenting, children's language and speech development, and health and care support, through multi-agency teams from education, health and care.



Team Around the Family

Our purpose is to intervene early when problems within families emerge, but this intervention happens voluntarily with the family's permission. We will help by responding to needs and providing appropriate services.

We have received 282 referrals to the Team Around the Family in 2019/20.

Youth Service

Having the opportunity to socialise, take part in activities and continue to learn and develop new skills outside school is very important to the county's young people. Supporting young people to build resilience to be able to deal with any future challenges is very important for the Youth Service. Young people have told us that they want our support to help them look after their health and well-being, to help them develop and learn skills, and to help them be a part of their communities.

Care and support, safeguarding, and care needs

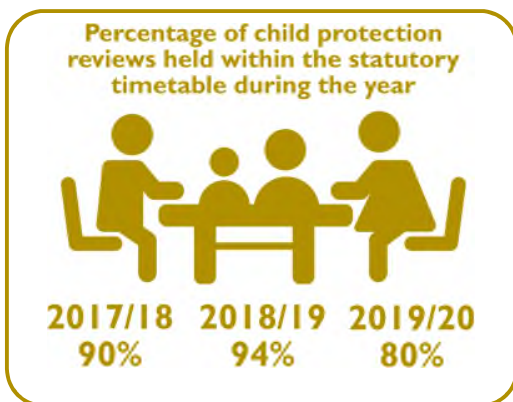
Most children and young people in Gwynedd live happy, safe lives and enjoy opportunities to learn and play. At times, however, some children and their families will need more formal advice and assistance.

The Council is responsible for leading, investigating and managing the county's child safeguarding interventions. We work closely with schools, the Police, the Health Board, doctors, and health visitors

etc. to fulfil this statutory responsibility. The responsibility for safeguarding children is one of the Council's most important responsibilities.

The **Information, Advice and Support Service** maintains high standards when responding in a timely manner to referrals, which could be safeguarding referrals, and to referrals for care and support. In order to safeguard children and young people, we respond to referrals without delay. When those referrals include concerns about allegations of abuse, we must investigate those allegations in accordance with the Child Protection Guidelines. We will make a decision on each case within twenty-four hours in order to determine the best way to proceed.

The **Social Work Teams** offer support and intensive intervention to children and their families. Social workers see children and their families regularly and keep in touch with them, remaining alert to issues of risk to children and young people. We ensure that there are resources available to support them and that their needs are clear to us. Plans are then put in place to respond to their needs. At times, we will refer on to teams that offer more specialist interventions, such as the services in the Trobwynt Team.



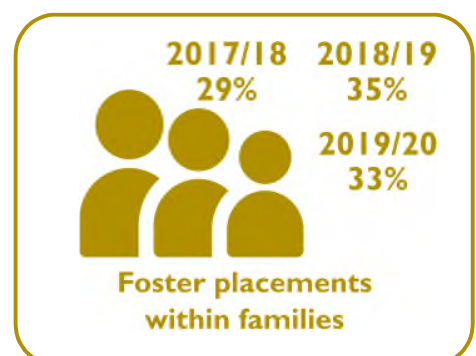
We also conduct child protection investigations; and sometimes, some families require highly intensive support and we need to bring children who are at risk into the Council's care.

Children usually come into our care under extremely difficult circumstances, and we are as ambitious for these children as anyone would be for his/her own child.

The reduction in the compliance to hold conferences at the time in 2019/20 mainly derives from delays due to court cases and staff illness. Despite the delays, conferences take place and any child protection arrangements that need to be in place continue to safeguard children from harm.

To ensure that children and young people experience stability, we support children to live at home with support where this is possible. Emphasis is also placed on trying to place a child with members of his/her extended family or friends of the family. Where this is not possible, the child will be placed with registered foster carers or, at times, some children and young people will require specialist residential units to meet specific needs.

The role of the **Fostering Team** is to ensure that we have sufficient foster parents to satisfy the needs of children who cannot live at home.



We assess and support foster carers so that they can provide children who come into our care with the necessary support, and this is a high priority for the Department. We are aware that children who are in stable situations get the best opportunity to test those boundaries that are crucial for good development. This lays the foundation for achieving the best outcomes for them.

While a child is in the Council's care, it is our responsibility to provide a clear care plan for him/her, which is reviewed regularly in order to ensure that the right decisions are made for the benefit of the child and that there are no delays in the plan.



The **post-16** team offers support for young people over 16 years old who have been assessed as being in need of care and support, and includes young people who have left care up to when they are 25 years old. The workers see the young people regularly and encourage them to maintain good contact with their families and develop their skills to live independently. The 'When I'm Ready' Scheme gives young people who are not ready to leave their foster placement on their 18th birthday the choice to stay on until they are ready to do so.

The Specialist Teams

The purpose of the **Trobwynt Services** is to reduce needs by offering a range of intensive interventions and support to children who are on the edge of care, who have just come into care, or to safely return children home from care. By working closely and co-producing care plans with the children and their families, the physical and mental health needs and the emotional well-being needs of the children and their families are met.



The needs of families we supported during 2019/20 have been more complex and intensive; especially the number of young people in their teens who received support.

As part of these interventions, the **Trobwynt Team** offers intensive support packages aimed at keeping children stable in their homes. The **Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS)** offers specialist intervention for families where there is misuse of alcohol and drugs by the parents and carers and this is a risk factor for the children. Because of the intensive nature of the intervention, the service is prioritised for families where the risk to children is high. The **Reflection** project offers specialist support to parents whose children are in the care system permanently. In addition, **Trobwynt** offers a specialist

service that focuses on abolishing care orders where intensive work has already been completed, and through this offers a way out of care for children and their families.

The **Derwen Team** provide a service for disabled and ill children and young people and their families. We provide support for young, disabled people to help their inclusion in community activities and life, and to increase their skills so they become more independent. We provide periods of respite care for a great number of families through a support service. It is a multidisciplinary team that works in partnership with the Health Board. We have social workers, nurses and psychologists working in the team, and because of the wide range of complex needs, our workers need to possess expert skills to respond to the needs of the children and their families.



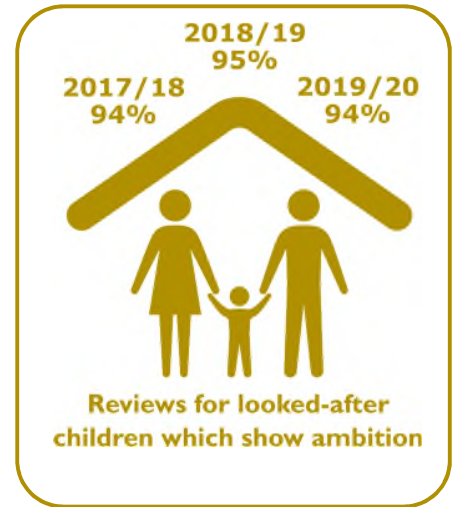
The purpose of the **Youth Justice Service** is to work intensively with children and young people who have offended, to prevent them from re-offending. We offer a wide range of specialist interventions and work with the whole family to find solutions to help children and young people from re-offending. We also work on a preventative basis with children and young people to prevent them from offending in the first place. We do this in partnership with schools and within the individuals' communities. We are a multi-agency team and we work in partnership with the Police, the Health Board, Careers Wales, North Wales Housing and others.

How we ensure the quality of Safeguarding

In order to provide assurance to the Council that our safeguarding arrangements are robust, we have a **Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit** that focuses on different aspects of this important area of work. We implement the statutory duties to review cases of Looked After Children, and provide guidance on child protection, and chair Case Conferences and Strategy Meetings where allegations have been made about professionals.

We conduct child protection conferences in partnership with the families and other workers. Intervening with a family to safeguard the child can be very difficult for them. They do not often welcome this support, and very often only cooperate through enforcement. Our aim is to ensure that the child's voice is more prominent in these discussions and that families are involved more effectively in their safeguarding plan.

Independent Reviewing Officers monitor the care plans of every looked after child and young person. They ensure that the care plans have given appropriate weight and consideration to the wishes and feelings of the child, and that the child fully understands his/her situation bearing in mind the child's age and comprehension. The Independent Reviewing Officers give assurance to the Council that the interests of the child are safeguarded throughout their time in care. They listen to children, make sure they are happy with their plans, ensure their opinion is heard and that their plans are followed, and they are sufficiently empowered to take action if the plans are not followed.



This Department's work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible



The Environment Department



The Environment Department leads on the following main areas:

- **Planning and Building Control**
- **Public Protection**
- **Transportation and the Countryside**

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

- Public Protection Capacity – (Improvement Priority 7)
- Climate Change Action Plan – (Improvement Priority 8)

Naturally, the Covid-19 crisis and the restrictions pertaining to it have had a considerable impact on all the department's services, with many e.g. our **Public Protection** services undertaking quite different work to the norm, and this under pressure. We have established a completely new service, the **Test, Trace and Protect Service**, and we have had to find different solutions to ensure that we can continue to provide other services. All of this has had an impact on the usual way the department is run, and on our priorities during 20-21. The challenge of restoring and stabilising will face us during 2021-22, and we will use the lessons that have arisen from the crisis when considering the shape of our future services.

Planning and Building Control

- **Planning Service**
- **Joint Planning Policy Service, (Gwynedd and Anglesey)**
- **Building Control Service**

Planning Service

The purpose of this service is to facilitate and manage sustainable developments for the benefit of our communities, the economy and the environment within the Gwynedd planning authority area (which does not include the National Park area).

During 2019-20, over 1,000 general planning enquiries / pre-application enquiries were received. We make decisions on **planning applications** to develop land and deal with approximately 1,100 planning applications annually and, on average, over 91% of applications are granted permission. On average, it takes 68 days to determine applications, with approximately 86% determined within the required time-frame.



Percentage of customers stating that they were satisfied with the level of service

We take **enforcement measures** against developments that have not received planning permission and we deal with approximately 210 cases every year. We investigated 60% of the enforcement cases within 84 days and several enforcement notices were issued.

We deal with all types of developments such as housing (including affordable housing), new schools, factories and substantial infrastructure developments such as National Grid plans.

Joint Planning Policy Service, (Gwynedd and Anglesey)

The purpose of this service is to prepare planning policy documents, including preparing and monitoring the Joint Local Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The Local Development Plan promotes sustainable development and includes maps and written policies used to determine planning applications.

Since adopting the **Joint Local Development Plan** (Gwynedd and Anglesey), 8 (of a series of 17) Supplementary Planning Guidance documents have been adopted and another 2 have been subject to public consultation. The guidance add details to the planning policies, and strengthen the Development Plan's ability to provide a firm foundation to make decisions on planning applications in the future. A draft Annual Monitoring Report has been prepared for 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 and has been discussed with Cabinet Members. The service will need to submit a report pertaining to a 2-year period in October 2021 as it was not necessary to report in 2020. The draft Annual Monitoring Report's conclusion was that the plan delivered the strategy and that the plan's policies worked.

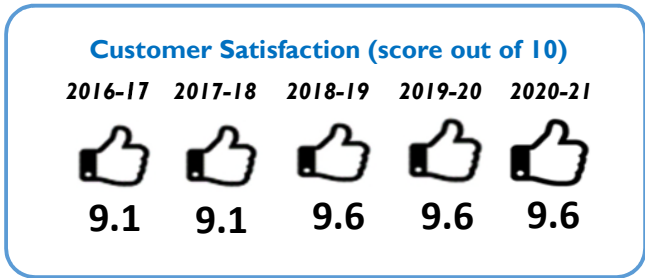
Guidance is also given on planning policy matters to the Gwynedd Planning Authority, the Isle of Anglesey County Council Planning Authority and to external organisations and the public.

