



Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023: Review 2021/22 - Improvement Priorities



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The report outlines our main objectives for 2021/22, whilst the Plan in its entirety also gives information about the full breadth of the Council's work and our budgets.

To view electronic versions of any of these documents, follow this link to the Council's website

www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/CouncilPlan

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The Council Leader's Foreword

As I present this review of the Gwynedd Council Plan for 2021/22, it is impossible not to look back at the unprecedented past year. It would be unwise, if not irresponsible, not to respond to the far-reaching impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic as we plan our work for the year ahead.

2020/21 was a year like no other in our lifetime, with individuals and families having suffered bereavements and illness, loss of work or income, and businesses affected in an unprecedented way. The Council and I express our sincere sympathy with each and every one of you. Although the Council cannot solve all the problems thrown at us by Covid-19, we will do everything within our own ability to respond.



Therefore, this Plan includes a number of priorities and projects that have been developed over the past year, and new ones for 2021/22. Who could have predicted, a year ago, that we would have provided a Test, Trace and Protect service that has, and which will continue to make a real difference in the battle against the virus? With the Covid-19 situation being so unpredictable, we need to be able to respond swiftly to the needs of the people of Gwynedd, and should it be necessary to divert our attention to other work, then we need to be realistic regarding what it is possible for us to achieve within this Plan.

Having said this, there is further work to be done in certain fields to understand the true impact of Covid-19, such as how it affects the well-being and education of our children; we will undertake this work and take action as necessary. Likewise, we intend to adapt some existing projects, such as 'sustainable tourism' and the exciting and ambitious action plan to provide homes for the people of Gwynedd.

We will begin the work of rebuilding for the future by looking at the various needs of local communities. We need to start at our feet. Naturally, the needs of Bangor, Y Bala and Barmouth will not be the same; therefore, the work will begin with the drawing up of Local Regeneration Plans, and I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this work.

Remember that the impacts of Covid-19 were not wholly negative. The situation has also highlighted all those excellent qualities that already existed under the surface amongst the people of Gwynedd. Throughout the hardships of the past year, people have helped each other. Communities have pulled together and wrapped a protective blanket around the most vulnerable in our midst. We must celebrate and give thanks for that effort, and we have schemes that will strive to maintain that momentum in the future, such as Supporting People's Well-being.

Gwynedd Council cannot satisfy everyone's needs and we cannot do everything on our own. More than ever, Covid-19 has shown how dependent we are on each other; and by collaborating with other public bodies, the third sector, businesses and communities, I am full of hope as I look forward to 2021/22 in this special county.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Dyfrig Siencyn'.

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn,
Gwynedd Council Leader.

Introduction to the Plan

The Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-23 was adopted by the Council in March 2018 (and reviewed annually following that). It was produced based on evidence within the well-being assessment conducted by the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, and feedback from engagement sessions held with communities, elected members, staff and partners.

In accordance with the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act)**, the Council has adopted well-being objectives, which simply summarise the Council's ambition to see every community in Gwynedd thriving. This means that Gwynedd's residents:

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable them to do what they want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support themselves and their families
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment

These objectives have previously been published in our **well-being statement**, which also explains how they contribute to the national well-being goals set by Welsh Government in the Act. This Plan notes how the Council's work contributes to the realisation of our ambition through a combination of the day-to-day work of our departments and specific projects that have been identified in order to address the areas that need the most effort to develop. These projects have been noted under Improvement Priorities. Each of the Improvement Priorities contribute to several of our well-being objectives, and the plan notes which ones under each project.

As part of this action we will also give appropriate consideration to the sustainable development principle by considering the long-term, prevention, integration, collaborative working and being inclusive of people of all ages. We will do this by adopting the "Ffordd Gwynedd" approach of working, which focuses on placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do. The plan refers to several examples of where we are working preventatively, where we involve the people of Gwynedd by consulting and working with our communities and where we consider future needs. There are also examples of where we collaborate and work in integration to achieve what is important to the people of Gwynedd – for example through our work as a member of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board, or internally through our programme boards such as the Supporting People Board.

Act, we recognise that further work is needed to evidence this and the impact on the residents of Gwynedd. Consequently, we intend to strengthen our arrangements to challenge and report on performance in order to highlight our contribution to the principles of the Act.

We have reviewed the content of the Plan over the past months in order to ensure that we continue to do the things that matter to the people of Gwynedd and to examine the social, economic, environmental and policy issues which influence the Council, and which are likely to have an impact on the people of Gwynedd in the future. Of course, there are some significant changes in the needs of our communities following the Covid-19 emergency and the lives of the people of Gwynedd look quite different when compared with the last time we reviewed this scheme.

As a Council, we have therefore reviewed the contents of the plan and the priorities previously set by us. The 2021-22 review of Gwynedd Council's Plan 2018-2023 includes a continuation of schemes already in the plan, as well as a collection of new priorities; many of which have arisen directly as a result of the Covid-19 emergency, and others that have arisen indirectly as different needs were brought to the surface as a result of the emergency and the living conditions and restrictions that came with it. Many of the areas included within some of the projects, for example 'The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates' and 'Native Welsh Place Names', have of course been being addressed as part of the council's work for some years. However, specific challenges that have arisen as a result of the Covid-19 emergency have increasingly highlighted the problems, and so some things that were already in place are now included among the plan's main priorities.

This version of the Plan, the 'Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023: 2021/22 Review', will supersede the current version. Below is an attempt to summarise the main adaptations made following the review:

The following projects have been added:

- Regeneration: creating regeneration plans for our areas
- The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People
- Digital Learning Strategy
- The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates
- Native Welsh Place Names
- A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the future
- Keeping Families Together Strategy
- Ensuring specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs
- Ensuring that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive
- Public Protection Capacity
- Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively
- Realising Savings
- Clean and Tidy Communities
- Strengthening Communication and Engagement

In addition, the scope or content of the following projects has changed:

- **Benefiting from Tourism** has now been extended and re-named **Tourism – creating a Sustainable Tourism Plan**
- The scope of the **Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper** project has been extended as a result of the need for additional support for businesses following the challenges of the Covid-19 crisis
- **Post-16 Provision, Bangor Catchment Area, Treforthyr Catchment Area (Cricieth), Meirionnydd Strategic Collaboration** has been split into four individual projects, namely:
 - Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon
 - Bangor Catchment Area
 - Cricieth Catchment Area and
 - Meirionnydd Collaboration
- The scope of the **Supporting People's Well-being** project has been extended in light of different needs emerging in our communities during the Covid-19 crisis
- The scope of the **More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the World of Work** project has been extended as a result of increased unemployment following the Covid-19 crisis
- The **'Homes for the People of Gwynedd' Strategy 2019-24** has been changed to focus on three additional projects that are covered by the strategy, namely:
 - A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin action;
 - Easy and clear access enquiry services and advice on housing matters: Establish 'one front door' and helpdesk for the public to help them with housing problems; and
 - Letting social housing to local people: Create a new allocation policy for the county which will give greater priority to local people.
- The scope of the project titled **Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People** has been changed because of the need take into account the impact of lockdown on Welsh learners' skills and confidence
- The **Community Resilience** project has been incorporated as part of the **Supporting People's Well-being** project
- The scope of the **Apprenticeships Scheme** has been extended and re-named **Planning the Workforce**
- The project titled **Gwynedd Businesses to use the Welsh Language** is now being addressed as part of the day-to-day work of the Corporate Support and Economy and Community Departments.

The plan also includes information about our achievements in response to matters raised as Local Priorities by Councillors back in the autumn of 2017. Any changes to these priorities, along with any action plans intended for the future, are addressed within the relevant Departmental Plan.

The precarious financial position of Wales and Britain sets us as a Council a significant challenge as we plan our services for the future. Inadequate increases in Government grant mean that continuing to provide a number of services is difficult. We must, therefore, be creative and consider all possible ways of providing the services that the people of Gwynedd deserve. We make it clear however that any change will be based on the need to see all communities in Gwynedd thrive and to improve the well-being of our residents for the future.

Since the original plan was adopted, the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board adopted its **Well-being Plan** during the spring of 2018. The well-being goals and the priorities highlighted within the Well-being Plan are consistent with the ones in the Gwynedd Council Plan 2018-2023. The Council Plan focuses on the day to day services and the matters that the Council has prioritised while the Well-being Plan will focus on the fields where it is felt that public organisations could make more of a difference to the well-being of the people of the area by working together.

Our vision is for every community in Gwynedd to prosper, and for us as people to...

Well-being Objectives

Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives

Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do

Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families

Live in quality homes within our communities

Live in a natural Welsh society

Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible

Take advantage of the beauty of the County's natural environment

We will achieve this by pioneering innovative ways of working, whilst focusing on...

Improvement Priorities

Creating a viable and prosperous economy

Every pupil having the opportunity to reach his or her potential

Reducing inequality within the county

Ensuring access to suitable housing

Assisting people to live their lives through the medium of Welsh

Assisting people who need help to live their lives as they wish

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

Responding to the climate change emergency

...which will be supported by the day to day work of the Council's Departments.

Improvement Priorities

Our Improvement Priorities are the areas we believe we need to focus on in order to increase or improve the current situation. Below, you will find descriptions of the 8 Improvement Priorities, followed by the individual projects that will contribute to each of them.

There are some priority projects where it will be absolutely necessary for us to deliver them, and of course, the Council intends to deliver all of the projects within this plan and commits to putting every effort into doing so. However, it should be noted that the Covid-19 crisis, as we have seen since March 2020, is causing difficulties that can limit our ability to achieve fully on some things. We will report on any such difficulties in our next review of this scheme and in relevant performance reports.

Improvement Priority 1

Create a viable and prosperous economy.

Ensuring that there are suitable jobs available in the county that pay salaries that enable people to support themselves and their families is the foundation to allowing the people of Gwynedd to thrive.

How will we achieve this?

1. North Wales Growth Vision

Economy and Community Department

A lack of growth is a weakness in the economy of the whole of north Wales, and particularly the north-west. In an attempt to overturn the situation, the six counties in north Wales, and other stakeholders such as education institutions in the region and the private sector, came together to establish the North Wales Economic Ambition Board.

