

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held in the Committee Room and virtually on Zoom on 17 June, 2025

PRESENT: Councillor Jeff Evans (Chair)
Councillor Sonia Williams (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Geraint Bebb, Aled M. Jones, R. Llewelyn Jones, Jackie Lewis, Keith Roberts, Ieuan Williams, Arfon Wyn.

Co-opted Member: Mr John Tierney (The Catholic Church)

Portfolio Members

Councillors Gary Pritchard (Leader), Neville Evans (Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism and Maritime), Carwyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience), Dyfed Wyn Jones (Portfolio Member for Children, Young People and Families), Nicola Roberts (Portfolio Member for Planning, Public Protection and Climate Change), Alun Roberts (Portfolio Member for Adults' Services and Community Safety), Dafydd Roberts (Portfolio Member for Education and the Welsh Language), Robin Williams (Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing).

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Director of Function (Resources)/Section 151 Officer
Director of Education, Skills and Young People
Director of Social Services
Head of Highways, Waste and Property (HP)
Head of Housing Services (NM)
Head of Adult Services (AWO)
Head of Regulation and Economic Development (CB)
Head of Democracy (DS)
Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation (CE) (for items 3 & 4)
Corporate Planning Programme and Performance Manager (GP) (for items 3 & 4)
Chief Property and Asset Officer (MH)
Scrutiny Manager (AGD)
Committee Officer (ATH)
Webcasting Officer (FT)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Llio A. Owen, Alwen Watkin, Mr Rhys H. Hughes (Deputy Chief Executive)

ALSO PRESENT: N/A

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declaration of interest was received.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meetings of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on the dates noted below were presented and were confirmed as correct:-

- 10 April 2025
- 20 May 2025
- 21 May 2025 (extraordinary)

3 MONITORING PERFORMANCE: CORPORATE SCORECARD Q4 2024/25

The report of the Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation incorporating the Corporate Scorecard for Quarter 4 2024/25 was presented for the Committee's consideration. The scorecard report portrays the 2024/25 end of year position against the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience presented the final corporate scorecard report for 2024/25 highlighting that 82.5% of the indicators with targets monitored during the quarter met or exceeded expectations, achieving Green or Yellow RAG status and reflecting a strong performance across the Council. Councillor Carwyn Jones referred to the main underperforming areas which were consistent with those from Quarter 3 including the number of children undertaking swimming lessons throughout the year (Môn Actif), the delivery of disabled facilities grants, re-letting of lettable housing units, uptake of annual mooring contracts, domestic waste recycling rates and the timeliness of FOI responses although the latter had improved in the fourth quarter. These areas are actively monitored by the Leadership Team with mitigating actions in place or planned. Councillor Carwyn Jones also highlighted a number of positive outcomes as noted in section 2.3 of the report. Those were in relation to support for businesses developing the Welsh Language via the ARFOR programme, an increase of 50,000 in visits to Môn Actif Leisure Centres where visitors undertook exercise, a reduction in the number of Year 11 pupils leaving school not in employment, education or training (NEET), high tenant satisfaction with responsive repairs, a strong performance in timely planning application decisions and the condition of roads across categories A,B and C.

In discussing the Q4 scorecard report, the committee raised the following matters –

- The committee noted that the number of children participating in swimming lessons has declined each quarter throughout 2024/25. Members requested information on the actions being taken to encourage greater uptake of the programme and to meet the target. A related question was raised concerning the shortage of Welsh speaking instructors in Holyhead Leisure Centre, as well as how many staff members who have received Welsh language training use it in their daily work.

Councillor Neville Evans, Portfolio Member for Leisure, Tourism and Maritime confirmed that the service regularly reviews data on usage and is actively seeking to understand the reasons behind the decline in demand. He emphasised that the indicator does not capture all swimming activity as it refers specifically to private swimming lessons and does not include those delivered through primary schools. A range of factors may be influencing the trend, including cost of living pressures and the availability of alternative activities at the leisure centres. The service is currently focusing on enhancing instructor training to improve the quality of lessons and promoting the availability of places on the programme. However, he acknowledged that the target may ultimately need to be reviewed to ensure it remains realistic and accurately reflects performance.