As a result of Legislation that will come into force in 2021 to create a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for the north Wales region (and the other regions), there will be a statutory requirement to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the region. The Council will be expected to contribute towards any costs of creating a New Unit that will be responsible for preparing the Strategic Development Plan, at a time when the Service will need to prepare a Revised or New Local Development Plan.

Building Control Service

The purpose of this service is to ensure the required standards to secure the health and safety of people around buildings while improving fuel and power conservation, protecting and improving the environment and promoting sustainable development. We also ensure that access and essential facilities are provided for the disabled in new buildings and as part of adaptations.

Building work must be completed in accordance with the specific requirements of Building



Regulations. This is important and valuable to the people of Gwynedd, as it will ensure that any building work is safe and is of the required standard.

In terms of dangerous structures and buildings, we offer a 24-hour service to ensure that the health and safety of Gwynedd residents is protected.

For Full Building Control applications, the service aims to inspect the plans within 15 working days, with the decision being released as soon as possible, and offers close joint working with builders and architects to attain a good standard of application.

Following the Ffordd Gwynedd review, the Service is focusing on trying to deliver the purpose of ensuring that building work is undertaken in accordance with the appropriate requirements, with regulations being enforced where there is justification, to safeguard the health and safety of residents and the environment. This also entails that the Service is revisiting the model for funding the day-to-day work, by also inputting into the changes that are under way nationally with the Building Control system.

Public Protection

- **Pollution Control and Licensing Service**
- **Food and Safety Service**
- **Trading Standards Service**
- **Tracing Service [part of the COVID 19 Test, Trace, Protect system]**

The general purpose of these services is to protect the public in relation to a range of environmental and health matters.

Pollution Control and Licensing Service



The purpose of this service is to ensure that businesses or individuals do not pollute the air, the land, or waters with undesirable substances or noise by investigating and responding to complaints about pollution and statutory nuisance.



We assess the safety of private drinking water supplies and enforce improvements as required - 536 drinking water samples were assessed over the past year. We also investigate and monitor **industrial processes** on 49 sites and regulate industrial airborne emissions (oil waste burners, mobile crushers, cement machinery).

We also organise funerals in cases where there are no family members - we had 14 cases during the past year.

We license the following fields in order to protect the users, businesses and the communities of Gwynedd from any detrimental impacts; and take enforcement measures where required to keep users of licensed services safe.

Enforcing Licences	
 1,001 Alcohol Premises	 66 Gambling Premises

- Alcohol and entertainment licensing (including events) and gambling.
- Animal permits including pet shops, riding establishments and dog breeding establishments.
- Taxi vehicles, drivers and operators.
- Caravan sites and scrap metal dealer licences.



Food and Safety Service

The purpose of this service is to:

- **Ensure that food and drink sold that is manufactured, stored, distributed, treated or used in the Gwynedd, is free of any risk to the health and safety of the consumer and is in compliance with constitutional and labelling requirements.**
- **Prevent deaths, injuries and conditions that are associated with workplaces**
- **Protect residents and visitors to Gwynedd against infectious diseases and harmful chemicals.**
- **Assist Gwynedd businesses to meet with the required statutory requirements.**

To realise our purpose we educate individuals and businesses, and hold inspection programmes, sample foods and undertake research. We also undertake reactive interventions as required. The service contributes to supporting the local economy by assisting businesses to comply with regulations and deal with businesses who choose not to, in order that they do not have an advantage over legal businesses and cause a risk to public health. Our work assists the Council to realise our well-being objectives to ensure that Gwynedd is a healthy, safe and sustainable place to live and work.

Monitoring 2019-20



Over 2,100 food businesses



200 Food samples



70 accidents and safety complaints



93.23% of food businesses with a score of 3 (satisfactory) or higher



Over 40 visits Educational



Visit 2,000+ businesses annually

Requests for Service



745
Food safety



125
Health and Safety



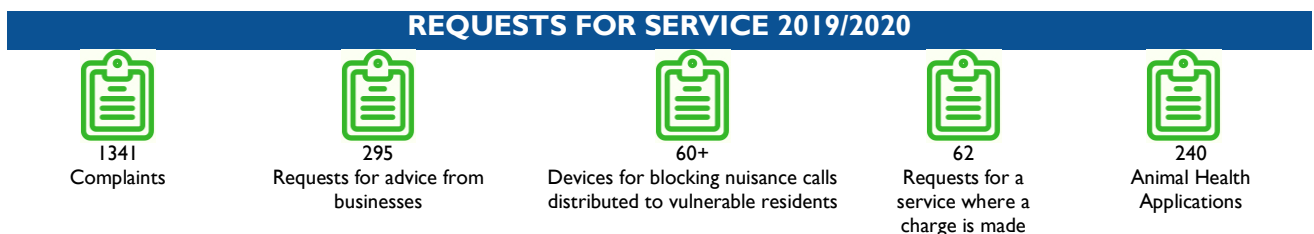
320
Infectious Diseases

Trading Standards Service

The purpose of this service is to promote, support and ensure a fair and equitable environment while protecting the interests of Gwynedd residents and businesses.

We are responsible for enforcing a wide range of legislation involving the supply and distribution of goods and services and deal with a variety of subjects, including:

- safety of goods
- raising awareness of scams and illegal money lending
- doorstep crimes
- sale of goods and age restrictions
- business advice
- fake goods and crimes and intellectual property rights
- e-commerce and internet investigations
- estate agents legislation and property descriptions
- petroleum and explosives/fireworks
- animal health and welfare
- animal feed
- weights and measures



The Test, Trace and Protect Service (New Service)

The Test, Trace and Protect service (TTP) was established in May 2020 and came into operation on 1 June 2020. By now the service employs 103 workers.

The aims of the Test, Trace and Protect Services in Gwynedd are:

- Reduce the spread of Covid-19 across our communities by supporting people infected with the virus to isolate during their infectious period;
- Identify the people who have been in contact with a positive case of Covid-19 and support them to isolate until the symptoms or the incubation period has elapsed;
- Support people with symptoms to get access to a Covid-19 test;
- Work with specialist partners in the risk management area to control any risks for people who are isolating together with wider communities and businesses in Gwynedd.

Since June 2020, TTP in Gwynedd has responded to:

- 8049 cases of Covid-19 in Gwynedd (between 01/06/20-31/12/20)
- 1420 cases (Index cases) of Covid-19 have been identified (between 01/06/20-31/12/20)
- 6513 contacts to Index Cases were created

On average, in Gwynedd each positive Index Case has 4.67 contacts.

In addition to dealing with cases in Gwynedd, we undertake some significant work on behalf of other local authorities across Wales - this is called joint support. Since 1 June 2020, we have provided the following support throughout Wales to other local authorities:

- Approximately 550 positive Covid-19 cases
- Approximately 370 contacts to positive cases

The flexibility of the TTP model enables us to be more resilient throughout the whole of Wales, to reduce the spread of the virus and ensure that we make the best use of public funding, this will continue in 2021.

Transportation and the Countryside

- **Parking and Street Care Service**
- **Traffic and Projects Service**
- **Integrated Transport and Road Safety Service**
- **Countryside and Access Service**

It is noted that establishing a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for north Wales can also impact on transportation services as it will be one of the duties of the CJC to deal with preparing the Regional Transportation Plan. The Council will be expected to contribute towards any costs to create a new unit that will be responsible for preparing the Regional Transportation Plan.

Parking and Street Works Service

At the turn of this year, an opportunity was identified to improve efficiency and effectiveness by merging the Parking and Street Works units because of the synergy between the responsibilities and activities of the teams. A new service was formed within the Environment Department, namely the Parking and Street Works Service.

The purpose of the service is to ensure that the county network is safe and unrestricted, to facilitate the flow of traffic and ensure there are appropriate parking places for all.

We satisfy this purpose by delivering the following aspects:

- ensuring there is no unnecessary barrier to the use of the highway as a result of activities and events, through coordinating and appropriate control
- parking enforcement on and off our streets
- maintaining our car parks and ensure their safety
- maintaining our pay and display machines

We are responsible for coordinating and monitoring all the activities carried out on the public highway network by statutory contractors (e.g. Welsh Water, BT) or their contractors. We also **licence the siting of skips and scaffolding** on our roads as well as enforcing property owners to fell trees, move obstructions off the road and so on.

A **Parking Task Group** was formed in 2019 to conduct a review of the Council's current parking strategy as a great deal had changed since the Council conducted the last review in 2015. In addition, this year has exacerbated the problems in terms of parking, such as the lack of parking spaces throughout the county, as a result of the fact that the majority of people have remained in the UK rather than venturing overseas on holiday as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. This has certainly highlighted the need for additional powers to deal with vehicles that cause an obstruction and better control of motorhomes. There is now an opportunity to review the current arrangements and recommend improvements to arrive at appropriate and practical solutions.

Concerns had been highlighted in the Ogwen Valley area about the lack of parking for residents and workers in the area. Despite the intention to continue to monitor the situation there, due to the Covid-19 crisis monitoring had to be significantly reduced during 2020-21 but we will resume this work once the situation improves.

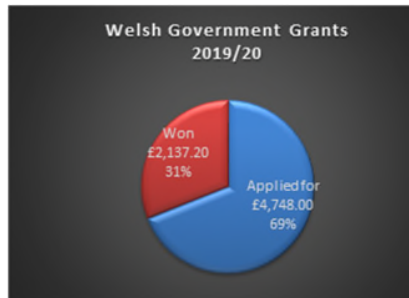
Traffic and Projects Service

The purpose of this service is to enable the public to use Gwynedd roads in a safe and unobstructed way.

We satisfy this purpose by delivering the following main activities:

- ensuring that our roads are safe and unobstructed for every user and offer appropriate measures to monitor and improve them.
- complying with our duties under the Active Travel Act 2013 by providing a network of footpaths and cycle tracks and promote active travel
- delivering projects dealing with road safety, improving the network and integrated and sustainable transport in a cost effective, timely and safe way
- ensuring that new developments that impact our roads network have been designed and implemented safely.

We also manage various road improvement projects across the county and we are always looking for opportunities to fund our transportation and safety schemes from external sources.

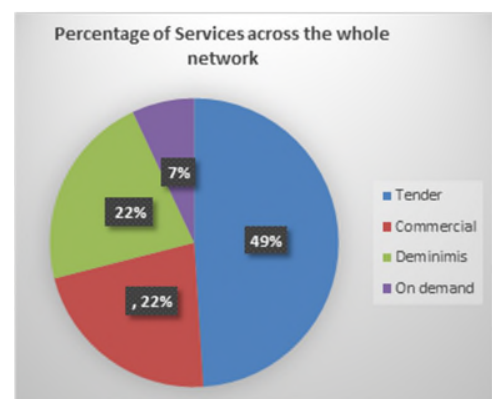


Integrated Transport and Road Safety Service

The purpose of the transport service is to provide safe, quality and cost-effective transport for Gwynedd residents. To this end, the unit is responsible for all matters relating to transporting Gwynedd residents, be it public transport, transporting learners to educational establishments, community transport or transport for social services.

Over half the **public transport routes** in Gwynedd receive financial support to run them as they are not commercially viable. To facilitate this, we prepare public transport contracts as well as prepare and create operational service timetables for the various routes. We are also responsible for arranging **education transport contracts** (including a seat purchasing scheme) in order to provide free transport for eligible pupils.

In areas where a conventional transport provision is not available, or for our residents who are unable to, or find it difficult to use conventional public transport, we also consider opportunities for **community transport** e.g. use of electric vehicle in the Nebo and Nasareth area to transport passengers to meet the bus in Penygroes.



Bus Reform Programme

This project aims to make wider improvements to the network across Wales by the end of March 2021. Welsh Government has commissioned consultants to deliver this work. The aim is to stabilise the network, increase the number of passengers using the bus service to encourage a modal shift and a change in travel behaviour. They will design a new network in January 2021. No reference has been made to additional funding to address these changes. Transport for Wales will manage the network.