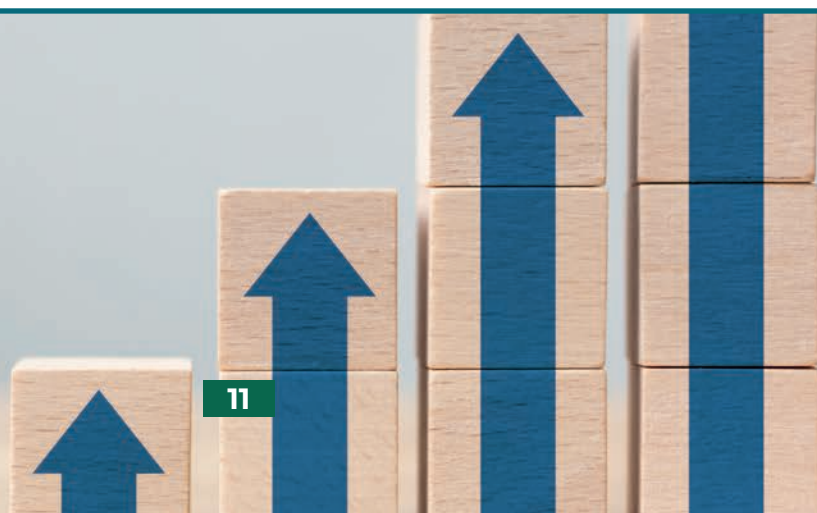
The Board's main scheme is the 'North Wales Growth Deal' and in December 2020 an agreement was signed between the Ambition Board, the Welsh Government and UK Government, which paves the way to delivering the Growth Deal. The bid will lead to an investment of £945m in the north Wales region over the next 15 years and create up to 4,000 jobs across north Wales.

As a member of the Ambition Board, our aim as a Council is to ensure that the people and businesses of Gwynedd maximise the benefits from this financial investment, especially at a time when there will be a need to respond to the side-effects of Brexit.

In future, we will continue to contribute to the Ambition Board's work programme, including improving the availability of superfast broadband, developing the Trawsfynydd Power Station site, and developing a Rural Innovation Hub in Glynllifon. We will also contribute to the development of the North Wales Economic Framework, which is being prepared by Welsh Government to identify the main regional investment programmes in the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Keeping the Benefit Local

Corporate Support Department

The Council is responsible for procuring, or purchasing, a number of goods and services and is eager to try to ensure that local businesses can compete for and win these contracts in order to ensure that as much of the Council's expenditure as possible remains local.

The local market cannot always respond to opportunities due to restrictions in terms of size or other existing barriers. This then leads to businesses losing the desire and ability to compete for work, and consequently, it is not possible to maximise the Council expenditure that is kept locally.

We are seeking to support local businesses with the changes to procurement rules as a result of leaving the European Union, taking advantage of the opportunities to procure locally.

We will address the following fields:

1. Completing a project in order to assess the practicality of delivering a '**Social Value Portal**' or similar to Gwynedd, i.e. sharing the method of assessing tenders currently being set by measuring Price and Quality to one that measures Price, Quality and Local Value.
2. Plans to **develop the market ability** to win the Council's procurement contracts - Respond to the Well-being Act's questions in tenders, support to gain health and safety accreditations.
3. Assess opportunities to award tenders to local companies as a result of **Brexit** and the freedom to act outside European procurement regulations.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Creating High Value Jobs (£28,500 + salary)

Economy and Community Department

Salaries in Gwynedd are among the lowest anywhere in Britain. Weekly pay in the county was the lowest in Wales in 2020 (£500 on average) and the low pay is at its worst in our rural communities (£418 - the lowest in Britain). Low salaries will inevitably lead to higher levels of poverty and rural depopulation, which in turn affects our communities, the future of our young people, and the Welsh language as a healthy community language.

The Creating High Value Jobs project has already taken steps to improve the situation, securing European funding to realise a plan to develop space for businesses to locate at Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr, implement a plan to increase the number of school pupils who study the subjects desired by businesses within well-paid sectors and have influenced the decision to continue with the decommissioning work on the Trawsfynydd Power Station site.

In future, we will continue with these schemes, and we will also lead on other schemes such as supporting the development of the creative and digital industries sector, supporting the development of the health and medical sector and develop a scheme by the North Wales Economic Ambition Board to prepare the Trawsfynydd Power Station Site to produce low-carbon energy and medical isotopes in the future. Such schemes will ensure the continuation of high-value local jobs.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



4. Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig

Economy and Community Department

The nature of our rural economy means that 79% of Gwynedd businesses do not employ more than one person and there are too many jobs within sectors that do not pay well. This leads to threats in terms of the sustainability of our rural communities with these challenges having increased as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and Brexit.

The Council is seeking to strengthen the foundation of the rural economy by encouraging local enterprises to develop, create and maintain jobs across Gwynedd. A financial package has been identified via Europe to implement the Rural Development Programme in the area, which includes a package of projects to promote enterprise.

Ensuring digital connectivity for our rural communities, and that the workforce and rural businesses have the skills to take advantage of them are matters that have already received attention. We have held a pilot scheme to provide public Wi-Fi in eight rural towns, and to increase access to computer equipment. We are also a part of the ARFOR programme, a Welsh Government investment to create more and better jobs in areas in west Wales where a high percentage of the population speaks Welsh.

In the future, we will continue to extend the digital provision in communities and will work with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and the private sector to establish a rural innovation hub in Glynllifon, giving particular attention to the food and drink sector, and we will work to develop the foundation economy and support our rural businesses to adapt and develop as a result of Covid-19 and Brexit.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



5. Promoting Town Centres

Economy and Community Department

Lively town centres are able to make substantial contributions to the economic and social success of local areas and offer a broad range of services to our communities.

However, the “high street” areas of our town centres are currently facing substantial challenges with a number of national chain stores closing and trading being restricted as a result of Covid-19. There is a need to promote and support the development of town centres to ensure that they are able to adapt and thrive in the future; to maintain and create employment, provide a broad range of goods and services required by residents and visitors and provide new residential units.

We have already been collaborating with businesses in Bangor and Caernarfon to promote the Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and to attract resources from Welsh Government's Regional Regeneration Programme. We were successful in establishing a loans scheme for the upgrading of redundant buildings in the areas of Caernarfon, Bangor, Bethesda and Penygroes and the scheme will extend to all Gwynedd towns in 2021.

During 2020, a cross-departmental group was established to develop a programme of improvements and short-term measures in response to the Covid-19 crisis. In future, we will continue with this work, and will prepare plans for 13 catchment areas in Gwynedd, based on what matters to the residents within these communities.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



6. Implementing the Gwynedd Slate Heritage Economy and Community Department

During 2020, a full nomination from Gwynedd was presented to the UK Government and to UNESCO for a World Heritage Site designation for the Slate Landscapes of North-West Wales. The nomination gives us an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the traditional slate industry on an international platform, and to celebrate and protect the Welsh culture associated with those areas.

We have already used the World Heritage Site nomination as a tool to regenerate our slate communities and to increase the value of the tourist industry. £1m of additional resources have been attracted to the county through the Heritage Fund, Welsh Government, the European Union and Snowdonia National Park through the LleCHI project.

In future, we will collaborate with the slate communities, via the LleCHI project, to create a programme of regeneration activities in these areas that will improve the appearance and look of communities, improve the quality of the visitors' experience, and will lead to an increase in residents' ownership of their heritage, language and culture.

The World Heritage Committee will meet in June / July 2021 and we will continue to engage and collaborate with communities, landowners, businesses and partners to ensure that we are ready to take advantage of the opportunities that will come as a result of the designation, in the interests of the people of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.

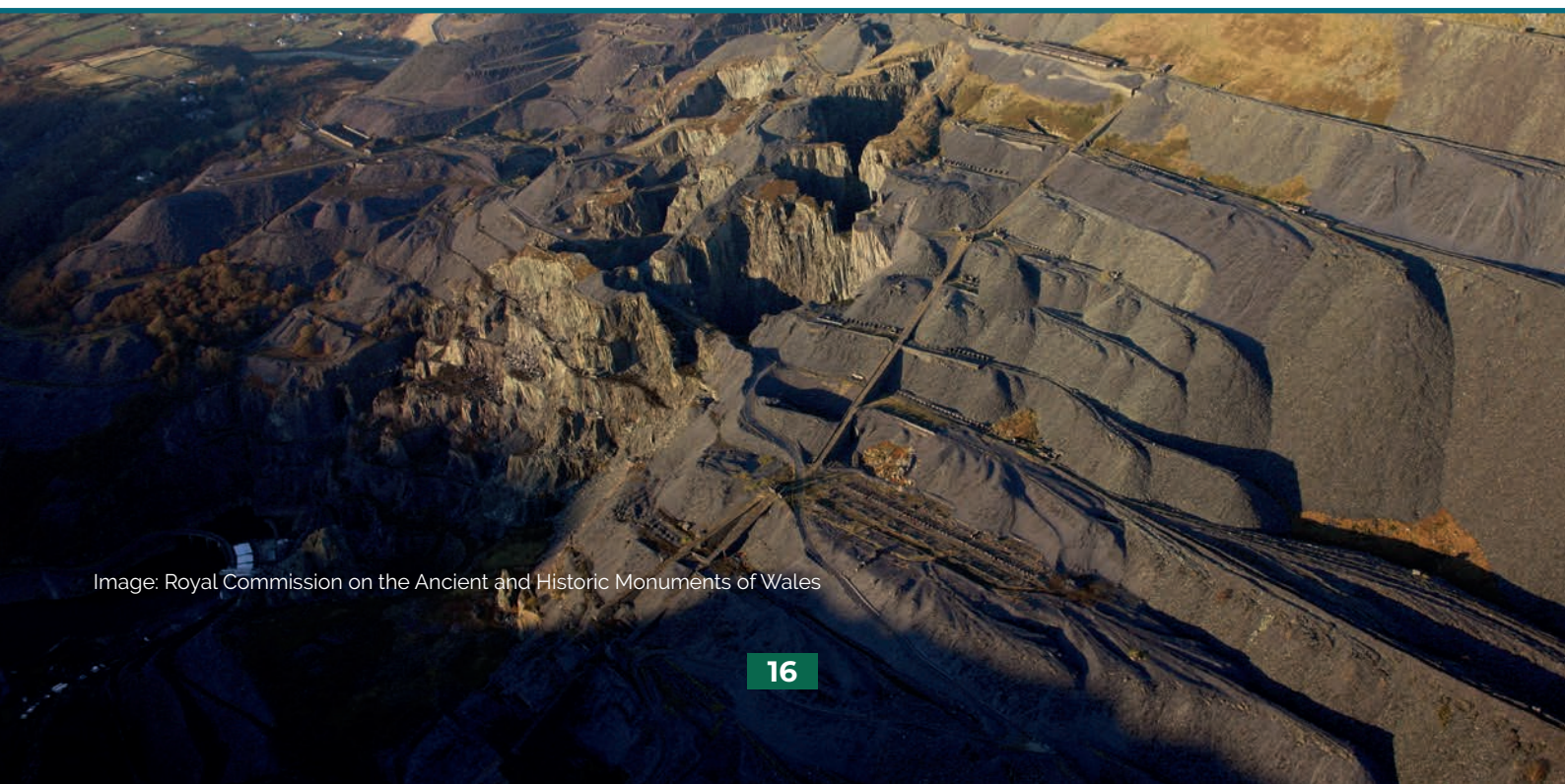


Image: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales

7. Businesses Receiving Support to Prosper

Economy and Community Department

It is currently an uncertain time for businesses as a result of Covid-19 and Brexit and changes in trading and competition arrangements. Gwynedd Council is determined to help local enterprises to adapt and respond to the challenge and we have already made an unprecedented effort to support local businesses by providing financial aid, advice and support.

