

26th May 2015

Dear Councillor

CABINET

You are requested to attend a **Cabinet** meeting to be held at **The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 3rd June 2015, at 2.00 p.m.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Consideration of reports from Select Committees (none).
4. To consider the following reports (copies attached):
 - (i) **DRAFT REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15**
Division/Wards Affected: All
Purpose: To provide Members with information on the outturn position of the Authority for the 2014/15 financial year. The position is regarded as draft prior to external audit of Statement of Accounts and it also seeks to provide summary information about the Council's reserve position as a consequence of year end movements and given recent reports in last quarter that have significant future implications..
Author: Mark Howcroft, Assistant Head of Finance
Contact Details: markhowcroft@monmouthshire.gov.uk
 - (ii) **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET PROCESS 2016/17 TO 2019/20**
Division/Wards Affected: Whole Authority
Purpose: To highlight the context within which the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will be developed for 2016/17 to 2019/20, to agree the assumptions to be used to update the MTFP, and provide an early indication of the level of budget savings to be found and to agree the process for developing the MTFP and budget for 2016/17.
Author: Joy Robson, Head of Finance
Contact Details: joyrobson@monmouthshire.gov.uk

- iii) **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION ANTI-FRAUD POLICY**
Division/Wards Affected: Countywide
Purpose: To present the Council's new anti-fraud policy detailing the investigation process for Council Tax Reduction Fraud.
Authors: Richard Davies, Head of Benefits / Joy Robson, Head of Finance
Contact Details: richarddavies@monmouthshire.gov.uk / joyrobson@monmouthshire.gov.uk
- (iv) **VALE OF USK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**
Division/Wards Affected: All
Purpose: To approve the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy 2014-2020 (LDS) the overarching document which will inform the activities to be delivered and funded through the Rural Development Programme (RDP).
Authors: Peter Davies, Head of Commercial and People Development / Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise
Contact Details: peterdavies@monmouthshire.gov.uk / cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk
- (v) **MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OBSTRUCTIONS ON THE HIGHWAY STATIC ADVERTISING**
Division/Wards Affected: All
Purpose: To seek approval for the adoption of a policy titled 'Provision of a Management of Commercial Obstruction on the Highway', in relation to 'Static Advertising opportunities' The Policy will cover various occasions when a business wants to use the Public Highway for reason of benefit to that company. It will bring a consistency to the policy, both within MCC processes and the wider Local Authority community by using a specific licensing and charging mechanism for any organisation seeking to make use of the public highway.
Author: Steve Lane, Operations Manager, County Highways
Contact Details: stevelane@monmouthshire.gov.uk
- (vi) **CROESONEN SECTION 106 FUNDING**
Division/Wards Affected: Croesonen and Mardy
Purpose: To consider the process for allocating £40,000 of funding from the Croesonen (Farm and Infants School) Section 106 Agreements.
Authors: Mike Moran
Contact Details: mikemoran@monmouthshire.gov.uk
- (vii) **WELSH LANGUAGE MONITORING REPORT 2014/15**
Division/Wards Affected: All
Purpose: To ask Cabinet to note the contents of the attached Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2014 – 2015 that has been produced in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Monitoring report details our compliance with the action plan in our Welsh Language Scheme, gives details of specific Welsh Language records all evidence of good practice carried out by the Council over that 12 month period.
Authors: Alan Burkitt, Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language
Contact Details: alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Paul Matthews
Chief Executive

CABINET PORTFOLIOS 2014

County Councillor	Area of Responsibility	Partnership and External Working	Ward
P.A. Fox (Leader)	Organisational Development Whole Council Performance, Whole Council Strategy Development, Corporate Services, Democracy.	WLGA Council WLGA Coordinating Board Local Service Board	Portskewett
R.J.W. Greenland (Deputy Leader)	Innovation, Enterprise & Leisure Innovation Agenda, Economic Development, Tourism, Social Enterprise, Leisure, Libraries & Culture, Information Technology, Information Systems.	WLGA Council Capital Region Tourism	Devauden
P.A.D. Hobson (Deputy Leader)	Community Development Community Planning/Total Place, Equalities, Area Working, Citizen Engagement, Public Relations, Sustainability, Parks & Open Spaces, Community Safety.	Community Safety Partnership Equalities and Diversity Group	Larkfield
E.J. Hacket Pain	Schools and Learning School Improvement, Pre-School Learning, Additional Learning Needs, Children's Disabilities, Families First, Youth Service, Adult Education.	Joint Education Group (EAS) WJEC	Wyesham
G. Howard	Environment, Public Services & Housing Development Control, Building Control, Housing Service, Trading Standards, Public Protection, Environment & Countryside.	SEWTA SEWSPG	Llanelly Hill
G. Burrows	Social Care & Health Adult Social Services including Integrated services, Learning disabilities, Mental Health. Children's Services including Safeguarding, Looked after Children, Youth Offending, Health and Wellbeing.	Gwent Frailty Board Older Persons Strategy Partnership Group	Mitchel Troy
P. Murphy	Resources Accountancy, Internal Audit, Estates & Property Services, Procurement, Human Resources & Training, Health & Safety.	Prosiect Gwrydd Wales Purchasing Consortium	Caerwent
S.B. Jones	County Operations Highways, Transport, Traffic & Network Management, Waste & Recycling, Engineering, Landscapes, Flood Risk.	SEWTA Prosiect Gwrydd	Goytre Fawr

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Outcomes we are working towards

Nobody Is Left Behind

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

People Are Confident, Capable and Involved

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

Our County Thrives

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

Our priorities

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation
- Maintaining locally accessible services

Our Values

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

REPORT

SUBJECT	DRAFT REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15
DIRECTORATE	Chief Executive's Unit
MEETING	Cabinet
DATE	3rd June 2015
DIVISIONS/WARD AFFECTED	All Authority

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the outturn position of the Authority for the 2014/15 financial year. The position is regarded as draft prior to external audit of Statement of Accounts.
- 1.2 It also seeks to provide summary information about the Council's reserve position as a consequence of year end movements and given recent reports in last quarter that have significant future implications.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members consider the information contained within this report noting that the figures may be subject to adjustment through the external audit process.
- 2.2 That Members consider the position concerning revenue monitoring outturn resulting in the favourable replenishment of Council Fund reserves by £31,000 compared to the budgeted draw of £296,000.
- 2.3 That Members agree to the review of earmarked reserves resulting in the following adjustments:
 - 2.3.1 Single status and Equal pay reserve - £1.052 million, redistributed to the following reserves:
 - Fixed Assets disposal reserve - £257k
 - Pension and Redundancy reserve - £600k
 - Schools library reserve - £195k to extinguish a deficit balance
- 2.4 That Members approve the redundancy payments identified in paragraph 3.1.6 included within the outturn figures

- 2.5 That Members consider the position concerning school balances and the implications on 2015-16 school budgets. 4i
- 2.6 Members note the progress concerning the delivery of the saving mandates in 2014/15 and seek further reports to identify alternate savings and virements proposed by Directors to replace original proposals to ensure further pressure on the 2015/16 budget is reduced.
- 2.7 That Members consider the position concerning outturn capital monitoring resulting in an overall underspend
- 2.8 That Members approve the slippage schedule as identified in Appendix 2, building upon the recommendation at month 9 to review these at outturn.
- 2.9 That Members approve the planned capital financing position as reported in para 3.7.
- 2.10 That Members approve the use of the capital outturn underspend to fund the capital priorities identified in 3.5.6 and therefore obviate the need for 2015/16 capital budgets to be top sliced.