Climate Change

In accordance with the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023 in response to climate change, we have secured 3.6m from Welsh Government to purchase 6 electric buses that will operate between Blaenau Ffestiniog

and Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llandudno from September 2021. This is in line with the Welsh Government's wish for public buses and taxis to be carbon neutral by 2028.

The purpose of the road safety service is to try and reduce injuries and accidents on our roads by undertaking appropriate educational, training and publicity initiatives

We satisfy this purpose by delivering the following aspects:

- safe cycling training (primary)
- training to cross the main road safely (primary)
- walking to school campaigns (primary and secondary)
- Pass Plus Cymru training (young drivers)
- vehicle management (young drivers)
- byw yn iach - gyrru'n iach (older drivers)
- joint campaigns with others on aspects such as drink driving, speeding, seat belts, baby seats and mobile phones (adults)

Concerns were raised about road safety outside Penygroes primary and secondary schools serving the Nantlle Valley area. A new route has been opened which enables pupils at Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle and Ysgol Bro Llew, Penygroes to walk to school avoiding busy sections of the main road. Work is also underway to improve parking and bus provision at peak times, and we hope to create a new car park in the area.

Similarly, concerns were raised about road safety outside some of the schools in Caernarfon. A scheme is now underway to improve the safety of road users in the vicinity of Ysgol y Gelli, Ysgol Syr Huw Owen and Arfon Byw'n Iach Centre. This scheme will include traffic calming measures, an extension to a car park, provision for taxis and a new footpath.

Countryside and Access Service

Countryside Service

The purpose of the service is to look after the Gwynedd path network, the beauty of the landscape and nature on land and sea.

We managed to proceed with some of the operational areas identified in the Ffordd Gwynedd Review of the Service in 2019, and the work will continue in 21/22.

Biodiversity and the Llŷn AONB

We ensure that we comply with the Council's duties to protect our Biodiversity in Gwynedd, by giving specialist advice on planning applications, developments and enquiries.

Grants available via the **Local Nature Partnership** have enabled us to support and stimulate work that improves nature locally across the County. Their projects for 2021/22 include:

- Creating a community orchard and destroy non-native plants to improve the corridors for pollinators in the Blaenau Ffestiniog area
- In Pwllheli, the local partnership that includes the Town Council and Ysgol Glan y Môr are involved to improve habitat and biodiversity links in a local nature reserve and raise awareness about the area amongst local residents
- Supporting local organisations to manage land near Trem yr Wyddfa, Penygroes for the benefit of nature and as a community resource.

The Department is responsible for coordinating the work of managing a designated European site for marine habitats and species of European importance in the Pen Llŷn a'r Sarnau Special Area of Conservation. The department also protects and seeks to manage the quality of the **Llŷn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** in accordance with protocol. The AONB Management Plan is operated by the Council and other organisations.

The **Gwynedd rights of way network** is approximately 3,800km long. Priority is given to maintaining those paths that give recreational and active travel opportunities within reach of communities. The Department is also responsible for maintaining and developing the national Coastal Path, which is approximately 300km long in Gwynedd. We deal with applications to divert and create paths and maintain and update the definitive map, which shows the county's rights of way network.

A grant programme to improve access has allowed improvements to paths across the county including the Buan path between Llanelltyd and Dolgellau that had eroded badly. The path can now be used by the whole community.

A number of users of Lôn Eifion and Lôn Las Menai were concerned that it was not possible to adhere to social distancing guidance due to narrow sections of the path. Improvements will be implemented in 2021/22 to widen the paths and make the entrances more convenient for all to use.

Following local demand to complete the cycle route between Tywyn and Aberdyfi, which is already one of the Council's priorities, the Department has failed to find grant funding from the Welsh Government to enable us to take the work forward. We will continue to seek adequate funding to complete this important Active Travel link.

There was also a demand to build a multi-use route between Pwllheli and Llanbedrog that would enable users to have easy access along the south coast of the Llŷn Peninsula. Legal work is underway to seek cycling and riding rights on the route to expand our Active Travel network, and this work will be addressed in 2021/22.

We will also continue to work towards creating fit-for-purpose coastal routes between Tal y Bont, Bangor and Porth Penrhyn, and also between Dinas Dinlle and Trefor during 2021/2022.

Business Service

The purpose of this service is to support other services within the department to deliver.

Our work includes contract management, finance and income; managing the development and effective operation of information technology systems; integration of tendering and procurement provision, land charges and providing a support and administrative assistance for the different services.

We prepare, implement and manage a large number of the Department's contracts; monitor progress and performance of providers and contractors in terms of agreements, contracts and finance of services; design of operational systems and support procedures of the Department in cost-effective ways and prepare and present work papers regarding savings, changes to the staffing organisation and fees and charges.

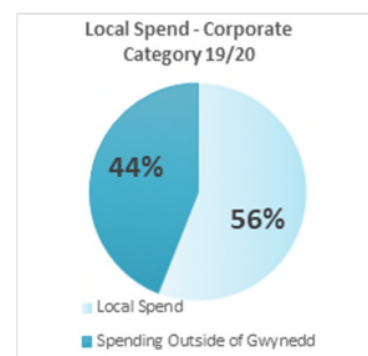
We need to manage the development and implementation of information technology systems, design the operational systems and the procedures for all the services that are used across the Department in cost-effective ways, which will lead to more effective and efficient work practices.

Corporate Category Management

The purpose of the Service is to collaborate and support services within the Council to spend public funds in a strategic and correct manner.

Category management provides a deeper understanding of the market, products, suppliers and the supply chain to develop cross-departmental strategic category plans.

Value for money - In the year 19/20, £165 thousand pounds was saved and another £78 thousand was identified as possible savings, together with an additional non-financial value for each corporate contract set during the year. In 2020/21, despite the redeployment of staff and being responsible for PPE and quality cleaning goods for the first six months, it was possible to save £58 thousand with an additional £23 thousand identified between April and November.



Keeping the Benefits Local - Through early engagement with the local market and joint working with Business Wales, who provide advice and support to prepare a proposal, there was an increase in local expenditure of 1% compared to 2018/19. The team's effort in 2019/20 continues to improve the local percentage, and between April and November **2020**, local expenditure has increased again by 1%. In addition to these figures are the supply chain initiatives to encourage main suppliers and contractors to use local companies.

For the rest of 2020/21 the programmers of further strategic development plans as well as providing practical support will implement these plans. Where possible special focus will be given to joint-development and implementing social value procurement practices to enable fair play for small and medium-sized businesses.



Economy and Community Department



The Economy and Community Department comprises a range of services that aim to improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of Gwynedd communities.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

- 1) Growth Vision for North Wales - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 2) Creating High Value Jobs (£28,500 + salary) - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 3) Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 4) Promotion of Town Centres - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 5) Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 6) Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 7) Tourism - creating a sustainable tourism plan - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 8) Regeneration: Creating regeneration plans for our areas - (Improvement Priority 1)
- 9) More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the world of work - (Improvement Priority 3)

This is a brief outline of the Department's work in 2021/22:

Economic Development Service

The economy's performance has an impact on the quality of life of Gwynedd residents, influencing household living costs and income. We collaborate with partners to create the conditions for businesses and enterprises to establish themselves, to be competitive and develop in Gwynedd and to create high quality jobs across the County.

COVID has had a significant impact on Gwynedd employers and businesses in 2020 - the number of businesses, productivity and value of businesses have been reduced. The number of unemployed people has increased significantly and the economy has gone into recession. Brexit has also caused uncertainty for a number of businesses, especially businesses in the agricultural sector and those depending on the import and export of key goods.

Gwynedd's economy was performing fairly well at a Wales level but not in comparison with other regions of Britain and Europe. Salary levels in Gwynedd are much lower than in other parts of Wales and the productivity value of Gwynedd businesses is low compared to other areas. It is therefore important that Gwynedd Council takes proactive measures to create the conditions that will stimulate economic growth at a time of economic uncertainty.

There were 16,010 businesses, enterprises and community companies in Gwynedd in 2019. The Department provides information, advice and practical support to assist them to establish, stabilise and develop in order to support and create jobs. The Service gives specific attention to supporting businesses by providing different business support and innovation promotion packages for businesses by encouraging them to make better use of technology particularly in the most rural areas.

1,200



of grants distributed to Gwynedd businesses in 2020, worth £2.6m

The service works closely with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to develop projects to improve the region's economic productivity and to create higher value jobs in the county. As a result of the significant increase in employment we also work with partners to support businesses to employ workers and the people of Gwynedd to gain access to jobs.

During the next year we will seek to ascertain the long term impact of COVID and Brexit on Gwynedd businesses and raise awareness of business support sources to enable businesses to cope with the change.

Tourism, Marketing and Events Service

The tourism industry is a key employer in Gwynedd. With an economic value of over £1.35 billion, over 18,200 people worked in this field in 2019. However, the visitor economy has been affected significantly by COVID as businesses have been closed for most of 2020 and events have

77,570

followers on Snowdonia, Mountains and Coast's social media in 2020/21



been cancelled. As the restrictions were relaxed during the summer the number of visitors to the main tourist destinations increased significantly placing pressure on local communities. In order to be able to respond to the concerns of communities and businesses, the Council reviewed the field and adopted a series of principles to enable the sector to recover and develop sustainably in the future for the benefit and well-being of the people of Gwynedd.

In 2021/22 the service will focus on supporting a visitor economy that:

- celebrates and respects our communities, language and culture;
- maintains and respects our environment;
- ensures that the advantages for Gwynedd communities are more than any disadvantages

Maritime Services

As the Gwynedd landscape and natural environment is so important for the county's prosperity, the Department tries to ensure **quality and safe resources in our harbours, marinas and on the beaches** of Gwynedd to create recreational attractions for local people and visitors. The Department manages 301km of Gwynedd's coastline, concentrating on eight Blue Flag beaches, four harbours and two marinas, including Hafan Pwllheli that accommodates 400 boats.



1,777 boats and **923**
personal watercraft
registered during 2018/19

In 2021/22, we will:

- update the Gwynedd Beach Management Scheme
- implement Dredging Strategies for Pwllheli Harbour and Victoria Dock
- establish future management options for Hafan and Pwllheli Harbour.

Regeneration Service

Several economic, social, cultural and environmental factors combine to make Gwynedd a special place to live, work and venture. However, market forces are not strong in some communities and they need a boost at times in order to reverse decline, and in order to respond to the challenges they face before achieving future potential. This is a process of regeneration and it **is an intentional effort to collaborate with Gwynedd residents and partners to improve areas** in order to create healthy, prosperous, dynamic and sustainable communities with a prominent and central place for the Welsh language.

It is not possible for one department to achieve the aims of the Gwynedd Regeneration agenda alone. In order to make a long-term difference and make the best use of resources, there must be collaboration across Council departments and with a variety of national, regional and local partners. A cross-departmental Regeneration Board has been established and during 2021/22 it will collaborate with partners to identify future priorities giving special attention to town centre improvement programmes.

Community Support Service

The Department provides services in order for Gwynedd residents to make our communities a better place to live. **It is important that voluntary groups and local enterprises are supported to respond to local opportunities and needs.** The Council has a network of area regeneration officers and 'CIST' grants to support specific community projects.



65

projects that are
developing a new
service/safeguarding
access to a service
during 2018/19

We will target some communities more than others giving specific attention to planning support for areas with the most needs.

In 2021/22, we will:

- support community networks to support the most vulnerable individuals as a result of COVID
- measure the demand for support from communities and consider options to provide the service in future
- contribute to the work of the Council's Regeneration Board by leading on the work of engaging with communities to try to identify local priorities.