The county's businesses work with many Council Departments and they receive a service from them, including rates, planning, trading standards, building control and procurement. We have already consulted with the county's businesses to see whether the assistance and support they receive from the Council is the best it can be.

We have already supported and collaborated with the North Wales Economic Ambition Board's Programme Office on a package of Growth Deal projects in order to create opportunities for businesses in Gwynedd's economy in the future. In addition, we have collaborated with the Corporate Support Department team to develop a programme to promote buying locally, and have reviewed the need for space by businesses (pre Covid-19).

In the future, we will continue to prioritise resources and efforts to support our local businesses, ensuring that all parts of the Council consider how they can offer assistance to support businesses. We will also encourage Gwynedd businesses to make the most of the support available from others, and to powerfully convey the needs of Gwynedd businesses when discussing with our partners, in particular in light of the pandemic and Brexit.

We will also implement:

- High Value and Quality Jobs Programme in order to safeguard and create jobs on the sites of Trawsfynydd, Llanbedr and key sectors which create quality jobs across Gwynedd.
- Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig and ARFOR Programmes in order to encourage the small businesses in the foundation economy to innovate and thrive.
- Improving Business for All Programme across Gwynedd Council services.
- Business Communication Programme in order to engage with businesses and share information.

In addition, we will implement Business Support Packages on behalf of Welsh Government in order to offer financial assistance to Gwynedd businesses in response to Covid-19 trading restrictions.

In future, we will need to evaluate the Council Plan's priority programmes in order to develop the economy and support businesses in light of the effects of Covid-19 and Brexit. We will also need to review the Council's role in the field with partners locally and regionally and agree on work priorities for the future.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- **Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families.**

8. Tourism - creating a sustainable tourism plan

Economy and Community Department

We have concerns that the people of Gwynedd do not benefit as much as they should from tourism, and the Covid-19 crisis has underlined how the negative impacts of the industry can sometimes outweigh the advantages.

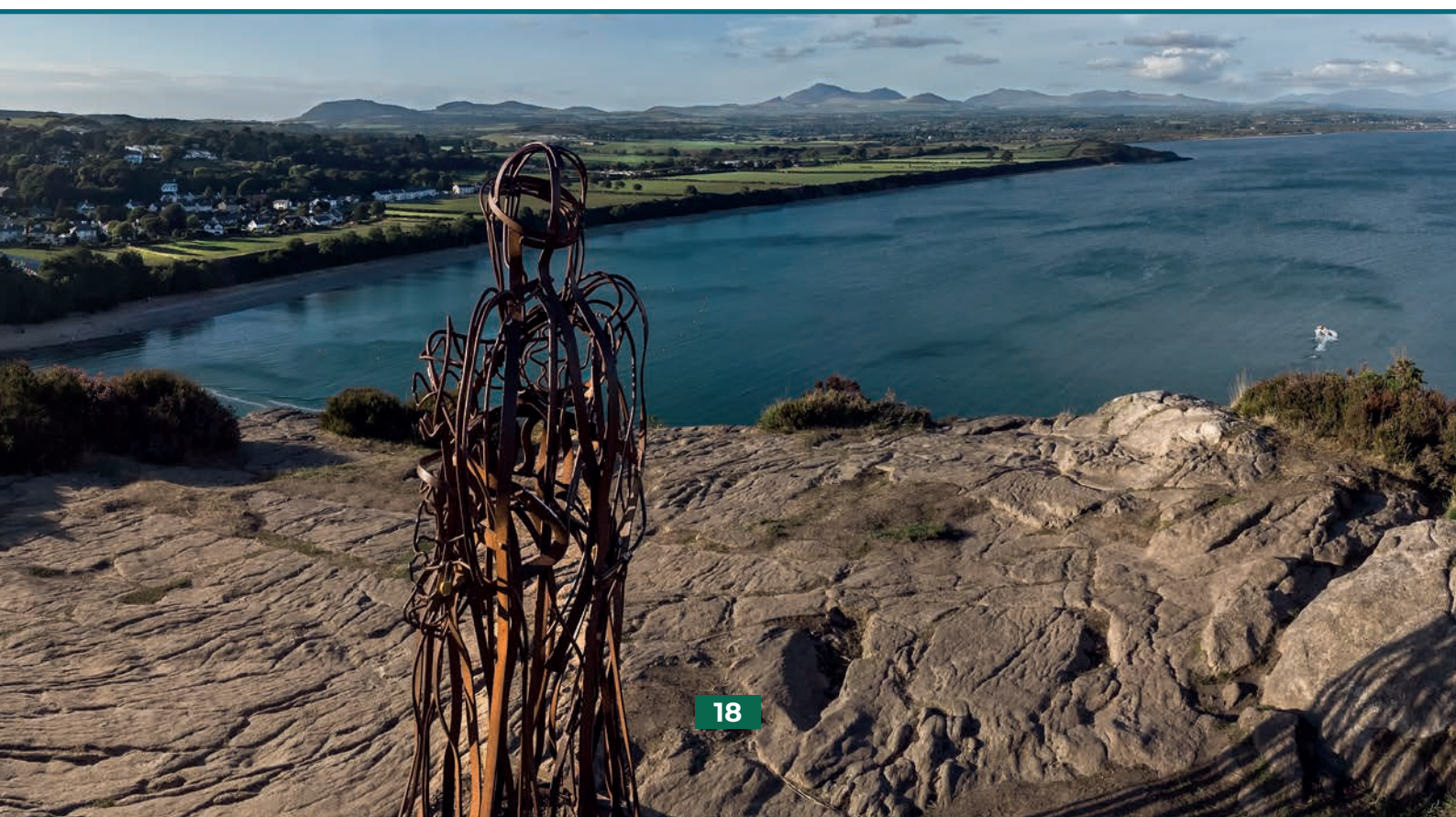
Work has been done to understand the change in tourism trends over the years and identify the benefits to Gwynedd, along with the risks, including the impact on the communities, language and culture of the area and second homes.

Over the past year, work has been done to draw up sustainable tourism principles for Gwynedd, which will form the basis of a future management plan.

We will complete the work of establishing a vision and principles for tourism in the future and will develop the Gwynedd Visitor Economy Management Plan in cooperation with communities and the sector in order to ensure the best benefits for the people of Gwynedd and tourists. The Plan will set a direction for policies and activities across the Council's departments in the future, but it will also acknowledge the long-term need to respond to the impact of Covid-19.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



9. Regeneration: Creating regeneration plans for our areas

Economy and Community Department

There is a risk that every service implements its own programmes in accordance with grant guidelines, but possibly does not respond to the actual needs and regeneration opportunities of Gwynedd. We have established the Regeneration Board with the intention of developing a Regeneration Plan for the County's communities. The Programme will incorporate cross-departmental activities, along with the Council Plan's priorities.

We will establish a new Regeneration Framework and develop 13 Regeneration Plans for the Gwynedd areas.

We will consult with stakeholders in order to understand how communities want to see their areas develop in the next 10-15 years, and identify local priorities. These schemes will give particular attention to the needs of town centres and the future of the 'high street' across Gwynedd over the coming years.

We will ensure that activities across the Council's Departments will contribute to the development and implementation of these Regeneration Schemes.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 2

Every pupil is given the opportunity to achieve their potential.

If we are to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise, it is crucial that Gwynedd has a sustainable quality education system in place, which gives our residents the skills to take advantage of those opportunities.

How will we achieve this?

1. Post-16 Education Provision in Arfon Education Department

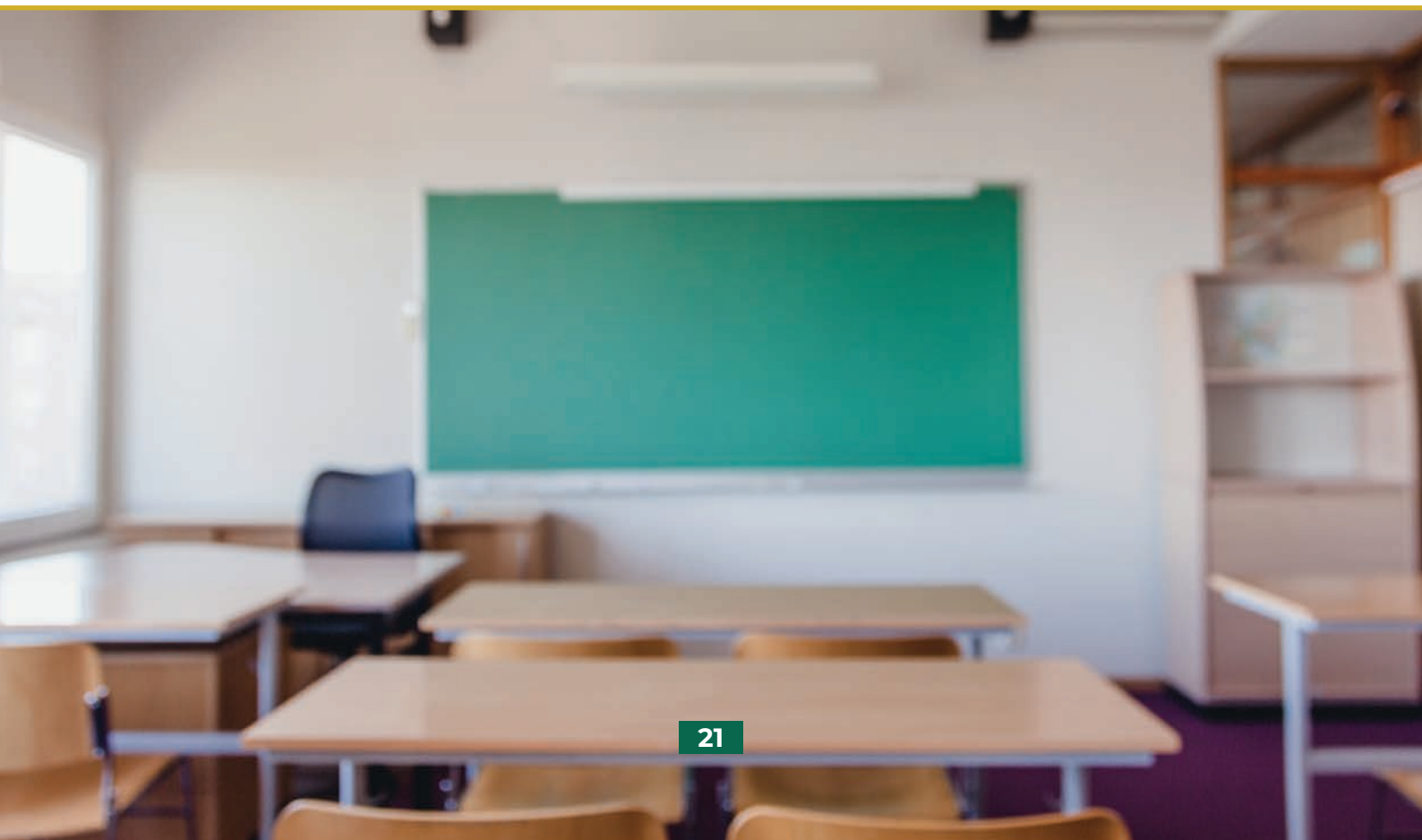
The variety in the quality of the education and experiences of learners across the post-16 education system in Arfon affects outcomes and learning pathways.