3. MONITORING ANALYSIS

3.1 Revenue Position

3.1.1 Revenue budget monitoring information for each directorate's directly managed budgets is provided together with information on corporate areas.

3.1.2 Responsible Financial Officer's Summary of Overall Position

Table 1: Draft Council Fund Outturn 2014/15 – Summary Total Net Expenditure Position at Outturn	Appendix	Actual Outturn	Annual Budget @ Month 9	Revisions since month 9	Annual Budget @ Outturn	Forecast Over/(Under) Spend at Outturn	Forecast Over/(Under) Spend at Month 9	Comparative Forecast Over/(Under) Spend at Month 6	Comparative Forecast Over/(Under) Spend at Month 3
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Social Care & Health	6&7	38,092	36,604	(37)	36,567	1,525	1,261	797	613
Children & Young People	7	52,163	52,150	28	52,178	(15)	93	45	26
Enterprise	5	10,169	10,080	107	10,187	(18)	132	55	232
Operations	4	17,851	17,861	172	18,033	(182)	103	182	385
Chief Executives Unit	4	6,954	7,376	(13)	7,363	(409)	(385)	(208)	(133)
Corporate Costs & Levies	4	17,367	17,941		17,941	(574)	(183)	(116)	(94)
Net Cost of Services		142,596	142,012	257	142,269	327	1,021	755	1,029
Attributable Costs – Fixed Asset Disposal	4	145	224		224	(79)	(92)	(47)	1
Interest & Investment Income	4	(89)	(29)		(29)	(60)	(59)	(58)	(48)
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	4	3,538	3,773		3,773	(235)	(241)	(235)	(231)
Charges Required Under Regulation	4	5,576	5,610		5,610	(34)	(35)	(35)	(35)
Capital Expenditure Financed from Revenue		138	16	122	138	0	0	0	0
Contributions to/(from) Reserves	4	(2,037)	(2,073)	(379)	(2,452)	415	1	2	5
Amounts to be met from Government Grants and Local Taxation		149,867	149,533	0	149,533	334	779	764	721
General Government Grants	4	(69,540)	(69,544)	0	(69,544)	4	0	0	0
Non-Domestic Rates	4	(28,984)	(28,984)		(28,984)	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	4	(57,158)	(56,780)		(56,780)	(378)	(389)	(415)	(348)
Council Tax Benefits Support	4	5,784	6,071		6,071	(287)	(246)	(233)	(154)
Council Fund (Surplus)/Deficit		(31)	296	0	296	(327)	144	116	219
Budgeted contribution from Council Fund		0	(296)		(296)	296	0	0	0
		(31)	0	0	0	(31)	144	116	219

- 3.1.3 The bottom line situation is a favourable £31,000 variance. The expectation in setting the 2014/15 budget required a contribution of £296,000 from the Council Fund. So the outturn position evidences an improvement to the anticipated outturn Council fund balance of £327,000. Other⁴ notable changes during the last quarter included net cost of services pressure reduced to £327,000 at outturn, an improvement of £694,000 during the last 3 months. Social Care, and predominantly Children's services continued to evidence financial pressures, and that adverse situation rose by a further £264,000 on the levels predicted at month 9.
- 3.1.4 However that additional volatility in costs was mitigated in full by improvements in the Operations Directorate, Chief Executives office and corporate costs during the last quarter.
- 3.1.5 Redundancy payments have been made during the year and are included in the outturn figures. Such costs appear as an overspend in comparison to the annual budget. Redundancy payments require Member approval and whilst this has been sought for some, there are some payments that still require approval and they are identified below in the table. The traditional approach is, unless specific reserve funding is sought, that services bear such costs initially to be mitigated where possible through the year, and for any net balance to be considered and borne through a use of reserves during the outturn process. This is a little different for schools where instead a resource of £300,000 is provided for by CYP, with schools only bearing any costs above that level. School redundancy costs amount to £391,000, of which schools have borne £91,000.
- 3.1.6 The redundancy costs for 2014-15 incurred in respect of non school activity amounted to,

Directorate	Amount £'000	Approved Reserve Funding	Approval required see Recommendation 2.4
Children & Young People	83	7	76
Social Care & Health	0	0	0
Chief Executives Office	107	42	65
Enterprise	165	59	106
Operations	407	81	326
Total	762	189	573

Of this £189,000 related to a caveated request for reserve funding at outturn and the funding adjustment has been made. This left £573,000 which is currently included within outturn figures and for which no budget provision existed.

- 3.1.7 In addition to the unbudgeted redundancy payments above, mandated savings that have not been made in respect of 2014-15 total £571,000. In order to achieve an outturn of £31,000 surplus there have been compensatory savings over budget of £1.2 million within services, treasury and council tax recovery.

3.1.8 Given the financial challenges that will continue to face the Authority for the foreseeable future, Chief Officers continue to be tasked with ensuring that services live within the budgets and savings targets set for the current financial year. Monitoring reports will seek to contain the information on what is being done to manage the overspends identified and the positive action that is required to ensure that the budget is not breached.

