

GWYNEDD COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 -17



Further information

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Measures can be found in appendix I, which accompanies this document.

Council Leader's Foreword

Following our usual arrangements, we are once again this year reviewing our Strategic Plan and adapting it in accordance with any new needs or changes in circumstances. As a result, some projects are now being omitted from the plan since they have been completed, and others (two) are newly included as a result of our need to give attention to matters concerning the capacity of care and health arrangements and the opportunity for us to maximise the field of high profile events within the county.

This is the last year of our current Strategic Plan, with the emphasis now on ensuring that we complete all projects included in the scheme, in accordance with our promises. We have attempted to maintain our ambition to create our Gwynedd for tomorrow, despite the circumstances and the acute, continuous cuts that public services are facing. It is our actions, today which will ensure a prospering, sustainable and exciting Gwynedd for tomorrow and for the generation which will follow us. We have a responsibility to look beyond the horizon and to attempt to create the right conditions to ensure success. Tomorrow is not going to be the same as today and we can ensure a future where our values continue, but in a new context.

Our experiences along the continuous journey to deliver, and to re-invent ourselves, confirm that success will be possible when working in partnership with others, within the public sector, the private sector or the third sector. The past year has also seen us as a Council emphasising the role of our communities when planning our future. In the midst of the financial constraints, we have an opportunity to come together in order to achieve something positive and to create our New Gwynedd, Tomorrow's Gwynedd.



Dyfed Edwards

Dyfed Edwards **Council Leader**

Profile of Gwynedd

75 Elected Members sit on Gwynedd Council. The Council is responsible for providing a wide range of public services for 122,273 residents, including: education and schools, social services, leisure centres, libraries, planning services, highways, waste management, public protection, youth services and economic development.



Since 2011, Gwynedd's population has increased by 0.6% (750 people). This compares with an increase of 0.9% in Wales.

Gwynedd is a large rural area that is 2,535 square kilometres in size in geographical terms. Gwynedd is the second largest county in Wales and represents 12% of the total area of the country.

65% of Gwynedd's residents speak Welsh and it is also the Council's internal administrative language.



In 2015-16, the Gross Revenue Expenditure of the Council was £367 million. Among a wide range of other services, this money was used to educate over 16,000 pupils, maintain 2,888 kilometres of highways and 301 kilometres of coastline.

There are 95 Primary Schools, 14 Secondary Schools and 2 Special Schools in Gwynedd.



The Council is responsible for running 12 Leisure Centres and 17 Libraries within the county, as well as 11 Residential Homes for older people.

Gwynedd's natural environment is a valuable attraction to tourists. In 2014, approximately 6.9 million visitors came to Gwynedd, creating £975 million in revenue.



67.5% of the land within Gwynedd is located in the Snowdonia National Park, the largest national park in Wales.

A large part of the Llŷn Peninsula was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1956, one of five in Wales.



In 2015, the median household income in Gwynedd (£22,458) was 8% below the figure for Wales (£24,271) and 28% lower than the figure for Britain (£28,696).

Median household income

In 2014, the median price for a house sold in Gwynedd was £145,000 which is an increase of 9.8% compared with 2011.

Median house price



It is estimated that the number of households in Gwynedd will increase by 12.5% by 2036. This is less than the estimated increase for all of Wales, which is 14.6%.

More information about the Council and its services can be found on the website - www.gwynedd.gov.uk

Reviewing the Plan

The original Strategic Plan for 2013-17 was adopted by the Council in May 2013.

The purpose of reviewing the plan this year was to look at where we have arrived following three years of implementing the strategic plan, as well as making sure that we are continuing to do the right things for the final year of the plan. In order to review properly, we needed to consider what had changed since last year, looking at the social, economic, environmental and policy matters that influence the Council and which are likely to influence the welfare of the people of Gwynedd for the future. Attention was also given to the priorities of the Local Service Board, namely: Older People, Building Resilient Families, and Sustainable Communities/Community Regeneration.

When reviewing the plan, we also sought the opinion of the residents of Gwynedd regarding the challenge which has been set for us as a Council to continue to do our best for the people of Gwynedd despite the fact that we have less finance than ever and that the demand for our services is continuing to increase. In order to understand more about what is important for the people of Gwynedd, we consulted on those services that we could cut, and those that will not be possible for us to cut. An on-line questionnaire was prepared and the people of Gwynedd were invited to attend one of the series of drop-in sessions and public forums to voice their opinion. Specific meetings were also held with groups of people with characteristics which are protected by equality legislation.

Over 2,000 Gwynedd residents responded and the responses were analysed in order to view the percentage who voted not to realise specific cuts and the ranking sequence emanating from that. We have also been able to view the rank given to the proposals according to the characteristics of the respondents, e.g. women, men, older people and disabled people, as well as according to geographical area. We have used the information gleaned from those sessions when reviewing the plan.

With the publication of the Welsh Government budget 2016-17 in December 2015, messages were conveyed in the press that the financial settlement was better than we had foreseen. However, because our financial planning been realistic, our fore cast for Gwynedd was in fact very close to that which was received in the settlement. Alongside this, costs are continuing to increase as a result of inflation and additional pressure on services. On that basis, our plans for identifying savings are continuing, and this is detailed in the section on Financial Planning.

We have also been considering our improvement objectives and the day to day work of the Council in the context of the well-being goals of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act. We will continually review that which we are doing in order to ensure that the well-being of the people of Gwynedd for the future is a central part of the way in which we plan and provide our services.

Fields

Our review demonstrated to us that the fields on which we are focusing need to stay the same for the 2016-17 Strategic Plan.

Projects

Since last year, four projects have ended because they have achieved that which we had promised. These are noted below, together with their associated fields:

Ysgol Bro Llifon (Children and Young People)
Older People Accommodation Strategy (Care)
Outcome Agreement (Effective and Efficient Council)
Cuts (Financial Planning)

Two new projects have been added, namely:

Capacity and sustainability of the care and health arrangements (Care)
Strategic and High Profile Events (Poverty, Deprivation, Economy, Housing)

Measures

Our measures have also been adapted in order to reflect the emphasis we are placing on improving the circumstances of the people of Gwynedd.

The Plan's Vision

The best for the people of Gwynedd in a difficult time

Our vision in this plan is to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of the people of Gwynedd despite the fact that the Council has to make decisions on which services to cut in order to address the financial deficit which is facing us. The plan is a natural continuation of the 2015-16 Strategic Plan, and its emphasis will continue to be on improving the ability of the Council to ensure the best for the people of Gwynedd. We will do so by transforming services to be services which we will be able to maintain for the future.

Without a plan such as this to address the situation, and to prepare for the welfare of the people of Gwynedd for the future, it is possible that key services will cease to exist.

The plan this year has been created in a period of preparing for around £5million of cuts over the next two years, and therefore it has been necessary to consider that context. Despite the fact that the forecast for the future continues to be bleak, Gwynedd Council is determined to face the financial challenge and to work tirelessly to improve our services in order to continue to offer the best for the people of Gwynedd despite the circumstances. This means making difficult decisions such as reducing some services and increasing Council tax in order to transform and maintain other services.

Any financial decisions will give careful consideration to our ability to achieve that which we have promised in this plan.

The plan is arranged according to our priority fields as noted below, and the improvement objectives which follow highlight the matters on which we will be focusing during the term of the plan.