The Cabinet has already given permission to commence engagement with stakeholders to discuss the vision for post-16 education in Arfon. The informal engagement was held during the Autumn Term 2020.

In 2020/21, we will use the conclusions of the engagement with stakeholders to proceed to establish draft proposals that will lead to proposing a favoured option to the Cabinet in the autumn.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Bangor Catchment Area

Education Department

The children's learning environment is unsuitable as a number of primary schools in Bangor (and specifically in the Penrhosgarnedd area) are full or over-full.

The work of constructing a new school for Ysgol y Garnedd that will have a capacity to accommodate up to 420 learners has been completed by November 2020. During 2021/22, we will complete the work of building an extension and ensure community care on the Ysgol y Faenol site in Penrhosgarnedd with capacity to accommodate 315 learners.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
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3. Cricieth Catchment Area

Education Department

The condition of the building and the current learning environment of Ysgol Trefarthyr in Cricieth is poor, which affects the learners' experience. We will therefore build the new school in Cricieth in order to improve the learning environment and ensure the best resources for the learners to thrive.

In 2021/22, as a result of the process of publishing a statutory notice, we will proceed to engage on the plans, and ensure planning permission and the appointment of contractors.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

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- Live in a natural Welsh society.

4. Meirionnydd Collaboration

Education Department

There is a risk that matters relating to the current procedure affects the experiences of Meirionnydd learners, e.g. the Meirionnydd secondary schools find it difficult to recruit teachers, middle managers and leaders. Unless there will be a solution to the situation, the impact on the resilience of the education system and leadership conditions in the area will continue.

Work has been commissioned to conduct research to identify creative solutions that will lead to collaboration between the primary schools of Meirionnydd in order to ensure that the quality of the education is consistently good and sustainable for the future.

In 2021/22, we will establish an amended procedure jointly with Chairs, Vice-chairs and Heads in Meirionnydd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.

5. Transforming the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

Education Department

There is a risk that we will be unable to make suitable provision for each pupil with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) because no resources were received from the Government to meet the increase in the need for statutory provision (ALN and Tribunal Act, 2018).

It is also possible that children and young people will not have the correct access to specialist staff (e.g. bilingual Educational Psychologists, Sensory Teachers) and key roles in terms of statutory jobs within the code (Early Years Lead Officer, ALN Coordinator), due to the combination of recruitment and funding difficulties and an increased workload.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Continue to prepare for the legislative change, focusing on the early years, post-16, the partnership with parents and agencies, and the most suitable funding method for the legislative requirement
- Establish processes and provisions in the Early Years, this includes mapping the demand in workload (e.g. the number of children requiring specialist attention/support)
- Establish processes and provisions in the post-16 sector - close collaboration with the Further Education colleges
- Establish a funding method - review the current funding method in order to obtain a model that provides better stability in terms of provision
- Continue with national discussions - continue to transfer the message regarding concerns about the training and recruitment of specialist staff.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

6. The Gap in Welfare and Attainment of Children and Young People

Education Department

There is concern that some children and young people can be left behind in terms of their educational attainment; and some of them need additional help to close that gap as well as support with their welfare.

Parents are concerned about sending their children to school or they decide to home school, and there is an increase in safeguarding concerns.

We are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown period have highlighted the vulnerability of the early years sector. During 2021/22, we will focus on understanding the impacts of lockdown on the welfare of young children and we will review our arrangements and provisions to ensure the best start for families and 0-5 year old children. During 2021/22, we will focus our efforts on the 5-16 year old age group by supporting the schools to implement the Accelerated Learning Programme with funding from Welsh Government. This will allow us to respond to the impact of lockdown on the welfare and attainment of some specific groups of learners.

Beyond school, we also realise that the 16-24 year old age group has been disproportionately affected by the crisis compared to any other age group. There are more referrals for well-being, mental health and homelessness assistance among this age group. Alongside the increase in the number of young people not in employment, education or training, there is an intention to give specific attention to this field in order to mitigate against any side-effects, ensuring that our young people have support and appropriate provision to enable them to thrive.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live in a natural Welsh society
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

7. Digital Learning Strategy

Education Department

There is a risk of providing a sub-standard education for the children of Gwynedd due to a failure to maximise the opportunities afforded by digital learning. The aim of the strategy is to give the best digital provision to support our learners and teachers to foster a range of skills to use technology confidently, creatively and critically.

As a result of amending the curriculum, digital competence is a statutory responsibility across all learning fields and it needs to be considered in all aspects when designing and introducing the curriculum. The quality of school networks and the quality and number and availability of devices for teachers and learners is varied. There is a varied understanding of the medium amongst teachers. The procedure of maintaining the equipment does not ensure seamless access.

Work is taking place to draw up a new strategy and by 2021/22, we will have published the strategy and put it into practice during 2021/22.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in a natural Welsh society.

Improvement Priority 3

Reduce inequality within the county

It must also be recognised that, currently, not everyone in our society has the opportunities to fulfil their potential. Certainly, as in every county in Wales, inequality exists within the county at different levels, with inequality created by poverty high in terms of the damage which is caused.

It is obvious that poverty can also have a significant devastating effect on well-being, and in particular on the future offered to children. Whilst we have services, which endeavour to mitigate the effects of poverty, it is our responsibility to consider if there is more we could do.

We also have a responsibility to maintain a good standard of services to look after those children who find themselves in situations where there is a need for the Council to take responsibility for them. Ultimately, none of them wants to be in such a situation.

How will we achieve this?

1. More Gwynedd residents playing a full part in the world of work

Economy and Community Department

A large number have lost their jobs in Gwynedd over the past year as a result of Covid-19. Unemployment levels have increased substantially and projections show that it will increase again over the next months. A number of the people of Gwynedd are also unable to achieve their full potential as they are underemployed or excluded from employment.

Unemployment and a reduction in household income can affect the health and welfare of individuals and families and increase the demand on public resources. Preventing this is a key part of the anti-poverty agenda. There are direct benefits from being in work in terms of increasing earnings, but there are also wider benefits in terms of health, children's life opportunities and pride in communities.

We have already diverted priorities in order to be able to respond within existing resources by:

- extending the Communities for Work programme in order to support more unemployed individuals who have been referred by Government agencies to receive support to overcome barriers to work
- working with employers, especially within the tourism industry, to ensure that more Gwynedd residents benefit from the employment opportunities available, and support the residents of Gwynedd to foster the digital skills required to access work
- supporting workforces that are being made redundant to assist them to gain access to relevant information by various services, especially during a period of Covid-19 restrictions
- collaborating with partners to develop the Government's 'Kickstart' programme in Gwynedd to support businesses and local employers to employ young people for a 6-month period and develop their work skills.

In future, we will continue with the above plans and collaborate closely with our partners across north Wales and with the UK Government's Department for Work and Pensions to improve the coordination of our services. We will provide a programme to offer work experiences for unemployed young people in businesses across Gwynedd and task force will consider whether there are further steps that Gwynedd Council can take to respond to the huge challenge of supporting the people of Gwynedd back into work as soon as possible.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives**
- **Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families**
- **Live in a natural Welsh society.**

2. Supporting People's Well-being

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some residents are finding it difficult to cope with life challenges as a result of the Covid-19 crisis; and the vulnerable situation of some other residents has worsened during the emergency. These residents need support to cope, to thrive, to be safe and to be healthy.

Residents find it difficult to gain access to services and discover information about what is available to assist them, particularly through virtual media and on-line and therefore face being socially and economically excluded.

Some residents are facing financial hardship, losing their job and losing their home. Residents are finding it difficult to obtain the help that they need to deal with these challenges and maintain their well-being, both locally and in a timely manner.

We have broad and numerous networks throughout the county's communities which help and support residents to cope and respond to their various needs. Those networks need support to sustain that voluntary effort.

During 2021/22, we will:

1. Prioritise our efforts and we will focus on supporting residents:-
 - who are facing homelessness
 - who are unpaid carers to their loved-ones
 - who are facing financial poverty and food poverty
 - who are digitally excluded.
2. We will work across services and with our partners on
 - well-being interventions for children, young people and people of all ages
 - supporting communities and
 - maintaining the resilience of communities and supporting volunteers/community spirit.
3. We will also look at models to ensure that residents obtain access to the broad and new range of support available in a timely, co-ordinated and local way.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives**
- **Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do**
- **Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families**
- **Live in a natural Welsh society.**

3. Women in Leadership

Corporate Support Department

The Council is firm that it adheres to equal pay, however the Council acknowledges that the number of women who have a managerial role within the Council is disproportionate with the split within the entire workforce i.e. 70% women 30% men.

We will introduce a programme to develop potential for women, carrying out an audit of our recruitment and appointment methods for managerial posts and creating a forum for female leaders and prospective leaders within the Council.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.



4. Implementing the Equality Plan (Ensuring Fairness for Everyone)

Corporate Support Department

We are eager to ensure that equality is deeply rooted within the Council's work in order to improve our services for all the people of Gwynedd.

