

APPENDIX 1

FFORDD GWYNEDD (2023-2028)

VISION

Ffordd Gwynedd is the name given to the “way of working” that we in Cyngor Gwynedd have adopted in order to place the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do.

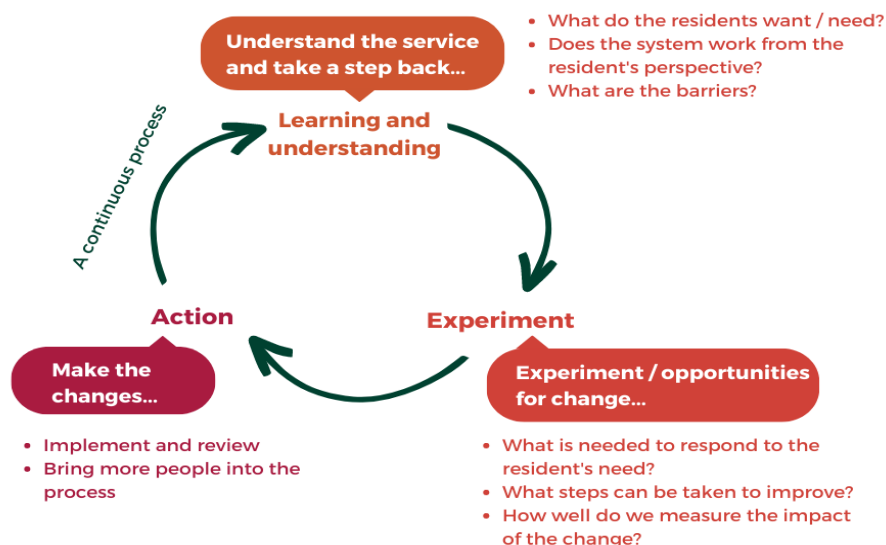
It is neither a process nor a theory, rather a collection of working arrangements, behaviours and culture which, together, allow us to be confident that we always consider the service from the perspective of the user.

Developing this culture means that we need to remove the obstacles that prevent our employees from delivering and that this leads to a continuous challenge in terms of the way that we work. The decisions that follow are evidence-based rather than assumptions.

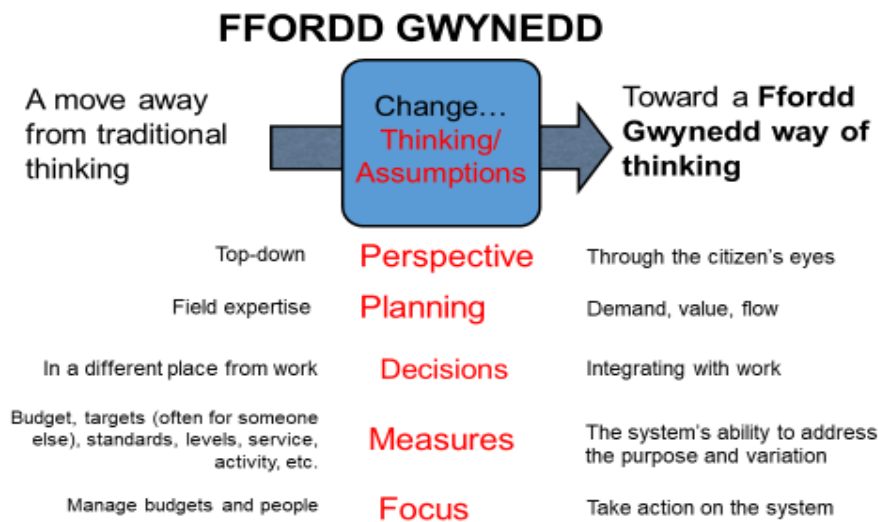
It means working across the Council's internal structural boundaries in order to deliver what is needed, creating and maintaining a work environment that includes everyone. It also promotes and supports the mental and physical well-being of our workers as well as respecting the key operational principles in the context of equality and language.