3.1.9 Summary pressures and underspends within the net cost of services include:

Service area	Indicative Forecast Position exclusive of savings not yet achieved Red=Adverse Green = Favourable	2014-15 savings not yet made	Forecast Position net of savings not achieved Red=Adverse Green = Favourable	Headline Cause
	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Social Care & Health (SCH)				
Children's Services	1,375	32	1,407 (worsening of 187)	Looked after children activity and additional team and conveyance of client costs
Adult Services	1	117	118 (worsening of 77)	Most notably historic Monnow Vale partnership cost apportionments and residential care costs exceeding recovery due to means testing considerations. The worsening position is mainly attributable to additional transport and staffing costs incurred in Day Centre provision
Sub Total SCH	1,376	149	1,525	
Children and Young People (CYP)				
Standards	-23	107	-84 (improvement of 67)	Increased costs apparent in breakfast club administration (£102k), compensated by net underspends in ALN, improvement, inclusions and education achievement service expenditure

Individual schools budget	-32	0	-32 (improvement of 86)	Reserve funding anticipated and budgetted for not utilised by end of financial year.
Resources and Performance	82	53	135 (worsening of 52)	Effect of Recovery Board and tribunal costs, unbudgeted IT migration costs. Previous Directorate predictions assumed a breakeven position for its SLA arrangement with schools, the outturn indices a deficit of £23k
Youth Services	-33	0	-33 (improvement of 5)	Additional income and reduced transport costs
Sub Total CYP	-175	160	-15	
Enterprise (ENT)				
Community Led Delivery	-113	0	-113 (improvement of 160)	Additional net income, predominantly cemeteries, a reduction in the pressure experienced in Community Education (this still remains a volatility to the Council going forward given a volatility in Coleg Gwent funding), and the positive effect (£50k) caused by the ongoing reorganisation of 1 stop shops and libraries
Commercial & People Development	48	0	48 (worsening of 82)	The net effect of business enterprise costs and building costs of Innovation section that were presumed to be funded from Property maintenance budget.
Tourism, Life & Culture	81	37	118 (improvement of 34)	Continued pressure in tourism services, and in particular Caldicot Castle, together with net costs of cycling initiatives. There

				are £39k net costs evident on sports development that weren't forecast at month 9.
Enterprise management	14	0	14 (worsening of 14)	
Development Plans	-85	0	-85 (improvement of 52)	
Sub Total ENT	-55	37	-18	
Operations (OPS)				
Highways	-554	116	-438 (improvement of 65)	Extra agency income
Property	-117	69	-48 (improvement of 81)	Schools meals service transfer from CYP with significant pressure, main improvement in schools cleaning area caused by removing unbudgetted contract consultancy costs
Passenger transport	294	40	334 (improvement of 25)	Past budget saving reviews of home to school and SEN haven't taken place. Overspends are in Council provided transport, mainly employee and transport maintenance costs. External transport provider costs tenders are anticipated to provide net savings to compensate for Council's SEN transport overspend. A bad debt assumption has been made in respect of historic debts of £50,000
Transport	33	0	33 (improvement of 61)	Predominantly car parking income deficit
Waste &	-62	0	-62	Waste exhibits

Streetscene			(improvement of 72)	predominantly breakeven position, improvement the net effect of subsuming grounds and training unit with division.
Registrars	-1	0	-1	
Sub Total OPS	-407	225	-182	

Regulation & Central Support Services				
Chief Executives Office (CEO)	-409	0	-409 (improvement of 25)	Staff savings and increased income predictions in democratic services. Savings in audit and revenues team costs and housing benefit administration below budget levels
Corporate (CORP)	-574	0	-574 (improvement of 391)	Corporate includes a variety of costs that only crystallise in the last quarter. The underspend reported is caused by national park levy underspend £11,000, additional dividend from Joint Crematoria Committee £105,000, reduced audit fee (£135,000), NNDR refunds in respect of Council property appeals £116,000, Income received in respect of previously written off debts £110,000, additional Pension strain costs of £97,000 compensated in part by saving in single status budget £76,000), Underspends in the Council's insurance account from reduced level of claims £67,000,

				contract extension renegotiation £26,000, and staffing savings of £17,000.
Sub Total Regulatory Services	-983	0	-983	
Total – Net Cost of Services	-244	571	327	

3.1.10 More detailed monitoring information together with a narrative of more significant variances over £25,000 is provided in the Select Appendices 4 to 7.

3.2 Schools

3.2.1 Each of the Authority's Schools is directly governed by a Board of Governors, which is responsible for managing the school's finances. However, the Authority also holds a key responsibility for monitoring the overall financial performance of schools. Below is a table showing the outturn forecast Schools' balances position together with month 9 projections.

Draft Council Fund Outturn 2014/15 – Summary Forecast Year-end School Balances Position at Outturn	Opening Reserves (Surplus)/Deficit 14-15	In year forecast at Month 9 (Surplus)/Deficit	Difference reported from Outturn to Month 9 (Surplus)/Deficit	Outturn position (Surplus)/Deficit	Reserves to be carried forward to 2015-16 (Surplus)/Deficit
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Clusters					
Abergavenny	(-285)	173	(-300)	(-128)	(-412)
Caldicot	(-242)	67	(-251)	(-184)	(-426)
Chepstow	(-14)	255	(-143)	112	98
Monmouth	(-394)	57	(-87)	(-30)	(-424)
Special	(-54)	65	14	78	24
	(-988)	616	(-768)	(-152)	(-1,140)

3.2.2 School balances at the beginning of the financial year amounted to £988,000 credit. The replenishment of balances has been identified as being £152,000 resulting in closing school balances budgeted to be £1,140,000. This is a very significant change to that reported in the previous quarters, where schools predicted a draw upon balance of the order of £600,000 to £700,000 rather than a replenishment.

3.2.3 Part of this prudence can be attributed to the volatility in improvement grant awards during the year, in that Welsh Government announced cuts in funding during the year, which schools predicted would have an adverse effect on their general activities in not being able to divorce themselves of costs in the same timeframe as cuts. However the EAS and Gwent Councils have worked hard to mitigate the effect on individual schools, largely with savings falling to EAS, and the use of reserved core contributions from partnering local authorities. Similarly £105,000 additional grant

resources was passported to Monmouthshire schools during March 2015, which has provided additional headroom to schools general activities budgets. However grant administration in a wider sense remains part of the problem in accurate forecasting, as schools will tend to incur costs on their general codes, and not transfer such costs to the grant codes in a timely fashion, but effectively presuming their grants would be fully spent when it comes to monitoring, thereby effectively double counting expenditure. It is the intention to look at how the Authority can better aggregate grant considerations alongside general school accounts so that the combined position is reported.