By the end of 2020/21, we will have held a thorough investigation of the views of the people of Gwynedd who have protected characteristics (as noted in the 2010 Equality Act) about the services offered by the Council as well as identify any barriers that exist. The outcome of this investigation will be the basis to a number of further activities within the Action Plan for the five Objectives within the 2020-24 Strategic Equality Plan.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Develop a training and awareness-raising programme for staff and managers in order to gain better understanding of the needs of the people of Gwynedd and the Act for its introduction from September 2021 onwards.
- We will also continue to offer support and facilitate the ability of managers to carry out Equality Assessments.
- Encourage staff to complete the monitoring questionnaire in order to obtain reliable evidence to help to improve the diversity of our workforce, and to reduce any possible pay gaps.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Earn a sufficient salary to be able to support ourselves and our families
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Improvement Priority 4

Access to suitable homes

The Housing field has a vital role in helping the Council fulfil its ambition. We know that having a suitable, high quality home leads to better health, more resilient communities and a population that can contribute fully to society. It is important that we develop varied, innovative and green housing proposals - houses that people can live in for their whole lives - and also offer early support to those in need.

As a Local Authority, we will intervene to encourage a range of support and accommodation options to respond to the needs of the population today, and for future generations. Alongside this, we must ensure that the steps taken respect the culture of the county's communities.

How will we achieve this?

1. A shortage of suitable homes for the people of Gwynedd: Secure approval for the Housing Plan and begin action

Housing and Property Department

In order to reach the ambition in our Housing Strategy of "Ensuring that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable home of a high standard, which is affordable and improves their quality of life", we have adopted a Housing Action Plan which contains over 30 specific schemes and an investment of £77 million.

These schemes will aim to fulfil the following objectives:

- No one is homeless in Gwynedd
- Social housing available to all who need one
- Everyone's home in Gwynedd is affordable to them
- Gwynedd Housing are environmentally friendly
- Homes having a positive influence on the health and well-being of the people of Gwynedd

During 2021/22, we will start to implement these plans in order to increase the opportunities for local people to have suitable homes within their communities.

The demand on our homelessness service has increased during the past months as a result of the pandemic and we will aim to prioritise a number of the schemes which would increase the supply of housing available to the homelessness service.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. Easy and clear access to enquiry services and advice on housing issues: Establish 'one front door' and help-desk for the public to help them with housing problems

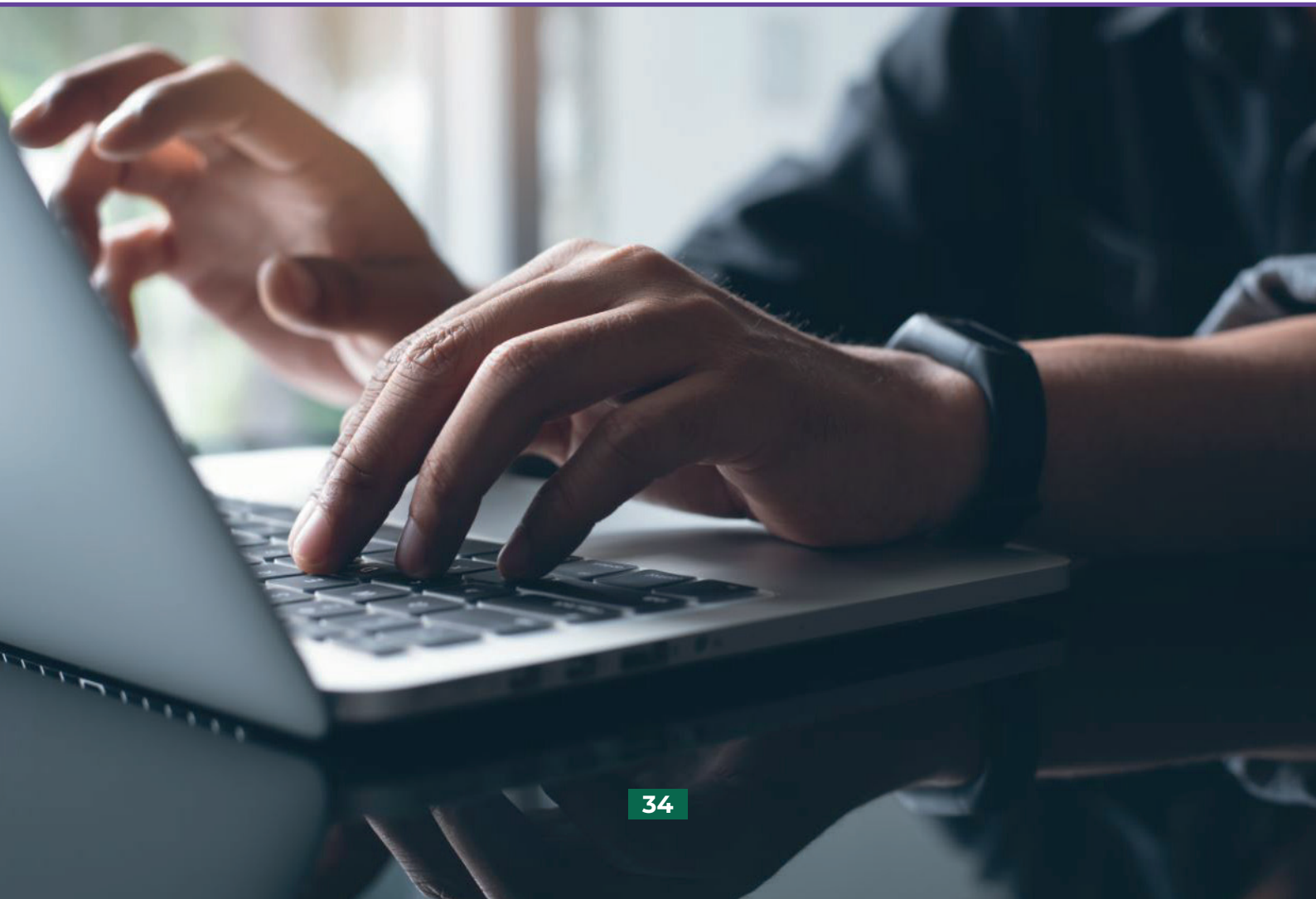
Housing and Property Department

Currently, there are many points of contact within the Department for the public to be able to access various services within Housing and Property. Our Housing Action Plan includes a project for establishing a single point of contact by creating a Housing Help Desk.

During 2021/22 we will research different models of providing a help desk and commence the work of establishing some sort of Housing Help Desk that can advise the public on how best to resolve their housing needs.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



3. Letting social housing to local people: Create a new allocation policy for the county which will give greater priority to local people

Housing and Property Department

We have introduced a new Housing Allocation Policy which has been in operation since the summer of 2020. This policy prioritises local people, and replaces the old points system for allocating housing.

The new system means that applications for social housing are put into one of four 'bands' depending on their housing needs and their connection with Gwynedd.

During 2021/22, we will need to ensure that there are effective arrangements for implementing the new allocations policy, and establish a procedure for monitoring that this policy is being implemented throughout the county to ensure the best opportunities for the people of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
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4. The transfer of holiday units from Council Tax to Business Rates

Finance and Information Technology Department

For several years now, the Council has been putting pressure upon the Welsh Government to change Section 66 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 in order to control the transfer of domestic housing to self-contained holiday accommodation which would be subject to business rates. The majority currently avoid paying any local tax because they receive small business rates relief. We intend to continue to press for reform in this area over the next few years, using evidence that we constantly gather, so that Welsh Government Ministers understand the scale of the problem in Gwynedd. The response thus far has been disappointing, with the Government focusing more on the alleged detrimental impact on tourism rather than the real detrimental impact on Gwynedd residents.

We will also continue the work of pressing the Welsh Government to amend the Town and Country Planning Order to include a specific use class for residential housing used as holiday accommodation, together with the introduction of a mandatory licensing regime to enable the business to be operated. As a result, any property without appropriate permission for use as short-term holiday accommodation should not be eligible to transfer from a Council Tax band to the non-domestic rates list.

The Council is investing the income generated from the Council Tax premium in our Housing Action Plan in an attempt to alleviate the detrimental impact that second homes are having on the availability of housing for local people. As property transfers to become holiday units it is possible that less property will be subject to the premium.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
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- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible
- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 5

Living lives through the medium of Welsh.

One of the unique features Gwynedd has as a county is its Welshness. Gwynedd Council itself is dedicated to working through the medium of Welsh, but that in itself is not sufficient if we are to keep the unique nature of the county alive.

How will we achieve this?

1. Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's services

Corporate Support Department

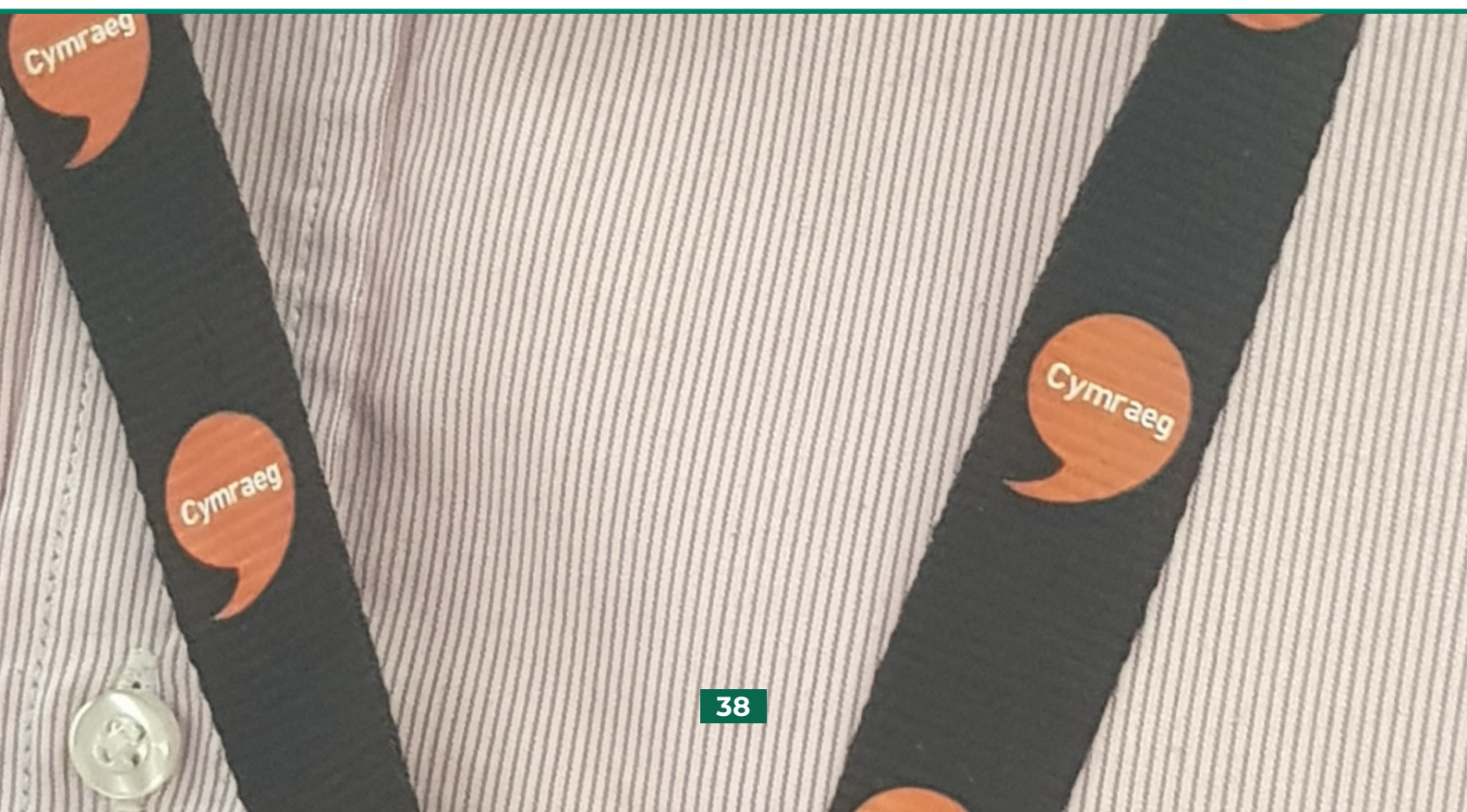
Gwynedd Council has been prominent in terms of ensuring that services for residents are available through the medium of Welsh as we operate through the medium of Welsh internally. It is continual work to **Promote the use of the Welsh language within the Council's Services**, and we are aware that there is a need to continue to maintain our staff's language skills.

