

Isle of Anglesey County Council Scrutiny Report

Committee:	Partnership & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	12.06.2025
Subject:	UK Government Funding – Holyhead: A culture and heritage driven transformation
Scrutiny Chair:	Cllr. Dylan Rees

1. Who will be the portfolio holder presenting / leading the report?

Portfolio Holder	Role
Councillor Gary Pritchard	Leader and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
Service Officer (Supporting)	Role
Christian Branch	Head of Regulation and Economic Development
Tudur Jones	Chief Economic Development Officer
Efan Milner	Programme Manager

2. Why the Scrutiny Committee is being asked to consider the matter

This is the 4th update of 5 to the Committee outlining progress in the delivery of the UK Government funded Programme for Holyhead (formerly LUF)

3. Role of the Scrutiny Committee and recommendations

- For assurance
- For recommendation to the Executive
- For information

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is requested to:

- R1. Notes progress in the delivery of the UK Government funded Programme for Holyhead
- R2. Notes the implementation of the UK Government funded Programme for Holyhead in line with UK Government guidance
- R3. Recognises the on-going role of the Council in supporting the Programme's Delivery Partners

The focus of this update to the Scrutiny Committee will be the Programme's projects being delivered by Môn CF. Annex B provides details of the remaining projects within the wider Programme

4. How does the recommendation(s) contribute to the objectives of the Council's Plan?

The UK Government Funded Programme has been developed against the context of Council priorities, with other key local, regional and national policies and strategies informing its scope Plan (i.e. Regional Economic Framework for North Wales, the Welsh Government Programme for Government and the Levelling Up White Paper).

Local strategies:

- Council Plan 2023 -2028 (Isle of Anglesey County Council, 2023)
- Isle of Anglesey & Gwynedd Well-being Plan (Gwynedd & Anglesey Public Service Board, 2018)
- Isle of Anglesey County Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020 –2024 (Isle of Anglesey County Council, 2020)
- Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011 –2026 (Isle of Anglesey County Council, 2017)
- Isle of Anglesey County Council toward Net Zero Plan 2022-2025 (Isle of Anglesey County Council, 2022)

5. Key scrutiny themes

Key themes the Scrutiny Committee should concentrate on:

1. Impact the matter has on individuals and communities [focus on customer/citizen]
2. A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality [focus on value]
3. A look at any risks [focus on risk]
4. Scrutiny taking a performance monitoring or quality assurance role [focus on performance & quality]
5. Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of:
 - a. Long term
 - b. Prevention
 - c. Integration
 - d. Collaboration
 - e. Involvement
6. The potential impacts the decision would have on:
 - a. protected groups under the Equality Act 2010
 - b. those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage in their lives (when making strategic decisions)
 - c. opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language

6. Key points / summary

6.1 Outline

Môn CF are one of the partners working with the Council to deliver the UK Government funded Programme for Holyhead.

Their Vacant Property Projects involve the purchase and refurbishment of derelict/vacant town centre properties and bringing them back into use for the benefit of local businesses. The project reflects the 'Empty Shop Initiative' which MonCF commenced in 2011 to revive the town's high street by addressing high vacancy rates of commercial premises. The initiative involved negotiating reduced rents and securing new businesses for the empty shops,

As part of the Project, Môn CF have purchased 4 properties (the former HSBC building, Central building, 9 Stanley Street and 14 A/B Stanley Street) which are located either on Market Street or Stanley Street in Holyhead Town Centre.

The following provides a summary of the project noting current progress and outlines some of the issues that have been encountered during delivery.

6.2 Former HSBC

The HSBC building is being refurbished to provide two Commercial units (Tap Room and Restaurant) and 6 overnight accommodation flats. Whilst progress has generally been good on the refurbishment it has been recently hampered by several issues. The extension at the rear of the building has been delayed for two main reasons. The first is the need to remove bedrock on which a Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) transformer is located. Removing the bedrock requires close cooperation with SPEN who need to attend site whilst the bedrock is removed. The second is the need to secure agreement for the capture, storage and use of rainwater. This requires the approval of Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and the Council's Sustainable Drainage Design officer. The drainage has now been redesigned and should be approved this month. Costs have increased due to the additional works required to accommodate the new drainage and increases in the price of materials and labour through inflation.

6.3 Central Building

Work on the Central Building is progressing well with completion expected in August. Once improved the building will be occupied by a Café on the ground floor and a Dance Studio on the upper floors. The minor delay with this refurbishment is the power connection which needs to be resolved. The roof has had to be improved and strengthened but this is now complete.

6.4 9 Stanley Street

This scheme has now been completed and a local business – Anglesey Soap – has opened on the ground floor. The two bedroomed flat above the shop will soon be let.

6.5 14a/b Stanley Street

This scheme has had to be withdrawn from the Vacant Property Project due to the structural issues related to Churchill House (the buildings are connected). To recoup the lost Outputs and Outcomes the Programme Board agreed to transfer the budget to another property (2 – 4 Market Street). Work on this building has now started and the food outlet is now operational. The building will also provide 2 residential units.