- 3.2.4 Within these summary figures, of particular note, is the deficit reserve position experienced in the Chepstow cluster, caused by the significant deficit balance at Chepstow secondary school of £389,000. The school has provided a recovery plan which has been endorsed by Governors, which clears the deficit within 3 years, which the LEA is prepared to accept. Parties appreciate that the level of deficit balance remains a risk going forward that will necessitate close monitoring and regular review of assumptions.
- 3.2.5 6 schools exhibited a deficit position at the start of 2014/15, and alongside Chepstow Comprehensive, Llandogo is predicted to exhibit a worsening position. Conversely Llanvihangel Crocorney and Castle Park continue to repay their deficit and at a faster rate than anticipated at month 9. It is also pleasing to note that Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin and Deri View have come out of deficit at outturn.
- 3.2.6. Conversely Mounton House has moved into a deficit position as anticipated at month 9 but to a greater extent. The Directorate report that the main cause for this is the appointment of a youth worker anticipated to be funded by a neighbouring LA, which proved to be only part funded.
- 3.2.7 All year a concern has been reported about the reducing trend in school balances, given the annual extent of draw made upon them by schools, with the suggestion that this was unlikely to be a sustainable position.

Year	Net level of school balances
2011-12	(965)
2012-13	(1,240)
2013-14	(988)
2014-15	(1,140)

- 3.2.8 The significant shift experienced in the latter quarter allays those fears somewhat for 2015-16 with most schools having now reported their formal budget for 2015-16 in advance of statutory deadline of end May. Other than Chepstow, the secondary schools are still to report, but early examination suggests that school reserves will sustain the call upon them anticipated by schools in 2015-16. This situation will be updated and reported as part of quarter 1 monitoring 2015-16.
- 3.2.9 Further information on Schools is provided in Children & Young People Select appendix 7.

3.3 2014/15 Savings Progress

- 3.3.1 The monitoring above reflects the outturn progress in achieving necessary savings agreed as part of the 2014/15 budget process. Appendix 1 provides details of specific savings initiatives and progress made in delivering them in full by the end of 2014/15 financial year.

In summary they are as follows,

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn

DIRECTORATE	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Savings reported achieved month 3 £'000	Savings reported achieved month 6 £'000	Savings reported achieved month 9 £'000	Savings achieved @ outturn £'000	% progress in achieving savings	Delayed savings £'000	Savings not achievable £'000
Children & Young People	722	639	669	669	652	90%	0	70
Social Care & Health	1,030	877	877	887	881	86%	0	149
Enterprise	1,366	1,126	1,025	1,306	1,329	97%	0	37
Operations	1,412	990	1,007	1,167	1,187	84%	156	69
Chief Executive's	923	923	923	923	923	100%	0	0
Total Budgeted Service Savings 2014-15	5,453	4,555	4,501	4,952	4,972	91%	156	325

3.3.2 Of £5.5 million savings agreed as part of 2014-15 budget process £5 million have been delivered by the end of the year, leaving £156,000 delayed, and £325,000 regarded as non deliverable by the services.

3.3.3 The amount of savings achieved overall is marginally more than reported at month 9. The changes are shown in detail for each mandate in appendix 1, but the main contributing factors are,

Operations (OPS)

- Improvement of £20,000, caused by delayed saving against transfer of facilities to other providers now being achieved.

Enterprise (ENT)

- Improvement of £23,000, caused by unachievable ICT saving in respect of building rationalisation being found through savings in staff vacancies.

Children and Young People (CYP)

- Worsening of £17,000, caused by a pressure to the ALN contingency mandate experienced during the last quarter following a backpayment to staff. However overall the savings performance has been fully met in ALN, which exhibits £193,000 underspend at outturn, but the favourable situation is caused predominantly by a reduction in out of county significant costs.

Social Care & Health (SCH)

- Worsening of £6,000, caused by outturn community meal volumes being short of that forecast at month 9.

3.4 Capital Position

3.4.1 The summary Capital position at outturn is as follows

Select Portfolio	Provisions B/F	Expenditure Incurred	Provisions	Annual Outturn	Budget Slippage b/fwd from 2013-14	Original Budget 2014-15 reported @ qtr 3	Budget Virements & Revisions since last quarter	Total Approved Budget	Provisional Budget Slippage C/F to 2015-16	Revised Budget 2014-15	Variance Over/ (Under) Outturn	Variance Over/ (Under) Month 9
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children and Young people	(509)	5,429	810	5,730	3,067	10,022	(69)	13,020	7,268	5,752	(22)	(2)
Adult	(3)	317	10	324		273	82	355	35	320	5	1
Economy & Development	(232)	245	96	108	732	82		814	531	283	(175)	(18)
Stronger Communities	(890)	7,660	839	7,609	7,192	3,821	82	11,095	2,940	8,156	(547)	(168)
Grand Total	(1,634)	13,651	1,755	13,772	10,991	14,198	94	25,284	10,773	14,511	(739)	(187)

3.4.2 Revisions to the capital programme during the last quarter reflect combined property maintenance virements between Select areas, the addition of Intermediate Care scheme (£82,000), an additional budget of £26,000 to progress a foster carers property adaptation, £74,000 additional resources to progress sc106 schemes, £58,000 reduction in Infrastructure maintenance budgets and £122,000 to finance Fixed assets purchased originally from revenue which better meets capital definitions.

3.4.3 The extent of progress and level of spend incurred has been questioned in each of the quarterly monitoring reports. Managers collectively reported that they would spend £7.7m in the last 3 months of year, when they only spent slightly more than this over the first 9 months (net £8.2m). The reality was a spend of £3.8 million in the last 3 months and creation of provisions worth £1.7 million which combined equates to £5.5 million, thereby increasing slippage requests proportionately at outturn.

3.5 **Proposed Slippage to 2015-16**

3.5.1 Slippage requests from managers totalled £11.1 million. Given the principles agreed with Cabinet at month 9 to more zealously review progress of schemes when considering the merits of approving slippage requests the same convention has been applied as established at month 9, namely where,

- there has been little or no progress in 12 month,
- the level of expenditure incurred this year has been less than in year budget and slippage b/fwd., to consider any opportunity to realign the budget to more realistic levels or reprofile budget more accurately over multiple years,
- or where there are identified problems/barriers to progress e.g. no agreement over scheme, archaeological considerations, planning considerations not yet satisfied or where the manager hasn't really evidenced why this should be slippage in the narrative etc.

- 3.5.2 Appendix 2 indicates slippage requested by managers, alongside progress narratives, spending activity over the year, whether the budget has slipped forward from previous years and an indication of how the particular capital project is financed to recommend whether it could be easily recycled into alternate schemes or is of a more restrictive nature.
- 3.5.3 The analysis at month 9 indicated £9.1 million slippage proposed by managers. By outturn this has risen to £11.1 million.
- 3.5.4 Of this £10.77million reflects schemes of an active nature, and where a use of slippage is recommended.
- 3.5.5 Conversely £339,000 worth of schemes exhibit limited progress. This is less than recommended for decommitment at month 9 predominantly due to the tender for Access for All works to be carried out 2015-16 despite knowing that combined access for all resources totalling £397,000 was scheduled for review at outturn. It would have been sensible to get Cabinet affirmation as a capital priority before doing this, but the essence of recommending a more zealous stance towards the slippage review was designed to encourage managers to progress projects in a timely fashion, so the end result is consistent with that motivation.
- 3.5.6 It was reported that any additional headroom resulting from this activity could be held as a source of headroom to facilitate any capital investment required to deliver further revenue savings in the MTFP or used to fund the additional priorities for the 2015-16 capital programme i.e.