With regard to the Welsh Language, the Head of Regulation and Economic Development noted said that he did not have immediate figures regarding use of Welsh among leisure centre staff. However, based on informal feedback, he acknowledged that a lack of

confidence is a key factor preventing some from using the language despite having the necessary skills and training. In response to a follow-up question on how staff can be supported to build their confidence in using Welsh conversationally, Councillor Neville Evans said that the matter could be raised with Môn Actif and leisure centre managers for further consideration.

- Reference was made to the fact that 40% of queries during the period were handled and resolved by Cyswllt Mon. Clarification was sought regarding the remaining 60%.

The Chief Executive explained that all Council queries initially go through Cyswllt Mon. However, those not resolved at this stage, comprising the remaining 60% were referred to the relevant service department due to the need for specialist input. The Council is working towards gradually increasing the proportion of queries handled directly by Cyswllt Mon each quarter.

- The recurring underperformance of Housing Indicator (03) was noted, with an average 54 days against a target of 35 days for re-letting units of accommodation excluding DTLs. Reference was made to higher performing councils - Harlow (21 days), Rotherham (32.7 days) and North Ayrshire (26.9 days) – as benchmarks. It was suggested that the Portfolio Member for Housing and Head of Housing Services engage with these councils to understand the strategies or interventions that contributed to their stronger performance and explore potential lessons for adoption. A similar approach was recommended for Housing indicators (04) and (05) – the average number of calendar days taken to deliver small and medium, and major Disabled Facilities Grants, respectively. It was proposed that Conwy Council as a local council and better performer in this area be contacted to determine what practices it is using that could inform improvements at the Council.

Councillor Robin Williams, Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing highlighted that two major changes have affected performance against Housing indicator (03) namely the introduction of the Welsh Housing Quality Standards 2023 which require additional work before re-letting properties and the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, which extends the time tenants have to return keys. Despite properties becoming void at the end of the tenancy, the Council's access is often delayed. As an example, the Portfolio Member noted that of the 253 properties re-let in the year, 35 followed the death of a tenant (14 requiring major works) and averaged 87.8 days and 15 followed moves into residential care averaging 74.6 days. Excluding these brings the average re-let time down to 44.9 days, closer to the 35 day target. Regarding DFGs, the Portfolio Member explained that allocations were paused in November 2024 due to a projected budget overspend, contributing to delays. He also pointed out that the three benchmark English councils referred to are not subject to the WHQS or the Renting Homes (Wales) Act, making direct comparisons difficult.

- The committee requested an explanation for why 1.9% of Year 11 school leavers are not in education, training or employment (NEET)

The committee was advised that the position represents a marked improvement from the 4% identified as NEET in 2023. Given the school cohort of approximately 700 to 800 pupils, the percentage is relatively small. The Council has identified these children and is actively supporting them to access education, employment or training and is also working closely with the Children and Families Services. However, complex personal and social circumstances mean that not all children are able to take up education, employment and training opportunities.

- The committee noted that hedges were overgrown and untidy in certain areas of the island prompting questions about the Council's approach to their maintenance and trimming.

The Leader, Councillor Gary Pritchard confirmed that the hedge trimming programme is now underway. He advised that members should report any specific hedge related concerns within their wards to the Highways Service. If the hedge is located on public land, the Council will take appropriate action. If it is on private property, the Council will issue a letter to the landowner requesting that they address any overgrowth that may cause an obstruction or safety issue. The Head of Highways, Waste and Property added that the hedge and grass cutting schedule is pre-planned and continues throughout the summer months. He encouraged members to contact the service regarding any such matters.

