Concise Version

Mi allwch ddarllen y ddogfen yma yn Gymraeg hefyd. Ewch nôl i'r dudalen we, a chliciwch ar y botwm iaith ar dop y dudalen.

Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

CYNGOR GWYNEDD

AUDIT WALES REVIEW

1 REVIEW

Audit Wales conducted a review of the effectiveness of our scrutiny arrangements during February 2023 - April 2023.

2 REPORT

The report of the review was received in September 2023.

3 CONSULTATION

Workshops were held in October / November 2023 for members to get the opportunity to give their opinion. There were also consultations with officers.

4 JOURNEY TO A DECISION

Joint meeting of the Scrutiny Forum and Cabinet Members > Scrutiny Forum > Governance and Audit Committee

5 FULL COUNCIL

Decide to adhere to the current scrutiny committee arrangements and approve the actions to improve efficiency.

ITEMS SCRUTINISED DURING 2023/24

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee

Education Department, Economy and Community Department, GwE, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, Leadership Team and Legal, Corporate Support Department, Finance Department, the Council's Internal Operation and Partnerships

Item	Reason for scrutiny	Impact of Scrutiny
Emergency Planning	Ensure that arrangements are in place in terms of emergency planning	Receive assurance that arrangements are in place to respond to an emergency.
Gwynedd Town Centres	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Prosperous Gwynedd	Receive confirmation in terms of the financial situation to achieve and receive assurance that the town/city centre action plans intertwine with the Regeneration Framework.
Digital Plan	Pre-decision scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - An Efficient Gwynedd	A useful discussion highlighting matters to be given attention, namely that digital technology increases the distance between the two people who communicate together, that there is room to inform councillors and others in terms of artificial intelligence technology and the need to be awake to new developments in the digital field.

Education Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny	Matters were highlighted to be given attention, including the need to revisit the Education Strategy in light of the Gwynedd Category 3 Secondary Schools Scrutiny Investigation report, and specifically in terms of how bilingualism is dealt with.
Pupils' attendance and behaviour in Gwynedd schools	Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic period on the field	Receive assurance that a work programme is in place to respond to the situation.
Estyn report on education services in Cyngor Gwynedd	External Auditor's Report	Receive assurance that the Education Department is responding to Estyn's recommendations and decide to track progress on a response to the recommendations in nine months.
Cwmni Byw'n Iach	A matter on the risk register	Receive assurance that the risk is being addressed and what plans Byw'n Iach has in terms of supporting people with lower incomes, and children in particular. The need to send a letter to the Minister of Health and Social Services highlighting the work being done by Cwmni Byw'n Iach in relation to the National Exercise Referral Scheme and the need for more funding to fund its operation in Gwynedd was identified. The Committee escalated the matter to a national level because of the importance of preventative work which contributes to the Government's vision for a Healthier Wales, namely to give greater

		emphasis on preventing illness and helping people to manage their own health and well-being.
Beach Management	A matter on the risk register	Receive assurance that arrangements are in place to manage beaches and mitigate risks.
Gwynedd Economic Development Project	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Prosperous Gwynedd	Receive assurance that progress is being made to achieve the priority project.
Equality Objectives 2024-28	Pre-decision scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - An Efficient Gwynedd	Scrutiny input into the draft equality objectives before the Cabinet adopted the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.
Education Annual Report & GwE Annual Report	Annual Items / Assurance	Make observations on what has been achieved and the Education Department's priorities, as well as GwE's next steps for the next period.
Post-16 Education Project in Arfon	Council Plan 2023-28 - Tomorrow’s Gwynedd	Follow-up following scrutiny of the informal engagement process held on post-16 education in the meeting on 4 February 2021. Receive assurance in terms of the direction and the next steps.
North Wales Growth Deal - Quarter 3 Performance Report 2023/24	The Committee’s role to scrutinise the Ambition Board's work	Scrutinise progress and impact of the Growth Deal on Gwynedd, being satisfied that mitigation measures are in place to respond to the risks.

Free school meals	Council Plan 2023-28 - Tomorrow's Gwynedd	Track progress and highlight matters that need to be considered.

Communities Scrutiny Committee

Environment Department, Highways, Engineering and YGC (Gwynedd Consultancy) Department, Local Development Plan, Public Services Board, Crime and Disorder and the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan

Item	Reason for scrutiny	Impact of Scrutiny
Annual Report 2022/23 - Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board	The Committee's role to scrutinise the Public Services Board's work	Monitor the progress of the Public Services Board's efforts in implementing the Well-being Plan.
Developments in the Public Transport field	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd	Receive assurance that there is progress in achieving the vision of the priority project.
New Local Development Plan – The Delivery Agreement	Role to scrutinise the Local Development Plan / Council Plan 2023-28	Identify a possible additional risk to the Local Development Plan - 'consultation'. Namely, the risk of not consulting sufficiently. As a result of the scrutiny, it was added as a possible risk in Appendix 5 of the Delivery Agreement, "Potential Risks and Response Methods".