6.6 Vacant Property Project costs:

Scheme	Original Budget	Tender Award Value	Estimated Completion Sum
HSBC	£2,856,885.58	£3,668,894.08	£3,668,894.08
Central building	£985,683	£1,268,885	£1,293,884.14
9 Stanley Street	£400,980	£242,306.26	£285,268.14
2-4 Market Street	-	£20,000	£20,000

6.7 Summary

Programme officers have worked closely with Môn CF to continuously monitor progress and manage rising costs, providing certainty and reassurance to the Programme Board. As stated previously the increase in costs is mostly down to increased inflation impacting on materials. Regular meetings, including progress reviews with architects and contractors, as well as monthly delivery partner meetings have allowed Môn CF to track developments and highlight challenges. Programme management of £400,000 are included in the wider budget in order to facilitate delivery of the projects. Môn CF have also recently completed a town centre painting scheme, utilising alternative grant funding. This collaborative approach has not only ensured that cost increases are effectively absorbed through mitigation efforts but has also fostered a strong and positive working relationship.

Outcomes agreed with UK Government	
Anticipated	Achieved to date
4 dilapidated buildings improved	1 Residential Flat
4 Commercial units accommodating high street uses	1 Commercial space
6 overnight accommodation flats created	2 FTE posts created
1 Residential flat	
Employment created (30 FTE's)	
Direct land value uplift: £0.4m	
Wider land value uplift: £2.9m	

Annex A – Artists impressions and images of the buildings in the Vacant Property Projects.

6.8 Wider Programme Update

As noted in the Scrutiny Committee report in March 2024 the original Programme completion date was March 2025. We have now reached agreement with the UK Government to extend the deadline to March 2026 (to include a formal process to evaluate and report upon the Programme).

Annex B provides an overview of progress on the Programme's other projects which include;

- a. Empire (Holyhead Town Council)
- b. Newry Kiosks (Holyhead Town Council)
- c. St Cybi's Church (Diocese of Bangor)
- d. Ucheldre Centre
- e. Transforming Towns (Regulation & Economic Development)

7. Impact assessments

7.1. Potential impacts on groups protected under the Equality Act 2010

None – applications by and for protected groups under the Equality Act 2010 will be dealt with exactly the same and funding could be targeted towards those groups

7.2. Potential impacts on those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (strategic decisions)

Positive – this funding has the potential to be targeted towards those at a socio-economic disadvantage

7.3. Potential effects on opportunities to use Welsh and not treat the language less favourably than English

Positive – by creating employment opportunities in the area it is hoped that more Welsh speakers will be able to benefit and stay in the locality. The Council is also engaging with local businesses on the use of bilingual signs and menus.

7.4. Potential impact on the Council's Net Zero Carbon target

Neutral – reduction in running costs through the installation of PV panels and/or air source heat pumps on buildings. Also aid reduction in EPC values in new and existing buildings

8. Financial implications

Neutral – there are no financial implications on the County Council as the cost of the bid development and staffing implications have been paid for and will be met through external sources.

9. Appendices

Annex A – Images of MonCF Projects
Annex B – Wider Programme Update and Outputs

10. Report author and background papers

Efan Milner – Programme Manager
[Report to Scrutiny Committee November 2023](#)
[Report to Scrutiny Committee March 2024](#)
[Report to Scrutiny Committee November 2024](#)
<https://www.anglesey.gov.wales/en/Business/Economic-development/Holyhead-Levelling-Up-Fund/Welcome.aspx>