Children and Young People

Care

Safeguarding

Poverty, Deprivation, Economy, Housing

The Welsh Language

Effective and Efficient Council

Financial Planning

Improvement Objectives

Listed below is a summary of our **improvement objectives**. These focus on the matters which will receive the greatest attention over the lifespan of the plan. We have agreed on 16 improvement objectives, with the first namely 'Putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do' as the lead objective:

Effective and Efficient Council

AG1 Putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do

Children and Young People

AG2 Improving the quality of education

AG3 To create a network of viable schools for the future

AG4 Improving the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

AG5 Improving preventative services for groups of vulnerable children and young people

Care

AG6 Improving engagement with communities on the care challenge

AG7 Improving integrated working focusing on what matters for individuals

AG8 Preparing the care workforce to meet the new way of working

AG9 Improving the provision of accommodation and care for vulnerable adults

Safeguarding

AG10 Improving the Council's safeguarding arrangements

Poverty, Deprivation, Economy, Housing

AG11 Improving job quality and levels of salary

AG12 Improving the strength and robustness of business and retaining the economic benefit in the local economy

AG13 Strengthening the rural economy

AG14 Working together against poverty

The Welsh Language

AG15 Promoting the use of the Welsh language in Gwynedd

Financial Planning

AG16 Ensuring a balanced sustainable budget for the future

These improvement objectives will be achieved through the projects that are included in this plan.

Children and Young People

The start of life for each of us has been crucial in establishing a foundation for the remainder of our lives and the principle of ensuring that every child and young person receives the same opportunities and receives the same good standard of education is important.

As we develop the education arrangements in Gwynedd, it is also essential that we ensure that they are sustainable for the future and that we are able to offer the best learning environment for all our children, young people and staff. It is a priority to ensure that the most vulnerable learners experience success and that children with additional learning needs are accurately assessed early on and receive the educational opportunities of the appropriate quality. This means that we must focus on ensuring consistency in the quality of the education we offer to all children and young people of the county wherever they may live.

There is also a need to consider investing in preventative work and early intervention and provide the right type of service. By doing this successfully, it will be possible to reduce the demand for statutory services and enable children and young people to live more independently.

We need to see a situation where the quality of education is more consistent in the county, and there will be robust arrangements in place to assist children with additional learning needs to achieve their potential. We also have to make sure that our preventative plans are more sustainable and that we concentrate our efforts in the right places.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a series of projects in order to address the challenge that faces us over the next two years:

PI Improving and reconciling education standards

The purpose of this project is to improve and reconcile education standards across Gwynedd in order to ensure that children and young people achieve the highest standards to nurture the qualifications and skills which enable them to live and prosper locally. We will implement practical steps in the schools in order to improve and reconcile education standards. We will target specific subjects, and will challenge performance in specific fields.

During 2015-16, an Education Quality Strategy was created, setting a direction and action steps to improve and reconcile education standards.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Introduced a new model of supporting schools which will strengthen school to school support systems, develop new partnerships, improve key stage outcomes, as well as support schools to perform in the highest quartiles

- Reviewed the structures of the Education Department by creating a new area structure and defining the role of the 'Area Education Officer' in order to better co-ordinate the support to the schools and the whole support service
- Implemented a clear specification between the Council and GwE (School Effectiveness and Improvement Service) which will ensure that clear and appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor and evaluate progress in the schools
- Worked with GwE to ensure the raising of English and Mathematics standards in specific departments within our secondary schools
- Developed and implemented an effective tracking and targeting system, as well as an improved educating and teaching standards in subjects such as specifically English and Mathematics. This will contribute towards increasing the number of pupils who will attain the Level 2+ threshold (5 grades A*-C GCSE) or equivalent
- Targeted improvement in schools which are underperforming generally or who are performing comfortably
- Continued to develop and implement the authority's current strategies to improve attendance in schools

Cost: No additional cost.

P2 Improving leadership and management

The purpose of this project is to improve the condition of leadership in order to raise standards. The project will implement proposals that will improve leadership and management with the aim of moving towards schools with non-contact head teachers, i.e. that they do not teach children.

During 2015-16, a report on the field of schools leadership in Gwynedd was commissioned. We will act on the recommendations of that report during 2016-17. We have also conducted a specific programme of leadership development workshops.

By the end of the project, there will be better quality in terms of leadership in the schools of Gwynedd. Also, there will be a clearer career structure in place for teachers. This will be crucial if we are to ensure that children and young people benefit from more consistent standards in our schools, as the effect of strong leadership will have a positive impact on the achievement of children and young people.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Implemented a leadership development programme which improves the conditions of schools leadership in Gwynedd
- Monitored and challenged every school and used all powers available to the authority to improve leadership and management in underperforming schools
- Ensured arrangements where the authority and governing bodies intervene sooner in schools where leadership causes concern
- To ensure a collaborative management structure on a catchment area and area basis which will release time for heads to lead effectively

- To develop managers and prospective managers within services and to identify leaders for the future

Cost: No additional cost.

Programme for a network of sustainable schools for the future

The purpose of this programme is to create a network of sustainable schools for the future. Its delivery will create improved conditions to develop leadership, to improve and standardise education standards, and to improve experiences for children and young people. We also need to plan and model for a structure for the future, giving specific attention to planning for the next phase of the Government's capital projects.

The programme's projects are detailed below:

P3 Ysgol Hafod Lon

The purpose of this project is to provide a new special school for pupils of Meirionnydd and Dwyfor in light of the decision to close the existing Ysgol Hafod Lon.

There will be room for 100 pupils in the new school, along with a residential and respite provision. The new development will create a modern provision and will include new and custom-made resources for special educational needs and it will improve the children's opportunities and experiences and consequently the standard of their education. The new building will include modern classrooms, a hydrotherapy pool, therapy rooms, sensory equipment and suitable outdoor areas for play and learning along with a garden and a café where older children can develop their entrepreneurship skills. These latest facilities will improve the experiences of children who attend along with their families.

During 2015-16, a full business case was completed and submitted to Welsh Government for their contribution of £6.5million as part of the Twenty First Century Schools Programme. We have also been able to complete all the necessary statutory processes according to the timetable.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Started and completed the work associated with moving Ysgol Hafod Lon and Tŷ Aran to Penrhyndeudraeth and will have established the new unit
- Completed the proposed building work in Penrhyndeudraeth which is worth £13million and will have opened the new school (in the autumn 2016 term)

Cost: No additional cost.

P4 Y Gader Catchment Area

The purpose of this project is to establish an All-through Welsh-medium Catchment School for 3-16 year olds in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader.

This proposal will create better conditions to develop leadership, share resources and improve and standardise the quality of education across the catchment area. This also means a substantial capital investment of £4.34 million to improve the learning environment on specific sites in the catchment area.

The new all-through school will open in September 2017.

In 2015-16, we were successful in completing the statutory processes, starting the building work on the Rhydymain site, and the Shadow Governing Body has now been established. Following an advertising process for the post of Strategic Head of the ensuing school, the Head was appointed in January 2016 and it is expected to commence in post following the Easter 2016 holidays.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Begun the process of co-ordinating of the backlog maintenance expenditure of the Friog, Y Gader and Dinas Mawddwy sites
- A vast proportion of the proposed building work worth £4.34million on the sites of Rhydymain, Llanelltyd and Dolgellau Primary will be completed for the opening of the new school in September 2017

Cost: No additional cost.

P5 Ysgol Glancegin

The purpose of this project is to secure an investment to provide a new building for Ysgol Glancegin, which is located in Maesgeirchen, Bangor. The learning environment of the school is unsuitable as the existing buildings have reached the end of their lifespan and their condition is very poor.

This new scheme will ensure a modern and purpose-built space to improve conditions for teachers and children. It is also intended to examine the possibilities of developing an integrated centre for children and families near the site of the new school. This centre will draw together some of those services that support children and families on the Maesgeirchen Estate and specifically address early years services and services that are preventative in nature.