Roll-out of public charging points for electric vehicles	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd	Highlight the need to look at providing a greater number of rapid charging points. Ask the Cabinet Member/Environment Department to consider the possibility.
Public Toilets	Scrutiny of the management of the public toilets provision	Input before the Service develops an action plan.
Climate and Nature Emergency Plan	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd	Recommend that information about 'Active Travel' be added under Section 3 of the Report: 'Section 6 Environment (Wales) Act 2016' and consider adapting the format of how information is displayed under the 'What did we promise to do in 2022/23' and 'What we did' titles in Sections 5-11 of the Report for clarity to the reader. As a result, the format of how the information is displayed was adapted. The need for the Cabinet to consider the staffing resource to achieve the vision of the Climate and Nature Emergency Plan was highlighted. An example of scrutiny highlighting an issue that needs addressing to ensure achievement.
Local Flood Strategy	Pre-decision scrutiny / Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd	It was recommended that the information about the risk in terms of roads flooding as well as the risk to properties should be included in the Local Flood Strategy and the awareness of all residents should be raised of how to prepare for flooding. As a result, a specific action point was added relating to flood risk to the highways network (Action

		Point 2.3A) and there are clear references in the document towards information sources for property owners who are at risk from flooding.
Annual Update by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership	The Committee's role as a Crime and Disorder Committee	To receive assurance in terms of the Partnership's work over the period, as well as priorities and the direction of the work in the future.
Grass Cutting and Land Maintenance	Follow-up following scrutiny at the 19 January 2023 meeting	Receive assurance in terms of the direction and identify the need to receive an update in a year's time.
Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board Delivery Arrangements	The Committee's role to scrutinise the Public Services Board's work	Highlight the need to include more detail about the delivery arrangements and how progress is measured to achieve the objectives of the Well-being Plan in reports for the future to ensure that scrutiny can add value. It was recommended to the Public Services Board that the annual report should include information about: • How the Welsh language is promoted per well-being objective; • How the Whole System Thinking and Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales methodology is a golden thread throughout the work. When the Draft Well-being Plan was scrutinised, specific matters were raised in terms of protecting the Welsh Language. The scrutiny led to amendments to the Draft Well-being Plan but it was not added as a well-being objective in the plan. Through scrutinising the

		implementation of the plan, scrutinisers ensure that the Welsh Language is a consistent priority and is promoted in every work field.
Highways Maintenance Manual	Scrutiny of implementation following the adoption of the Manual	To recommend that the Highways, Engineering and YGC Department puts arrangements in place to notify councillors when a reported problem has been resolved and to look at establishing arrangements to review the standard of inspections.
Street Scene Service	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Green Gwynedd	Scrutinise the progress towards achieving the 'Clean and Tidy Communities' priority project.

Care Scrutiny Committee

Adults, Health and Well-being Department, Children and Supporting Families Department, Health and the Housing and Property Department

Item	Reason for scrutiny	Impact of Scrutiny
Gwynedd Mental Health Service (Adults, Health and Well-being Department)	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd	Support the department's plans to establish a new work model for the Mental Health Service, ask the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being to contact the Welsh Government's Health Minister to

		explain the intention to create a new work model and the reasons for that.
Recruitment and retention of social workers (Children and Supporting Families Department)	A matter on the risk register	Support the Children and Supporting Families Department's intention to concentrate on the four main matters noted in the report as a response to the staffing situation, acknowledging that some of the work had already commenced.
Care Inspectorate Wales' Review Findings: Safeguarding Children Service	External Auditor’s Report	To address the findings of the review that were relevant to Gwynedd.
Housing Allocation Policy and Housing Waiting List	Scrutinise the implementation of the policy and the situation in terms of the housing waiting list	Scrutinise the implementation of the Housing Allocation Policy, being alert to the possible implications for the policy as a result of the Welsh Government's White Paper.
Housing One Stop Shop	Follow-up following scrutiny at the 30 September 2021 meeting	Receive assurance of the development of the One Stop Shop and highlight the need to facilitate communication between councillors and housing associations.
Supported accommodation including learning disabilities services, mental health and support for women	Scrutinise the provision and the monitoring arrangements	Receive assurance of the supported accommodation situation for individuals with learning disabilities in Gwynedd and request information about supported accommodation provided by the mental health service and for support to women.