To afford the following capital priorities totalling £395,000 in 2015-16

- *Community Hubs – £300k capital investment required to achieve revenue budget savings and create the Hubs in Caldicot by creating the Hub in the existing Library, in Chepstow by creating the Hub in the existing building, in Monmouth by creating the Hub in the Market Hall or Rolls Hall and in Usk by creating the Hub in the building with the Youth service. It is assumed that the proposal in Abergavenny will be funded from the capital already allocated to the Library.*
- *Rights of way issues – current allocation of £40k to be increased by £30k to enable some mitigation measures to be undertaken*
- *Monmouth sports ground - £25k required to ensure the drainage meets all statutory requirements*
- *Caldicot castle kitchen - £40k to bring kitchen up to date and comply with environmental health requirements to enable income targets to be met*

That latter would obviate the need to reduce 2015-16 capital allocations in the following areas,

£136k from Property maintenance

£159k from Infrastructure maintenance

£100k from County farms maintenance

- 3.5.7 The capital programme evidences a significant underspend £739,000 at the end of 2014-15 due to genuine underspends where schemes have finished and managers haven't requested slippage (£184,000), where slippage hasn't been approved totalling £339,000 and a grant based highways scheme totalling £216,000, which provides no additional spending capacity as it was grant funded and the grant needs to be returned.

3.6 Outturn

- 3.6.1 As mentioned the capital programme for 2014-15 evidences an underspend of £739,000, largely the consequence of,

Children and Young People – **underspend** in SIMS development costs (£5,000) and an underspend in Property Maintenance costs (£13,000)

Economy & Development – net **underspend** (£90,000) in development schemes and a credit of £84,000 against the Abergavenny regeneration project following successful legal defence and reimbursement of the Council’s fees. Court action totalling £84,000 compensating for legal costs incurred in successfully defending the Council practice in Abergavenny regeneration project. Colleagues are exploring whether and to what extent the Council could reclaim our legal expenses.

Stronger Communities – net **underspend** of £547,000, predominantly the effect of an underspend of £216,000 against an abortive highways scheme which ultimately isn’t a net underspend as its financing will need to be returned to Welsh government, underspends on IT projects totalling £59,000, infrastructure £151,000 and development schemes £27,000, net savings of £124,000 in property maintenance costs, £13,000 underspend on maintenance to County Farm portfolio, which mitigate £15,000 additional drainage costs at Caldicot school and leisure centre site, £7,000 temporary Sc106 overspend, and an overspend of £21,000 in respect of “new” County Hall. A large proportion of these underspends are caused by the rejection of particular slippage requests.

Given the return of transport grant and sharing of “old” County Hall saving with TCBC, Stronger Communities capital schemes more transparently indicate a £329,000 underspend for the reasons described above.

3.7 Capital Financing and Receipts

3.7.1 Given the capital spending profile reported in para 3.4.1, the following financing mechanisms are expected to be utilised.

Financing Stream	Annual Forecast Financing	Approved Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Virements	Budget Revisions	Total Approved Budget	Provisional Budget Slippage C/F to 2015-16	2014-15 Adjusted Budget	Increased / (Reduced) Financing
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Supported Borrowing	2,420		2,420			2,420		2,420	0
General Capital Grant	1,473		1,473			1,473		1,473	0
Grants and Contributions	1,579	53	1,247		4,452	5,751	3,952	1,799	-220
S106 Contributions	452	556			580	1,136	690	445	7
Unsupported borrowing	5,607	6,710	3,492		-3,317	6,886	1,274	5,611	-4
Earmarked reserve & Revenue Funding	370	656			144	800	409	392	-22
Capital Receipts	1,844	2,957	1,707		2,096	6,759	4,414	2,345	-500
Low cost home ownership receipts	27	60				60	33	27	0
Grand Total	13,772	10,991	10,338	0	3,954	25,285	10,773	14,512	-739

3.7.2 The effect of slippage and underspends identified above are anticipated to predominantly delay the need to utilise capital receipts.

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3.8 Useable Capital Receipts Available

3.8.1 In the table below, the effect of the changes to the forecast capital receipts on the useable capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments is shown. This is also compared to the balances forecast within the 2014/18 MTFP capital budget proposals.

Movement in Available Useable Capital Receipts Forecast

TOTAL RECEIPTS	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance b/f 1 st April	7,854	17,487	12,778	22,202
Receipts forecast to be received in year as 2014/18 MTFP	21,165	13,556	4,000	2,000
Increase / (decrease) in actual receipts / forecast receipts forecast at outturn	(9,693)	(2,766)	21,200	0
Deferred Capital Receipts	5	4	4	4
Less: Set aside Capital Receipts	0	0	(10,452)	0
Less: Receipts to be applied	(1,844)	(2,891)	(76)	(538)
Less :21C Schools programme excluding Raglan	(0)	(12,612)	(5,252)	(11,207)
TOTAL Actual / Estimated balance c/f 31st March	17,487	12,778	22,202	12,471
TOTAL Estimated balance reported in 2014/18 MTFP Capital Budget proposals	14,062	26,923	30,851	32,317
Increase / (Decrease) compared to MTFP	3,425	(14,145)	(8,649)	(19,846)

- 3.8.2 The Council has agreed to the inclusion of 21c schools initiative within the capital programme. This relies on utilising £29 million receipts during this next 4 year MTFP window, and a further £600,000 in 2018-19. Consequently the balance of capital receipts available during this MTFP window has reduced compared to the original 2014/18 MTFP predictions due to the anticipated resourcing of the 21st Century Schools programme.
- 3.8.3 Despite changes in the timing of individual receipts, which remains a risk to the Council to ensure it has sufficient receipts to fund its expenditure aspirations in the years necessary and avoid temporary borrowing costs, after factoring in £28.8 million receipts usage in relation to 21c schools projects, the balance of capital receipts available to fund capital expenditure at the end of this next MTFP window has been revised by circa £8.5 million, as a consequence of additional receipts predominantly LDP related.