The new school will open in September 2017.

In 2015-16, the full business case was approved by Wels Government with a financial package of £5.11 million in place to enable the achievement of the plan.

By March 2017, we will have:

- Moved forward with the proposed building work worth £5.11 million
- Prepared a full business case in order to develop an integrated centre for children and families on a site near the new school on the Maesgeirchen estate (the project is not within the capital expenditure of £5.11 million).

Cost: No additional cost.

P6 Y Berwyn Catchment Area

The purpose of this project is to create a Welsh-medium, Life-long Learning Campus on the current site of Ysgol y Berwyn. The Campus will be a community resource of the finest order for the area and will play a key role in promoting the Welsh language.

The proposal will lead to an investment of £10.27 million in the town of Bala and it will substantially improve the learning environment for the children of the area. Also, the campus will include community resources such as a library and an arts facility and it is proposed to submit a case to attract more resources to improve the sports provision.

The campus will open in September 2018.

During 2015-16, the final stage of preparing the business case for the Welsh Government was completed, which has ensured £10.27million for realising the project. All statutory processes have been completed, and the planning process has begun.

By March 2017, we will have:

- Moved forward with the process of establishing a shadow governing body for the proposed learning campus, and will have begun the work of the body to appoint a head and complete the staffing structure
- Begun on the building work on the current site of Ysgol y Berwyn

Cost: No additional cost.

P7 Transform the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

The purpose of this project will be to transform the service for children with additional learning needs. The project aims to ensure that children with additional learning needs receive more support to take advantage of opportunities and to gain experiences that have been planned effectively for them, in order for them to make appropriate progress in line with their ability.

In 2015-16, the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Strategy was prepared. The principles of the strategy include the intention to give more attention to the early years, to establish a central integrated team of professionals with specific expertise and to implement a training programme to upgrade the skills of the workforce.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Adopted the Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Strategy and put arrangements in place for its implementation, therefore achieving improved outcomes for children and young people for a significantly lower cost
- To re structure and model the Additional Learning Needs Workforce

- To establish an integrated team of professional to co-ordinate the support for children and young people who have additional learning needs
- To establish new arrangements for the inclusion/behaviour support provision
- To create and implement a comprehensive training programme (including e-learning packages)
- To review the criteria of Additional Learning Needs

Cost: No additional cost.

P8 Preventative services for groups of vulnerable children and young people in Gwynedd

The purpose of this project is to set a direction and establish priorities for a preventative agenda in Gwynedd, working on a multi-agency basis in order to ensure that we focus our efforts on doing the right things in the right places. The project will ensure early intervention and will ensure that the appropriate support is provided at the right time. The intention here is to ensure that there is a clear programme of preventative services available for young people in Gwynedd, and that it is a programme which has cross-sector ownership, including the third sector.

The policy context on a national level also emphasises the need for a preventative programme. It is necessary to prepare for the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014, and the response to the assessments, advice and support for families requirements across the need spectrum.

During 2015-16, we held an audit, and identified the gaps regarding programme activities in the field of early intervention, and have analysed the needs of vulnerable groups of families.

By investing in preventative work, in future, fewer families and children will be referred to high cost interventions within the statutory services. There will be positive outcomes for children and young people as it will be possible for them to live independently and there will be business outcomes for the public services as it will be possible to provide services at a lower cost.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Reconsidered and prioritised the resources of the Gwynedd Families First programme for 2016-17 and planned for the coming years
- Strengthened the Team Around the Family Team, building on the work of co-ordinating the support to vulnerable groups of families
- Adopted the Early Intervention Strategy and put it to work
- Responded to the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act by ensuring that our work processes correspond to the statutory expectations of responding to referrals
- Implemented the Government's engagement strategy, which gives attention to vulnerable groups of children and young people

Cost: No additional cost.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

Pupil achievement levels increasing across the county.

Strong voice and opinion of young people in creating provision.

Parents feel that their opinions count.

Care

We have known for some time that the older population of Gwynedd is increasing. The 2011 census predicts a growth in our population of over 85 from 3,875 in 2015 to 4,110 by 2017 and 6,832 by 2032. As we live to an older age, our needs change with time, and this can often mean that people need care services and health services at the same time.

The Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 sets new responsibilities for the Council, and offers a once in a generation opportunity to modernise social services legislation. It notes a significant change in the way key local government services are provided, and there are four basic principles:

- 1) People – placing people and their needs at the centre of their care, give them a voice and control over the outcomes in their lives
- 2) Well-being – supporting people to reach the best well-being condition they can and measure this success
- 3) Earlier intervention – increasing preventative services within the community in order to prevent more intensive needs from arising
- 4) Collaboration - agencies and organisations work together in a strong partnership

Alongside this, the Council's resources are dwindling, meaning that we need to find savings. People also tell us that they are eager to continue living in their homes and to be part of their communities.

We need to respond to this by ensuring that the people of Gwynedd are aware of the challenge that faces us and that we work towards new and different methods of service provision. In order to achieve this, there are two key things that we need to do; firstly, we need to make sure that our staff are prepared for the challenge, and secondly, we need to work closely with the health services in order to ensure that we are able to respond to the needs of every individual.

We need to see a situation where the people of Gwynedd will have a good awareness of the challenge which faces the field of care, and staff will have the confidence to deliver the new way of working. This way will be suitable to meet the requirement of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 that will ensure that more people are able to live their lives as they wish. The available services will need to meet with the requirements, and there will be a need to work with our partners in the third sector and communities in order for this to happen. A range of early and preventative interventions will be needed in order to be able to focus our service on the most vulnerable individuals in our society.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a programme and a series of projects in order to address the challenge that faces us over the next two years, and delivering projects G1, G2 and G3 below will contribute towards our ability to meet the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act:

G1 Care challenge

The purpose of the project will be to try to ensure that the people of Gwynedd truly understand the challenge which faces us to motivate and support communities to contribute by taking action. The success of the project will be crucial for the preventative agenda, and will ensure that we as a Council (and our partners) will respond proactively to change and meet the requirement within the Social Services and Well-being Act.

At the end of the project, the people of Gwynedd will have an understanding of the field that will lead us naturally to contribute and support the most vulnerable people within our communities.

During 2015-16, we were successful in developing the Care Challenge 'story', namely the background, the context and the reason for change. We also developed a programme of events, communicated the story with stakeholders, engaged with stakeholders and held a number of events to discuss the challenge.

During March 2017 we will have:

- Further enacted the communication strategy
- Continued to work with communities to identify their strengths and the aspects requiring development, with the intention of stimulating interest in community action to respond to the care challenge and to the well-being issues of their communities
- Continued with the work of raising the general awareness of the people of Gwynedd and to develop it further as community feedback is received

Cost: The project will be financed from resources which have already been earmarked for the care field

G2 Integrated working, focusing on what matters for individuals

In order to respond to the evident challenges in this field, it is crucial that we work effectively, and when appropriate, in an integrated manner with the Betsi Cadwaladr Local Health Board. The project's purpose will be to redesign our current working methods to ensure that our central focus is on the interests of Gwynedd's people (specifically older people and people with physical disabilities in the context of this project).

During 2015-16, success in integrated working was experienced through the establishment of an Integrated Team in the Eifionydd area. This team has established the principles regarding a way of working and has trialled the new methods for the first time. They have also experimented with ways of measuring the impact of the work with service users. The intention is that this way of working is a basis for the new wholly integrated service model across adult services. Subsequent teams will be able to adopt the way of working which has been started in the Eifionydd area and will therefore be able to implement the new method sooner.