Libraries Service

The Council provides a service in nine main libraries, four community libraries and three library click and collect links across the county. It is important for Gwynedd residents to be able to borrow books and audio books, and to download e-books, audio e-books and e-magazines of their choice. 463,370 items were borrowed by Gwynedd residents in 2019/20. However, not all Gwynedd residents can reach their local library and therefore the Council also provides a Library Service for the Home that visits 479 individuals every month. Gwynedd Libraries are also commissioned by the Education Department to provide the Lori Ni Service, which visits every Primary School, Special School and All- through School twice a year to lend reading books for 3-11 year olds.

Gwynedd residents use the library for so much more than just to borrow books. They are welcoming places for people to use for various activities - to get information about services, together with help and support to find on-line information. Through the Gwynedd and Anglesey Adults Education Partnership we can organise and offer a number of short courses and taster sessions, such as digital sessions, mindfulness and craft sessions. We also hold activities for Welsh Learners, and hold sessions for infants and story time for children. Through our Better Reading Collections, it is possible to gain access to trusted information on health and wellbeing matters, including Dementia and Mental Health. Gwynedd residents can also use one of the 96 computers or Wi-Fi, in the libraries for free to seek work, or to find local services, as well as being able to photocopy and scan.

The Gwynedd Libraries service received an excellent report for its performance in 2019/20, which shows that the service is performing well within the Welsh Public Libraries Standards Assessment Framework. As a result of COVID, libraries have been closed to the public for extensive periods, however alternative services, including click and collect have been available.



In 2021/22, we will:

- continue to collaborate with communities and promote safe access to the service
- learn from the experience of the COVID period and review the mobile library service
- re-open Neuadd Dwyfor to the public and prepare a business case for future support

Archives Service

The Council has a statutory responsibility to **protect our public records and to ensure that people have access to them**. We will do this through the two record offices we have in Gwynedd - Caernarfon Record Office and the Meirionnydd Record Office in Dolgellau.



Gwynedd Record Offices have a wide range of documents, photographs, maps and newspapers with the oldest document dating back to 1176. There is a range of public, official and private collections that reflect the culture and heritage of Gwynedd communities. The Record Offices provide taster sessions and family history courses and work with Gwynedd Primary Schools.

In 2021/22, we will:

- work with the Welsh Government and other records offices across north Wales to identify opportunities to make the best use of Record Office resources in the region
- work with the Education Department to discuss the maintenance of the Education Archives and Museums Service for the future
- identify the cost of digitising the collections and collaborate to identify systems to enable access to digital collections.

Museums and Arts Service

The Service runs two museums in Gwynedd and is responsible for looking after collections and creating exhibitions in both, namely Storiell in Bangor and the Lloyd George Museum yn Llanystumdwy.

Much of our work in the field of community arts targets **health, well-being, education and tackling loneliness projects**. The Service is also responsible for allocating arts grants in order to support arts standards and arts opportunities for all.

The museums have been closed for extensive periods last year and the arts activities have been provided virtually and through various media.

Our aim will be to continue enriching the lives of Gwynedd residents by promoting an understanding of our unique heritage and culture.

In 2021/22, we will:

- work with the Friends of the Lloyd George Museum to create a new way of managing the Museum



- ensure the success of the Storiell scheme and establish a Development Trust to enable it to work with the arts and heritage sector in Gwynedd in future
- work with the arts sector to realise the aims of our new strategy for the arts.

Leisure and Country Parks Service

We collaborate with partners locally, regionally and nationally in order to inspire, support and enable Gwynedd residents to be active and live healthy lives.

The health trends of Gwynedd residents are slightly lower than the national average. However, with the levels of obesity amongst four-year-olds in Gwynedd among the highest in Wales, it is crucial that Gwynedd Council and partners respond and create the conditions to promote healthy living

Gwynedd Council has a network of 12 leisure centres across Gwynedd which attract 1.3 million visits every year. This provision enables Gwynedd residents of all ages to learn new skills and enjoy participating in active activities in safe locations.



Gwynedd Council is committed to continuing to provide these facilities and has established the Byw'n lach Cyf. Company to run the centres on its behalf in future. The Department has established a contract for the Company to manage the service from 1 April 2019 and we will monitor the contract

regularly in order to assure the quality of the service. As a result of COVID restrictions the centres have had to close for extensive periods during 2020 and 2021.

The Council also manages the country parks in Glynllifon and Padarn. These parks are important heritage sites and are popular attractions to visitors. However, the parks are also valuable assets to improve the well-being of Gwynedd residents and to promote healthy living. The Department will seek to secure more local benefit for communities from these assets in the future.

In addition to these facilities, the Council is collaborating with partners in order to ensure that a programme of active and inclusive activities is available for young people via the Sport for Life team in centres, schools, clubs and in the community. A programme of Exercise Referral activities is



also available in Gwynedd to help to reduce the impact of conditions that prevent Gwynedd residents from exercising and to improve their health. There has been a significant increase in the number of clients for this service, especially in the fields of dementia and chronic conditions and there is clear evidence that shows the impact of this investment on the quality of life and health. These two programmes are provided in Gwynedd by means of an agreement with the Byw'n lach Company.

In 2021/22, we will:

- support the Byw'n Iach Company to manage leisure centres across Gwynedd
- establish arrangements to upgrade and invest in our leisure facilities
- collaborate with partners to develop a new model to provide a Sport for Life service across north Wales and to establish a new sport development service jointly with the Byw'n Iach Company in Gwynedd
- collaborate with Sport Governing Bodies to offer a range of inclusive activities that respond to the demand in Gwynedd and the special opportunities that are available in the county through our natural resources
- collaborate with the Byw'n Iach Company to provide the Exercise Referral service on behalf of the Council in future
- develop future management options for the Country Parks of Glynllifon and Parc Padarn.

Local priorities have been noted in the Council Plan since 2018/19 which responded to needs that had been raised by local Councillors. The Department has used these priorities when developing their wider work programmes and, therefore, a number of the needs are addressed through work that has already been described in this Department Plan.

We have listed local priorities below alongside the programme or project that has been planned in order to respond to that local and county need.

Local Priorities	Programme
<p>In consultation with local councillors in the Porthmadog, Ffestiniog and Penllyn areas in the Summer of 2017, an aspiration was noted to attract more long-term well-paid jobs to improve the economic situation of local residents. The Create High Value Jobs priority is developing new opportunities in Trawsfynydd and Llanbedr that will benefit these communities. In the Porthmadog area, it was also noted that the local councillors were concerned about the condition of some dormant sites in the area and in response we will be looking at opportunities to support, improve or reuse the sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Value Jobs • Promoting Town Centres
<p>When we consulted councillors in the Dolgellau area it became evident that the poor connectivity of mobile phones and broadband hinders residents and the area's businesses. We are seeking for Welsh Government to prioritise the county for its schemes in relation to this field by following the principles of Digital Gwynedd.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth Vision for North Wales • Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig
<p>In the areas of Dyffryn Ogwen and Dyffryn Nantlle, local councillors noted that the promotion and regeneration of the high street was a local priority and we have made outline applications for some regeneration activities in the areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Town Centres

<p>In consultation with Bangor area councillors, their wish to improve the appearance of the local area and to respond to empty shops was noted, and a wish to work with partners such as local businesses and Town and Community Councils to generate income to contribute to the work. In turn, this could support local businesses and tradespeople. We are considering the opportunities to build on existing work jointly with the Bangor Business Improvement District and our partners locally and regionally to plan a response. Additional grant funding to maximise the benefit of the interest free Loans Scheme has been secured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting Town Centres
<p>There is also a link to the county level priority to implement the Gwynedd Slate Heritage plan, as noted above. The regeneration of these areas should improve any negative image that stems from being post-industrialised areas and release their potential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage
<p>During a consultation session in the Ffestiniog area it became evident that local councillors were concerned about the future of the Community Centre and the services located there, and the Regeneration Team recently conducted a survey on public buildings across Gwynedd. This indicated that ineffective use was being made of a number of public buildings in Blaenau Ffestiniog including the Community Centre. In a time of financial hardship, there is an opportunity here to share resources better in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Support Service

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to maintain ourselves and our families

Live in quality homes within our communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.



Housing and Property Department



The Housing and Property Department is a new department, established during 2019, with the aim of facilitating the Council's ability to face one of the biggest challenges in the county, which is to ensure an adequate supply of suitable, good-quality housing to address the needs of a changing population.

The Department is also responsible for managing the Council's property assets in order to ensure they are suitable for providing services to the county's residents.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

- 1) A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin taking action – (Improvement Priority 4)
- 2) Easy and clear access to an advice and enquiries service on housing matters: Establish a single front door and helpdesk for the public in order to help them with their housing problems – (Improvement Priority 4)
- 3) Letting social housing to local people: Create a new lettings policy for the county which will give greater priority to local people – (Improvement Priority 4)

Housing Matters

The Council uses the Social Housing Grant from the Welsh Government to facilitate the Housing Associations' ability to build more houses for local people. Our Housing Action Plan sets a challenge to try to build 500 new social houses by 2026. We now have a new Local Housing Allocation Policy, so that Gwynedd's residents will be given priority for the tenancy of these new houses.

Number of new units developed with the Social Housing Grant



Homelessness

The Homelessness Service provides advice and assistance to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The team fulfills the Council's statutory duty to meet the requirements of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. Their work includes:

- helping to prevent homelessness before it occurs
- assessing the accommodation and support needs of individuals and families who are threatened with homelessness
- helping to find somewhere else to live when an individual or family are facing becoming homeless
- providing temporary accommodation in emergency cases, and securing accommodation for those in priority need.



Temporary Accommodation



The service provides many temporary accommodation places until a permanent property becomes available for homeless people, including two Council-owned hostels, 68 properties leased by private owners, and 31 properties leased by Housing Associations. Accommodation was provided to 401 families/individuals in 2019/20. The number who are facing homelessness in Gwynedd has been increasing consistently for some years, and there is increasing pressure on the service to deal with the need to accommodate people at short-notice.

Tenancy support



Since many homeless people are vulnerable, support is provided to ensure that individuals can maintain their tenancy and avoid becoming homeless again. Support is provided on a number of issues such as claiming benefits, support for the maintenance of accommodation, understanding rights and responsibilities, and applying for grants for furnishing a property.

Social Housing Register



The Gwynedd Housing Options Team administrates the Common Housing Register and works in partnership with the social housing providers in the county, namely Adra, Grw p Cynefin and North

Wales Housing. The team's primary aim is to prioritise access to social housing on the basis of the most need in our communities and to provide advice to residents on the housing options that are available in Gwynedd. With the support of the Gwynedd Housing Options Team, over 690 families managed to secure a new social tenancy in 2019/20.

Number of families given new tenancies in social housing during the year



2017/18 - 573

2018/19 - 621

2019/20 - 696

Refugee relocation scheme

Since 2016 Gwynedd has contributed to the UK Government's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement programme. The Council committed to welcome and provide a house for up to 40 individuals who had been forced to flee war-stricken Syria. We have now fulfilled our promise as a Council and take pride in the fact that we have helped eight families to settle in Gwynedd.



As a result of this programme's success, the Council has now committed to welcome up to 20 of the most vulnerable refugees identified by the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as part of the Worldwide Refugee programme over the next three years.

Travellers' site

There is a statutory requirement on every Local Authority to meet the need for suitable sites for travellers. We have been managing a purpose-made site in Llandygái for many years, and following the receipt of grant aid from the Welsh Government, a £1.8M investment was made there recently to improve the facilities and expand the provision to meet the demand within the county.