"Building on the culture and way of working, which is based on the principle of providing the best possible services to the residents of our county, with every one of us supporting each other to achieve this, is central to the Council's vision. The aspiration to ensure continuous improvement can already be seen widely across the Council and the next step is to ensure that nothing prevents us from embedding that mindset further and aim to improve even further what is already being delivered" (Chief Executive)

In the Ffordd Gwynedd culture, teams question and challenge historical arrangements and processes that are being taken for granted. Time is invested recording the workflow and what really happens. They identify empty steps that do not now add value whilst noting barriers from operating effectively. It encourages innovation and creativity with the emphasis on experimenting and then implementing the necessary changes. Collectively this will assist us to improve the service but in order to maintain the "way of working", the mindset must be changed above anything else.



“Doing the right things before making the things better” is the mantra. Unless we change the mindset before, or during, changing a process, we will certainly fail and the changes will not be sustained in the long-term.



A shift in culture is a gradual process but everything possible needs to be done in order to facilitate the development needed so that we are able to take advantage of what can be realised.

This is the third review of the Plan which was introduced in order establish that culture, and there is strong evidence and numerous examples where the Council has developed and benefited significantly from implementing the previous work programmes, embedding the expected behaviours amongst the workforce, reviewing work systems and consequently improve services.

The amended Plan for the 2023-28 period is an attempt to build on the successes to date with the work programme focusing on the further sustainable development needed in order to realise the long-term benefits stemming from implementing good practices and the mindset across the Council.

The main objectives for the period of the Plan have been identified as a result of comprehensive consultation. There will be an annual exercise to report on the progress of the individual objectives and to review what is recognised as priorities.

The following are the details of those priorities which will drive the work programme for the next period in order to embed Ffordd Gwynedd further;

1. Learn, Experiment and Act to Improve

In order to change culture and mindset, it is essential that managers and staff have experience of implementing it at work and see for themselves that the new principles are working.

Most Council managers are now immersed in the basic principles and how to use them to learn about and understand the customer experience when carrying out reviews of work arrangements. There are a number of good examples of where this has already been implemented, but a number of managers report that things have stalled/come to a standstill due to the Covid crisis and that the process is also seen as resource-heavy and consequently difficult to free up the capacity of managers and staff to be maintaining it.

In a situation like this, having vivid examples of successes/failures is invaluable to drive others to be willing to change, experiment and take risks, to be creative, and to act to improve the service to the customer.

We will:

- Accelerate the programme of holding service reviews across the Council offering support that will include:
 - Short workshops for specific teams on elements of conducting service reviews.
 - Training on conducting reviews
 - Practical support on conducting reviews
 - Facilitate one-day workshops to assist managers to present to their teams
- Adapt our training to incorporate hybrid working methods, and to use examples of implementing reviews on smaller pieces of the system showing how it can be incorporated into the day-to-day work rather than having to do large reviews.
- Develop e-modules that managers can use with their teams.
- Using the managers network to share experiences and develop ideas
- Develop the existing site on the intranet to facilitate the sharing of examples of good practice and learning.
- Consider prioritising support for cross-departmental reviews.
- Revisit Gwynedd's awards to reflect the work culture.

2. Leadership

Effective leadership is key to driving and embedding the culture and principles of Ffordd Gwynedd. It sets a clear direction, motivates others and creates an appropriate environment to get the most out of staff.

The political and executive leaders of the Council are unanimous regarding the need to establish and nurture a culture of leading people rather than managing people only. To this end, continuous development for Council leadership is one of our top priorities, including individual incentive sessions for the purpose of personal development.

We will:

- Re-establish the Managers Network to include team leaders
- Focus on collaboration and developing appropriate leadership behaviours
- Continue to run developmental sessions for Elected Members and the Corporate Management team

3. Understand and Improve Performance

To ensure that the Council achieves what Gwynedd residents need it is essential to measure performance, which is to measure how well services serve their purpose and the impact those services have on residents. There is a performance regime in the Council where each unit measures and reports the extent to which they are delivering what matters to the residents of Gwynedd.