By the end of the project we will have services that can deliver what matters to individuals in the most effective way, while also ensuring that we don't tie individuals to becoming unnecessarily dependent upon statutory services. This also will ensure that we meet the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act.

It is difficult to estimate the specific time required to implement the entire change owing to the nature of the project which changes the culture of a way of working as well as the structure. As a result of this, and the fact that this change means working closely with another public body such as the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, it is likely that it will be 2020 until we can be completely confident that the change in culture will have been completely embedded within everyone's way of working.

Nevertheless, we can include some milestones; the project will be expected to achieve the following by March 2017:

- Establish robust working arrangements and ensure complete clarity about how we will measure the impact of our work
- Agree on the timetable for mainstreaming the new working methods throughout Gwynedd (older people and people with physical disabilities)
- Determine clearly if this way of working is appropriate for the fields of learning disability and mental health, and if appropriate, what would the timetable be for bringing the new way of working to these services

Cost: No additional cost.

G3 Restructuring the Adults, Health and Well-being Department

If the substantial changes and the change of mind-set and culture within the department are to be successful, it is crucial that the staffing structure of the department is fit for purpose for the future. The department structure as it was was not suitable, and it was inevitable that it had to be reviewed. Having completed the review of the structure, the department will have staff and managers who can work effectively and who can respond in full to the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act and the new way of working.

During 2015-16, a new senior management structure was established and appointments were made.

By March 2017, it is anticipated that the project will be fully implemented and the following elements within the department will have been restructured:

- Senior Management – April 2016
- Broader structure – December 2016

Cost: No additional cost.

Programme of care accommodation and provisions

The purpose of this programme is to ensure that the people of Gwynedd have the most appropriate accommodation and care provision in order to address their needs for the future, within the resource constraints and that we as a Council respond proactively to the demand.

By the end of the programme vulnerable adults in Gwynedd will have the appropriate range of accommodation and care choices which will enable them to live as full and satisfied lives as possible. This programme has been divided into a number of specific projects, and noted below are the projects which are currently being enacted.

During 2015-16, agreement was reached on the Older People's Accommodation Strategy, and this will now be used for the purpose of developmental talks with key partners.

By the end of March 2017 the projects currently within the programme will have achieved the following:

G4 Extra Care Housing

The purpose of this project is to build Extra Care Housing in Porthmadog.

During 2015-16, work was carried out with the key partner to ensure that the agreement for the building of the new development had been confirmed.

By the end of March 2017, the project will have reached the final stages of building works and the new development has been scheduled to be ready around summer to autumn 2017.

Cost: No additional cost.

G5 Frondeg

The original purpose of this project was to ensure clarity on the Frondeg site and to decide on the way forward. In January 2016, following a period of engagement and formal consultation, it was decided to develop a new accommodation model for adults with learning disabilities on the Frondeg site, and to bring the current use of the building to an end once the new development becomes available.

By March 2017, we will have agreed on a working partner e.g. a housing association, in order to work together in partnership to develop the new accommodation model. It is foreseen that the site will have been transferred to that partner by the autumn 2017.

Cost: No additional cost.

G6 Internal Provision

The purpose of this project is to decide on how we run the Provider Service (which provides care services) in addition to what we deliver and begin to implement accordingly.

During 2015-16, initial options regarding the future were developed. The intention is for us to be clear on the way forward by the end of March 2017.

Cost: There will be a need to consider the need for additional resources once the future of the Provider Service is determined.

G7 Capacity and sustainability of the care and health arrangements

The purpose of this new project is to attempt to respond to the current problems that exist regarding care and health provision within the field of older people specifically. In delivering the project together with our health partners, we will attempt to ensure that we have the appropriate arrangements in place across the care and health field for the future.

The project will look at aspects of the service as well as the need regarding workforce and carers (including non-paid carers).

- Regarding the provision in the field of older people with dementia, we will look at, together with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, options that we can adopt to attempt to respond to the current problems regarding the availability and quality of care. As part of the work we will work in partnership with our main stakeholders and receive specialist leadership from experts in the field including the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales.

By March 2017, we will be in a position to recommend a way forward to the Health Board and Cabinet.

- Regarding the nursing and care workforce the project will look at agreeing on short and longer term interventions, together with the appropriate health boards, to attempt to improve the situation regarding identifying and appointing appropriate staff to work in the care and nursing fields locally.

We will implement the short term interventions during the year as they are agreed, and by March 2017 will have established a work programme to address any longer term developments.

By March 2017 we will also have reviewed how effective our current arrangements are for supporting non-paid carers and, if necessary, will have decided on the additional interventions required to support carers for the future.

Cost: No additional cost.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

The people of Gwynedd understand more of the challenges faced in the field of Care, Health and Well-being and how they can contribute.

That service users can do what counts to them.

To change staff culture and that they use the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd to place the central focus on the customer.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is crucial to ensure that all individuals receive the same opportunities in life and to safeguard the most vulnerable in our society. There has already been good progress in terms of work procedures; however, further work is needed to ensure that the awareness and culture of the importance of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is embedded in all parts of the Council. This is the situation which we have been aiming for:

A situation where all of the Council's safeguarding arrangements are robust, with firm evidence that the Council's staff and members are acting in accordance with the expectations. We also need to see evidence that our arrangements are having a positive impact on the field of safeguarding.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We need to see staff and members' ownership of the safeguarding field improve, and take effective steps to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in Gwynedd.

We have implemented three projects to enable us to achieve this, but safeguarding, of course, will always be a priority for the Council, even when we have delivered the projects noted below, and we will continue to review and monitor beyond the duration of the Strategic Plan.

These are the projects which are continuing to be active this year:

DI Ensure whole Council ownership in the safeguarding field

The purpose of the project is to ensure that there is corporate ownership of the safeguarding agenda and that effective steps are taken to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in Gwynedd.

This agenda is a continuous one and therefore we will continue to attempt to improve ownership of this field beyond March 2017.

This is what has been achieved during 2015-16:

- A substantial amount of awareness raising work has been completed, and it will be necessary to continue this as a day to day part of the Council's work
- Specific elements to strengthen the working arrangements of human resources have been carried out, the annual audit has been completed and departmental and corporate policies have been reviewed in accordance with the timetable.

During 2016-17 we will ensure that procedures are in place to measure the impact of the corporate safeguarding procedures as well as continue the work of raising awareness of the safeguarding field.

Cost: No additional cost.

D2 Safeguarding children and young people

The purpose of this project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture within the field of children and young people.

During 2015-16, specific sessions with an expert in the field were held in order to look at our processes in Gwynedd. Then, specifically in the field of education, the work programme was developed, the relevant training programme for staff was developed and a Child Safeguarding Officer was appointed in order to drive the work programme forward. Regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), we have contributed to regional work, beginning the work of understanding more about the demand and trends together with agreeing on a work programme for 2016-17.

By the end of March 2017, we will:

Review the Council's arrangements for responding to the risk of 'Child Sexual Exploitation' (CSE) by:

- Ensuring that the Council's arrangements coincide with the regional strategy which is being developed between agencies
- Ensuring that the Council, as far as possible, understands the demand for services and CSE trends in Gwynedd
- Improving the understanding and awareness of individuals and key groups within this specific field, including how to identify the signs
- Acknowledging that the risk is higher for looked after children, and work with the Corporate Parenting Panel to try to safeguard the most vulnerable children

During 2016-17 we will also further strengthen the safeguarding procedures and culture within the field of education, by:

- Conducting an annual audit of safeguarding and governance arrangements within the department and schools
- Creating a training programme to meet the needs of the annual audit
- Implementing a work programme in accordance with the recommendations of the annual audit and also consider any opportunities for improvement

Cost: No additional cost.