- Concerns were raised regarding the increase in the number of children and young people permanently excluded from school, which rose to 21 in Quarter 4. Assurance was sought that appropriate follow-up provision is being made for these children alongside specialist support for schools to help address the issue and tackle the root causes.

The Director of Education, Skills and Young People explained that this increase reflects a national trend and is not unique to Anglesey. The Council has a duty to ensure that a child who is suspended or excluded from school continues to receive a suitable education. While pupils can be re-registered at school, parents sometime choose home schooling instead. Nevertheless, all children retain the right to receive education on the island after suspension.

For children re-entering the school system, a tailored bridging plan is developed by the school and the Inclusion Service. These plans vary and may offer immediate or phased re-entry, depending on the child's individual circumstances and the length of time they have been out of school. The service continues to work closely with the Children and Families Service to ensure a swift return to education for affected pupils. The Inclusion Service also offers advice and guidance to schools. Plans are underway to adopt a more preventative and integrated approach working proactively with schools and Social Services within current resources.

The Leader emphasised that exclusion should always be a last resort. The Council is committed to becoming a trauma informed authority, one that prioritises wellbeing and seeks to keep children engaged in education rather than excluded from it.

- Questions were raised on the likelihood of achieving the 70% target for domestic waste being reused recycled or composted (Climate Change PI 02) and whether the goal remains realistic.

The Leader, Councillor Gary Pritchard acknowledged that by Quarter 3, it was clear that the target would not be met in the current year. Nonetheless, Anglesey's recycling performance is respectable within the national context and strong compared to wider UK rates. The Council remains committed to achieving the 70% target and has been trialling changes to recycling bin formats and cardboard collection in two local communities. Education is seen as a key factor in improving recycling behaviours especially among visitors staying in holiday lets who may be unfamiliar with local recycling practices. The Leader further confirmed that the Council is keen to promote the value of recycling at all levels including within households, businesses and the wider workplace.

- The committee queried the availability of historical data relating to carbon emissions from council buildings and requested clarification of the increase in emissions from the council fleet.

Councillor Nicola Roberts, Portfolio Member for Planning, Public Protection and Climate Change confirmed that while some historical data is available, it is limited and does not extend as far back as the Council would prefer. Although she did not have the data immediately to hand, the Climate Change Manager would be able to circulate the relevant information. The Head of Highways, Waste and Property explained that mileage undertaken by staff using the council fleet has increased since the pandemic period.

However, the Council is working to extract data to demonstrate that a growing proportion of these journeys is now made using electric powered vehicles. While overall emissions have risen, the percentage of green mileage has also seen an upward trend.

In response to a further question regarding the Council's carbon emissions, the Chief Executive advised that a draft end-of-period analysis has been prepared reviewing progress against the objectives set out in the "Towards Net Zero Plan 2022-2025." This analysis will form the foundation for the development of the next phase of the plan covering the period 2026 to 2030. He suggested that the review report be presented to Scrutiny in the autumn for consideration.

- A decline in performance during Quarter 4 in relation to the percentage of adult protection enquiries completed within statutory timescale was noted. Clarification was requested regarding the reasons for this underperformance.

The Head of Adult Services explained that a significant rise in enquiries during the second half of the year had impacted performance. However, although the target was missed, many of the delayed enquiries were completed a few days beyond the deadline. The Head of Service stressed that due to the complexity of some cases, it is important to ensure a thorough and accurate response which can take time. He felt it was reasonable for the service to take the necessary time to handle each enquiry properly rather than rush in order to meet the timescale.

Following a comprehensive discussion, the committee welcomed the report as a reflection of strong and steady performance throughout year. However, Councillor Ieuan Williams raised the issue of continuous improvement. He suggested that the Council consider implementing a formal system and fostering a culture of continuous improvement to help address the recurring areas of underperformance. He noted that, in the past the Council had invested in schools as centres of learning based on the OECD's principles of continuous improvement in education.