Day Care Service	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd	Support the intention to hold a full review of the current provision and consider an alternative model and ask officers to ensure that the new model provides a consistent service across the county, including service for those who live in rural areas.
Arrangements for managing and maintaining care homes	Request from the Governance and Audit Committee	Receive assurance that progress has been made since the initial audits. Declare concern about staffing challenges for care homes and the problems that emerge as a result, such as difficulty in completing training and ask the Adults, Health and Well-being Department consider how to ensure that every home reaches a high assurance level in the future.
Support for unpaid carers	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Caring Gwynedd	To declare support to raising awareness of the support available for unpaid carers, including the Direct Payments Scheme. The need to raise members' awareness of the Direct Payments Scheme was highlighted.
Housing Action Plan	Council Plan 2023-28 - A Homely Gwynedd	Track the progress of achieving the priority project in the Council's Plan. Identify the need to look at the details of the Social Housing Allocation Policy and to receive assurance of the system’s resilience.
Preventative work commissioned to the third sector (Adults & Children)	Assurance in terms of the provision and the monitoring arrangements	Highlight inconsistency in terms of the level of detail received and the performance information requested from the third sector, and the need to reconcile across the sector. Support the idea of a cross-departmental arrangement to monitor.

Falls Protocol	Contribute to establishing a falls protocol for carers to use in the community	Lead to the implementation of the I STUMBLE protocol, train Council staff and carers to use it, consider sharing the information with the public, collaborate with the Health Board to improve training for each carer and collaborate with the Ambulance Service to provide equipment and train local volunteers as part of a pilot scheme.
Annual Report on the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department's Complaints, Enquiries and Expressions of Gratitude Procedure for 2022-23	Assurance in terms of the arrangements to deal with complaints in the care field of work	To receive assurance in terms of the arrangements to deal with complaints in the care work field.
Short Breaks Service (Derwen Integrated Team)	Assurance that suitable provision is available to everyone who needs the service	Receive assurance about the provision and acknowledge the financial situation so as to continue to offer the service to everyone who needs it.

GWYNEDD CATEGORY 3 SECONDARY SCHOOLS SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

The main question that the investigation addressed was:

'What is the Welsh-medium provision in our secondary schools and what plans are in place to increase the provision in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 in Gwynedd?'

The implementation of the Authority's Education Language Policy in three category 3 secondary schools (1 school from Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd) was considered, namely:

- Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle
- Ysgol Eifionydd
- Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn

Access can be gained to the full investigation report via this link - **Gwynedd Category 3 Secondary Schools Scrutiny Investigation Report**

At the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 21 March 2024, the Cabinet Member/Education Department's progress report was received in response to the recommendations - Progress Report. It was welcomed that the Department is collaborating with a freelance consultant to revisit Gwynedd's Education Language Policy.

AUTISM PLAN
TASK AND FINISH GROUP

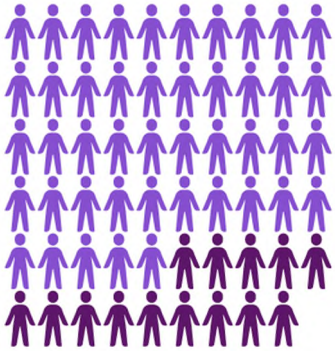
The intention of the work was to ensure understanding of the implementation of the Gwynedd Autism Plan as a whole, including:

- an understanding of the support available to individuals and their families when awaiting a diagnosis, and whether there are any barriers on the road to a diagnosis;
- following diagnosis, in particular the support available for children within our schools, and whether there are any barriers.

A report on the Task and Finish Group's work was presented to the Care Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 April 2024. Recommendations were made in connection with training, school planning and Council buildings and that the Committee should receive an update in 12 months. Access can be gained to the Task Group report via this link – **Autism Plan Task and Finish Group Report**

All information about scrutiny work in 2023-24 is available in the full version of the Annual Report on the Council website – https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/scrutiny

Facts about Scrutiny in Gwynedd in 2023/24

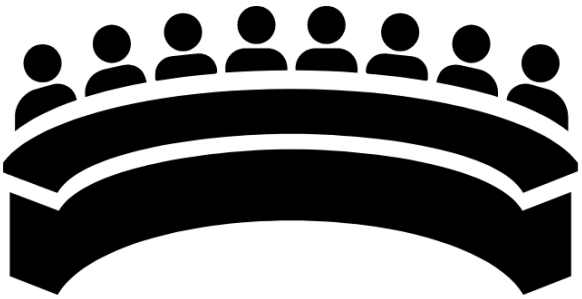


45 members (out of a possible 59) have been a part of the important scrutiny work during the year.

43 items have been scrutinised in formal meetings (33 last year).

meetings of the Scrutiny Forum have been held during the year.

A member of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee represented the Committee on Gwynedd's Education Language Forum.

A member of the Communities Scrutiny Committee represented the Committee on the Nature and Climate Change Board.

3 members of the Care Scrutiny Committee represented the Committee on the Mid Wales Joint Committee for Health and Care's Scrutiny Group.