SECTION 1

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Content of the Constitution

1.1.1 The Constitution describes the various bodies that make up the Council, their functions, Membership and procedural rules.

1.1.2 In Section 3 (Getting Information and Getting Involved) we have provided information for members of the public and councillors on how you can get information about the Council, and how you can get involved. We hope that this will help people who have an interest in the Council's work, or a particular matter it is dealing with, understand where they can get more information, and how they can contribute to Council activities.

1.1.3 You can get a better understanding of what each of the Council's bodies do in Sections 4 to 10 of this Constitution, including Full Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Standards Committee and Regulatory Committees Section 11 provides information on the management and Officer structures of the Council. Some Officers have a specific duty to ensure that the Council operates within the law and uses resources wisely. Responsibility for functions at Section 13 says which Council bodies, and which Officers, have authority to make which decisions.

1.1.4 The procedural rules that apply to the different Council bodies are contained in the sections relating to those bodies, eg Full Council (Section 4), the Cabinet (Section 5) and Overview and Scrutiny (Section 7). You may find these useful if you want to attend a meeting, particularly if you want to be able to ask questions, have a matter discussed, or put your point of view.

1.1.5 Sections 18 to 20 have the Codes of Conduct and Protocols which Officers and Members have agreed to comply with. They set the standards of behaviour.

1.1.6 The Contents pages at the beginning of this Constitution provide a guide on what is in the Constitution and where you can find it.

1.2 How the Council Operates

1.2.1 The Council is comprised of 75 Councillors elected every four years. Each Councillor is democratically accountable to the residents of their electoral division as well as all of those who live in Gwynedd. The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those that did not vote for them.

1.2.2 All Councillors have agreed to follow a Code of Conduct, to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. The Standards Committee is responsible for training and advising on the Code of Conduct.

1.2.3 All Councillors meet together regularly as the Council. Meetings of the Council are normally open to the public. Here Councillors decide the Council's overall Policy

Framework and set the budget each year. The Council appoints the Leader of the Council for the term of the Council. The Leader then decides the size and Membership of the Cabinet i.e. the role of individual Members of the Cabinet and arrangements for the exercise and delegation of Executive Functions. The Cabinet is appointed to carry out all of the Council's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council, whether by Law or under this Constitution, together with making decisions within the Budget and Policy Framework set by the Council.

If you need any further help please do not hesitate to contact us at the following address.

The Monitoring Officer, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL55 1SH.

Whilst the Constitution is very long we hope that you will find it easy to use. We have spent a lot of time trying to make it as easy to follow as is possible with such a long and complex legal document.