

THE EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 22 May, 2025

- PRESENT:** Councillor Gary Pritchard (Leader) (Chair)
- Councillors Carwyn Jones, Alun Roberts, Dafydd Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Robin Williams.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer
Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
Director of Education, Skills, and Young People
Director of Social Services
Head of Democracy
Corporate Planning, Performance and Programme Manager (GP)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Webcasting Officer (FT)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Neville Evans (Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism and Maritime), Dyfed Wyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Children, Young People and Families), Jeff Evans (Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee).
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Glyn Haynes, Kenneth Hughes, R. Llewelyn Jones, Sonia Williams (Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) Elin Allsopp (Scrutiny Officer).
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1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted and were noted as documented above.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Carwyn Jones declared a personal but not prejudicial interest with regard to item 6 on the agenda due to his role as a lecturer at Coleg Menai. As the matter under discussion was solely an engagement report and had no impact on his position, the interest remained personal.

3. URGENT MATTERS CERTIFIED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR HIS APPOINTED OFFICER

None to report.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 29 April 2025 were presented for confirmation.

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Executive held on 29 April 2025 be confirmed as correct.

5. THE EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Head of Democracy incorporating the Executive's Forward Work Programme for the period from June 2025 to January 2026 was presented for confirmation.

The Head of Democracy updated the Executive on the one change to the Forward Work Programme which was the addition of the Schools Digital Strategic Plan to the Executive's 21 October 2025 meeting agenda.

It was resolved to confirm the Executive's updated Forward Work Programme for the period June 2025 to January 2026 with the one change outlined at the meeting.

6. ENGAGEMENT REPORT – PROVISION OF POST-16 EDUCATION

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People on the outcome of the public engagement on the future of post-16 education provision on Anglesey was presented for the Executive's consideration.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language presented the report explaining that the review and potential restructuring of post-16 education provision on Anglesey was identified as a key consideration within the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme and its Modernising Learning Communities and Developing the Welsh Language Strategy. The Council undertook a public engagement exercise on the future of post-16 education provision from 20 January to 7 March 2025, details of which are included in the report. Rather than holding a formal consultation at this stage – given the absence of a specific proposal, the Council opted for engagement to involve more stakeholders and to have a broader conversation in order to understand different perspectives and opinions. The feedback collected will be used to guide the Council's next steps and decision-making regarding post-16 education provision.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts highlighted the positive nature of the process which produced a total of 779 responses. Notably, 30% of the responses came from learners and young persons aged 16 to 21 with a preference expressed for retaining the post-16 provision with each of the existing providers.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People confirmed that the Council's Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme and its Modernising Learning Communities and Developing the Welsh Language Strategy acknowledge the need to review the current post-16 education provision model to ensure the system is sustainable, efficient and responsive to learners' experiences. The report also highlights current challenges within the post-16 education sector including class sizes, demographic changes and financial viability. As part of the engagement exercise a range of options were presented and stakeholders were also invited to propose alternative solutions. A majority of respondents agreed that a review of post-16 education provision is necessary, with 79% expressing a preference for provision to remain with each of the existing providers. For both general respondents, and for young people, the key priorities for the future of post-16 provision are local availability, quality of teaching and the availability locally of a variety of subject choices. Considering the feedback from the public engagement, the recommended approach is to further develop a closer working relationship between the existing providers and for officers to prepare a strategic plan to support this direction. The plan will also seek to address or mitigate the challenges currently facing post-16 education provision on Anglesey and strengthen post-16 learner entitlement and experience. This vision forms part of the broader

ambition of ensuring education provision of the highest quality possible on the Island for current and future generations.

Councillor Sonia Williams, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee provided an update from the committee's 21 May 2025 meeting where the Engagement Report on Post 16 Education Provision had been reviewed. The committee had noted that the post-16 education provision engagement process and work integrated multiple strands of the Council Plan. While members noted that the engagement exercise had been comprehensive, they sought assurance that the exercise had effectively reached a diverse range of young people and they enquired about the age range, abilities and interests of respondents to ensure a broad perspective. Members also enquired about the risks and challenges of not implementing the proposal and discussed its implications for the Welsh language. Having scrutinised the report and received satisfactory assurances on these matters the committee had resolved to recommend that the Executive approve further developing a closer working relationship between the existing providers and authorise officers to prepare a strategic plan to support this intention which will also seek to address and /or mitigate the challenges currently facing the post-16 education provision on Anglesey.

The Executive acknowledged the report as a positive step and welcomed the broad response to the engagement exercise, recognising it as testament to the Learning Service's efforts particularly in conducting face to face engagement sessions with secondary schools and Grwp Llandrillo Menai to gather feedback from both current and future post-16 learners.

However, assurance was sought that the engagement exercise extended beyond the Coleg Menai Llangefni and Bangor campuses mentioned in the report, given that Anglesey learners may be located across other sites within Grwp Llandrillo Menai. In response, the Director of Education, Skills and Young People confirmed that the service has requested the college to ensure that learners from Anglesey had access to the questionnaire, and that the engagement exercise was centrally promoted. The Executive suggested that this be clarified in the report. Additionally, the Executive emphasised that the engagement report represents only the first step in reviewing post-16 education provision and that as the process evolves, a wider range of perspectives will be sought. Most importantly, ongoing engagement and feedback from both current post-16 learners and from those who have completed their post 16 education – whether in school or college, is a priority. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People noted that subject to approval, those expectations for regular engagement could be incorporated into the strategic plan to help guide the programme going forwards.

