

MEETING	The Council
DATE	6 July 2023
TITLE	The Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services 2022/23
PURPOSE	To submit the report for the attention of Council Members
AUTHOR	Dylan Owen, Statutory Director of Social Services

1. Background

- 1.1. At the end of every fiscal year, all Statutory Directors of Social Services are required to provide and publish a report regarding the performance of Social Services within the local authority during the previous year.
- 1.2. The purpose of the annual report is to note the local authority's journey towards improvement in providing services to people in their areas, to those who receive information, advice and assistance, the individuals and the carers who receive care and support. Under the requirements of the new Social Services and Well-being Act, the report must demonstrate how local authorities have promoted well-being and have been accountable for presenting well-being standards.
- 1.3. I as Director am asked to consider the range of information and experiences that affect the ability of the Council's Social Services to provide reliable, sustainable services of the highest quality, and to express my opinion in the report and present it to the Council. The report draws attention to any lessons learnt, and outlines the priorities for the year to come. It also explains how we assessed people's needs, and included them at the centre as we shaped our services and care provision. The form of the report had followed national guidance over the past years, but you will see that we have attempted to make it more accessible and reader-friendly this year.
- 1.4. It is a pleasure to be able to report that the performance of Gwynedd Social Services is good on the whole, which is a reflection of our workforce's commitment and resilience. The year gone by was not easy, and the impacts of the pandemic, along with the cost-of-living challenges and the impact of waiting times for health treatments, continue to be felt in our communities. It is obvious from the performance reported here that managers and staff have made a heroic effort to be able to cope with the demands that have been on them during the year.
- 1.5. As highlighted in the report, we have also experienced substantial challenges, and certainly we have key matters that require our attention on a local, regional and national level. Our workers and care providers have faced huge challenges throughout the period in question, including the recruitment and retention of front-line staff, financial sustainability, paying a fair wage to workers and ensuring

suitable placements for the county's residents. As a result, we are working hard, jointly with our key partners, to seek to ensure that appropriate services are available locally. This is the case about the children and adults fields alike.

- 1.6. The performance of relevant services is challenged in accordance with the Council's internal procedures and reports on this performance are presented by the relevant Cabinet members at regular intervals. An overview of the services' performance for the whole year will also be available in the Gwynedd Council Performance Report for 2022/23.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Council is requested to accept the report submitted by the authority's Statutory Director for Social Services.

3. Views of the Statutory Officers

The Monitoring Officer:

Presenting the report to the full Council provides an opportunity to consider the work and challenges which faces the Social Services from the perspective of the Statutory Director. I am satisfied with the propriety of the report.

Head of Finance Department:

I believe that the annual report is a fair reflection of the activities of the Social Services for 2022/23, and I can confirm the accuracy of the financial information that appears in the "Finance" section which starts on page 25. I am satisfied that the approval of this annual report will not involve any additional financial commitment from the Council.