Housing Enforcement

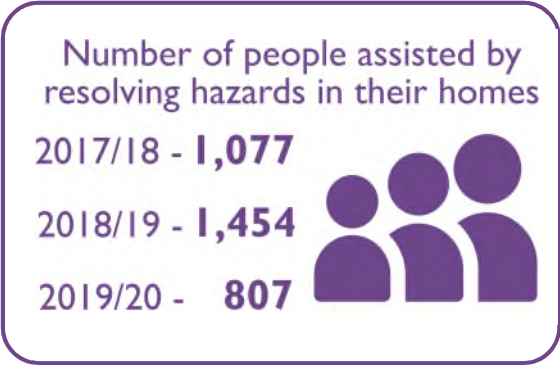


The purpose of the Enforcement Team is to ensure good-quality, warm and safe housing for tenants within the county. We are responsible for enforcing standards in 9,000 private-rented housing and 8,500 social housing in Gwynedd.

We are also in charge of the HMO Licensing Scheme which checks that such houses reach the expected standards. At present, 900 houses in

multiple occupation have received a licence from us following a detailed inspection process.

The Unit also works jointly with Rent Smart Wales to maintain a national register of rented housing, inspects dwellings for Home Office cases, deals with over 300 complaints annually relating to cases of nuisance, deals with problems resulting from empty houses and deals with approximately 20 annual cases of illegal eviction.



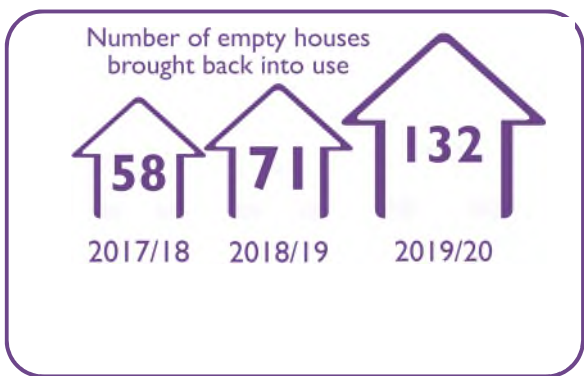
Housing Alterations

This Unit is responsible for promoting the independence and well-being of Gwynedd residents by providing timely and high-standard alterations to the homes of children and adults with physical disabilities. Around £1.3M a year is invested on schemes such as creating accessible bathrooms, installing ramps outside the house, building extensions etc. Around 30 of these are referrals received from hospitals so as to enable patients to return home. We also fund around 900 minor alterations a year, such as installing handrails, mobile ramps and other small alterations.



The unit administers interest-free loans for repairing houses that are in a poor state and which are owned by residents on low incomes, and there is significant and constant demand for these loans.

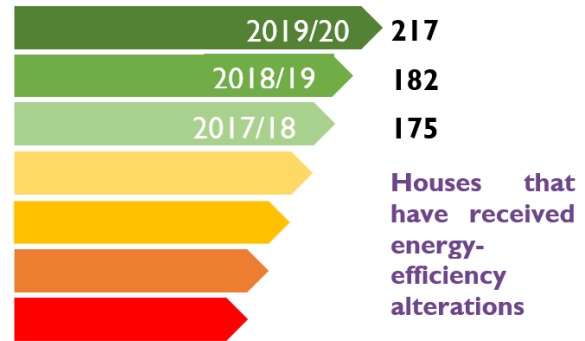
Empty Homes



There are approximately 1,300 empty houses in Gwynedd at present, and we have an important role to play in attempting to bring these houses back into use in order to contribute towards the number of affordable housing that is available to local people. Since 2008, over 600 empty houses have been brought back into use through methods such as offering grants to first-time buyers, providing loans to landlords and the use of enforcement powers. This led to us being able to provide a home to over 1,000 local people in houses that had formerly been empty for some time. During 2019/20 we were fortunate in attracting an additional grant in order to bring empty homes back into use, which explains the jump on numbers this year.

Fuel Poverty

Most of the Government's resources in this field are directed towards the Housing Associations but the Council has also been able to make a valuable contribution in this important field. We have a number of schemes that are funded from various sources, with the aim of assisting those who are most likely to suffer fuel poverty.



Property Matters

The purpose of the Property Service is to ensure that we have properties that are suitable to provide the Council's services, and to manage our property assets effectively and efficiently.

The Council owns 965 buildings located on 477 sites across the County. These are mostly buildings used to provide services to the residents of Gwynedd but we also own and use non-operational properties to promote the Council's objectives e.g. economic development, the provision of social care etc. Many of these non-operational properties are leased to local businesses and other organisations, which generates an annual revenue income of around £1.1M for the Council.

Maintenance



The Buildings Maintenance Unit provides a 24/7 help-desk to deal with approximately 8,000 requests a year for repair work to buildings. Many of these are requests for work that require an urgent response to prevent the building from having to close.

In order to carry out this work we work in partnership with a number of local contractors, but we have also developed an in-house team of tradesmen who can undertake building work, joinery, plumbing etc.

Property Safety

We ensure that our buildings are safe to use for providing services to the residents of Gwynedd by ensuring that we comply with the various statutory duties and ensuring that we have an effective maintenance programme. We manage risks relating to asbestos, Legionnaire's disease, Radon and fire risks and ensure that electrical, gas, oil, water etc. systems are safe for the thousands of residents who spend time in our buildings every day.

Property Development



A concept design of the new school in Cricieth that will open in September 2023

The purpose of the Unit is to develop new buildings or convert and renovate existing buildings to improve the service provided to the residents of Gwynedd.

By working closely with the Education Modernisation Team, the Property Development Unit has completed a £60M programme of new school buildings over the past 7 years, and a new £47M programme is now being developed over the course of the next four years.

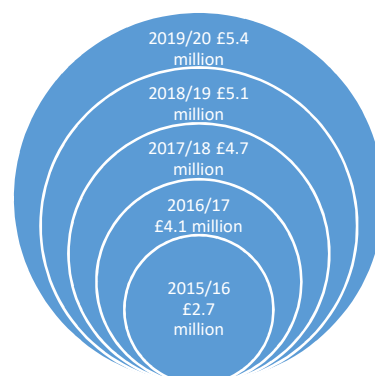
The team is also undertaking a programme of improvements and extensions to the county's care homes and a programme of early years units to address

the need in several individual communities throughout Gwynedd. In addition, the team has embarked on the delivery of a programme of the Housing Action Plan's development, in response to the housing needs of Gwynedd's residents.

Estate Management

Our purpose is to ensure that the Council receives the best value in managing its portfolio of property assets, and ensuring that only those assets which we genuinely need are retained. Over the past decade we have been able to reduce the size of the Council's property estate by over 25%, ensuring that our spending on the maintenance and provision of buildings is kept to a minimum, in order to release financial resources for the provision of front-line services. This will continue as opportunities arise, but we will also consider any assets that are no longer required to deliver the content of the Housing Action Plan.

Cumulative income from property sales



The Estates team is also responsible for managing all the Council's leases including the Smallholdings Estate and the Industrial Properties portfolio which includes the Intec and Mentec Enterprise Centres, generating an annual rental income of over £1.1M.

Managing Offices

The Offices Team provides office space for approximately 1,500 staff in seven large buildings, including all the related services associated with this such as care-taking, cleaning and security arrangements for all the buildings and their users. We also let office space to external tenants.

Cleaning Service

We also provide a **cleaning service** for a large number of the various buildings used to provide the Council's front-line services. We are also a provider for external organisations.

Energy Conservation Unit

Following the adoption of our Carbon Management Plan, the Energy Team is implementing a number of projects to **reduce carbon emissions**. Since the adoption of the Carbon Management Plan in 2010, we have succeeded in reducing the carbon emissions from our activities by 46.6% The work carried out by the team to reduce our usage has created annual revenue savings of over £1.1M for the Council. We have started working on identifying how we can contribute further to the Council's aspiration to tackle the climate crisis.

Reduction in CO2 emissions
from the Council's activities
since 2010



*since adopting the Carbon
Management Plan in 2010

Our Energy Conservation unit has succeeded to establish an energy purchase framework that enables us to secure a cheaper price for our electricity and gas. By doing this we will save approximately £200,000 over five years.

The programme for raising awareness amongst school children has been an important part of this work, using characters such as Sbarci and Fflic. www.sbarciafflic.org



Pest Control and Dog Wardens



We offer pest control services for the control and culling of all sorts of pests, through contracting and by responding to daily calls by the public for assistance to control pests in their homes or businesses.



We also provide the statutory service of looking after stray dogs.

Telecare



We provide a service for the installation and maintenance of Telecare equipment to the residents of Gwynedd. This is a hugely popular service amongst vulnerable individuals and their families, where the use of Assistive Technology enables people to continue to live independently in their own home.

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Live in quality homes within our communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible

Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.



The Gwynedd Consultancy Department (YGC) operates as a commercial department that generates income for the Council, whilst also undertaking statutory functions in water and flood management. By combining the commercial and statutory, YGC can maintain high quality jobs, whilst retaining expertise within the county. The Department specialises in the fields of engineering, construction and climate change in relation to flooding and coastal erosion.

Water and Flooding

As a result of Climate Change, the threat of coastal erosion and flooding is exacerbating. Our intention is to manage and reduce the impacts of these threats on the people of Gwynedd wherever possible. There are also national legislations that place statutory responsibilities on the Council.

Forward Planning and Identifying Risk

In accordance with the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), it is essential that we plan ahead to keep our communities safe, healthy and viable for the future. Climate change is creating specific challenges, and the area of flooding has been acknowledged internationally as a priority field.

In order to plan ahead for these challenges, we are creating a picture of flood risk across Gwynedd by analysing the data that we are collecting, as well as other official external data, such as climate and sea level projections. All of this then forms the basis of our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The Service also encourages collaboration between the whole Council and various stakeholders (such as Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Water and our communities), to ensure that we take every available opportunity to collaborate to adapt and protect from flooding. Successful grant applications ensure that investment is made in Gwynedd's infrastructure which increases the resilience of our communities in light of flood risks. We have identified that ongoing support is required in every community in order to ensure sustainable resilience to mitigate against these risks in the future.

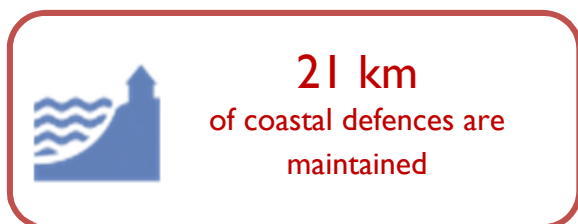
Below is a summary of the data collection which feeds into this work.

Investigating Flooding Incidents



There is a duty upon us to investigate flooding incidents under the Flood and Water Management Act. Since the Act came into force in 2010, on average YGC has investigated 42 incidents of indoor flooding each year. We also gather information by identifying faults or by receiving any flood-related concerns from Gwynedd residents. We aim to respond to these in the shortest possible amount of time.

Flood Prevention Asset Maintenance



We are responsible for maintaining 229 coastal assets which extend along 21km of coastal defences, and 52 assets that manage the risk of flooding from ordinary watercourses. Surveying and maintaining these assets is essential as we protect Gwynedd's communities. We give a score from 1 to 5 (with 1 meaning 'as new')

to each asset, and set a condition target for each one. Our aim is for every asset in Gwynedd to meet its condition target to ensure that they mitigate against flood risks for the people of Gwynedd. We also maintain and implement a coastal monitoring programme, which assesses changes to the coastline. This, due to climate change, will increasingly affect our coastal communities in the years to come.

Our Role in the Planning System

Gwynedd Council is the Local Lead Flood Authority and therefore YGC has a role to prevent developments and activities that could contribute to the flood risk. These mainly include:

- Providing advice on planning applications in relation of surface water flooding.
- Advice to the planning service.
- Advising on work in watercourses and approving relevant applications - on average per annum, we receive 50 applications that affect or prevent the flow in an ordinary watercourse. We ensure that the construction work is done in a way that has the least possible impact on flood risk and the environment. There is a statutory requirement upon us to respond in 28 days; however, the aim in every case is to approve applications as soon as possible.