ANNEX A – MonCF

Adeilad Canolog/ Central Building Argraff arlunydd/Artist's impression



 Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU
Funded by
UK Government

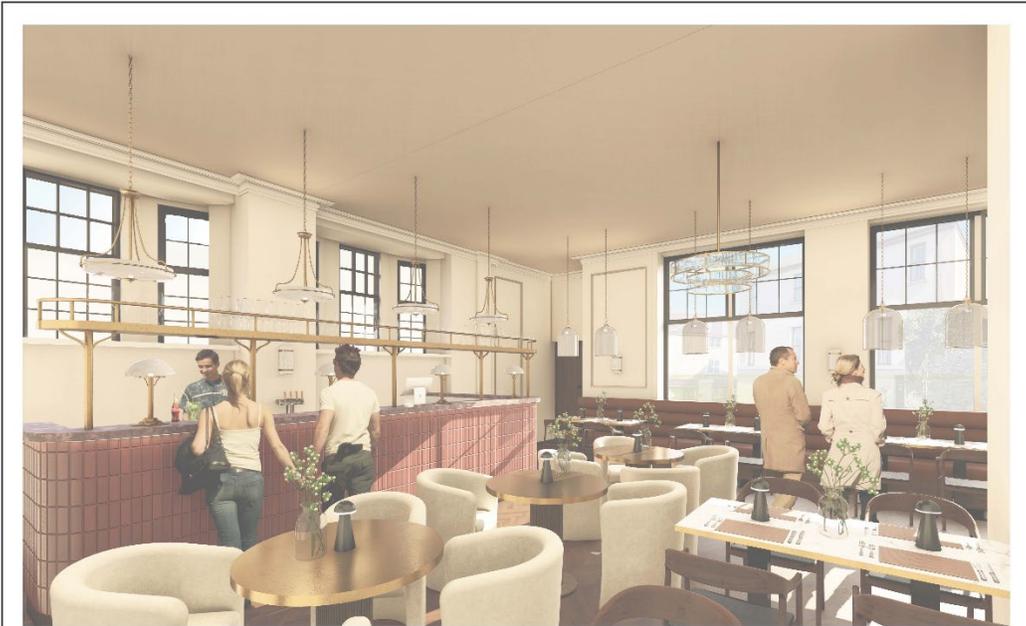
Proposed Cafe 3D Visual

 Môn CF
here to help
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ARCHITECTURE



HSBC - Argraff arlunydd/Artist's impression






Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU
Funded by
UK Government

Proposed Restaurant 3D Visual




Wedi ei ariannu gan
Llywodraeth y DU
Funded by
UK Government

Proposed Tap Room 3D Visual





9 Stanley Street – Llundain ar ôl cwblhau/Images following completion





Annex B - LUF Programme Update and Outputs

Project Lead	Description	Update	Outcomes and Outputs
Holyhead Town Council	A substantial extension by Holyhead Town Council to the Empire Play Centre and Cinema, the town's main indoor attraction, to cater for increasingly higher demand and the renovation of the Newry Beach Frontages improving facilities for locals and visitors alike.	<p>Play Centre progressing well. PV panels installed on the roof and extension has been completed.</p> <p>Work now focussed on installing the play frame.</p> <p>Completion expected by July 2025. Formal opening planned once complete</p> <p>Cinema reopened February 2025 following refurbishment.</p> <p>Works on the Kiosks completed and official opening was held in September 2024.</p> <p>Four businesses are now operating from the kiosks.</p>	<p>Empire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 FTE created • 16,000 additional visits to the play centre. • Leisure space created/improved <p>Newry Kiosks –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.5 FTE posts created • Capture additional spend locally • 60 Sqm of underused / dilapidated heritage space brought back into use <p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional floorspace and/or floorspace brought into use to support employment
Bangor Diocese	Renovation of St Cybi's Church, a Grade 1 listed heritage asset. Redevelopment of Eglwys Y Bedd, which will expand into a community hub, helping local people and bringing more activity into the heart of the town.	<p>Work on St Cybi's progressing well. New underfloor heating installed.</p> <p>New and reclaimed tiles being laid.</p> <p>Repairs to the tower complete</p> <p>Work on Eglwys y Bedd extension ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganisation of the church for better use of space to display heritage assets • Increase the number of annual events and visits. • Additional floorspace and/or floorspace brought into use • Creation of new posts (2.5 FTE's) • Provision of a social enterprise café/foodbank

		Planned completion in now August for both buildings	
Ucheldre	<p>Extension to the existing arts and culture centre. A new dance and art studio will be created. Additional theatre facilities will also be created.</p> <p>The gallery, reception and café will be altered to improve public access to the building.</p> <p>Centre continues to offer limited events.</p>	<p>Monitoring of ongoing costs to ensure delivery within budget.</p> <p>Need to monitor delivery timetable to recognise any possible delays to the deadline</p> <p>Work on the dance and art studios is going well and final designs for the external panelling have been agreed.</p> <p>New gallery has been completed and new changing room facilities are nearing completion.</p> <p>Internal works inside the church to be completed towards the end of the project.</p>	<p>Cultural / arts space created - 576.5 additional sqm.</p> <p>Increased visitor numbers to culture / art events: 50% increase in visitors from 35,000 to 52,500.</p> <p>Additional floorspace and/or floorspace brought into use.</p> <p>New jobs created - 11 FTE's</p> <p>Additional volunteering opportunities created</p> <p>Promoting carbon reduction.</p>
IACC	<p>The Council has extended the Townscape Transformation programme in Holyhead to include the refurbishment of dilapidated town centre heritage properties and improvements to shopfronts on Stanley Street.</p> <p>This will help reverse the decline of the town centre and provide new residential properties in the town centre. It</p>	<p>Tenders for all the remaining contracts have been completed and contractors successfully appointed.</p> <p>Owner agreements are nearing completion and will be issued soon.</p> <p>Work on the shopfronts to begin in June 2025</p> <p>Work will commence on 1 Stanley Street in June with</p>	<p>Vacant space brought back into use: 6 buildings refurbished and 6 shop frontages renovated</p> <p>3 Commercial units accommodating high street uses:</p> <p>14 new residential units and 4 existing units refurbished.</p> <p>Direct land value uplift: £0.8m</p> <p>Wider land value uplift: £1.7m</p>

	<p>will also transform the public realm around St Cybi's by improving access which will draw people into the town centre.</p>	<p>completion estimated as December 2025.</p> <p>Work on both Boston Street properties to commence in July.</p> <p>Iron railings above the Market Buildings have been completed</p>	<p>Additional floorspace and/or floorspace brought into use to support employment 17 FTE's</p>
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