

**Update on the projects of the Council's Plan presented to the Children and Families'
Challenging and Supporting Performance meeting 29 January 2025**

Performance Challenge Meeting	29 January 2025
Title	GWYNEDD PROJECTS OF THE COUNCIL PLAN 2023-2028
Purpose	Reporting on progress of improvement priority projects against pledges for 2024-2025

Autism Scheme

Project Description:-

Autistic children, young people and adults find it difficult to access the specialist support they need. We will therefore improve our provision and make it easier for individuals and their families to transfer between different services.

2024-25 Pledges:

1. Continue with the training programme for frontline staff. Ensure staff undertake Level 1 and 2 Autism training and ensure that figures are increasing. Ensure specialist jobs undertake Level 3 training and that the Autism Team also provides bespoke training for Level 4
2. Group development – continue to develop groups and consult with stakeholders on what groups need to be maintained and numbers over the year. Scatter these over the County.
3. Continue to collaborate with Department of Education and Neurodevelopmental Team (NDT).
4. Consult with internal and external staff. Work 1 to 1 needs to happen with a stellar result.
5. In individual casework be able to show a positive outcome and progress with the cases and measure the feedback.
6. Engage with the third sector to see if a service can be delivered

What has been achieved in the Performance Challenge period (August - December)

1. The team now offers an IAA service, we provide impartial and confidential information, advice and support to autistic individuals and their families to make informed wellbeing choices, explore the options available and support them to access appropriate services. IAA (children and adult front doors) will be part of work moving forward, the knowledge and understanding of what is needed in terms of enquiries following the last 12 months by the team so we need to work closely with SPOA/ IAA staff to develop this in line with the autism code of practice. This is a priority for the government and senior managers for Children’s services (SWC) and adult representation (MEH) have attended the **Neurodivergence Improvement Programme - Information, Advice & Assistance in-person** information day to start implementing this.

2. The team receives a number of referrals from autistic adults, parents/ carers of autistic children/ young autistic people, education, health, carer support etc. Many of the references are handled through consultation with the referring employee and thereby develop their knowledge, skills and ability to deal with autistic individuals. The team's intention is not to do the work for other employees but to upskill. There are times when there is a referral regarding individuals who are not meeting the adult services criteria and preventative intervention is needed at this point. we carry out an assessment of what is important and develop a plan to meet needs to tackle the worsening situation and ensure timely and suitable support is available. If there are care and support needs or safeguarding concerns, the case is discussed/referred to statutory services, the team is then available to work together on cases.
3. A preventative worker has been appointed and placed in the family support team. The employee holds a caseload of children who are on the diagnosis pathway or have been diagnosed and works very closely with the autism team and are involved in providing group-based intervention such as Cygnet, Tripple P, exploring my autism.
4. The team continues in a consultative role and works collaboratively with professionals to provide advice and guidance. The team has developed a wealth of resources that they can share as well as evidence-based/practice-based practice to support intervention. As part of the consultation proposal, key workers can offer short-term direct support based on individual outcomes and conduct 1-1 interventions. Progress and change are measured using the outcome of the star.
5. Training – The team continues to develop and has access to a wide range of training which is based on the work we provide. Cygnet edition 4 (2024), sensory integration training, sensory diet/ circuit that is proving to be a success and has been a gap in our work.
6. A new key worker has been appointed in December (NDIP) which brings the number of key workers to 5, although one of the employees has been away long-term ill since May.
7. Work is being done with Derwen to identify young people aged 14+ who have been diagnosed with autism but will not meet the criteria for adult services. The social worker works collaboratively with Derwen employees to develop outcomes-based pathway plans to increase independence to ensure they are welcomed but focused on developing skills, socialising opportunities, upskilling and providing information and education to parents in order to realistically prepare for when the individual turns 18.
8. There are a number of addresses for individuals 14-25. After completing assessments of what is important, the themes identified relate to isolation, not understanding their diagnosis of autism, emotional regulation, burnout, independent living skills. As a result the team has developed a booklet and runs a series of 'exploring my autism' workshops (14+) which offer information, advice, support and education whilst also offering individuals the opportunity to socialise and meet other autistic young people. The workshops are divided into 8 sessions 1.What is autism 2.Emotions, feelings and anxiety 3.Sensory 4.Active functioning 5.Autistic overload and social battery 6.Routine, planning and change 7.Sleep 8.Socialising and relationships. This intervention is available on a 1-1 basis as needed. These workshops have proven to be successful with young people and their parents/carers reporting a difference in identity, confidence, socialising skills and overall wellbeing improved
9. The team runs parent/carers support programmes which run parallel to workshops offered to young people, in order to achieve any change the autistic person needs to have access

to/develop knowledge. To experience change for children and young people it is necessary to ensure that the support provided at home is effective and appropriate.