Sustainable Drainage Systems Consent

Since January 2019, specific types of developments need to receive Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) consent. Before commencing the building work, developers must consider how they will manage water on the site in order to ensure the quality of the water and reduce the risk of flooding in the future.

As a SUDS approval body the department offers pre-application advice to assist developers to meet the new requirements.

In 2021/22, we will:

- **Continue to develop plans in order to attract investments to mitigate flood risks to the residents of Gwynedd.**

Consultative Services



YGC design and manage projects relating to roads, structures, buildings, etc. in Gwynedd and across Wales. We create and maintain quality jobs that would not otherwise be available in the county, and as we attract fees for our work, we are contributing towards the costs of maintaining Gwynedd Council.

We provide various consultative services in the following fields:

- building and infrastructure,
- water and environment,
- technical, and
- business and project management.

Financial Performance



As part of these services, we can undertake architectural, surveying, design, inspection and assessment, hydraulic modelling and geo-technical work, and much more.

This work plays an essential role in our ability to realise our statutory requirements in relation to flooding and coastal erosion. Our ability to attract fees for our consultative work enables us to build technical and scientific expertise within the Council and retain that expertise.

In turn, this expertise provides a foundation for us to successfully attract grants by developing innovative and sustainable flood risk management work plans. Therefore, the consultative services are essential to allow us to protect the people of Gwynedd in light of the impact of climate change.

In 2021/22, we will be focusing on adding to our list of clients in order to increase the investment we attract, whilst also expanding the range of professional services that we can offer.

This Department's day-to-day work contributes towards the Gwynedd Well-being Objectives, ensuring that Gwynedd residents can:

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives.**
- **Live in quality homes within their communities.**
- **Benefit from the beauty of the County's natural environment.**



Corporate Support Department



The department reinforces the Council's ability to provide the best services to Gwynedd's residents through a combination of support, specialist and front-line services. This provides an opportunity for the remainder of the Council to focus on the other services that are provided directly to the public.

Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority projects:

- Keeping the Benefit Local – (Improvement Priority 1)
- Women in Leadership – (Improvement Priority 3)
- Implementing the Equality Plan (Ensuring Fairness for Everyone) – (Improvement Priority 3)
- Native Welsh Place Names – (Improvement Priority 5)
- Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services – (Improvement Priority 5)
- 2. The Welsh Language in Public Services – (Improvement Priority 5)
- Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively – (Improvement Priority 7)
- Planning the Workforce – (Improvement Priority 7)
- Implement Work Programme Plan Ffordd Gwynedd (Empowering Units to Implement Ffordd Gwynedd) – (Improvement Priority 7)

Customer Contact



Galw Gwynedd, from its centre in Penrhyndeudraeth, responds to telephone calls, e-mail messages and online service requests on behalf of Council services. Siop Gwynedd in Dolgellau, Pwllheli and Caernarfon operate as a combined one-stop-shop and reception for the same purpose, as well as operating as a first point of contact for the Tax and Benefits Services.

Answer phone
calls, on
average within
49 seconds



Galw Gwynedd receives approximately 190,000 telephone calls annually, and Siopau Gwynedd receive at least 20,000 visitors each year.

In future, we will:

- review and introduce new arrangements for the switchboard service to improve customer services,

- restructure in order to ensure that the full range of services can be provided in each of the Customer Contact Centres,
- develop the current use of web-chat and extend the support to online service users,

Registration

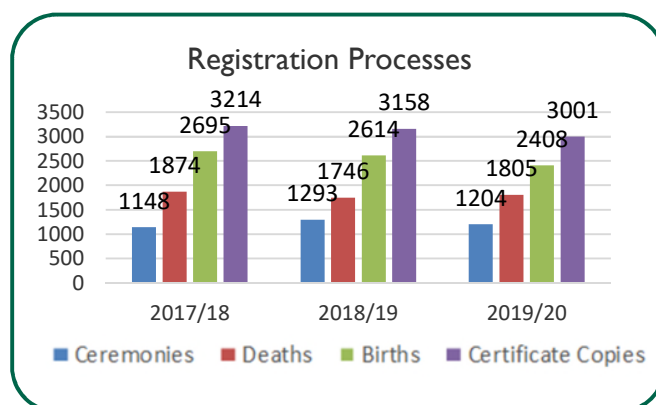


The Council provides a registration service from four locations across the county.

During the past year, 5,600 marriages, civil partnerships, births and deaths were registered and more than 3,000 requests for certificates.

In future, we will:

- develop self-service for requests for certificates,
- strengthen our service continuation plans.



Communication and Engagement

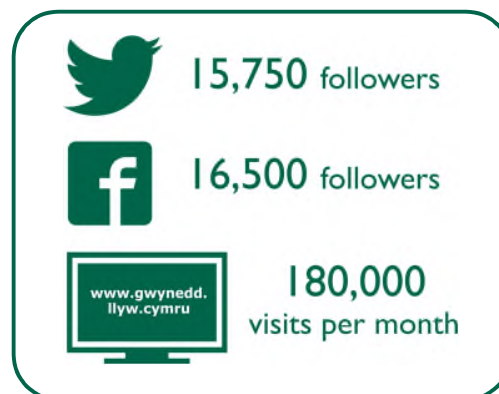


The Communication and Engagement Service facilitates a two-way dialogue with the residents of Gwynedd, staff and councillors.

This communication includes maintaining a proactive relationship with the media, maintaining the Council's website and social media accounts, publishing Newyddion Gwynedd and coordinating opportunities for Gwynedd's residents to give their views on the Council's work and maintain the Council's internal communication arrangements.

In future, we will:

- improve the procedure for identifying and prioritising the main messages and the main issues in order to ensure that the people of Gwynedd receive the information they require
- undertake development work to ensure that the Council's website continues to meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd
- strengthen and extend our internal communication arrangements



Council Business Support



This service coordinates arrangements for publishing the Council Plan, Equality Plan and performance reports in addition to providing executive support to the Corporate Management Team, advising on project arrangements and managing projects, service reviews and scrutiny investigations. We will assist the Council's services to give fair consideration to the equality and rights of each individual, consider the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and assist officers and councillors to challenge plans and working practices.

Another element of the service's work is supporting the work of the *Public Services Board* where Gwynedd and Anglesey Councils, with the Health Board, Natural Resources Wales and the Fire and Rescue Service, collaborate closely in order to improve the well-being of residents in several fields.

In future, we will:

- implement the work programme within the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 in order to ensure that equality is embedded in all the Council's work,
- review and update the well-being assessments published for the 14 well-being areas in Gwynedd and Anglesey.

Research and Information



In order for all Council services to work successfully in accordance with the Ffordd Gwynedd principles, they need to understand the needs of their customers, to be able to measure whether or not they are delivering what's important to their customers, and to make decisions based on the evidence of the impact on the people of Gwynedd. To achieve this, gathering, recording and analysing information is vital. We are here to support the Council's services to do this.

As so much information is kept to provide Council services, including information about people, we need to ensure that the arrangements for creating, retaining, sharing and using this information are working correctly and that they comply with legislation.

In future, we will:

- collaborate with the Business Support Service to improve the evidence that is available for Council services regarding the nature and needs of local areas in Gwynedd,
- develop the information and analyses that Council managers receive regarding their workforce and make this information more accessible,
- make the most of the potential of the Council's new document and records management system (iGwynedd) and help services to develop things that facilitate ways of working and reduce unnecessary steps,
- ensure that information retention and sharing arrangements and practices mean that the use of data is safe and complies with legislation at all times.



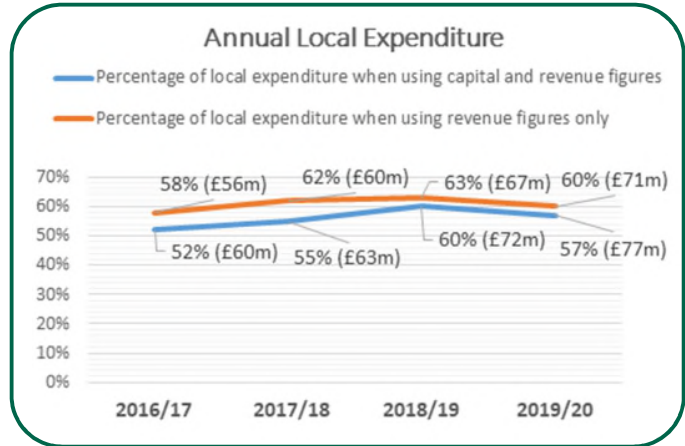
Procurement



The Council spends over £118m annually on procuring, or purchasing, various goods and services from revenue budgets. In 2019/20, the locally purchased goods and services were equivalent to £71 million to the local economy.

In future, we will:

- strengthen and develop the procurement expertise within the Council and review what we are currently purchasing,
- adopt best practice in the field and introduce further schemes to support the market,
- develop our electronic purchasing systems in order to respond to new requirements.



Democracy and Language



The Democracy and Language Service is responsible for three specific fields, namely democracy, translation and language. We are responsible for undertaking the committees process and offer various support to the 75 councillors.



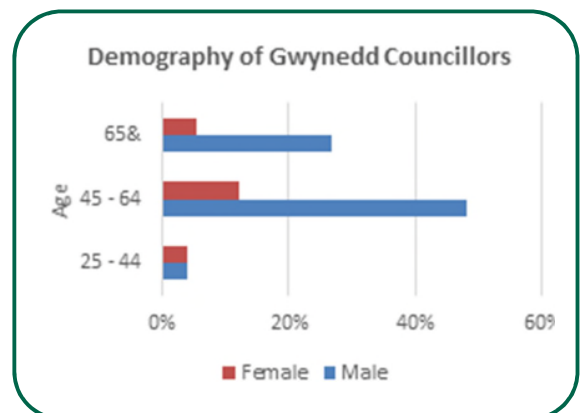
All the Council's services are available to the public in Welsh and English, but the Council's administrative language is Welsh. Therefore, we promote and enable the use of the Welsh language in all our services. This is supported by the provision of written and oral translation services for staff, councillors and the county's residents.



The Council wishes to see a situation where Gwynedd continues to be a stronghold for the Welsh language, and that it is an everyday language that is heard and spoken naturally by children, young people and adults across the county.

In future, we will:

- build on the existing remote attendance and committee web-casting arrangements
- review how we promote the Welsh language in the community
- promote the use of the Welsh language in technology.



Support Service



The Support Service provides administrative support such as arranging appointments, ordering goods, printing, paying bills and distributing post for Council staff.

In 2019/20, the service has focused on rationalising the administrative arrangements, reducing unnecessary paperwork, and enabling staff and managers to access service and information directly and promptly.

In future, we will:

- input recruitment and appointment arrangements, in an effort to reduce internal bureaucracy and to facilitate the task for individuals when applying for a post in the Council,
- change the procedure of communication and administration from paper to electronic means.

Emergency Plans

The Council has a role in preparing plans for dealing with emergencies and to collaborate with the emergency services, agencies and volunteers when caring for the welfare of the public. The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted this key role more than ever before.

The provision of food and rest facilities, temporary accommodation and road safety are prominent examples of the specific responsibilities that the Council has in responding to various emergencies.

The Emergency Planning Operation Group, which has representatives from all Departments, co-ordinates the arrangements to prepare for emergencies while a Strategic Group, under the guidance of the Corporate Director, keeps an overview and challenges those arrangements as and when necessary. This is all supported by the Regional Emergency Planning Service which is contracted to provide specialist guidance in this field.

