



ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The City Council is an elected body of 20 Councillors; it has the same functions and powers as a Town or Community Council and is nearest the electorate. The Council meets regularly to discuss various issues relating to the City of Bangor. Currently it also has two standing Committees

1 Planning and Amenities Committee

The City Council is consulted by Gwynedd Council on every planning application submitted within its boundaries, and also on Highway Matters and Licensing applications in the City. These are considered by its Planning and Amenities Committee and comments or objections are made to Gwynedd Council as appropriate on these matters. The Committee has delegated authority on these consultations. It will also deal with general operational matters involved with Council property and amenity issues and will have delegated authority to approve payments if necessary.

2 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Finance and General Purposes Committee considers general policy matters, financial, staffing and property issues and will have delegated authority to approve payments. The Committee considers consultations and comments upon a wide range of issues that affect the life of the citizens of Bangor by Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council, the Health Authority, the Police and other public bodies which operate locally.

Ad-hoc Sub-Committees, working groups and panels are appointed as required to deal with specific issues.

3 The City Council is responsible for land and property in Bangor, including:

The City Council Offices, Ffordd Gwynedd

The ground floor of the office building is the main base for the City Council and it contains the offices of the Mayor, the staff and a public reception desk.

The Penrhyn Hall, Ffordd Gwynedd

The Hall contains the main Council Chamber where City Council meetings are held. The Hall is managed as a community hall and is available for hire to the public, to local groups and organisations to hold various functions, meetings and events..

Bangor Garth Pier

The City Council owns, operates and maintains the Bangor Pier. It lets out the Pavilion Cafe and the retail Kiosks on the Pier to private tenants.

Renovation work started in November 2017 to secure the future for this iconic Victorian Grade 2* Listed Building the refurbishment and repair of defective steel superstructure and painting underneath the timber decking on an incremental basis is still ongoing.

Nantporth Football Stadium, Holyhead Road

It owns the football stadium and associated facilities which it leases out to the Nantporth CiC.

Hafan Drop-in Centre, Garth Road

This facility is managed for the Council by Age Concern Gwynedd a Môn and has operated as a successful partnership providing popular community facilities in a central location for local people for many years.

Public Open Spaces

Manages and maintains open spaces in the City including Ashley Jones Fields off Siliwen Road, Dargie Fields off Princess Road, the grounds of Bangor Cathedral, park at Bryn Llwyd off Caernarfon Road, the Lookout on Holyhead Road and more recently Garth Gardens.

Woodlands

Owens and manages woodlands including Menai Woods, Holyhead Road and Penrhyn Arms Woods (between lower High Street and the Golf Course on Bangor Mountain).

Owens and is responsible for maintaining the following also:-

War Memorial

Town Clock (Victorian Grade 2 Listed Building)

This is scheduled for some repair works and was surveyed in February 2019. The survey however did not raise any serious issues

Garth Pier (Victorian Grade 2* Listed Building) (see above)

Council Depot and Workshop

Pier House

Pier Car Park

Play area at the Pier Car Park

Play area outside Storiel

Public Footpaths

Is responsible for the maintenance of principal public footpaths throughout Bangor.

Bus Shelters

Is responsible for the maintenance and repair of most of the bus shelters.

Operation and Management of the Friday Open Market

In June 2018 agreement was reached with the Bangor Market Company for the City Council to continue to operate the Market in Bangor City Centre for a further period of three years until 2021.

4 The City Council and Partnership Working

The Council is responsible for Civic and Ceremonial events in the City such as Remembrance Day services and parades, freedom parades and marches through the City streets by RAF Valley, the Royal Welsh Regiment and the Welsh Guards.

It provides funding and financial support to local community groups and clubs as well as providing financial support and assistance and jointly organising and funding numerous events held in the City.

It is responsible for the provision and maintenance of **Christmas lights and decorations** as well as the **hanging baskets and some floral displays** in the City Centre.

The Council, whilst managing the **weekly Friday Market** in the High Street, has also been involved in organising the Food Festival and Christmas Market which is proving to be very popular.

The Council works in partnership with **Gwynedd Council** particularly with regard to environmental matters, image, litter and the fabric of the City and the business community through the **Bangor Business Improvement**

District (BID) (which covers the commercial area of the City centre). A **Bangor Image Group** has been set up to look at such matters with various partners.