In response, the Chief Executive stated that while the Council may not have a formalised system as proposed, it does effectively measure performance and promotes a culture of ongoing improvement. Given current financial pressures he considered the existing methods to be robust and fit for purpose. Nevertheless he agreed to explore the matter further with officers to determine whether improvements could be made either by introducing a new system and the implications, or piloting different approaches in specific areas to see if they make a difference. He concluded by emphasising that it was his view that people and organisational culture rather than systems are the real drivers of performance.

Having reviewed the Corporate Scorecard for Q4 2024/25 and following a full discussion it was resolved -

- **To note the Corporate Scorecard report for Q4 2024/25 including the areas which the Leadership Team is exploring and investigating to manage and secure further improvements into the future. These were in relation to areas under Education (Môn Actif), Housing (delivery of small, medium and major Disabled Facilities Grant and Housing Voids), Economy (Moorings), Climate Change (Domestic Waste recycling) and Whole Council Health (FOI requests).**
- **To recommend the scorecard report and mitigating measures outlined therein to the Executive, and**
- **To ask the Portfolio Member for Finance and Housing and the Head of Housing Services to engage with Harlow, Rotherham and North Ayrshire councils to explore potential lessons for adoption in their approaches to re-letting housing voids.**

Additional action: the draft end-of-period analysis of progress against the objectives set out in the “Towards Net Zero Plan 2022-2025” to be presented to Scrutiny in the autumn for consideration.

4 ANNUAL DELIVERY DOCUMENT 2025/26

The report of the Head of Profession (HR) and Transformation incorporating the draft Annual Delivery Document for 2025/26 was presented for the committee’s consideration.

Councillor Carwyn Jones, Portfolio Member for Corporate Business and Customer Experience presented the document outlining the Council’s planned work for 2025/26 detailing the actions that will drive progress toward achieving the strategic objectives in the Council Plan 2023-2028. These high level actions are designed to ensure the Council fulfils its commitments under each of the Council Plan’s strategic objectives by 2028. The actions are intended to be measurable with clearly defined targets and milestones wherever possible to enable effective monitoring throughout the year. Progress will be reviewed quarterly by the Improvement and Modernisation Programme Board and outcomes from this process will feed into the Annual Performance and Wellbeing Report.

During the discussion on the Delivery Document, the committee raised several questions regarding the Council’s progress on various proposed actions and aspirations. In response the Chief Executive clarified that the purpose of presenting the document to today’s meeting was to determine whether the committee is satisfied with the Council’s intentions as outlined in the draft document, prior to its submission to the Executive for approval – not to assess progress to date. He advised that the focus is on whether the stated outcomes are sufficiently clear and robust or whether the committee believes additional elements should be included. Once approved and published, the document will serve as a basis for more detailed examination and scrutiny.

Nevertheless the committee was provided with updates on several initiatives including the replacement of the WCCIS system with the Connecting Care database, the new Extra Care Development at Tyddyn Mostyn, Menai Bridge, flood control measures, and preparations to support the Eisteddfod Ynys Môn 2026 – particularly in relation to non-Welsh-speaking competitors.

Councillor Ieuan Williams while welcoming the document’s ambition, expressed concern that it lacked clarity on how the proposed actions would be delivered. He questioned whether a comprehensive performance monitoring framework was in place to ensure accountability, suggesting that the quarterly programme board meetings may not be sufficient to oversee the breadth of actions outlined. He sought assurance that each action was SMART - specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and timebound – and that they had been subject to a sanity check. He also highlighted several areas where he felt the document needed to be more explicit regarding implementation and monitoring.