D3 Safeguarding vulnerable adults

The purpose of the project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture within the field of adults.

During 2015-16, a strategic overview of all recommendations under consideration in the 'A Place to Call Home', the Winterbourne and Jasmine reports, creating a comprehensive work programme of the improvements. Also submitted to Cabinet during the year was a quality report on Residential and Nursing Care.

By the end of March 2017, the project will implement the above work programme, and therefore will have ensured that we:

- Develop a range of different methods for individuals to be heard
- Identify whether there is appropriate use of advocacy and try to respond to any deficiencies
- Provide evidence that the corporate groups can demonstrate that they listen to the voices of vulnerable adults

Cost: No additional cost.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

Vulnerable children and adults in Gwynedd know how to voice their opinion.

Vulnerable children and adults in Gwynedd feel safe.

Staff and Elected Members know what to do in safeguarding cases.

The results of the annual Audit reflect an increase or decrease in impact.

Poverty, Deprivation, Economy, Housing

The pattern of Gwynedd's economy shows a variety of elements that influence the financial position of the county's people. We know that 39% of the county's workers are employed in the public sector, which compares with 35% in Wales. Also, there are more than 14,000 businesses in Gwynedd, with 13,250 of those classed as "micro businesses" as they employ 0-9 people.

Poverty in work is an increasingly important matter both locally and nationally, including our most rural areas. Low salaries are a prominent feature of the county, with the average weekly wage for a full-time worker in Dwyfor/Meirionnydd being £389.20, which is the lowest in Wales, and the fifth lowest in Britain. Gwynedd is also a great distance from the populated areas, and this along with the size of its businesses means that they find it hard to compete for business.

This lack of economic diversity is a key obstacle that prevents people from accessing the housing market, with 61% of the county's households priced out of the market, and 1,993 applications registered on social housing waiting lists.

Therefore our priority for the field is:

- To improve the quality of posts and salary levels
- To strengthen business resilience and to keep the benefits local
- To improve the access of the people of Gwynedd to work and to respond to barriers

As part of our response to this, we are a member of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and through our work we influence the work programme in order for the people and businesses of Gwynedd to benefit in full from the regional opportunities.

We need to see a situation where we have quality jobs and good salary levels, strong and robust businesses and where the benefit from large contracts is kept in the locality. We are also eager to see the impact of poverty on specific groups and geographical areas alleviated, and an increase of housing supply in areas of need in order for people to have more housing options.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a series of projects in order to address the challenge that faces us over the next two years:

T1 High value and quality jobs

The purpose of this project is to create the conditions in order to generate high value and quality jobs in Gwynedd. We will do this by marketing the county to specific high value sectors and support businesses to grow in order to create high quality jobs for the residents of Gwynedd. In addition to this, we will work with further and higher education establishments to fill current skills gaps and to feed information on skills gaps within sectors which grow to ensure the correct supply of workers.

We have already identified the most significant sectors for Gwynedd regarding the creation of high value posts, namely Energy, Digital, Creative and Research and Development. A brief has been developed to create a package of pioneering marketing materials for the sectors, and also a network of businesses within the creative industries has been established. We are working with Menter Môn and Bangor University to offer work placements within local digital companies to undergraduates and school pupils. A lobbying scheme for the Trawsfynydd and Llanbedr zone continues to be implemented successfully.

By the end of the project, there will be more high value and quality jobs in the county and by the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Created and implemented a package of pioneering marketing materials, targeted directly at businesses within the significant sectors
- Facilitated the creation and maintenance of business clusters in those specific sectors
- Influenced the work of the Post-16 Consortium to promote what we foresee as being the “jobs of the future” in the area
- Prepare a business case for the Llwyddo’n Lleol programme and targeted resources for its implementation in order to promote entrepreneurship in the high value jobs sector
- To implement a specific campaign to target investment which will create quality jobs in the Trawsfynydd/Llanbedr enterprise zone
- Collaborate with Anglesey County Council on Energy Island programmes in order to ensure benefit to the people of Gwynedd of the investment of developing a new Wylfa

Cost: No additional cost.

T2 Keeping the benefits local

The purpose of the project is to maximise the expenditure of the Council with local businesses. There are two aspects to the project namely establishing a services and new merchandise in the Council and to support businesses to compete and win Council and other contracts, including capital and regional projects. In addition we will maximise the awareness and understanding of businesses of the Council’s procurement procedures. The emphasis will be on attempting to develop a network of local supply chains by working together with the business community.

We have already identified barriers to the access of local business to the local market and we will act on the findings. In addition to this, we have begun to establish arrangements for strategic purchasing in order to keep the benefits local.

By the end of the project there will be a significant increase in the number of businesses that will have the understanding and the ability to win Council contracts, and by the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Maximised the amount the Council spends with local businesses
- Formalised and rationalised the Council’s procurement processes by introducing strategic purchasing arrangements (named Category Management)

- Build on our arrangements to raise awareness of opportunities to work with the Council through a number of ways, for example, through the Council's website, social media and the press
- Provided information and offered support to local providers on how to apply for work with the Council considering applications for any additional support
- Provided guidelines and support to the Council's purchasers on how to reduce barriers to tendering
- Provided guidelines on making joint applications or forming a consortium with the market.

Cost: No additional cost.

T3 Digital Gwynedd

The purpose of the project is to support the efforts to transform the use of technology by the businesses, services and residents of Gwynedd by securing the latest broadband provision across Gwynedd. We will be promoting the new opportunities and encouraging individuals and businesses to adopt the technology. We will support businesses to gain from the new provision and support communities to take advantage of the new technology.

We have already ensured that more than 60,000 homes and business sites in Gwynedd can receive fast broadband service. We have also been successful in renewing free wi-fi service in 40 public locations whilst also ensuring that Gwynedd is the only area in Wales, and one of only four areas across Britain, to be part of the pioneering programme 'Digital Resilience' to reduce digital exclusion.

By the end of the project, the businesses and residents of the county will take advantage of superfast broadband and the benefits it has to offer and by the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Supported the Superfast Wales scheme in Gwynedd – together with additional projects such as the grant Wales Broadband Key – to provide fast broadband to all areas of Gwynedd and to promote the provision to ensure its full use
- Established a local scheme with Welsh Government to support businesses to use and take advantage of technology/fast broadband
- Implemented the programme 'Digital Resilience' to support residents to use the web to gain access to services and to increase the ability of Council staff and other public establishments locally to offer continuous support
- Worked with the 'Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig' (LEADER programme) to develop new methods for communities (geographical and of interest) to take advantage of technology and fast broadband

Cost: No additional cost.

T4 Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig scheme

The purpose of this project is to create the conditions to strengthen Gwynedd's rural economy base and encourage local enterprises to establish and develop in order to sustain

employment across the communities of Gwynedd. The project will focus on building on Gwynedd's strengths and we will be targeting efforts in the most rural areas. This will be achieved through Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig – LEADER Wales Rural Development Programme. We will also look for further opportunities through the Rural Development Scheme to respond to the needs of Gwynedd's rural communities. It will be targeted to respond to the priorities of the Meirionnydd Employment Plan and the Llŷn and Eifionydd Employment Plan.

We have already implemented the Meirionnydd Employment Plan and developed the Llŷn and Eifionydd Employment Plan with the Dwyfor local members. In addition to this, we have ensured that £4m is available for the Gwynedd area from the LEADER element of the Rural Development Plan. This funding will be used to develop new pioneering methods responding to the needs of rural Gwynedd. In addition to this, we have established new arrangements for Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig, sharing administrative resources with Anglesey.