We will:

- Continue the regime ensuring a work culture where all staff own and understand what the performance is, can identify the reasons behind the performance as well as what is hindering them to improve.
- Highlight the difference between managing and reporting on performance.
- Respond to the change in Council services as well as ensure a focus on measures of effectiveness as well as efficiency by ensuring that services regularly review their purposes and measures.
- Consider relaxing the performance reporting requirements, at times where this is justified, to ensure that staff can be removed from day-to-day work to carry out reviews or support on cross-departmental work, without causing undue concern as a result of a decline in short-term performance.
- Develop methods to nurture an environment where managers feel safe to declare that performance is not up to scratch.

4. Support and Develop

'Change' can be very difficult for many individuals, particularly if the new 'way of working' is different from what they are used to. It is important that as a Council we support and develop our staff to be able to:

- o Understand the need for change
- o Cope with the change
- o Adapt to maintain services
- o Sustain their own well-being and that of their colleagues.

We will:

- Create multimedia resources to improve the understanding of 'Ffordd Gwynedd'
- Create and deliver a framework of learning titles that include:
 - o A short e-learning module for all Council staff to
 - Share the vision
 - Clarify the main principles
 - o Intensive programmes for conducting service reviews
 - E-learning modules on specific elements e.g. *Studying Demand*
 - o Reminder sessions for officers
- Provide a range of further learning sessions to support individual managers, teams and staff, including elements such as:
 - o Workshops tailored to focus on specific needs (for managers/teams/staff)
 - o Change Management/Coping with Change Workshops
 - o Workshops to support 'Flexible Working' and 'Remote Leading'
 - o Sessions on 'Emotional Intelligence'
 - o Induction and Team Building Workshops
 - o Development Centres
 - o Mental Well-being Support

5. Digital Transformation

Reviewing our systems and how we deliver services is going to lead to alternative approaches and our ability to introduce and implement the necessary changes will be dependent on the development of current use of technology. People's expectations and trends have changed substantially in recent years, and this is an opportunity to see whether we can further improve the experience of Gwynedd residents of front-line and back-office services by using digital technology.

We will:

- Adopt a Digital Strategy over the 2023-28 period which will be reviewed annually
- Review and rationalize systems, innovating with technology to reduce our administrative efforts
- Increase opportunities and extend our on-line self-service provision
- Review the role of Galw Gwynedd and Siop Gwynedd within the digital provision
- Ensure that we are clear about our information needs so that the data collected helps us identify improvements as well as measure whether or not changes introduced are succeeding.

6. Workforce Planning and Talent Development

Planning to ensure that a workforce is in place with the right ability, attitude and skills is essential, both for the present and the future. We must consider what we will need to respond to growing needs for services, as well as the expectations of the people of Gwynedd.

We will focus our efforts on:

- The demand on our services in the future
- Identify key areas and posts in terms of risk to continuity of service
- The nature of our existing workforce in terms of turnover, age, skills and experiences
- Identify gaps and plan by
 - Establishing 'Talent Development' schemes for staff within the Organisation
 - Extending the Apprenticeship and Trainee schemes
 - Developing highest quality work experience opportunities in key areas for the future

7. Continuous Appraisal

Each person working for the Council should have a job description setting out core expectations for their role, duties and way of working.

All managers are expected to have regular conversations (*Continuous Appraisal*) with their staff, and the expected behaviours should be central to the discussion.

We will create and develop resources that:

- Highlight the '*Behaviours*' expected of all Council staff
- Support managers to be able to engage in meaningful appraisal discussions with individuals:
 - Plan and execute appropriately
 - Hold a meaningful appraisal discussion with each individual
 - Consider Health and Wellbeing
 - Focus on appropriate '*Behaviours*'
 - Discuss expectations and performance
 - Provide regular feedback
 - Encourage Personal Development
 - Support individuals to perform the best they can
- Ensure appraisal is timely and effective in all services across the Council

8. A Satisfied and Healthy Workforce

A vital part of embedding our culture is ensuring that we look after the health and well-being of our workforce. The Council has a Wellbeing Strategy, based on current data and information which is updated annually.