In future, we will:

- review and strengthen our service continuation arrangements and hold local exercises to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to the various emergencies faced

Human Resources Advisory Service



The team of human resources advisers and officers are responsible for advising managers and school heads on a wide range of staff employment matters. This includes interpreting the employment conditions, equal opportunities issues, restructuring or service cuts, dealing with disciplinary matters and complaints, managing absences and workforce planning. The service also leads on a programme that focuses on reviewing and developing the Council's employment conditions and has a central role in maintaining a constructive working relationship with the trade unions.

In future, we will:

- develop and implement the service's business model, so that there is an increasing emphasis on giving advice and supporting managers to take ownership of day-to-day employment matters.
- implement a programme of reviewing and developing local employment conditions to reflect and support the way in which the Council wants its staff to work,

Health, Safety and Well-being Advisory Service



The Service fulfils a statutory role of providing competent advice to the employer on health, safety and well-being matters. This includes advising on legal standards in safety, investigating accidents and other incidents, monitoring, examining and providing training programmes.

In addition to this, we support staff through periods of absences, provide advice to managers on the health of their staff and assess suitability to return to work following an injury or illness, screen the health of workers and carry out staff medical checks as well as plan and implement a programme to promote health and well-being.

In future, we will:

- mainstream mental health and well-being within the workforce, while raising awareness and empowering staff across the Council and promote a culture of sharing experiences and supporting individuals,
- develop and implement a new business model for the Service in order to encourage ownership within the services of day-to-day health and safety matters within the Council and prioritise resources for the biggest risks.



Learning and Organisational Development



The service provides relevant learning and development support, consults and responds to the needs of individuals and teams, helps to develop a beneficial working environment so that everyone gives their best, helps services to identify opportunities to improve and develops talent to fill gaps in the future.

Learning and Development Programmes are provided to staff (on all levels) and Elected Members, including developing the leadership. We are working with teams and officers to ensure that the service is relevant and of a good quality, to 'fill gaps' in the provision and tailor titles to meet their needs. We promote and

support individuals to take ownership of their own learning, and offer a range of learning methods that include the 'traditional' as well as innovative methods such as *coaching and mentoring* and learning through experience.

There is particular emphasis on developing remote learning ('virtual') methods, and the learning programme reflects this, with more learning opportunities being added regularly.

The objective of the *Organisational Development* work is to nurture behaviours and culture which create and maintain a working environment where staff are at their best to serve the people of Gwynedd. Giving staff a voice, and an opportunity to contribute their views and ideas is a crucial part of this while there is also focus on developing the future workforce through schemes such as *Identifying and Developing Talent*. An increasing range of benefits is offered which contributes to staff satisfaction and well-being.

Another important element is *Service Improvement* by responding positively to complaints, facilitating arrangements for services to take responsibilities for them, and learn from them. Also to celebrate successes.

In future, we will:

- develop and extend the distance learning provision
- contribute to a scheme to ensure that all Council staff have appropriate information technology skills in order to use self-service systems and take advantage of the e-learning provision
- extend the work (consultative and practical) to support departments to develop teams and leadership skills
- develop and coordinate a range of support packages to help staff and managers to cope

The department's day to day work contributes towards the following Gwynedd Well-being Objectives by ensuring that residents can:

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families

Live in a natural Welsh society



Finance (and Information Technology) Department



The Finance Department's intention is to contribute towards achieving the aim of attempting "the best for the people of Gwynedd during a difficult period" by:

- Ensuring the appropriate support to the Council's business operation and its services when managing, safeguarding and developing its financial position, in order to establish a sustainable community in an open, accountable and prominent manner.
- Ensuring professional supportive guidance and technology of a high standard that promotes the Council's basic values and encourages entrepreneurship.
- Providing front line services (such as collecting revenue and paying benefits) of a suitable quality to the customer, providing fairness to people and communities, and focusing on residents.

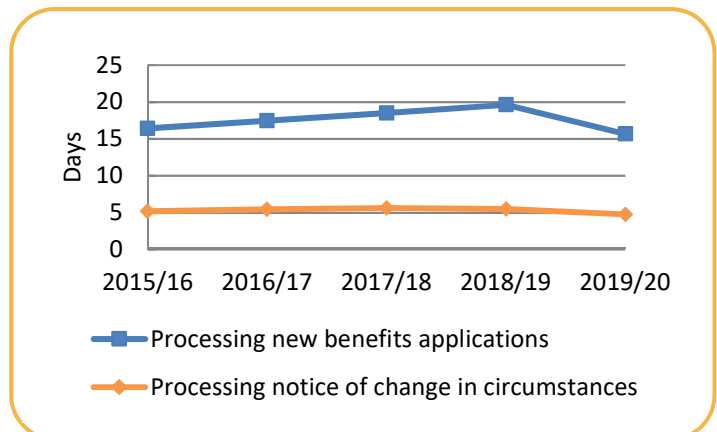
Together with the day to day work outlined below, this Department leads on the following priority project:

- The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates (Improvement Priority 4)

Benefits Service

The Council administrates benefit support to approximately 7,500 tenants to pay their rents, and to approximately 10,000 individuals, couples or families to pay their Council Tax bill, aiming to do this in a timely and accurate manner.

It can be seen from the graph that the number of days it takes us to pay has reduced in 2019/20, after a few years of gradual increase. This comes as a result of ongoing efforts to review work arrangements.

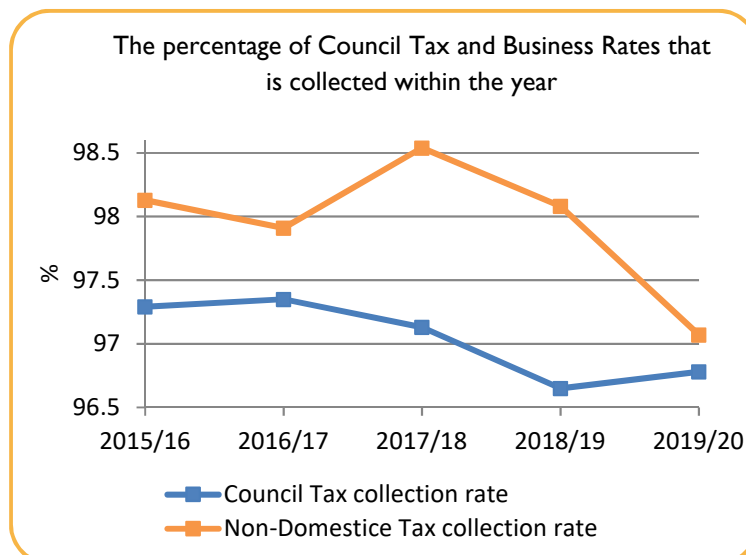


2021/22 will be a key year as the UK Government holds a comprehensive review of financial arrangements. We will lobby the Government that the level of demand for service from the Council will continue for longer than predicted. Although the local authorities have lost the subsidy grant, it funded support to personal budgets and digital support, it is expected for enquiries from the public to continue.

On the whole, arrangements are going smoothly and therefore the likelihood of substantial decline in the service provided by the Council is now relatively low. We have also lobbied the Government, and we have managed to convince them again to conduct the rural element of the Discretionary Housing Payments, which will make a significant difference to the people of Gwynedd in 2021/22.

Taxation Service

Without Council Tax and Business Rates, the Council would not be able to provide its services. This service administrates and collects Council Tax for over 61,500 properties, and Business Rates (Non-domestic Rates) of approximately 8,000 business properties in the most timely and efficient manner as possible, including administrating the various available discounts, exemptions and release schemes.



After a few years of marginal reductions in the rates of Council Tax collection, the rate remained relatively consistent in 2019/20.

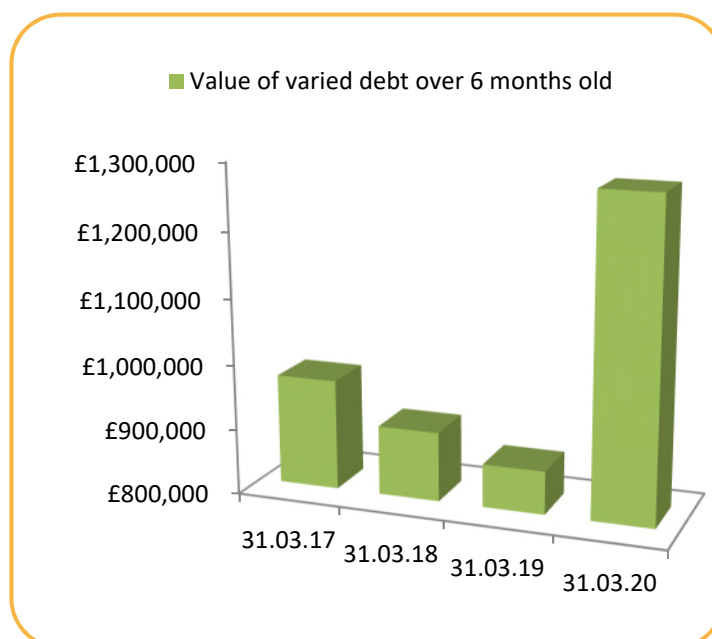
We fully understand that it is not easy for everyone to pay these taxes, and in the context of the restrictions of the pandemic, the collection rate will reduce again in 2020/21. After suspending recovery arrangements for 3 months from March to June 2020, the Taxation service is flexible (e.g. payment arrangements and agreements being encouraged) and sympathetic to the circumstances of individuals. The Council's Taxation staff seeks to encourage individuals to request advice on personal budgeting and broader debt advice.

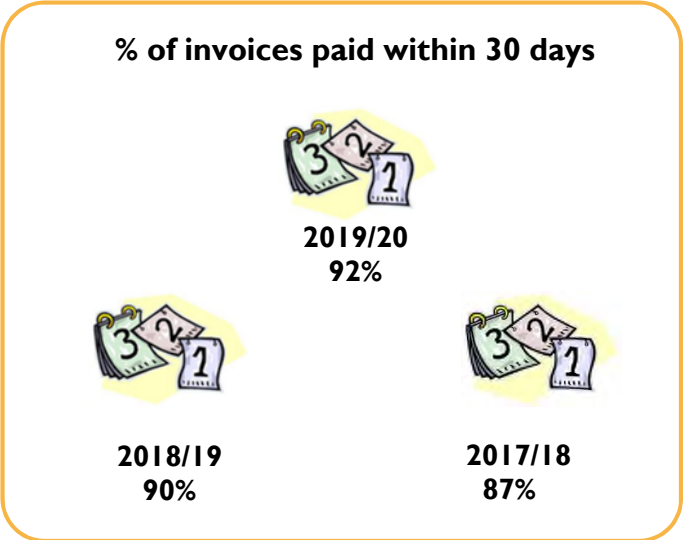
The transfer of holiday units from the Council Tax system to non-domestic rates remains a financial risk. In 2021/22, we will aim to meet with the Minister in order to place pressure on the Government to change the legislation relating to holiday homes and holiday units, and we will hold a broader campaign to promote suitable legislation.

Income Service

The Council receives income (e.g. grants, payments for service) of all types, and the Income Service processes this income, collecting the Council's debts in a timely and efficient manner in order to make the most of the income. The service considers the needs of the Council's departments and acts sensitively to debtors' financial circumstances when carrying out its work.

The debtors figure over 6 months old on 31 March 2020 was higher than the equivalent date in previous years, partly due to the restrictions of the pandemic.





Payments Service

The service is responsible for paying the Council's creditors in an accurate and timely manner. We pay over 105,000 invoices annually, with 92% of the invoices being paid within 30 days on average, aiming to prioritise paying local suppliers promptly.