The Chief Executive clarified that the purpose of the Delivery Document is to break down the five-year Council Plan into accessible, annual segments. The document outlines the Council’s yearly priorities for the public, staff and stakeholders in support of the longer term objectives of the Council Plan. He expressed confidence in the robustness of the Council’s performance management structures and capabilities, a view supported by regulators and demonstrated through the quarterly scorecard monitoring arrangements. This system is designed to drive progress towards achieving the Council Plan’s goals, with operational details managed at officer level ensuring accountability and upward reporting. He hoped that the information shared in the political arena and the involvement of portfolio members provides reassurance of the Council’s effectiveness. Despite the Council’s range of responsibilities and ongoing financial pressures and expectations, he believed the systems in place are largely fit for purpose while acknowledging there is always room for refinement.

The Leader, Councillor Gary Pritchard explained that the document sits near the top of the Council's strategic hierarchy, with more detailed performance plans developed for individual service areas and presented for scrutiny. Including all of these in the delivery document he noted, would make it overly complex and difficult to navigate. Drawing on his experience as former Portfolio Member for Housing he highlighted the service's engagement with tenants - an area Councillor Ieuan Williams had suggested needed to be more specific. He emphasised the value placed on tenant feedback, both positive and negative and believed that the combination of ongoing interaction and targeted events allows the Housing Service to gather a broad range of perspectives. As a result meaningful changes are implemented in response to this feedback.

In concluding remarks, Councillor Carwyn Jones thanked members for the feedback, reiterating that the delivery document represents the Council's road map for the year ahead. He emphasised that individual services will be responsible for monitoring the progress of their respective commitments - many of which will be reported to the Executive and Scrutiny providing further opportunities for comment, while overall delivery will be overseen by the Programme Board.

Having reviewed the document and having received Officer and Portfolio Member assurance on the points raised in discussion, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee resolved to recommend the Annual Delivery Document 2025/26 for approval by the Executive.

5 CANOLFAN ADDYSG Y BONT ROOF REPAIR: LESSONS LEARNT

The report of the Head of Highways, Waste and Property which set out the lessons learnt following the roof failure at Canolfan Addysg y Bont was presented for the committee's consideration.

The report was presented by the Leader, Councillor Gary Pritchard as a record of the lessons learnt following the deficiencies identified in the processes around the construction of the roof at Canolfan Addysg y Bont including building design, contract setting and management. The lessons outlined in the action plan at Appendix A have either been implemented, are in progress or will be implemented on all future construction projects.

The committee welcomed the report, commending its openness and the commitment to learning and improvement. A suggestion was made to prepare a one page, easy to read summary for the public and to provide members with further information regarding measures to strengthen document retention processes. Members also queried whether the Council would consider commissioning green roofs on future new school buildings.

Councillor Gary Pritchard explained that the Welsh Government grant for Canolfan Addysg y Bont had in part been awarded due to the innovative nature of the design. The report sets out clear expectations for the future design, construction and management of complex new systems within projects including roofing. The Head of Highways Waste and Property advised that since Canolfan Addysg y Bont was built in 2013, the Property Service has delivered five other new schools none of which feature either cold roofs or green roof finishes.

The Chief Executive emphasised the value of self-evaluation particularly in identifying lessons and driving improvements. He also extended his thanks to everyone who had responded promptly when the roof issues emerged, including the school, the secondary school and leisure centre, the Learning, Property and Finance Services as well as the Health and Safety section and Council members who had all worked together to resolve the matter and minimise disruption. He regarded the response as exemplary both in terms of the technical aspects of the building and in terms of the support extended to the school's staff and pupils.

The Chair concluded by thanking the Council for its handling of the issue and its commitment to learning from the experience.

It was resolved to note the lessons learnt and the steps take to implement them as included in the Action plan in Appendix A to the report.

7 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report of the Scrutiny Manager incorporating the Committee's Forward Work Programme to April, 2026 was presented for consideration.

It was resolved –

- **To agree the current version of the Forward Work Programme for 2025/26.**
- **To note progress thus far in implementing the Forward Work Programme.**

**Councillor Jeff Evans
Chair**