The Executive further acknowledged the importance of providing the best possible post-16 educational opportunities incorporating both academic and vocational elements ensuring that learners can choose subjects that really interest them without unnecessary limitations at a pivotal moment in their lives when they are shaping their future paths. To successfully implement the proposal, the support and commitment of headteachers, leadership teams and the governing bodies of existing providers is essential. The Director of Education, Skills and Young People affirmed that the service maintains a good working relationship with the schools and the college and that he was confident in the ability to collaborate successfully on this initial step.

It was resolved to approve the following as the most appropriate way forward in light of the feedback from the public engagement –

- **To further develop a closer working relationship between the existing providers and,**
- **To authorise Officers to prepare a strategic plan for further developing a closer working relationship between the existing post -16 providers which will attempt to**

address or mitigate the challenges currently facing post-16 education provision on Anglesey and strengthen post-16 learner entitlement and experience.

7. MODERNISING LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND DEVELOPING THE WELSH LANGUAGE STRATEGY – POTENTIAL NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING IN THE HOLYHEAD AREA

The report of the Director of Education, Skills and Young People which sought the Executive's approval for the proposal to relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school building for 11-18 year old learners and conduct a statutory consultation thereon was presented for consideration.

Councillor Dafydd Roberts, Portfolio Member for Education, Skills and Young People presented the report and he explained that the Council's Strategic Outline Programme (Sustainable Communities for Learning) which is a rolling nine year plan sets out the schemes identified for capital investment and delivery over the period. However, the widespread presence of RAAC concrete in the Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi school building means the situation needs to be addressed in the short or near term. Following changes in UK guidance in August 2023 on RAAC, extensive remedial work has been undertaken to safeguard the school structure in the medium term, but a long-term solution is required. The proposal paper presents the outcome of work to explore a range of options for the future of Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and has been drafted in line with the expectations of the revised School Organisation Code (O11/2018).

Councillor Dafydd Roberts noted that if approved for statutory consultation, the proposal to relocate the school's learners to a new building could mark the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the school.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People affirmed that the proposal complies with the revised School Organisation Code and aligns with the Council's commitment to improving schools and creating modern learning environments that support communities and the Welsh language. The proposal involves relocating Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school specifically designed for the 11- 18 age range with capacity for 900 pupils. In developing the proposal the Council considered a number of factors as outlined in the paper with the primary driver being the condition of the current school building - classified as Grade C (operational but in need of major repair or replacement in the short to medium term). The current and projected future maintenance costs for the existing school building amount to nearly £29m. While alternative options for the future of Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi were considered, as detailed in section 6 of the report, relocating the school's learners to a new purpose built school for 11-18 year olds is considered the most effective solution to the challenges facing the school. The cost implications are set out in section 7 of the report.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People described this as an exciting period, presenting an opportunity to establish a modern school that complements and supports contemporary teaching and learning practices, benefiting both staff and pupils. The proposal addresses the challenges regarding the school building's condition, particularly RAAC and could lead to long-term savings in repair and maintenance costs over the next 25 years if implemented through the Welsh Government's Mutual Investment Model. Additionally, it also supports the objectives of the Strategic Outline Plan. Under the revised School Organisation Code, relocating a school to a site more than a mile away from the current site is considered a regulated alteration, necessitating a statutory process to gather and consider the views of learners and stakeholders before a final decision is made. The Executive is asked to approve the proposal and authorise officers to initiate the necessary statutory consultation.

Councillor Sonia Williams, Vice-Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee presented the scrutiny committee's views following its discussion of the proposal paper at its 21 May meeting. She reported that the committee recognised the proposal as an exciting opportunity to establish a modern, safe and fit for purpose secondary school in the Holyhead area while also offering potential savings on repair and maintenance costs. The committee's members had sought assurances that the proposal fully complies with the revised School Organisation Code, meets both current and future needs of secondary education in the Holyhead area and is affordable. After reviewing the proposal paper and receiving satisfactory assurances, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had resolved to recommend the proposal and necessary statutory consultation process for approval by the Executive.

The Executive's Members welcomed the proposal suggesting that it would contribute alongside other developments in the area, to the town's regeneration. They emphasised that while the existing Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi building is structurally safe, it requires significant investment in the long term to resolve the maintenance challenges it faces. Members believed that those resources would be better spent on constructing a brand-new purpose built school – one that offers modern learning facilities, greater outdoor space and enough capacity to meet future demand. The Executive further highlighted that the proposal represents an investment in young people and the wider community, it enhances education and supports the Welsh language strategy. In supporting the proposal, the Executive sought clarification on the timescale noting that the new school if approved, would not be operational until 2030. The Programme, Planning and Performance Manager explained that as well as the six month statutory consultation process, detailed business cases and plans have to be prepared to Welsh Government requirements, funding approval secured and the necessary land acquired before any construction work can begin.

The Chief Executive in acknowledging the complexity and length of the process ahead, urged all those with an interest to participate in the consultation and share their views, expectations and concerns through the council's formal communication and engagement channels.

Additionally the Executive recognised that other school buildings on the island require upgrades. While current resources do not allow for immediate improvements, these schools have not been forgotten and will receive maintenance over time. However, given the situation at Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi and the presence of RAAC in the school building, its remaining lifespan is limited making it a priority that must be addressed.

It was resolved –

- **To approve the proposal to “Relocate Ysgol Uwchradd Caergybi learners to a new school building for 11-18 year old learners”, and**
- **To authorise Officers to undertake the necessary statutory consultation.**

At the conclusion of the meeting's formal business, the Chair expressed his thanks to former Executive member, Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas for his contribution to the Executive's work. This recognition followed his appointment as Vice-Chair of the Isle of Anglesey County Council at Tuesday's Full Council meeting.

**Councillor Gary Pritchard
Chair**