3.9 Reserves Position

- 3.9.1 In a change from previous outturn reports, the updated position concerning Council reserve balances is being reported, so that members can better understand the holistic position concerning the sustainability of Council finances, and the implications to reserve balances from the net use of reserves reported in the revenue monitoring above of £2.04 million and capital financing of £232,000, the replenishment of £152,000 to school balances and the transfer of bottom line surplus to Council Fund of £31,000.
- 3.9.2 The effect on individual balances is shown in Appendix 3. The following table indicates the summary position together with an indication of reserve usage already approved in respect of 2015-16,

	2013-14 year end b//fwd.	Activity during Year	2014-15 year end	Anticipated activity during year	2015/16 year end
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Fund	(7,080)	(31)	(7,111)		(7,111)
Schools Reserves	(988)	(152)	(1,140)		(1,140)
Sub Total General Reserves	(8,068)	(183)	(8,251)		(8,251)
Specific Reserves	(11,342)	1,324	(10,018)	2,980	(7,038)
Minor & Restricted use reserves	(1,907)	945	(962)	(4)	(966)
Sub Total Earmarked	(13,249)	2,269	(10,980)	2,976	(8,004)

Reserves					
Total	(21,317)	2,086	(19,231)	2,976	(16,255)

- 3.9.3 To give an indication of relative sustainability, the Council uses Council Fund balance as a proportion of net budgeted revenue expenditure. This provides a value of circa 4.75% at the end of 2014-15, which complies with tolerance the Council has set for such an indicator of between 4% and 6%, although it is towards the lower end appreciating the wider financial environment affecting the public sector.
- 3.9.4 The draw on earmarked reserves over the two years shown is considerable and shows that three reserve balances go into deficit. The full list of reserves is shown in Appendix 3. Following review, it is anticipated that the Single Status and Equal Pay (£1.052 million) reserve is no longer needed as it is now 6 years since job evaluation was implemented in 2009. It is therefore proposed to redistribute this reserve to the three reserves:
- Fixed asset disposal reserve - £257k
 - Pension and Redundancy reserve - £600k
 - Schools library service £195k to extinguish a deficit balance
- 3.9.5 Members may note the significant insurance fund balance (£2.3 million) in Appendix 3. The purpose of such a reserve is to reflect and fund likely liability for claims. The level of reserve is established independently through actuarial assessment. The last such assessment was undertaken in 2010. It is proposed to undertake a new assessment during 2015-16, following re tender of the Council's insurance and broker contracts.

3.9.6 Draw upon reserves can come in one of two forms, either,

- a budgeted request for a draw upon reserves, where the amount concerned is certain and the debit budget is adjusted in service account with a corresponding credit shown in appropriations.
- a caveated request for a draw upon reserves, where the amount is less certain or where the initial presumption is for service department to incur costs during the year, with the intention of mitigating them and for the actual call on reserves to be actioned on the net cost during the closure of accounts process.

3.9.7 In respect of 2014-15 the following requests were made

Budgeted Requests	Amount	Amount
	Revenue	Capital
	£'000	£'000
Service Transformation Adult Social Care	212	
Movement of expenditure from capital to revenue	175	
Centre of Innovation	130	6
Up Front Investment for savings - Highways Street Scene Systems Review	43	
Vehicles - invest to save advances	60	
Monmouthshire Cycling Strategy - Cabinet 5th November 2013	40	
Up Front Investment for savings - Fuel Saving Technology HGV's	40	
Council tax additional recovery	11	
Up Front Investment for savings - Museums Income Generation	27	
HR Restructure - 28.01.13 Cabinet	23	
Informing the Future of Cultural Services	6	
Sub total – Invest to Redesign reserve	767	6
Oracle Licensing - Non compliance	104	
Capital Scheme Funding		203
Sub total – Information technology reserve	104	203
Fixed Asset Disposal, Capital Receipt Generation reserve	133	8
Treasury Equalisation Reserve	338	
Pension Strain Costs, Redundancy & pension reserve	455	
Capital scheme funding, Capital Investment reserve		15
Raising Education Standards	94	94
CYP Development Fund/Key Priorities 14/15	27	27
SCH Development Fund 14/15	100	100

Raising Education Standards Slippage from 13/14	130	130
Innovation Centre - People Strategy	44	44
Movement of expenditure from capital to revenue	35	35
Head of School improvement	34	34
ICT Technicians in Schools slippage from 13/14	28	28
Sub total – Priority investment reserve	492	492
Grass Routes Bus Service reserve	26	26
School Library Service reserve	104	104
Education Achievement Service reserve	69	69
Total Budgeted Call on Reserves 2014-15	2,488	232

Caveated Requests	Amount Revenue	Amount Capital
	£'000	£'000
To finance funding gap in implementing savings initiatives (DNA Definitive), Invest to Redesign reserve	37	
Redundancy Costs, Redundancy & pension reserve	189	
Eisteddfod, Priority investment reserve	5	
Total Caveated Call on Reserves 2014-15	231	

4 REASONS

4.1 To improve budget monitoring and forecasting information being provided to Senior Officers and Members.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As contained in the report.

6 EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The decisions highlighted in this report have no equality and sustainability implications per se.

7 SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The decisions highlighted in this report have no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications per se, although monitoring does cover a commentary about Children's Services as part of holistic reporting.

8 CONSULTEES

Strategic Leadership Team
All Cabinet Members
All Select Committee Chairman
Head of Legal Services
Head of Finance

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Outturn monitoring reports, as per the hyperlinks provided in the Select Appendices

10 AUTHORS

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 Savings Summary
- Appendix 2 Capital Slippage Analysis
- Appendix 3 Summary Reserves Position at Outturn 2014-15
- Appendix 4 Strong Communities Select Committee portfolio position statement
- Appendix 5 Economy and Development Select Committee portfolio position statement
- Appendix 6 Adult Select Committee portfolio position statement
- Appendix 7 Children and Young People Select Committee portfolio position statement

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn								
DIRECTORATE	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Savings reported achieved month 3 £'000	Savings reported achieved month 6 £'000	Savings reported achieved month 9 £'000	Savings achieved @ outturn £'000	% progress in achieving savings	Delayed savings £'000	Savings not achievable £'000
Children & Young People	722	639	669	669	652	90%	0	70
Social Care & Health	1,030	877	877	887	881	86%	0	149
Enterprise	1,366	1,126	1,025	1,306	1,329	97%	0	37
Operations	1,412	990	1,007	1,167	1,187	84%	156	69
Chief Executive's	923	923	923	923	923	100%	0	0
Total Budgeted Service Savings 2014-15	5,453	4,555	4,501	4,952	4,972	91%	156	325