In future, we will focus on working with the rest of the Council services - especially front-line services - to complete the assessment and develop the skills of new staff.

We will also develop an apprenticeship plan to attract and develop staff with the appropriate linguistic ability and will continue to develop the learning provision that is already in place (with flexibility to adapt to the needs of specific teams).

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh society.



2. The Welsh Language in Public Services

Corporate Support Department

At present, there is inconsistency in the provision of bilingual services by public bodies in Gwynedd, which means that it is not always possible for residents to use the Welsh language naturally when communicating with public bodies.

Through the Welsh Language Sub-Group within the Public Services Board, we will draw up a joint plan with our partners on the Board to try to move to a situation where using the Welsh language naturally, straight away, is not only possible but also encouraged.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh Society.

3. Native Welsh Place Names

Corporate Support Department

We are concerned that native Welsh place names are disappearing from the landscape of Gwynedd as a result of a lack of use of Welsh names and an increase in renaming places in English.

We will draw up a work programme and prioritise the fields to be addressed and in what order. We will also consider what can be done as a work programme with regards to Council buildings, street names and place names.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Live in a natural Welsh society.

4. Promoting the Use of Welsh by Children and Young People

Education Department

The skills and confidence of learners (more specifically in non-Welsh-speaking homes) in Welsh have deteriorated as a result of lockdown and Covid-19.

In 2021/22, we will establish a baseline of the current situation of the Welsh language as a result of the impact of lockdown and Covid-19 and will draw up a Strategy and Action Plan in response to the situation.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

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- Live in a natural Welsh society.



Improvement Priority 6

Helping people who need support to live their lives as they wish.

As a Council, we provide direct care to children and their families and to adults who need specialist support, but our vision is that everyone of all ages receives the support they need in the most suitable and convenient way for them.

As the needs of each individual and family are bound to be different, in order for them to continue to live their lives as they wish we need to adapt our services to be more closely tailored to the real needs of those who need our support. To succeed, we will need to continue to work with other providers, such as the Health Board, always remembering to put the needs of the individual at the centre.

How will we achieve this?

1. A Suitable and Sustainable Care Provision for the Future

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

The Covid-19 crisis has highlighted a number of factors that can affect our ability to **continue to provide suitable care services for the people of Gwynedd**. In order to ensure that we are able to continue, in 2021/22, we will:

- seek to understand the "actual cost of care" to consider possible options for our care commissioning arrangements in the future
- ensure that we understand the need for nursing beds provision in the county, and proceed with the Penrhos Site project in order to address the shortages in Pen Llŷn
- work towards further increasing the number of dementia beds in the county
- consider whether our support services, e.g. day care and respite continue to be suitable to address the needs of the people of Gwynedd, or whether we need to do something differently
- consider how we can improve the suitability of our care provider buildings whilst attempting to satisfy additional infection control measures.

We are also committed to **improve the quality of our care provision across the county**. During 2021/22, we will:

- open a bespoke dementia unit that has been completed at Llan Ffestiniog, but has been unable to open due to the Covid-19 crisis
- complete the work of building an additional dementia unit at our home in Barmouth
- complete modifications to our home in Dolgellau in order to be able to offer more bespoke care for individuals with severe physical needs
- collaborate with the Adra housing association on the development of Extra Care Housing in Pwllheli and seek to identify opportunities for similar developments in other parts of the county, with priority being given to the Dolgellau and Meirionnydd area more broadly
- strengthen our quality assurance services to ensure sufficient support to care providers to help to maintain quality services for the residents of Gwynedd

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives**
- **Live in quality homes within their communities**
- **Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.**

2. Re-designing our Care Services

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

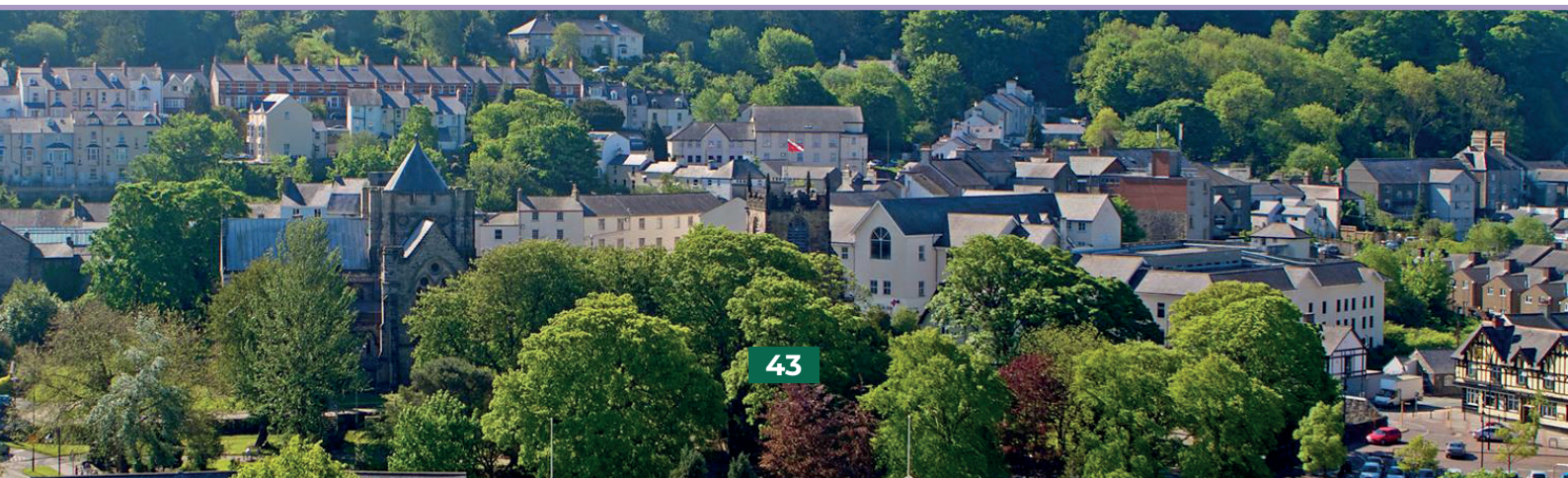
The county's care needs are changing, and we have been collaborating with the Health Board to transform our community services. We need to facilitate the ability of our staff and Health Board staff to collaborate as one team within specific areas. This will lead to ensuring that individuals who require health and care support in the community will have one point of contact, in order to ensure the best outcomes and a seamless service. We are also working to change our way of providing domiciliary care across the county in order to facilitate our ability to ensure that the care is tailored based on what matters to the individual.

During 2021/22, we will:

- empower the integrated teams (teams that include care staff as well as health staff), to be able to achieve what matters to the adults of Gwynedd. This will include looking at appropriate training and removing any technological barriers
- award new home care contracts in each area, with the aim of implementing the new model early in 2022/23
- strengthen our Occupational Therapy service, including developing a specialist manual handling service to enable individuals to live as independently as possible
- add to the network of community hubs that support and create opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities by developing plans for Canolfan Dolfleurig in Dolgellau
- re-open our community mental health hub in Pwllheli, after it had to close as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, and look at options to develop further hubs across the county
- look at options to develop an emotional and practical support provision for the younger cohort in the Arfon area

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

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- **Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.**



3. The Workforce and Recruitment in the Care Field

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

Recruiting to the care field is challenging for various reasons. We have an effective and committed workforce, and this has been especially evident during the Covid-19 crisis. However, we must ensure that we have sufficient workers with the necessary skills to cope with the increasing need that is likely to arise in the future.

During 2021/22, we will:

- review the arrangements of the recent #GalwGofal recruitment campaign in order to consider how we will approach recruitment in the future
- consider our registration and training arrangements as well as staff development arrangements, in order to increase flexibility and resilience in the field
- develop a Grow our Own scheme to address the lack of expertise in some fields, such as Occupational Therapy.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

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4. Keeping Families Together Strategy

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some families need specific support at times to help them bring up their children so that those children are able to stay with their family, to thrive, to be healthy and to be safe. No children are brought into care unnecessarily in Gwynedd and we wish to ensure that this does not happen. Sometimes, it is inevitable that a child is brought to our care as it is dangerous for them to remain at home. Our arrangements and decisions when that happens are based on the risk and needs of the family. When a child comes into care, every effort needs to be made so that the child receives appropriate, suitable and local care; and that the child and his/her family are supported so that the child can return to his/her family.

The 'Effective Child Protection' Transformation Programme will be operational in Gwynedd, and will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. We will also share this model with other North Wales Authorities.

We will complete the Ffordd Gwynedd work, working across the department's services and jointly with the Education Department to understand what matters to the families of Gwynedd and we will agree on principles, and ways of improving what we do and how we work in order to provide the required support.

We will introduce and adopt a "Keeping Families Together" strategy, which shows our aim, our arrangements and our approach towards avoiding children from coming into care unnecessarily; however, if care is required, then ensure that the child is cared for in a suitable, appropriate and local placement; and that every effort and support is provided in order to return children to their families.