10. The team continues to work on the Pathways us project, which provides social opportunities for young people, a break for parents and carers of individuals diagnosed with autism, awaiting assessment/diagnosis and individuals who will not meet the criteria for specialist services when they transition to adulthood. These sessions focus on socializing, developing independent living skills and will provide a short-term break for parents and carers. The groups are proving to be successful, having run 3 sessions on increasing numbers weekly. Two groups have been established across the county, one in Caernarfon and one in the Porthmadog area. The sessions are proving to be very successful.
11. Talking shop, tea and chat groups - Parent/carer groups have expanded across the three regions of Gwynedd. The sessions are for parents/carers of children who have been diagnosed with autism, are awaiting diagnosis or have additional learning needs who are not exposed to any specialist services i.e. Derwen. This gives parents the opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns, ask questions and meet with other parents who may be having similar experiences. After discussion with parents these groups will offer different themes each month such as sleep, censorship, toilets, PDA, etc and professionals will be invited to the group to discuss. These sessions are still successful with a number of parents/carers attending monthly.
12. The team develops a close relationship with an integrated autism service and promotes adult wellbeing groups that are held across the county on a monthly basis. We are beginning to attend these sessions in order to support and deliver IAA when needed.
13. Training programme - Autism awareness and understanding modules 1 and 2 continue to be delivered across the local authority with information being passed on to our partners (social care providers, housing associations, CAB, Job Centre) being encouraged to complete the training. All new social care staff complete both modules during their induction phase as well as newly qualified social workers employed by the local authority. We hold a database of the names of all staff members that still needs to be completed.
14. The team has developed their own autism training workshop with the support of the developmental neuro service and co-produced it with the neurodiversity community. The 'Social work through a diverse neurological lens' training took place twice in October in Caernarfon and Penrhyn which was attended by 44 members of social care staff. This training sits on the national autism training framework under 'autism enhanced training', so practitioners who assess needs and work directly with autistic individuals and their families are targeted to attend.
15. The team have completed a training needs analysis (TNA) and have a clearer picture of the departments that have completed training and could now identify areas within the council that need to be targeted.
16. The team supports 3rd sector services to complete training provided by ND Cymru and some have been successful and are now an autism aware organisation, this support and promotion work will continue.
17. A Task and Finish Group on the Autism Scheme has taken place following a recommendation from the Care Scrutiny Committee. This work will be reported back to the next Scrutiny Committee.
18. Regular meetings with the education department and ND team in order to share information, good practice and update each other. This meeting will be expanded to be a stakeholder meeting, the first meeting of the new year will look at the terms of reference of

the Group to build on the membership. Representation from the ND community will be part of this forum.

Next Steps

1. In order to continue to build on the work already being done, our main area of work is to continue to develop the IAA service and ensure that the team are fully trained and aware of the Services available across the county. We hope to develop this across other points of IAA within the council as it is important that the right information is received at the front door regardless of which team you contact (adult and children's services). A piece of work being produced in collaboration with the Wales neurodiversity team to upskill IAA teams across services in the form of webinars and discussions.
2. Continue to develop training and ensure the number of staff across the workforce completing the modules provided by Autism Wales.
3. Continue to run 'Social work through the lens of autism' training to look at the support social workers are able to provide to individuals and families, whether they have an autism diagnosis or not. Numbers and waiting time for diagnosis have increased significantly so workers need to use their social work skills to support and respond to the needs we face, we need to continue to develop confidence, upskill and develop their knowledge and understanding of autism/neurodiversity.
4. Continue to develop the advisory role within the team and continue to build knowledge and educate team members with current issues and the fast moving pace. Research is currently being completed, it is important that our knowledge base is up-to-date, evidence-based and takes into account all aspects of autism i.e. sensory, functional functioning, communication, emotional regulation and also consider environmental factors such as PDA, trauma, EBSA, sleep, abstinence, transition, parent/carer support to name but a few.
5. Continue to develop outcomes-based Groups for needs set across the county.
6. Continue to develop talk shop groups (parent/carers)
7. Continue to develop an Autism Advisory Group with all stakeholders in order to develop collaboration.
8. The team is in discussions with Gisda to look at developing opportunities and work placements for autistic/neurodiverse individuals. Early days but ready to work as a partner for a lottery grant.