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn							4i
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE							
Budget proposals 2014/15	Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Value of Saving Forecast at Month 12 £'000	Delayed savings £000s	Savings not achievable £000s	Assessment of progress as at Month 12	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
Schools delegated budgets	Proposal is about finding opportunities to reduce costs in schools. Schools budgets will be protected at cash limit, this means no pay inflation and or non pay inflation is provided for in funding,	434	434	0	0	Fully Achieved	Low
Review ISB - ALN contingency	Currently a contingency budget is held centrally, proposals to reduce this budget by £75k and reduce staffing in the service by £65,000	140	123	0	17	£17k relates to back pay for a member of staff.	Medium
Grants to micro finance and rationalise numerous grants to single organisations	Reducing the amount of grants paid annually to third sector bodies. Options will include reduction, micro-finance and introducing business plans. SCH mandate for £100k in 2014/15, R & C/CEO target of £100k. Further £300k in 2015/16 is not now considered feasible	37	0	0	37	These savings cannot be found from the grant areas as our grants cover a statutory provision.	High
School library service - combine with general library service	£50k is MCCs contribution to full year running costs of school library service, changes to service needs to be considered with TCBC	30	30	0	0	MCC savings have been achieved. Torfaen alongside MCC schools have now decided to withdraw from service, which will introduce additional severance costs (unquantified at present). These together with assets and deficit reserve balance of £100k, will need to be apportioned between MCC and TCBC	High

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn							4i
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE							
Budget proposals 2014/15	Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Value of Saving Forecast at Month 12 £'000	Delayed savings £000s	Savings not achievable £000s	Assessment of progress as at Month 12	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
School Music service - reduction in subsidy	Total MCC contribution to schools music service is £260k, exploration of alternative models to reduce the subsidy required	50	50		0	Saving achieved, working with the service to achieve future savings identified within the budget mandate.	Low
Review of additional payments	Target a 10% reduction in additional payments made eg overtime, standby etc	31	15	0	16	Given current pressures we are not able to achieve anymore of this saving.	High
		722	652	0	70		

2014/15 Budgeted Savings progress at outturn							4i
SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH							
Budget proposals 2014/15	Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Value of Saving Forecast at outturn £'000	Delayed savings £000s	Savings not achievable £000s	Assessment of progress at outturn	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
Community meals increase take-up	Mainly about increasing customer base	30	8	0	22	Weekly sales are 1,271, 179 below target.	High
Grants to micro finance and rationalise numerous grants to single organisations	Reducing the amount of grants paid annually to third sector bodies. Options will include reduction, micro-finance and introducing business plans. SCH mandate for £100k in 2014/15, R & C/CEO target of £100k. Further £300k in 2015/16 is not now considered feasible	100	100	0	0		Low
Practice change - reduction in flexible budget/contingency	Working with individuals, families and communities to find sustainable solutions	277	277	0	0		Low
Redesign day provision in line with My Day/My Life	Reconfiguring day provision for people with Learning disability	160	160	0	0	Whilst mandate has been made in full, additional staffing and transport costs have compromised the botom line for the service	Low
SCH restructuring: Direct care (£89k), Children's/Adults teams (£50k), Commissioning team (£31k)	Staffing efficiencies	163	163	0	0		Low

SCH Transition project staff transfer to Bright New Futures	Combining our initiative with Bright new futures to establish a shared service model	14	14	0	0		Low	4i
Review of additional payments	Target a 10% reduction in additional payments made eg overtime, standby etc	95	0	0	95	Work not undertaken corporately on issues such as reviewing bank holidays.	High	
Sustaining Independent Lives in the community	Cabinet report and business case presented on 2nd Oct 2013, aim is to divert people from needing statutory services through Local Area Co-ordination and small local enterprises	123	123	0	0		Low	
TOTAL ADULTS SELECT		962	845	0	117			
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT								
SCH children's staff restructuring	Rationalising service delivery within children's services	68	36	0	32	Due to Dr Paul Thomas one of the two posts was reinstated, but mandate and/or additional funding not adjusted for.	High	
		1,030	881	0	149			

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn							4i
ENTERPRISE							
Budget proposals 2014/15	Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £000	Value of Saving at Outturn £000	Delayed savings £000	Savings not achievable £000	Assessment of progress at Outturn	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
DEVELOPMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES	Income maximisation and staff review, developing the cycling offer, broaden leisure offer and explore new service provision options and models in the context of 'whole place'	125	125	0	0	Savings achieved in full	Low
Collaboration on housing services and development of careline services	Commercialisation of careline service, one housing solutions service with TCBC focussed on enabling wider access to housing options and providing greater scope for increasing the resources with which to address housing need and homelessness	30	30	0	0	Savings achieved in full	Low
Sustainable energy initiatives	Investing in biomass boilers, solar farms and reduction in Carbon Reduction Commitment budget	133	133	0	0	Savings achieved through reduction in Asset Management Expenditure	Low
Museums, Shirehall & Castles and Tourism	Consolidation of tourism and culture offer throughout the County through considering shared services models; making attractions self-sustainable and income generation. This relates to the museum business plan and explores roll-out of some community ownership models. Member consultation has indicated that the aspect of merging of museums and TIC (£150,000 in 2014/15) was not a preferable model, and will necessitate driving even further savings on other aspects of this mandate	245	208	0	37	TIC's 13k not achieved due to ambitious income targets & reduced opening hours Caldicot Castle savings of 24k will not be met.	TIC's medium Castle high

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn

4i

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT & OPERATIONS								
Budget proposals 2014/15	Savings Proposal Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £'000	Value of Saving Forecast at Month 6 £'000	Value of Saving at Outturn £'000	Delayed savings £000s	Savings not achievable £000s	Assessment of progress as Outturn	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
OPERATIONS								
School meals -increase price, market and expand service	Increase in school meal to £2.00, currently £1.65 infants and £1.80 junior based on an estimated 397,058 meals	69	0	0	0	69	Savings plan was based on increase meal take up, for the first 9 month of the financial year the section saw a reduction in meal take up due to the increased meal price and implementation of a compliant A4L menu. Since appointing an A4L co-Ordination meal numbers have started to increase in the final 3 month of the financial year allowing a partial saving to be achieved.	High
Grants to micro finance and rationalise numerous grants to single organisations	Reducing the amount of grants paid annually to third sector bodies. Options will include reduction, micro-finance and introducing business plans. SCH mandate for £100k in 2014/15, R & C/CEO target of £100k. Further £300k in 2015/16 is not now considered feasible	13	13	13	0	0	Achieved	Low
Highways - review of management arrangements, gritting schedules, verge maintenance, use of sub contractors	Reduction in management team and operate from 2 depots, reducing stand by payments and gritting frequencies. Reduce sub contractors and biodiversity policy on verges	405	274	289	116	0	Full mandate saving not achieved but the shortfall from the delayed element has been funded by savings found elsewhere within Highways.	High
Street Light savings	Review of turning off street lights at designated times	180	180	180			Achieved	Low