We will receive feedback from Welsh Government on our "Keeping Families Together" strategy.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

5. Ensure a specialist appropriate local provision for children with the most complex needs

Children and Supporting Families Department

Some children and young people who come into our care have complex and severe needs. Some of these children have to receive care and support in an expensive placement outside Gwynedd or Wales, far from their family and community. We wish to ensure that we have a variety and sufficient number of suitable placements available locally, and that we have specialist workers and support locally to address these children's needs.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Implement a specialist training programme for staff so that they are able to appropriately support children with complex needs and their families
- Develop and agree upon a business case, across local partners, for operating and practising as one multi-disciplinary team so that the support for families and children is more effective and efficient
- Develop a plan for identifying local residential provision for children with complex needs
- Increase the number of foster carers by recruiting and providing resources to assess carers in order to secure a sufficient number of placements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- **Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives**
- **Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do**
- **Live in quality homes within their communities**
- **Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.**



6. Ensure that families and children with autism have access to the support they need to thrive

Children and Supporting Families Department

Children and young people with autism and high skill abilities; and children with autism and no learning disability, find it difficult to access the specialist support that they require. The experiences of these children and their families show that there is room to improve our current assessment arrangements; that there are gaps in the provision and that they require help during the transitional period to other services such as adults and health.

During 2021/22, we will:

- Launch an Autism Plan for the county, jointly with the Health Board, third sector partners and across the Council's services
- Appoint a role in the Council for working in the field, giving specific attention to the transitional period from childhood to adulthood in the field
- Review the arrangements for accessing the integrated disabled children's service (DERWEN)
- Improve arrangements for collaborating, sharing information and providing support in the field with our health partners and with specialist providers in the third sector.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives
- Receive education of the highest quality which will enable us to do what we want to do
- Live in quality homes within their communities
- Live with dignity and independently for as long as possible.

Improvement Priority 7

Placing the people of Gwynedd at the heart of everything we do.

As previously noted, the Council already provides a wide range of activities which seek to ensure that we achieve our vision. However, there is always room for improvement. We recognise that there are examples where we do not always look at things through our residents' eyes, and we need to ensure that this happens everywhere within the Council.

Of course, this does not mean doing everything for everyone, as our resources do not permit us to do that. It means that we prioritise those things which are of most importance to our communities, and ensure that the limited resources available contribute to doing what is most important to the people of Gwynedd (whilst accepting that prioritisation will inevitably mean not achieving everyone's aspirations).

This consideration will also have to take place at a time when the funding available for services is significantly reduced. In that respect, there will be a need to ensure that the funding available is used to deliver the most important things.

How will we achieve this?

1. Implement the Ffordd Gwynedd Work Programme Plan (Empowering Units to Implement Ffordd Gwynedd)

Corporate Support Department

As a Council, it is our responsibility to ensure, as we provide our services, that it is the **needs of the people of Gwynedd** which steer how we will offer those services. In doing so, we should avoid any unnecessary working arrangements. We are already challenging 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.

We will develop training to assist managers to understand the close link between the culture of Ffordd Gwynedd and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and present that session to the Managers Network during the first half of 2021, whilst releasing the job description to team leaders and the rest of the Council staff that will confirm the behaviours expected of them.

We will establish methods of measuring the progress with the culture sought through a combination of regular self-assessment and challenging established procedures.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.



2. Ensuring that managers practice their Health and safety role effectively

Corporate Support Department

We need to ensure that our arrangements for protecting Health and Safety are robust and whilst we have mature arrangements within the Council, we are concerned that there are pockets where there is an opportunity to improve operational arrangements.

In order to respond to the situation, we will hold a discussion with heads / senior managers / managers in each Department in order to understand their needs and identify the most effective way of resolving the situation.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

3. Planning the Workforce

Corporate Support Department

The People Plan prioritises improving arrangements for nurturing talent within the Council, improving our Workforce Planning arrangements, and ensuring that our learning and development arrangements focus on the necessary elements. To ensure that the Council is in a position to provide services that always place the residents of Gwynedd at the centre, we must ensure that we have the right staff in place with the correct skills. This means that we need to continuously train staff, evaluate their performance and foster and develop their talents. Staff training arrangements are an important way of promoting and dissipating the mindset of Ffordd Gwynedd across the Council, and of course, it is vitally important that the Council has officers with the skills to carry out their posts.

The work of identifying gaps and acting pro-actively, which has commenced with the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department, will be disseminated to the rest of the Council during 2021. We will also extend the number of apprentices and professional trainees across an increasing number of services across the Council.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.

4. Realising Savings

Finance and Information Technology Department

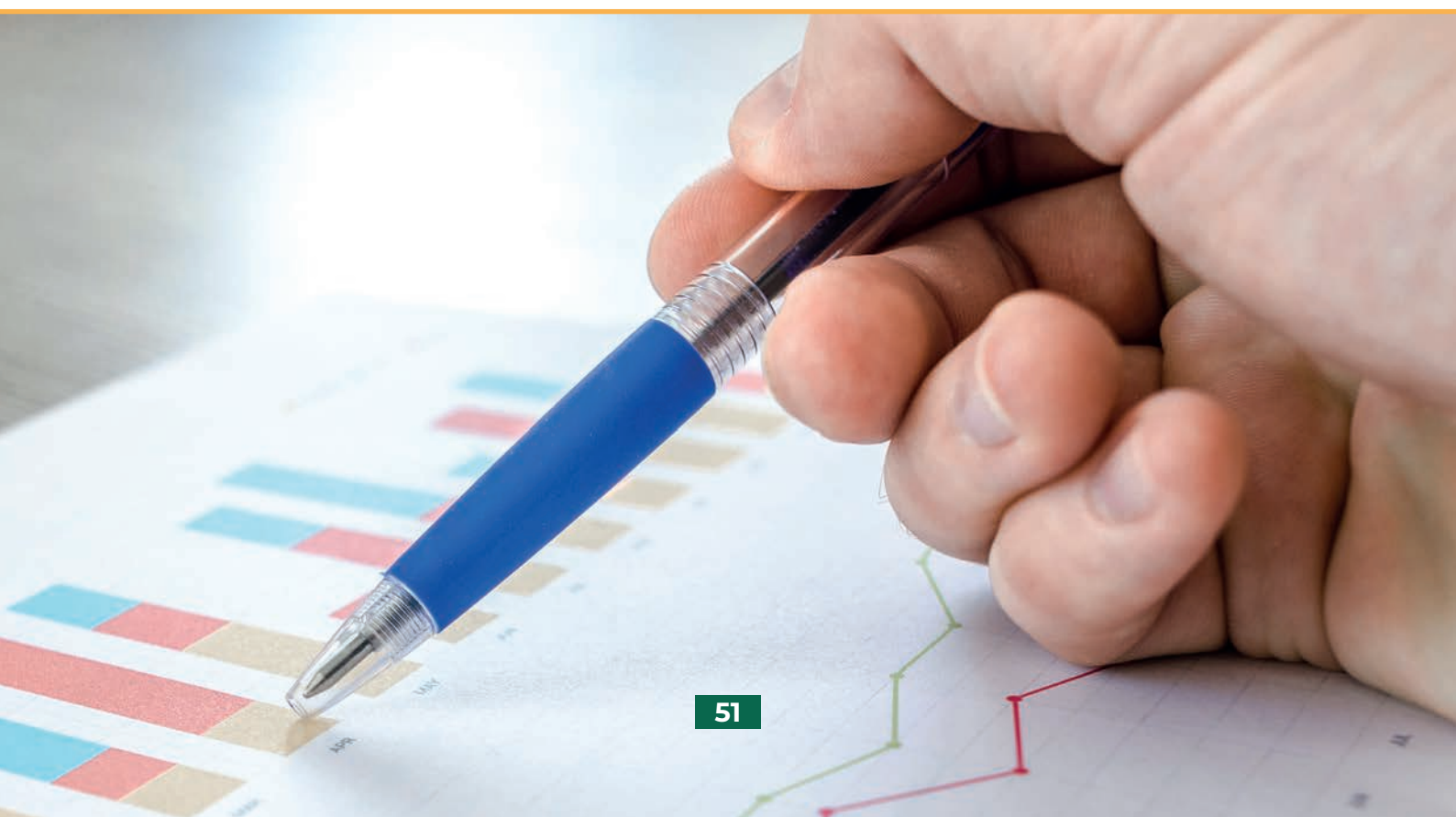
The Council has good financial planning arrangements, which have already identified many efficiency savings in order to reduce service cuts for the residents of Gwynedd.

The work already achieved over a number of years suggests that we have harvested a vast proportion of the available efficiency savings, but we need to continue to monitor the approved plans of all Council departments to ensure that the bulk of the proposed savings are achieved.

After a long period of finding and delivering savings, over £30m in the period since 2015/16, the plans are now so much more difficult to achieve with efficiency projects entailing much more work than cutting services. All savings plans were reviewed to assess which ones are now unobtainable, and a revised programme of savings has been drawn up for 2021/22. Through the robust arrangements we have in place to monitor how departments are delivering savings, we will ensure that this revised programme is realised. We will also support departments with transformation costs, as they introduce new working arrangements.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- This project changes the way Council staff plan and provide services for the people of Gwynedd and is therefore essential to the delivery of all well-being objectives.



5. Strengthening communication and engagement

Highways and Municipal Department

The Highways and Municipal Department is very visible with aspects of the services reaching each resident throughout the County. Value can be added to the department's work by means of effective communication and engagement plans; for example, campaigns to prevent littering or dog fouling, or campaigns and guidelines to encourage re-use, re-purposing and reducing waste. It is also very important that residents are confident in the department's services and that their concerns and enquiries are dealt with effectively. We will ensure that timely and meaningful response arrangements are in place and we will:

- review current arrangements for communicating and responding to enquiries
- highlight where there are shortcomings/improvement places
- establish a task group with representation from officers together with Galw Gwynedd
- identify measures for monitoring

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



6. Public Protection Capacity

Environment Department

As a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the importance of our Public Protection Services has become increasingly apparent, in their role of protecting the health of our communities, as well as advising and supporting the county's businesses. There is also an expectation that we use our enforcement powers as a result of allegations of Covid-19 regulations breaches.

The experiences during the emergency period has highlighted the lack of resilience in the Public Protection Services as a result of years of cuts. It is believed that a short-term and long-term solution is required to provide a sustainable and effective service to support and protect the residents and businesses of Gwynedd.

It is intended to carry out a full review of the structures of the Public Protection Services during 2021/22 in order to fully assess the need and consider the staff capacity required in the long-term (whilst noting that it is difficult to anticipate when the current crisis will end), in order to support and protect the residents and businesses of Gwynedd.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Enjoy happy, healthy and safe lives.