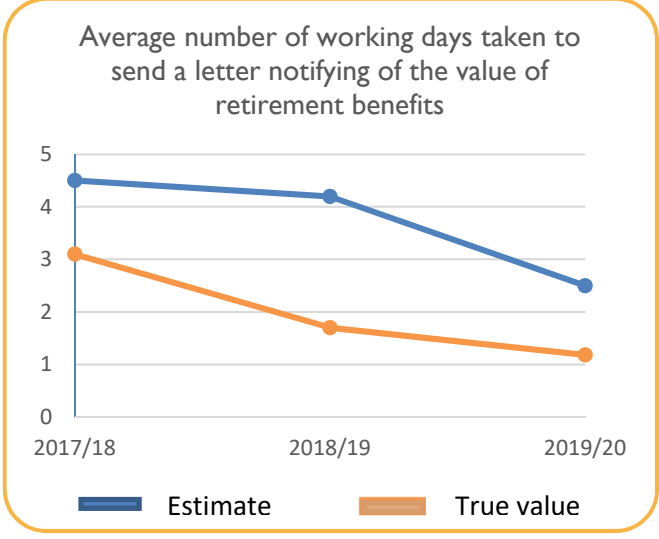
The service has now moved to a procedure of receiving invoices electronically, with over 95% of our payments now being bank transfers, rather than cheque payments.

Payroll Service

There are over 7,200 different individuals working for the Council in order to enable it to serve on behalf of the people of Gwynedd, and the purpose of the Payroll Service is to ensure that they get paid accurately and in a timely manner. The service also keeps appropriate accounts in order to pay external bodies such as HMRC.

Pensions Service

The Pensions Service is responsible for administrating the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) on behalf of over 40 employers including Gwynedd Council, Anglesey County Council and Conwy County Borough Council. The fund has over 18,000 active members, 12,000 deferred members and 10,000 pensioners. The service's daily duties include establishing a record for new members, making changes to members' records, calculating deferred benefits, transferring pension rights in and out of the LGPS, and paying benefits after the retirement and death of the scheme's members.



During 2021/22, the Pensions Service will focus on improving the correspondence and self-service provision for members. Also, it is intended to work with the employers of the Pension Fund to receive relevant details for re-calculating member benefits following the 'McCloud' case.

Investment and Treasury Management Service

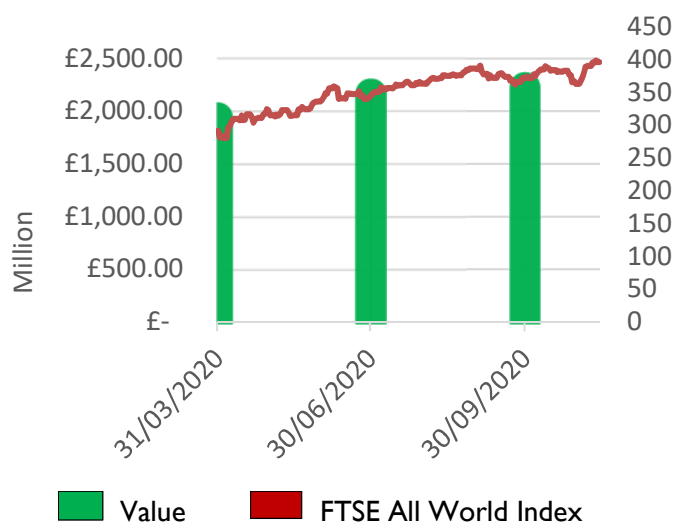
This service invests the Council's money in order to gain interest, to contribute to the funding of the services. They also manage the investments of the Pension Fund, to ensure their ability to pay pensions now and in the future. In addition to this, the service plans and arranges long-term borrowing.

The Unit's aim is to keep money safe, gain interest and ensure that funding is available to pay for daily expenditure.

During 2020/21, the Council's borrowing activity remained within the constraints originally set. £546,000 was the total interest and dividends received on investments, which is higher than the £406,000 included in the budget. No banks the Council had used for investments had failed to pay.

Pensions Service

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Finance and Accounting Service (including devolved units)

We provide a finance and accounting service for the Council's services, and help and support them to be effective and efficient. The service:

- Sets an annual balanced budget for the Council
- Regularly monitors and reports on the Council's financial performance
- Provides financial support with a gross budget of over £431 million
- Is responsible for producing final accounts for Gwynedd Council, GwE, Joint Planning Policy Committee, Harbours and North Wales Economic Ambition Board
- Assists the departments to realise over £30 million of savings since 2015 (out of a total of £36 million).



Success in staying within the budget

The Auditor General for Wales has published an unconditional audit report on the 2019/20 financial statements, namely that the accounts had been appropriately prepared and provide an accurate and fair picture of the financial situation.

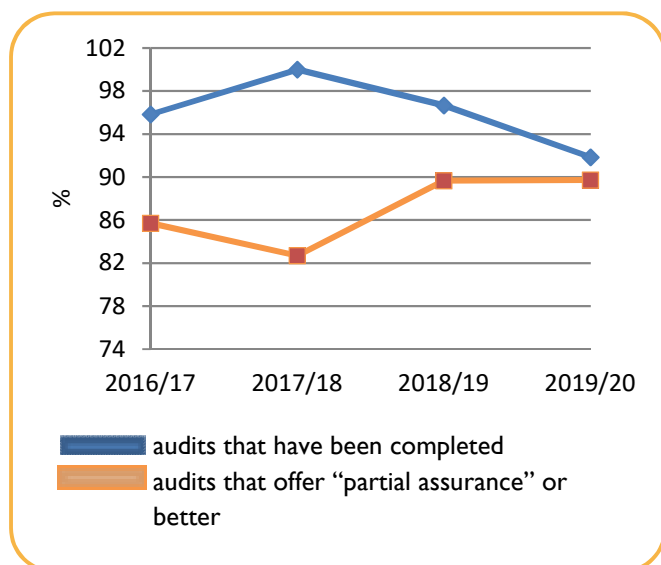
As a result of the pandemic's impact on the Council, with a combination of additional costs and income losses to the value of over £13 million by the end of November 2020, we will provide additional financial advice to all Council budget holders, as well as "business" advice to the departments.

In general, the money the Council receives from Welsh Government is insufficient to pay for the key services provided by the Council. Therefore, in order to ensure a balanced budget, we will also continue to realise the savings that have already been approved, and will also ensure that we plan to identify and select the savings required in order to respond to the financial challenge facing the Council in the future.

Internal Audit Service

The service reviews the Council's governance and administrative arrangements in order to give confidence to the authority and the citizen that these arrangements are robust. We report independently and objectively to the Head of Finance Department and the Audit and Governance Committee, and to the joint-committees where Gwynedd acts as the host authority.

In March 2020, Internal Audit resources had to be redirected temporarily to deal with the Covid-19 emergency, therefore, not every audit was completed in accordance with the expected timetable.



Risk and Insurance Service

All Council departments need to assess the threats and opportunities that could face them when providing their services, and prioritise their activities based on the assessment. The role of the Risk and Insurance Service is to advise and support the departments in doing so. The Service also protects the interests of ratepayers, by ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements and dealing with around 250 claims per year.

Work continues to ensure that all Council departments record their main risks and are regularly reviewed. The Risk and Insurance Service will support all departments to ensure that the use made of the Corporate Risk Register is consistent across the Council, and

that risks are updated continuously. In parallel, there will be increasing consideration of the content of risk registers when monitoring departmental performance.

Information Technology Service

The Council's Information Technology Strategy is implemented in order to help the people of Gwynedd to gain easy access to the Council's information and services, and for staff to work efficiently.

WThe face of this service is the *Support Service and the Help Desk* which supports 2,550 users and meets approximately 20,000 service requests per annum. 2020/21 has been very challenging, with 600 laptops provided during the first half of the year - a 33% increase on the normal total being provided in a whole year.

Significant changes had been programmed before the advent of the pandemic, and changes such as VPN, Microsoft Teams and Office 365 connections have been significant in the IT Service's efforts to maintain Council services.

% of network availability

2019/20: 99.98%

2020/21: 99.98%



% bodlonrwydd y Ddesg
Gymorth

2019/20: 99.35%

2020/21: 99.22%



The *Infrastructure, Security and Network Unit* ensures that technology services are introduced on firm foundations, extending to 300 buildings, 1,400 WiFi access points and 2,700 telephone connections and supports all systems in the data centre, on 440 servers and over 1,000TB of storage. The two data centres are connected with a fast fibre connection and a recent investment in a generator in the headquarters means that we will see further improvements to the resilience of the Council's infrastructure.

With up to 2,450 officers working from home, substantial changes needed to be made at the beginning of the year to enable the provision, thus doubling the link to the internet, building two new firewalls, and providing specialist equipment to enable the Galw Gwynedd contact centres, IT Help Desk, and Council Tax frontline to serve in full from the homes of the individual staff members.

The *Development and Geographical Information Service Unit* provides systems that have been developed around the bespoke needs of the user, including systems that are being used by the departments to serve the public, direct interfaces for the public, and self-service for staff. Substantial progress was made on introducing new systems during 2020/21, including the provision of a number of emergency systems in response to the pandemic, including provision to book Siop Gwynedd and recycling centre appointments, a test, trace, protect system for north Wales local authorities and the Health Board, along with various claiming and processing systems for various grants for the county's businesses.

The *Programme Management and Innovation Unit* provides support for the departments to meet their IT needs, including ordering IT equipment and materials, implementing and monitoring agreements and analysing needs.

The Gwynedd Schools Digital Strategy was prepared, with the technical provision now in progress and we will introduce a new Corporate Digital Strategy in 2021/22, thus transforming the Council's services further.

During 2020/21, the Information Technology Service will carry out other exercises to strengthen the resilience of the Council's provision, introduce substantial improvements within our schools and put the new Digital Strategy into practice.



Legal Services



The department supports the Council's ability to provide the best services to Gwynedd's residents through a combination of support and front-line services.

LEGAL

The Legal Service provides legal support across all of the Council's range of work from child protection and prosecution to the preparation of traffic orders and land and property proceedings.

As well as being available to deal with daily enquiries, the team on average deals with approximately 900 cases and proceedings annually. We also support the main priorities of the Council, specifically implementing the Housing Strategy and a review of the Post-16 Education system.

Customer Satisfaction Survey - score of 10 out of 10



PROPRIETY

The Legal Service supports the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer to implement their responsibilities for the propriety of the Council's operation, the Constitution and complaints as well as the arrangements for upholding standards of conduct by members of the Council and Town and Community Councils.

We continue to support Gwynedd Council's propriety system along with the ethical system for the County's Town and Community Councils. This also involves providing legal advice and assurance on decisions and decision-making procedures. A Monitoring Officer and legal support services are also provided for collaboration projects: GwE, the Joint Local Development Plan Committee and the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

Our priorities for 2021/22 will be:

- Collaborate locally and regionally to plan and respond to changes to governance and to the Constitution that will derive from the introduction of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2020

ELECTIONS

The Legal Service provides support to the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer.

We as a team are responsible for the administration of the electoral register and for conducting local and national elections and by-elections, referendums or polls within the county.

Our priorities for 2021/22 will be:

- Respond to extending and amending the voting rights, specifically for electors aged between 16 and 18 years as a result of the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill 2019 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2020 by promoting registration and participation in relevant elections.
- Respond to the impact and implications of Covid-19 on elections and by-elections that may be affected by planning arrangements that ensure that effective and appropriate elections can be conducted.

CORONER

The Legal Service provides support to the Coroner's Service for North-west Wales.

We support and administrate Coroner arrangements for north-west Wales. The Team has been established within the Council and is receiving direct support within the Department by now.

Our priorities for 2021/22 will be:

- Deal with the arrangements for appointing a Senior Coroner for the area which could involve undertaking a review of the current Coroner area.