Risks

1. Education. There are barriers for autistic children (diagnosed or waiting for an undiagnosed assessment) accessing education, this puts extra pressure on our service as parents seek support. The children are not in school so parents are unable to work, they do not have breaks, their role then becomes more of a caring role which leads to an increase in the demand for carer assessments. An increase in care and support needs because parents are struggling to cope.
2. Transfer age- Individuals who transfer from the Derwen service to adult services receive a second cognitive assessment, a process here starting at 17 years and 6 months and therefore it is difficult to guess who will receive a post-18 service. Part of the team's social worker role is to target transfer-age autistic individuals in order to develop independent skills and try to ensure that there is less dependence on others, develop skills and opportunities for socialisation and higher skill and strengthen the system around them, but there are cases where autistic children/young people have received services throughout their childhood and parents have been receiving support, etc. The

children are educated in our specialist schools but are rejected into adult HR services on the basis of an IQ of 70 or above. Individuals and families need to find out much earlier if they meet adult services criteria, the transfer age process starts at 14 I feel that we need to know at this point in order to create a clear transition pathway for young people and families.

3. Health - Pre-Diagnostic Support is not currently offered by BCUHB so the team is receiving a large number of calls to seek support. It's hard to refer when services aren't available.

Timetable

No change

Developing residential provision for children in care in small group homes

Project Description :-

We want to improve the experiences of children in Council care with intense and complex needs, who are currently having to leave the county or Wales in order to receive suitable provision. We will develop registered residential homes for small groups of up to two children which will allow them to be looked after in Gwynedd, attend local schools, and participate fully in the life of their communities.

2024-25 Pledges:

1. Appointment of Manager for first house in Morfa Bychan
2. Registration with CIW for the first house - working towards June 2024 up to the start of September 2024
3. Opening the doors of the first house in Morfa Bychan September 2024 and having the first child based there
4. Quarter 1 24/25 - housing market audit in 3 specific areas namely Arfon (Bangor), Pwllheli and Meirionnydd
5. End of quarter 2 24/25 – purchase of second house
6. End of quarter 4 24/25 - Second house registration with CIW
7. Identify a third house to purchase or submit a planning application on a piece of land in the Arfon Area that is already owned by the Council.

What has been achieved in the Performance Challenge period (August-December).

1. A recruitment event for Morfa Bychan was scheduled for the end of June 2024. As a result of this we have appointed a Manager, a deputy manager and 6 resident employees. It is intended that the new manager will be responsible for two sites, namely Morfa Bychan and Deiniolen.
2. Work on the house at Morfa Bychan has gone to tender and the work commenced in August 2024 and the work was completed by September 2024.
3. The purchase of two additional houses has been completed, located in Deiniolen and Edern.
4. Registration with CIW was submitted for the home in Morfa Bychan in August 2024,. There is a delay in the work so we have not received a Response. Marian Parry Hughes has contacted them directly in connection with this. We will be working on making a registration for the two new houses in the coming months.
5. We will place a first child in Morfa Bychan in early 2025.
6. As an extension of the small home work, we have begun the process of searching for a house in the Criccieth area. This will be in order to locate a specific child who currently lives at another facility.

7. We have also received an offer of a house in Farrar Road, Bangor, in December, 2024. This property is intended to be a house for care leavers.

Next Steps

1. The first child moved into Morfa Bychan.
2. Expect to hear back from CIW with the registration application.
3. Apply to register for the new homes.
4. Staff need to be appointed for the properties in Penllyn and Arfon.
5. To make changes to the new houses, Deiniolen and Edern in order to bring them up to CIW standard.
6. The purchase of the Bangor house is expected to be completed.
7. Find an ideal house in Criccieth.

Risks

1. Delay in CIW registration schedule.
2. Completion of the Bangor house.

Timetable

1. Receive a registration application from CIW for the first house.
2. A second child was confirmed to the house in Morfa Bychan, following the pairing process.
3. To make modifications to the new houses, Deiniolen and Edern, in accordance with CIW requirements.
4. Recruitment of staff for Deiniolen and Edern.
5. Commencement of the process of finding children for the new houses in Deiniolen and Edern.
6. Completed purchase on the house in Bangor.
7. Find a home in Criccieth and complete the purchase.

Gwynedd Council Plan 2023-28 – Year 2 Operations

Caring Gwynedd: Supporting Gwynedd residents to live full and safe lives in our communities

Section	Project	What we want to achieve during the SECOND year 2024-25 (milestones):	CONCISE update on progress with milestones to date (specify date)	Is the milestone completed/likely to be completed by the end of the financial year (Yes / No)	Leader
Adults	Modernising our care resources to meet future needs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determining the size and site for the provision of Extra Care Housing in Caernarfon 2. Scoping up the need for additional provision of Care Housing at the Penyberth site, Pwllheli 3. Decision on way forward for Extra Care Housing provision in the Dolgellau area 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A meeting has been held with the Department of Housing and the Chief Executive to discuss the wider site. A brief is going to be sent to the Department of Housing by the end of March. 2. The work is currently focused on the nursing home. This scoping work will begin soon, but will not be finished by the end of March. 3. A specific resource is needed to work on this plan, to be decided soon and milestones 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2 . No 3. No 	Alun Gwilym Williams