By the end of the project, we will have worked with our partners to establish programmes and projects across the rural areas.

By the end of March 2017, we will have

- Adopted the Llŷn and Eifionydd Employment Plan and a programme for its implementation in order to meet the needs of the area
- Established the LEADER European Programme in Gwynedd and will be implementing it to support the development of rural enterprises
- Targeted broader resources from the Wales Rural Development Plan and other sources to meet the specific needs of rural Gwynedd

Cost: No additional cost.

T5 World Heritage Site

The purpose of this project will be to generate economic benefits from Gwynedd's rich heritage. We will focus on existing World Heritage Sites and will submit a case for World Heritage Site status for parts of the slate valleys.

We have already published an evaluation of the economic benefit which could derive from the process of nominating and receiving the status of World Heritage site for the slate industry. We have developed and prepared an application for European funding to implement the Glannau Menai programme with the intention of developing the status of the area as a regional and international destination.

By the end of the project, sites across Gwynedd will receive international recognition and the county will gain from the associated economic benefit deriving from this.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Created an application to UNESCO to gain world heritage site status for the slate industry

- Prepared a programme of interventions with partners to promote pride and employment in the communities
- Submitted a bid worth £15m for European funding to develop the Glannau Menai programme jointly with Welsh Government and local partners
- Collaborated with CADW and partners to market and promote the World Heritage Sites
- Started on the work of implementing the Caernarfon Shore and Town Centre Regeneration Programme

Cost: No additional cost.

T6 Improving access to employment for the county's people and responding to barriers

The purpose of this project will be to facilitate and implement a package of projects in order to support vulnerable individuals into employment. It is a regional project through the North Wales Ambition Board's work where Gwynedd has been contributing towards commissioning the work.

This includes schemes such as TRAC 11-16 which supports young people aged between 11 and 16 who are not engaged in education and who are most likely to become NEETs (not in education, employment or training); TRAC 16-24 which engages with young people aged between 16 and 24 who are NEETs and encourage them back into education, training or employment and the OPUS scheme which works with individuals who have learning disabilities or mental health issues who are economically inactive and are aged 25 or over in order to get them into sustainable employment. Although many of the plans that are underway in this field are regional in nature, it is critical that robust arrangements are in place to ensure that the vulnerable groups of children and young people of Gwynedd have a direct benefit from them.

We have already established the Gwynedd Employment Group in order to collaborate and share information and good practice amongst the projects. We have also ensured European funding to implement TRAC in schools.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Implemented TRAC 11-16 and TRAC 16-24 schemes for the benefit of vulnerable groups of children and young people in Gwynedd
- Implemented the OPUS scheme for vulnerable groups of adults in Gwynedd in order to support them to sustainable employment
- Appointed mentors to support young people, so that they do not lose out on the opportunities in the labour market

By the end of the project, vulnerable individuals will be supported and encouraged into the world of work.

Cost: No additional cost

T7 High profile and strategic events

The purpose of this project is to attract national or international high profile events to Gwynedd in order to take advantage of the economic and social benefit which will derive from this. We will do this by ensuring that national or international high profile events have been attracted or have established in Gwynedd. We will also support areas within Gwynedd to develop events with the potential to contribute towards the image of an area which has ‘buzz’ and to develop expertise in the area in the field of arranging and holding events, particularly amongst young people and local enterprises.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Worked hand in hand with the large events, identifying opportunities and developing specific ideas and projects in order to make the most of the opportunities for Gwynedd businesses and residents
- Worked closely with the Welsh Government Large Events Unit on projects in order to attract additional investment by the Government
- Worked with event organisers in order to ensure that there are opportunities for the young people of Gwynedd to benefit from the events by assisting or taking part in them

Cost: Dim cost ychwanegol

T8 Working together against poverty

The purpose of this project will be to adopt and implement a Tackling Poverty Strategy in Gwynedd together with partners, implementing a vast array of schemes. Implementing the Strategy will involve interventions in four areas namely: Digital Inclusion (with Digital Gwynedd and Citizens Online); Financial Inclusion; Economic Inclusion (with the Improving People’s Access to Work Package) and Responding to Welfare Reform.

We have already held financial literacy training for benefits, Council Tax, and Economy and Community staff, in order to enable them to provide guidance to those in need. We have also worked with banks in order to offer awareness raising sessions on financial matters. The Gwynedd Digital Resilience Group has been established in order to ensure that all relevant agencies work together.

By the end of March 2017, we will have:

- Established a partnership arrangement for the tackling poverty agenda in Gwynedd
- Adopted a Tackling Long Term Poverty Strategy
- Agreed on a work programme with partners
- Trained front line staff in financial literacy and digital literacy
- Continued to operate the Discretionary Housing Payment fund in order to support families to avoid falling into debt due to the bedroom tax
- Provided new “Local Support Services” to support Universal Credit claimants
- Ensured specialist advice for benefit claimants in locations of historical depression in the areas of Caernarfon, Bangor and Talysarn (until March 2016).

- Developed and implemented a package of schemes to support vulnerable groups of young people to have access to work opportunities

Cost: No additional cost.

T9 Housing Supply Strategy

The purpose of this project will be to implement our strategy to increase the supply and variety of housing in order to ensure that our housing supply is appropriate for the needs of the people of Gwynedd. The project will lead to different solutions in different areas.

During 2015-16, the Affordable Housing Funding Model was approved which includes four major plans, namely:

- Establishing Affordable Housing for Gwynedd residents in rural areas
- Empty houses back into use
- Provision for people who are homeless
- Provision for older people who are promoting independence

By March 2017, we will have:

- Established the financing model in order to increase affordable housing in rural areas, and it is foreseen that we will have started building a total of 31 new homes for residents during 2017-18
- We will also aim to develop between 10-15 empty housing units back into use, which is in addition to the annual total of 40 to 50 units
- It is foreseen that it will be necessary to carry out further work during 2016-17 before we start to work on developing provision for homeless people
- We will have identified the area in which provision for older people is needed, and the type of provision needed. The recommendations submitted as part of the Older People's Accommodation Strategy will be implemented within this work together with any recommendations from the Capacity and sustainability of the care and health arrangements project (G8).

Cost: No additional cost.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

The residents will be more aware of the work opportunities that exist now and in future.

Employers will have a good relationship with the education establishments in order to facilitate pathways to work.

The Welsh Language

Gwynedd has always been a stronghold for the Welsh language and culture; however it has witnessed a gradual decline in the number of Welsh-speakers. According to the 2011 Census, there has been a decline of -846 in the number of Welsh-speakers in Gwynedd, namely -3.5% compared with the 2001 Census.

There are pockets of a lack of awareness of the Welsh language and the Welsh identity amongst residents, along with a lack of social use of Welsh by children and young people. Some residents lack the confidence to use Welsh in different contexts, and there are inconsistencies in the provision of bilingual services across the county. The Council is also eager to promote the use of the Welsh language in the context of the Language Commissioner's Language Standards.

We need 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.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a series of projects in order to meet the challenge that faces us but we will also continue to hold discussions with the experts in the field of language planning in order to ensure that we do the things that will lead to the outcomes which we are striving for:

11 Communities promoting the Welsh language

The purpose of this project will be to promote the Welsh language by supporting and empowering four communities to implement the Local Action Framework and to assist residents to undertake an assessment of the position of the Welsh language in the community in order to strengthen the status and the use of the language.

During 2015-16 the Local Action Framework has been completed for the communities of Bangor, Porthmadog and Dolgellau and action plans have been produced. In addition to this, opportunities to empower the community have been identified and are being implemented in Pwllheli.