7. Clean and Tidy Communities

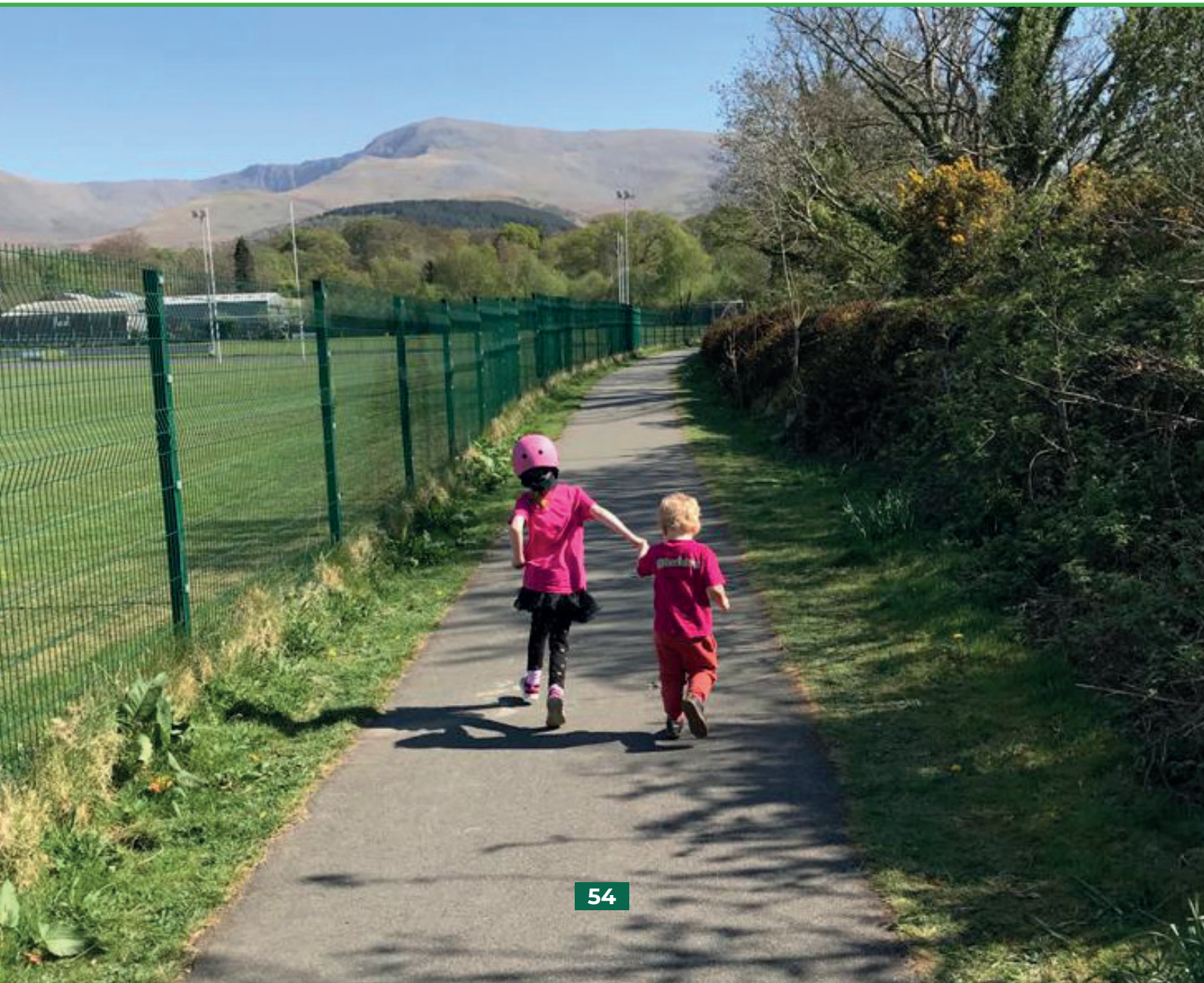
Highways and Municipal Department

We will collaborate with the residents and communities of Gwynedd by engaging in order to develop an Action Plan to correspond with this priority by expanding and developing community partnerships to improve the quality and appearance of the county, e.g.

- Clean and tidy streets
- Roads and walking paths in a good condition
- Local work teams to complete the work
- Discussion about the principles and actions by engaging with the community and staff
- Draw up an action plan and identify aspirations and possible stakeholders on a community level.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



Improvement Priority 8

Respond to the Climate Change emergency.

At its meeting on 7 March 2019, the Council considered a motion relating to climate change and it was resolved to do our utmost to ensure that the county remains a vibrant, viable and sustainable home for our children and their children for generations to come. We do this by means of:

- Declaring a Climate Emergency;
- Committing to taking decisive action to reduce carbon emissions and strive for a zero-carbon future;
- Looking for innovative means to achieve zero carbon targets;
- Reporting back within 6 months on positive steps the Council has taken to reduce carbon emissions; and
- Call on Welsh Government and the Westminster Government to provide the requisite powers and resources to achieve the target of a carbon-free Gwynedd by 2030.

How will we achieve this?

1. Climate Change Action Plan Environment Department

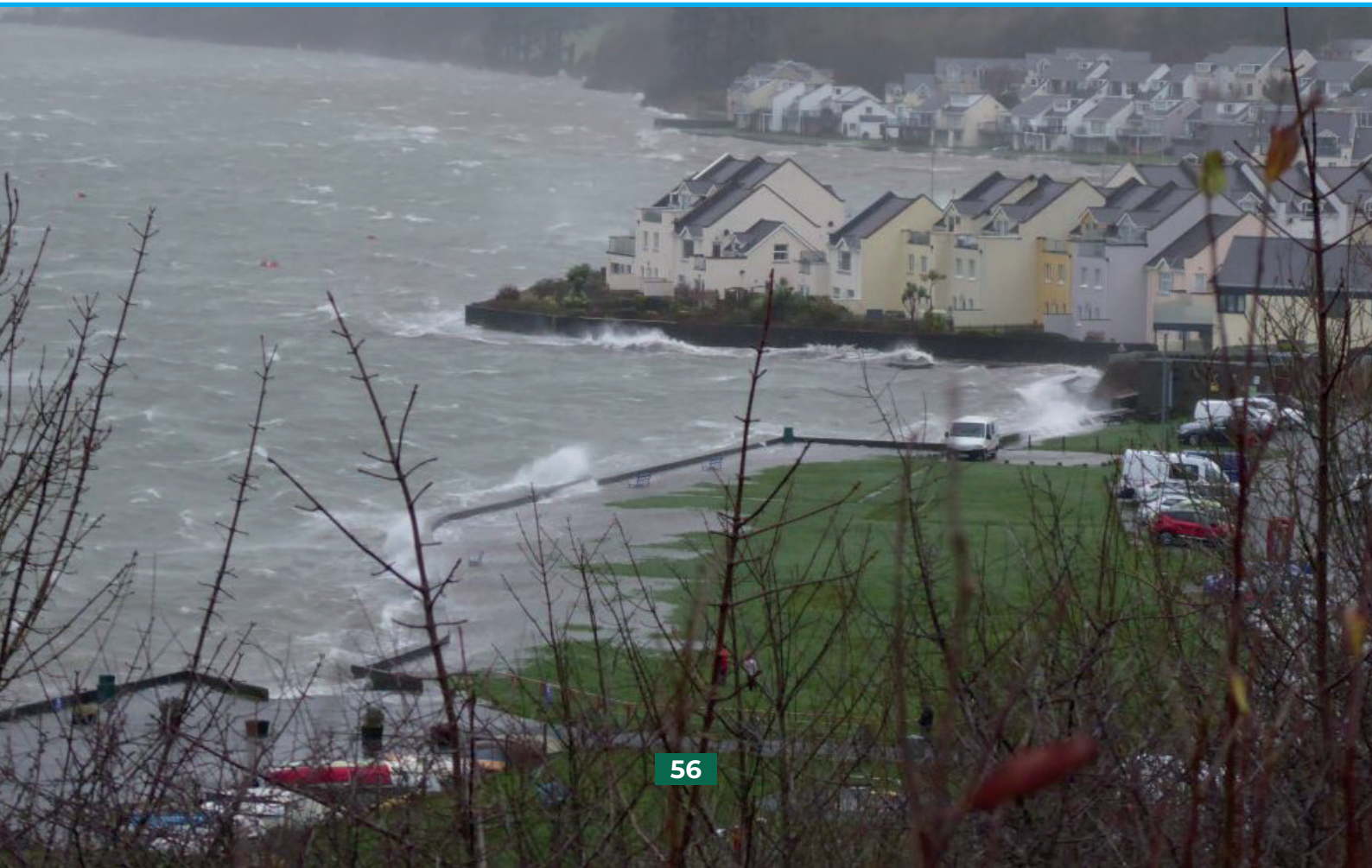
As a result of the Council's decision to declare a climate change emergency, we have attempted to draw up a Climate Change Action Plan; however, unfortunately, the Covid-19 emergency interrupted that work.

It is intended to ensure that we have an initial document that highlights what the departments intend to achieve so that this becomes a basis to a workshop for members to be held virtually, early in 2021, so that this in turn leads to the adoption of the Action Plan before the end of the current financial year.

Once the Action Plan is adopted, it will be published and we will start implementing the plans contained within it.

This work contributes to the following Well-being Objectives –

- Take advantage of the beauty of the county's natural environment.



Finally...



The budget adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4 March 2021 will be the basis for being able to deliver the above Improvement Priorities, whilst also trying to cope with the continued increase in demand for our services.

The grant settlement we receive from the Welsh Government for 2021/22 is fairer than in years previous to 2020/21, and meets the inflation increase of around £6m, but it doesn't contribute towards the substantial increase in demand for our services which account for around an additional £4m, mainly in social services.

After having to find more than £30m of savings since 2015/16, following previous years where the Government's grant was insufficient to meet inflation, this year a decision was made to postpone or eliminate £3m worth of historical savings which couldn't be realised. This will give the Council's budget a stronger foundation. Generally, the net £725k contribution of savings towards balancing the 2021/22 budget comes from efficiency savings that have already been approved in previous years.

By harvesting historical savings and raising the Council Tax by 3.7% for 2021/22, it is possible to establish a balanced budget and cope with the financial situation facing the Council without any new cuts in services for the people of Gwynedd. Once again, the Council is protecting services and aiming to address those new issues which are important to the people of Gwynedd.

Whilst drafting the Council's Budget for 2021/22, appropriate consideration will be given to the priorities set out above in the Council's Plan.

The Council's Budget can be viewed in full on the Council's website by following this link – [2021/22 Council Budget](#)