Also the **Bangor Strategic Partnership**, with key local stakeholders as members, has been established to collaborate and work in tandem to drive the Strategy and Vision for the City of Bangor including commissioning agreeing and steering an Action Plan for the successful delivery of the Strategy underpinned by clear outputs and outcomes following the good work of the former City Centre Partnership.

5 Activities during the Year

Bangor Image Group

Houses in Multiple Occupation/Student 'To Let' boards were removed from all properties in the City. This improved the visual amenity and general appearance of the area as there had been comments and concerns about the number of signs that were displayed.

Gwynedd Council Officers also have in place an agreement with letting agencies to adhere to this code.

Approximately a 1000 boards were removed. Other ongoing issues are being addressed such as litter, refuse collection/recycling, grass cutting and the fabric of the High Street.

This was been achieved through the work of the Bangor Image Group as Chaired by Bangor Mayor Cllr John Wynn Jones.

Pier Renovation

The City Council made a decision in 2016 to repair and restore the Garth Pier which had not received any major maintenance works for many years and was in need of a refurbishment. The last restoration and renovation programme was in 1986.

Due to the precarious nature of this work substantial and creative scaffolding was required. Work commenced in autumn 2017 on Phase 1 and proceeded through to Phases 2 and 3. There was also a requirement to dispose of all waste material in compliance with the regulations and a Marine Licence application was approved by Natural Resources Wales and a dialogue had to be undertaken with other interested parties, including a licence to operate from Crown Estates.

Detailed incremental surveys had to be undertaken, revealing more and more challenging problems and the extent of the metal decay. Some areas

were so bad they could not be saved and new steel both trusses and supports had to replace the decayed and weak areas.



The Pier Head had to be closed due to safety issues with trusses so weak and corroded this was pertinent at the time, especially having observed the collapse at Colwyn Bay pier.

The Pier Head was ahead of schedule but this area would remain closed to the public until it is deemed not to be a construction site and the Pavilion rebuilt. Opening anticipated being available to the public June/July 2019. Now the Pier is structurally safe and presents no health and safety issues.

War Memorial

The War Memorial Cross, plinths, steps, slabs and naming slates have recently been repaired and renovated by the City Council as part of the 100 year Remembrance of the end of World War 1.

Successful grant applications with monies from CADW and the War Memorials Trust as well as a contribution from the City Council have enabled the work to be undertaken.

Works included cleaning, stone repairs; resin pinning, mortar re-pointing, brass cleaning, parapet, stone and blockwork repairs. It also entailed a refurbishment of the slate slabs and repainting of the lettering.



Mayor's Parlour and Penrhyn Hall

In recent years the room has been repainted, this year a new conference table and modern conference style chairs have replaced the old furniture and it has been re-carpeted. Penrhyn Hall has been updated over the past three years with a modern kitchen, Wi-Fi and audio visual facilities; it has also recently had more energy efficient lighting. It also has a licence to hold weddings which are booked through the Gwynedd Council's Registrars Department

Hafan Drop-in Centre, Garth Road

The building has been completely re-painted in 2018 and a scheme of external maintenance carried out including the installation of CCTV cameras to discourage anti-social behaviour.

Bus Shelters. A review and assessment of their condition has been carried out. Some repairs and painting have been undertaken also in response to vandalism and graffiti, and there is more to do.

Open Spaces and Play Areas

- **Ashley Jones Field.** Essential maintenance carried out, External wall twice damaged after vehicle impacts during the icy weather and now re-built.
- **Play Areas.** Both City Council sites had RoSPA inspection and report. Essential maintenance including standard maintenance, replacement and damaged parts has carried out at both sites.
- **Menai Woods and Penrhyn Woods/Bangor Mountain.**

Some tree surgery and emergency works have been carried out during the last twelve months making the area safe for both pedestrians and motorists. There is more work to do at these sites in the forthcoming year.

RAF100 Centenary Event 8 September 2018

As part of a programme of events in Wales to commemorate and celebrate the RAF Centenary, the City of Bangor hosted a major RAF parade and celebration on Saturday 8 September. The event was one of the closing RAF Centenary events and recognised the strong links that North Wales has had with the RAF over its last 100 years.