By the end of March 2017, we will support residents in the four communities to formulate and deliver their action plans in response to the findings of the Local Action Framework.

Cost: Funded through a Welsh Government grant.

12 The Welsh language in public services

The purpose of this work will be to support public organisations to increase and improve their provision of bilingual services to the residents of Gwynedd so that they can use the Welsh language naturally. By working with the members of the Local Service Board it will be possible to set consistent and clear standards, and work together on schemes which will

improve the user's experience. Also, it will be a medium of supporting the duty placed on public bodies during the coming years to comply with the Language Standards placed on them by the Welsh Language Commissioner. It will also be a medium of reiterating the requirements which will be attached to the strategy which will follow *More than Words*.

During 2015-16, the Local Services Board agreed to prioritise this work which will mean that the key partners will work with us to reach the goal. It is foreseen that by the end of March 2017 that the Local Services Board will have agreed the work programme to realise this and will start on its implementation.

Cost: No additional cost.

13 Young people using the Welsh language socially

The purpose of this project will be to ensure a strong progression to the Language Charter project which is being implemented in Gwynedd primary schools. By using the same methods to measure progress in young people's social use of the Welsh language, and by preparing a strategy which will provide clear guidance for Gwynedd secondary schools on how to plan an intervention, it is hoped that awareness can be improved and an increase made in the use of the language amongst young people.

During 2015-16 we have used the standard method of the language web to set a baseline for the use of the Welsh language amongst the Year 7 pupils of Gwynedd secondary schools.

By the end of March 2017, a strategy will have been created and approved which will set a clear plan for expanding the use of the language web and intervention planning on the basis of its findings.

Cost: No additional cost.

14 Audit of the Welsh language's situation in Gwynedd Council

Over the years, Gwynedd Council's language policy has been an effective tool to ensure appropriate status for the language within the public sector and beyond. Nevertheless, we need to ensure that the policy is consistently implemented across the Council.

There are two purposes to this project:

Firstly, it will consider the success of the Council in normalising the Welsh language through its departments and the services it provides to Gwynedd residents.

Secondly, it will deliver research work in order to find and confirm to what extent the Council goes a step further and succeeds in taking advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language through the services that we provide to Gwynedd residents. It will look at services that we provide directly along with services that we provide through third party arrangements and contracts.

This work will provide strong context and a foundation for the Language Standards for which the Council will be accountable to the Welsh Language Commissioner for their implementation and which came into effect during 2015-16.

During 2015-16, we held an audit of the use of the Welsh language with all Council departments. By March 2017, we will have developed and implemented a robust work programme in response to the findings of the research, ensuring that more of the Council's services are accountable and proactive in promoting the Welsh language.

Cost: We will deliver the work within existing resources.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

After delivering the projects within this theme:

The Children and Young People of Gwynedd using the Welsh Language socially.

The Children and Young People of Gwynedd have a better understanding of the Welsh Language and identity.

The people of Gwynedd (in four communities) have been empowered to undertake linguistic planning.

The people of Gwynedd are taking advantage of opportunities to use the Welsh language in the community, the workplace and in accessing public services.

The Council's services promote the Welsh language amongst residents and residents take advantage of those opportunities to use the Welsh language.

Effective and Efficient Council

Due to the risks arising as a result of the current challenging financial situation, it is more crucial than ever for the Council to make sure that it has the ability to respond to the needs of the people of Gwynedd now and in the future. This means making the most of the resources we have, e.g. funding and staff, ensuring that we don't have wasteful and unnecessary processes, and knowing what the people of Gwynedd tell us about how we respond to their needs.

The key principle here is placing the people of Gwynedd at the centre of everything we do. In addition to listening to people's opinions and views, this can also mean being open to considering new models of service provision, e.g. collaboration with other authorities, working with other authorities in North Wales, working with the remaining North Wales authorities, or working to externalise or internalise services, i.e. whatever works best for the people of Gwynedd.

We need to see a situation where the Council's working practices facilitate delivery rather than maintaining a process, and that the Council staff's mindset will continue to change to focus on what the citizen sees.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a series of projects in order to address the challenge that faces us over the next year:

CI Enabling units to put Ffordd Gwynedd to work

Ensuring a consistent culture does not happen on its own, and the purpose of this project will be to lead 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.

In doing so, we will ensure that every service unit within the Council places the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything they do. It will also ensure that we consider alternative methods of implementation (including collaboration with others) and measure those ideas against a single yardstick – namely to what extent does it increase the benefit for the people of Gwynedd.

During 2015-16 we created a development plan based on learning in the workplace, appointed an additional officer to drive the arrangements and trained and ensured an agreement to release three senior officers to work on the project. Seven service reviews have now been conducted or are being conducted within the Council.

By the end of the project (March 2019), 31 service reviews will have been conducted and culture within the Council will drastically change as a result.

By March 2017, 12 service reviews will have been completed and the Ffordd Gwynedd principles will have been promoted amongst the Council's managers.

Cost: With an additional cost of £150 thousand, 31 reviews could be completed by the end of 2018-19, compared to 22 that would be possible without the additional investment.

C2 Development of leaders programme

If we are to ensure that the workforce consistently places the people of Gwynedd at the centre, the Council's leaders must also encourage such culture.

The purpose of the project is to ensure that leaders within Gwynedd Council understand the principles of "Ffordd Gwynedd", that they are aware of what they need to do in order to reinforce "Ffordd Gwynedd" principles through all tiers of the establishment and that there is a system in place to ensure that this takes place consistently.

During 2015-16 we were successful in establishing new evaluation arrangements for members of the management team and the heads of service, and the first cycle of interviews were held. By the end of March 2017, we will have held a programme of personal development for every member of the Council's Management Group and the Cabinet to equip them to lead and reinforce the working culture within the Council.

Cost: No additional cost.

C3 Engagement

Ensuring that we meet the actual needs of our residents mean that effective and consistent engagement arrangements are needed, and the purpose of this project is to improve engagement across the Council.

During 2015-16, a communications strategy was created and we were successful in increasing awareness of the corporate support which is available to support engagements work and to review the Engagement Booklet. In addition to this, a series of campaigns under the Her Gwynedd banner were held to engage with the people of Gwynedd on the proposed cuts.

The activities linked to the strategy will:

- Provide training for staff and members in the field
- Secure agreement on how to extend the use of new communication and engagement platforms such as social websites
- Review and amend the Council's engagement materials
- Respond locally to the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission on our engagement arrangements
- Review the role of members and their satisfaction in relation to engagement arrangements

By the end of March 2017, this project will ensure that an Engagement Strategy is implemented that includes a series of activities aimed at improving engagement across the Council.

Cost: No additional cost.

C4 Implementing a performance framework

If we are to ensure that we meet the needs of our residents, we must also ensure that we have an effective procedure for measuring whether we are doing that and to be accountable for it.

The purpose of this project will be to develop and implement a new performance framework. The framework will ensure that service teams measure what matters to the people of Gwynedd, and use those measures to improve performance. The associated reporting procedure will add value by holding services to account.

During 2015-16, we were successful in establishing a new framework and the Council's departments have started to implement the new performance framework, identifying purposes and measures which align with "Ffordd Gwynedd" principles.

By the end of March 2017 the framework will be fully operational throughout the Council and we will have assurance that we are measuring and monitoring the appropriate matters.

Cost: No additional cost.

C5 Extending the use of self-service

At a time of financial constraints, it is vital that we continue to meet with the needs of residents effectively but in the most efficient way.