		<p>4. We will have finished upgrading Hafod Mawddach and Cefn Rodyn</p> <p>5. We will have fully opened the dementia units at Bryn Blodau and Plas Hedd</p> <p>6. We will have completed arrangements to provide 2 houses and community support</p> <p>7. We will have certainty on future care accommodation rental arrangements and confirmation as to whether the council will be able to act as a landlord</p>	<p>delayed until September 2025.</p> <p>4. Completed</p> <p>5. BB – Failure has been to fully open the unit so far with only half of the beds in use. The aim is to open the rest of the beds before the end of the financial year. PH – There has been a significant slippage in the timetable to complete the work to adapt the unit but the unit is scheduled to open during March 2025.</p> <p>6. Slippage in the second house adjustment schedule – aim to be ready May 2025. Still aiming for the site for one house to be ready for Spring 2025.</p> <p>7. Completed</p>	<p>4. Yes</p> <p>5. Yes</p> <p>6. No</p> <p>7. Yes</p>	<p>Rhion Glyn</p> <p>Mari Wynne Jones</p> <p>Alun Gwilym Williams</p>
Adults	Using more technology to improve Gwynedd	<p>1. The Dewis Cymru system will be updated for all areas in Gwynedd by summer 2025 and editors have been identified for each</p>	<p>1. Staff absences and uncertainty have delayed work. Editors have been identified but not promoted</p>	<p>1. No</p>	

	residents' ability to access support and care	<p>area of work to assist with the maintenance of the system.</p> <p>2. AskSara's Choice search and occupational therapy system will be integrated into the social services website pages</p> <p>3. A menu of telecare devices will be available and these will be widely promoted on the website, in the media and through the social work teams.</p> <p>4. A direct payments policy/agreement will be updated, and we will provide the option of a virtual wallet for any new direct payment cases.</p>	<p>across Gwynedd, and a resource will be needed to do this over the next year.</p> <p>2. Completed</p> <p>3. They are being promoted on the Council's website and the social work teams, a simple 'catalogue' needs to be compiled, which will be done by the end of March.</p> <p>4. Completed</p>	<p>2. Yes</p> <p>3. Yes</p> <p>4. Yes</p>	Alun Gwilym Williams
Adults	Collaborating with Health Services to enable people to live their best life in the community	<p>1. We will have established regular communication and meeting arrangements to promote collaboration and enable the adult teams to feel more like one</p> <p>2. We will have strengthened our collaboration systems to enable us to discharge people from hospital more efficiently</p>	<p>1. Completed – next step – co-location work.</p> <p>2. Schedule slipped away. We have identified that the capacity of the hospital patient data systems is limited but that there is wider potential for it and further development work is currently underway to identify the efficiency gaps. Further work will be needed to ensure that the 5 TACs use</p>	<p>1 Yes</p> <p>2. No</p>	Sian Edith Jones

		<p>3. We will have aligned the areas of the Community Resource Teams with the home care sub-areas and have reached an agreement with the Health Board on the way forward from the point of view of the areas of the community nursing teams</p> <p>4. We will have developed new collaboration arrangements for the mental health teams and also carried out a review of the arrangements some months later to ensure they are robust</p>	<p>the system to identify patients facing delayed discharge and the reason for this.</p> <p>3. Completed</p> <p>4. Completed</p>	<p>3. Yes</p> <p>4. Yes</p>	<p>Mannon Trappe</p>
Adults	Developing training and employment opportunities for individuals in need of support	<p>1. Development work on the new Dolfeurig building will proceed by the end of the financial year, with the aim of completing the work by Summer 2025</p>	<p>1. Confirmation was received at the beginning of January 2025, that the request for more funding to fund the Dolfeurig development from the Government has been successful which ensures that there is sufficient funding to fund the cost of the construction tender and the fees in their entirety.</p> <p>The successful company (SWG) has already started</p>	<p>1. No</p>	

		<p>2. We will have appointed a Job Opportunities Co-ordinator and additional Employment Support Officers, and we will have carried out work to identify the type and number of opportunities needed to be able to plan how to greet this</p> <p>3. At least 8 individuals who are not currently in employment will be in employment by the end of the year</p>	<p>pieces of work on the site, with work due to start in April.</p> <p>2. Completed</p> <p>3. Gradual increase in the number of people in employment, and large numbers on the training scheme</p>	<p>2. Yes</p> <p>3. Yes</p>	<p>Mari Wynne Jones</p>
Adults	Llechen Lân	<p>1. We will have completed the initial analysis and submitted it to the Leadership Team, and we will have set a timetable for the work highlighted</p>	<p>1. Completed</p>	<p>1. Yes</p>	<p>Alun Gwilym Williams</p>