We will:

- Continue to implement and develop a Council-wide Well-being Programme ensuring the scheme is coupled with our work arrangements and training programmes.
- Ensure that a programme to collect data and conduct well-being questionnaires is developed and implemented on an annual basis to identify the support that needs to be prioritised.
- Place the current focus, in line with what has been gathered in the latest data, on stress issues as well as musculoskeletal issues.
- Ensure all managers receive I-ACT training, develop e-learning kits on musculoskeletal issues and organise physiotherapy offers.
- Pay particular attention to services where the greatest need to promote health and well-being manifests itself.
- Address alternative issues that have an impact on health and well-being, for example the current financial climate, where a financial well-being programme will be developed and implemented.

9. Customer Contact

Identifying the needs of the people of Gwynedd and what matters to them is absolutely core to our way of working.

We will:

- Engage with the people of Gwynedd to seek their views on our performance during the year as part of the Council's annual self-assessment.
- In line with the participation strategy, work to raise awareness of the Council's functions among the people of the County; attempt to simplify documents shared with them and encourage / enable them to comment on decisions before, and after, they are made.
- Establish a cross-departmental group to develop and implement a customer care framework that will include our arrangements for handling complaints / enquiries from Elected Members and the public working towards improving our ability to respond in a timely manner.
- Continue to work to ensure that our consultation/engagement arrangements reach the hard-to-reach groups.
- Introduce a new programme of customer care training, which has a particular focus on the well-being of staff who have to deal with difficult situations.
- Introduce a new programme of training on responding to enquiries from Elected Members, the public and fellow service providers.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

The aim is for every Service within the Council to define clearly what needs they meet and to establish and review the measures that show how well the purpose is being achieved. The true success of this Scheme in reality will be to obtain assurance, by means of the feedback received, that all of this work leads to improving services.

We will submit an annual report to the Cabinet on the progress of the "way of working" setting out the outcomes realised for the services offered to the people of Gwynedd as part of what is reported.

Furthermore, and essentially, we will also measure the change in terms of staff behaviour and work culture that is required in order to embed the "way of working" in all Council activity. The content of the report is based on an annual self-assessment exercise, to which leaders and employees will be asked to contribute, as well as six-monthly staff surveys which will seek feedback in relation to the development of the culture, work environment and behaviours within the Council.

In addition, we will establish a cross-departmental Group, led by the Corporate Director, which will review progress and prioritise the support needed for embedding the culture and associated exercises in each of our departments and services.

This work programme, in its entirety, will help the Council reach the aim of putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do.

RESOURCES

The following resources will be provided to support the change in culture that is afoot.

- i) A Senior Advisor and Advisor within the Council's Business Support Service are employed specifically to support managers and staff to adopt and implement the Ffordd Gwynedd principles. They are able to advise on conducting intensive reviews with individual services as well as running developmental sessions with managers and staff with the increasing emphasis on assisting rather than leading reviews on behalf of services.
- ii) The Organisational Learning and Development Service continues to provide training for new managers and prospective managers, as well as planning (and at times, facilitating) workshops with individual teams to strengthen the awareness of what it meant by Ffordd Gwynedd in practical terms. A broader training programme is being led by the needs being identified for driving and embedding the "way of working" and the culture being professed.
- iii) The Research and Information Service will provide guidance and advice on gathering evidence and analysing information. Acting on the basis of evidence, rather than on the basis of what appears to be logical, is one of the cornerstones of the "way of working" and here there is an important function to ensure that managers and their teams use the information and data available to its full potential.
- iv) The Development Team and Infrastructure Team within the Information Technology Service will be instrumental in realising a large number of the improvements recognised by individual services, that are the result of carrying out reviews of their work systems. The Digital Strategy, which will run alongside this Plan throughout, will reinforce the support that it is anticipated will be needed.
- v) The Communications and Engagement Service will advise and provide guidance on engagement methods supporting the efforts to ask, observe and assess if the culture is embedded within the Council.