The purpose of this project is to extend the use of self-service to facilitate access to Council services for the people of Gwynedd at a cost that is less than the traditional channels. This development, on the basis of the work which has been carried out thus far, will provide access to up to 38 services through the medium of the digital channel.

During 2015-16, work has been commissioned to look at the technical basis to be used which will set a basis for the business case to combine contact channels. By the end of March 2017, we will have achieved the first step of the development and will have created/ordered a core system for recording and facilitating access to Council services.

Cost: In ensuring that it addresses the needs of the people of Gwynedd, the project will provide savings to the Council in being fully implemented but the size of the annual savings will be dependent on the system which will be created/ordered. It will be necessary to invest money before the saving can be realised. It is estimated that a minimum of £200,000 will need to be invested for a period of three years, but the exact cost will be dependent on which kind of system is adopted for the purposes of self service and the effort associated with its installation.

C6 Information Technology Strategy (IT)

Information Technology is an important tool to ensure that services are effective and efficient, and the purpose of this project is to produce an Information Technology Strategy. It will set

out the direction for the next phase in order to maximise the benefit to be gained from using this tool along with a work programme to realise the strategy.

Cost: The cost will be dependent on the content of the strategy.

C7 Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)

The purpose of this project is to establish the EDRMS system which will ensure that the Council's information sharing arrangements are much easier and effective, and reduce the use of paper. The system will store and manage access to all electronic documents. This will also facilitate savings schemes by enabling staff to save time.

During 2015-16 we have established and agreed the business case and started to develop a system for managing electronic documents and records. We have introduced the system to the Corporate Support Department and to the Economy and Community Department.

By the end of March 2017, at least five of the Council's departments will use the EDRMS system, also ensuring annual savings of £201,000.

Cost: No additional cost.

C8 Information governance

Information is a crucial and valuable resource to all our activities and we need to ensure that our working arrangements keep it safe.

Whilst we have relevant arrangements to ensure that it is safe with appropriate training arrangements, the purpose of this project is to review our training arrangements for staff who work with personal information, in order to ensure that training is wholly effective and that we are confident that the personal information of the people of Gwynedd is totally safe in our hands.

During 2015-16, we have reviewed the training arrangements, holding some training sessions with teams in different ways.

By the end of 2017, we will have assessed the propriety of our information protection arrangements (including the efficiency of our training arrangements), communicating and introducing a data protection policy for staff, introducing new training arrangements and introducing audit arrangements in order to embed information protection principles throughout the whole establishment.

What will be the effect of what we are doing on the lives of the people of Gwynedd?

Services demonstrate that they have understood and responded to what matters to the people of Gwynedd.

Better awareness of the financial challenge the Council is facing.

Performance measures that reflect what matters to the people of Gwynedd.

Financial Planning

The context of this strategic plan is the unprecedented reduction in Welsh Government grants to Welsh local government over the past few years and the increasing requirements on our services because of additional demand of Government policy requirements and the effect of inflation. In 2014-15 Gwynedd Council saw a reduction of 4.4% in the grant-funding received from the Government in Cardiff Bay, in 2015-16 a reduction of 4.0% and in 2016-17 a reduction of 1.5%, which is tantamount to a loss of £8.07m, £6.96m and £2.61m per annum. Therefore, we are in a position where we will be facing spending more than the income that is available over the next three years.

In order to maintain key services for the future, the challenge must be faced and difficult decisions made. The forecasts show that this deficit will increase substantially over the years to come and over the period 2016-17 to 2019-20 it could be as much as £44m prior to Council tax increases and savings. Although we will be facing a very difficult situation for an extended period, the Council is determined not to allow this to become an excuse for not improving things for the people of Gwynedd.

At the same time, we must continue to ensure that the people of Gwynedd are at the heart of everything we do. It is important that the effects of the savings on the people of Gwynedd are kept to a minimum and while seeking to continue to deliver more in those priority fields.

On the basis of the information that we have, we have foreseen what we could be facing and we have considered how we will cope with such a situation. The projection for the four years to come provides a realistic picture of what could hit us and identifies those savings that have already been planned and achieved. It should be noted that these estimates could change over time.

2016-17 – 2019-20 Budget

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Add back use of Balances	2,019			
Additional Expenditure Requirements	10,261	8,220	6,631	7,486
General Grant Reduction	1,322	2,100	3,100	2,900
Increase Council Tax	- 2,141	- 2,220	- 2,302	- 2,387
The Gap	11,461	8,100	7,429	7,999
Current Savings	- 3,090	- 3,947	- 130	-
Schools' Savings	- 2,095	- 990	- 263	
Additional Savings	- 1,240	- 2,692	- 1,009	- 2,315
The balance from the Gap = years' cuts	5,036	471	6,027	5,684
Following year's cuts	471		5,684	
2 year cuts (2 + 2 strategy)	5,507		11,711	

Over the period of 2016-17 to 2017-18, we will be planning to close the financial deficit remaining, namely £5.5m of cuts, following identifying efficiency savings worth £21m since 2015-16. Following this, (by 2018-19 to 2019-10) we will be keeping all options open (including the possibility of increasing the Council Tax above 3.5% and finding savings from school budgets). It is an important principle that the Council maximises the efficiency savings i.e. maintaining services with fewer resources without having an impact on the people of Gwynedd. Furthermore, where cuts have to be made to services, those need to be made in fields that have the least effect on the people of Gwynedd.

It will be possible to deliver several of the plans noted in the Strategic Plan by using existing resources but for some of them there will be a need to invest in order to achieve the ambition in question.

Despite the acute reduction in the Council's grant income, we are moving towards a situation where we have a balanced sustainable budget, whilst at the same time, ensuring that we have the necessary resources to achieve the Council's ambition for the people of Gwynedd.

What exactly are we going to do to achieve the desired situation and by when?

We will have a series of projects in order to address the challenge that faces us over the next two years:

CA1 Realising savings

The purpose of this project will be to ensure that arrangements are in place to realise efficiency savings of £21.7m (this sum will need to be reviewed as a result of introducing the new Financial Strategy) that have already been agreed as part of the savings system along with any further savings that are identified.

During 2015-16, we have been successful in harvesting savings of £7.3m. By the end of March 2017, it is foreseen that we will have achieved the savings planned for the period.

Cost: No additional cost.

CA2 Further efficiencies and service provision models

The purpose of this project will be to find further efficiency schemes in order to reduce the amount of cuts required in addition to researching fields where it is possible to change the current model of provision and thus make savings.

During 2015-16, work has been taking place to identify further efficiency schemes to be realised with more detailed work to develop alternative models taking place within three specific fields. There is a shortlist of identified efficiency possibilities worth about £9m.

By the end of March 2017, we will have worked further on the ideas, identifying clear plans for implementation to address the need for a further £6m of efficiency savings.

Cost: No additional cost.

Delivering the Plan

Delivering the plan is an important priority in itself. We have put appropriate arrangements in place at every level in the Council to deliver the plan and everyone has an important part to play in this.

The full Council is responsible for adopting the Strategic Plan and setting the direction for the Council's work over the coming years.

Members of the Cabinet of the Council will be responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan within their responsibility fields and they will ensure that there are robust project management and performance management arrangements in place to achieve what we are going to do.

The **Scrutiny Committees** will hold the Cabinet Members to account for their performance in terms of delivery and they will also scrutinise the impact of the plan on the residents of Gwynedd.

The **Council** will continue to collaborate with its partners in the public sector, the third sector and the private sector to achieve priorities that need the input of more than one partner for them to be achieved.

As part of our commitment to put the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do, we will be continuously engaging with residents and communities so that they will be given opportunities to influence the work of the Council and empower them to take ownership and responsibility of the future.