

Arweinydd y Cyngor
Leader of the Council
Cynghorydd / Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

Gofynnwch am/Ask for: **Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn**
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Ein Cyf / Our Ref: **DS/SEW**

Eich Cyf / Your Ref:



29/06/21

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister of Wales,

Dear First Minister,

Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan - Review

I write to you on behalf of all Gwynedd Council members following an extraordinary meeting of the Council that was arranged at the request of members to discuss our review of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan, as a result of significant concerns regarding the housing crisis in the county. Our Development Plan was adopted in 2017 and there is an intention to undertake a review of it with the process commencing during the next few weeks.

This is the proposal that was unanimously passed following an earnest and passionate discussion:

"That this Council urgently addresses the Local Development Plan (approved 28.7.2017) with a view to review and update in relation to planning policies and the Welsh language. It would be desirable to give this particular priority, beyond what was noted as the normal monitoring period within the Plan itself, and introduce proposals that correspond to the report of Dr Simon Brooks "Second Homes - Developing New Policies in Wales", commissioned by Welsh Government.

Following the Pandemic, and the fact that Wylfa B will not be developed, it is expected that such a meeting will address the necessary changes required to comply with the Welsh Well-being Act, a More Equal Wales and a Wales with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

Therefore, in light of the housing crisis and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, there is a need to move urgently to review the Local Development Plan; that this process takes full attention of the views of members and the community, and that the Council proceeds as soon as possible to prepare the Review Report, and submit a Delivery Agreement before the Council. Also, that the Council writes to the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, to press for the right to act within a shorter timeframe".

During the meeting, deep concerns were highlighted in every community across the county about the unruly housing market and the critical position we have here in Gwynedd. The housing crisis requires an urgent response and, therefore, there was considerable astonishment in understanding that a review of our Local Development Plan would take three and a half years due to the statutory requirements of the system.

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It is difficult to understand why so much time is needed when there is a need to respond with urgency to ensure that we can provide housing to meet the needs of our communities. This is at a time when there are substantial changes such as the huge increase in second homes and holiday homes, the change in the situation regarding the Wylfa Newydd scheme, the requirements of Future Wales (The National Plan) in addition to the impacts of the pandemic.

I was urged to write to you to ask if it would be possible to undertake a review of the Development Plan much sooner? A suggestion was made that this should be done within six months and certainly before council elections in May.

We have a team of enthusiastic officers who are eager to make every effort to complete the review as soon as possible but it appears that the regulations restrict their ability to do so.

It is clear that the Local Development Plan has a central part in what we can do as a Council to solve the housing problem, but we would like to remind you of our previous correspondence with our proposals noting what the Government can do, in an attempt to have local control over the number of second homes and holiday homes.

I look forward to hearing from you to discuss the crisis facing our communities in detail and to seek resolutions as a matter of urgency.

I look forward to your response as soon as possible in order for me to report back to my fellow members.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dyfrig Siencyn', followed by a period.

Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn
Leader of Gwynedd Council