There was a special RAF Centenary Cathedral Service in the morning and an RAF parade contingent presented arms at the War Memorial, welcomed to the City by His Worship the Mayor of Bangor, the Lord Lieutenants of Gwynedd and Clwyd together with VIPs and guests from across North Wales. The senior RAF Officer at the parade was Air Marshal Michael Wigston, who was himself brought up in Bangor and was a pupil at Friar's School.

6) Town Centre Regeneration Initiatives

Over the past 3/4 years, the City Council has pursued a number of initiatives designed to regenerate the High Street.

- **The Weekly Market**

The Friday market has been a very successful feature in the High Street bringing a substantial increase in shoppers to the retail area, with the majority of shops and businesses reporting increased footfall and increased sales on market days. The market is also a vital part of the City Council's regeneration initiative for the High Street. A new Agreement with the Bangor Market Company was negotiated and signed in June 2018 for the further provision of the Market until 2021. Both the City Council and the Market Company were happy to proceed with this arrangement which without doubt enhances the City's retail sector.

- **Bangor Strategic Partnership Group**

The Strategic Management and Action Plan for the City has been developed as an output from the old City Centre Partnership as jointly funded by the City Council/Welsh Government and the Bangor Strategic Partnership has now taken ownership using the revamped Action Plan continue to develop a number of projects and apply for financial support from Welsh Government and other sources to the benefit of the City. This Group covers environment, economy, image, health and housing with input from all partners.

- **Bangor University and Business Improvement District (BID)**

The City Council has and is continuing working in partnership with the BID, Gwynedd Council and the University to make significant improvements to the environment, well-being and the local economy.

- **Christmas Lighting**

By maintaining and erecting its own lighting rather than contract out saves the City Council up to £20,000 per annum. Bangor BID sponsors the Christmas Trees.

- **Diana Gardens, Caernarfon Road**

A major restoration and refurbishment programme took place in the summer of 2018 to improve and refurbish this area

- **Gwynedd Services – Public Rights of Way (PROW) maintenance**

The City Council has maintained certain Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the City for many years by means of a reimbursement scheme. The reimbursement has been cut severely by Gwynedd in recent years; however the City Council continues to deliver the PROW maintenance service at a much reduced rate.

- **Other Gwynedd Services**

The City Council has agreed to contribute £10,000 towards keeping open the Public Conveniences in the City for the next two years. Garth Gardens were maintained by the City Council for the first time as a pilot scheme in 2018. The City Council also funds the provision of grit for salt bins and there is a contribution for CCTV and crime prevention in the City which is now subject to review and replacement. Other areas under Gwynedd's service provision are coming under the spotlight given the current funding shortfall for Local Government and the City Council are exploring ways of assisting services.

6

Aspirations over the forthcoming year

- **Continue to serve the public and the City**
- **Continue to maintain excellent, effective and efficient service within the confines of the limited financial resource**
- **Be active partners in the Bangor Strategic Partnership. Its Sub Groups and the Bangor Image Group**
- **Continue to work with partners outside of these groups to secure long lasting bonding and healthy relationships which benefit the City and its residents and students**
- **Be responsive, proactive and when necessary reactive**
- **Be integral to improvements in terms of social, economic and environmental schemes and plans**
- **Promote and support a campaign for a 'Plastic free Bangor'**
- **Maintain and promote the Welsh culture and language**
- **Participate in the planning process by offering views, opinions and advice on applications and consultations received**
- **Support initiatives for new business, retail and job creation**
- **Operate with good governance and probity in an open, transparent and democratic manner within the bounds of legislation**
- **Maintain a code of conduct, standing orders and financial regulations to ensure decisions are taken legally with appropriate advice**

7

Priorities of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Wellbeing Plan

- 1. The need to maintain a healthy community spirit**
- 2. The importance of protecting the natural environment**
- 3. Understanding the effect of demographic changes**
- 4. Protecting and promoting the Welsh language**
- 5. Promoting the use of natural resources to improve health and well-being in the long-term**
- 6. Improving transport links to enable access to services and facilities**
- 7. The need for good quality jobs and affordable homes for local people**
- 8. The effect of poverty on well-being**
- 9. Ensuring an opportunity for every child to succeed**

The City Council has only limited scope in many of these priorities but it has demonstrated its intentions to assist and partake in a number of initiatives, events and partnerships which have impact and positive effect on many of these areas.

Town Clerk and Finance Officer

April 2019