Street scene and pest control	Reduction in sweepers and number of cleaning rounds, opportunity for Town & Community Councils to contribute to service and full withdrawal of subsidy for pest control.	195	170	195			Achieved	Low 4i
Home to School Transport - fundamental review of policy	Fundamental policy change - £420k - based around nearest school policy. Withdrawl of subsidy for post 16 transport.	47	47	47	0	0	Even though cost centre overall is overspent the saving has been achieved.	Low
Facilities - transfer functions to other providers	Engaging with town and community councils, friends clubs to take on service related costs - Linda Vista, Bailey Park, Public Conveniences	100	0	100	0	0	Achieved	Medium
Transport review and fleet rationalisation	Increased income from private hire (Passenger Transport Unit), management and staff reduction	105	25	65	40	0	Cost centre over all is over spent partly due to unachievable income targets therefore the saving has not been achieved	Medium
Property services and procurement	Staff efficiencies, systems review and procurement savings	115	115	115	0	0	Achieved	Low
Cost neutral waste service	Route optimisation, green waste charges up from £8 to £10 and reduce spend on bags	60	60	60	0	0	Achieved	Low
Review of additional payments	Target a 10% reduction in additional payments made eg overtime, standby etc	123	123	123	0	0	Achieved	Medium
TOTAL		1,412	1,007	1,187	156	69		

2014/15 Budgeted Service Savings Mandates Progress at Outturn							4i
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT							
Budget proposals 2014/15	Savings Proposal Narrative	Saving included in 2014/15 Budget £000	Value of Saving at Outturn £000	Delayed savings £000s	Savings not achievable £000s	Assessment of progress at Outturn	Risk of current forecast saving NOT being achieved (High / Medium / Low)
CEO Staffing restructures	Senior management restructure to include new service groupings and alignments and green space concept	70	70	0	0	Achieved	Low
CEO - efficiencies, including on line services, staffing structures	Staffing efficiencies and improving on line services, reduction in democratic services will mean that only decision making committees can be serviced, merging of roles supporting area work	595	595	0	0	Achieved	Low
CEO - Restructure (Customer Access) - 10% reduction in staff budget	The aim is to have one access point for customer service in each of the 4 towns and create efficiencies through a management restructure	64	64	0	0	Achieved	Low
Review of additional payments	Target a 10% reduction in additional payments made eg overtime, standby etc	40	40	0	0	Achieved. In general managers have seen this saving as just a straight cut in budget and have reorganised	Low
Public protection	Service Reductions in Public Protection Division	89	89	0	0	Achieved	Low

Legal	Reduction in Legal Services employee hours and Commons and Village Green Inquiries – Inspectors’ fees	37	37	0	0	Split £30k Legal & Land Charges, £7k Emergency Planning	Low 4i
Planning, place and enterprise	Increase in income from building control & development control (part of combined £32k savings)	28	28	0	0	Achieved	Low
TOTAL		923	923	0	0		

SLIPPAGE ANALYSIS 2014-15

APPENDIX 2

Project Code	Project Description	Slippage Requested	Recommended Approved	Recommended Rejected
98219	Upgrade School Kitchens	18,899	18,899	
96619	New Raglan Primary, 21st Century Schools Programme	488,317	488,317	
96625	New Monmouth Comp – 21c Schools	2,740,000	2,740,000	
96626	New Caldicot Comp – 21c Schools	3,211,000	3,211,000	
98621	ESR: Access For All	136,491	136,491	
98628	Rogiet Primary	12,681	12,681	
98638	Caldicot Castle Park (St Mary's Remodelling)	4,000	4,000	
98645	New School Caldicot Green Lane Site	38,285	38,285	
98650	New Thornwell Primary	27,091	27,091	
98674	Monmouth Comp – 21C Feasibility	143,004	143,004	
98675	Caldicot Comp – 21C feasibility	116,538	116,538	
98676	Raglan VC Primary feasibility			
	Sub Total Children and Young People Select	6,936,306	6,936,306	0
96624	SWIFT Replacement System (and Sub Total Adult Select)	35,000	35,000	
90038	Replacement Cattle Market	226,796	226,796	
90320	Caerwent House, Major Repairs	300,000	300,000	
97285	Woodstock Way Linkage Scheme	3,939	3,939	
	Sub Total Economy and Development Select	530,735	530,735	0
90307	Shire Hall - Furniture and Equipment Costs	11,439	11,439	
98058	County Farms Fixed Asset Disposal Costs	6,577	6,577	0
98060	Non County Farms Fixed Asset Disposal Costs	356,034	356,034	
98222	Improve Income Gen – Museums Rec/Retail Facilities	10,000	10,000	
95803	Ifton Common Sewerage Treatment Plant	10,070	0	10,070
91100	Access For All	260,935	260,935	
97236	Area Management (Combined)	24,496	24,496	
98822	PV Scheme - Usk Primary	29,334	29,334	
98826	Car Park Granville St & Wyebridge St	200,000	200,000	
98834	PV Scheme - Thornwell Primary	45,900	45,900	
98835	PV Scheme - Rockfield Community Centre	5,304	5,304	
97215	Reconstruction of Bridges & Retaining Walls	516,725	516,725	
97302	Signing Upgrades And Disabled Facilities	78,447	0	78,447
97304	Implementation & Review Of TRO's	3,337	0	3,337
97305	Parking Studies	31,779	0	31,779
97306	Structural Repairs - PROW	74,087	74,087	
97351	Accessibility Enhancements	72,643	40,000	32,643
97352	Road Safety & Trafficman Programme	39,736	39,736	
96055	Agile Working	39,634	0	39,634
96605	Highways Asset Management & Road	37,913	37,913	
96612	Land Charges - M3 System	31,750	13,500	18,250
96617	Purchase of Sharepoint and Active Directory Licences	30,000	30,000	0
96620	Upgrade to the Agresso system	23,788	23,788	0
96621	Provision of online facilities Revenue's section	13,000	13,000	0
98223	Imp. Physical & Virtual Access-Museums Collections	28,365	28,365	0
96020	Internet / Intranet Functionality	35,104	35,104	0
83700	Low Cost Home Ownership	33,000	33,000	0
98059	County Farms Maintenance & Reinvestment	145,000	145,000	0
99202	Disabled Facilities Grants (Private)	54,069	54,069	0
90723	Magor & Undy Community Hall	32,346	32,346	0
90752	Multi Use Games Area Bayfield Open Space	70,470	70,470	0
90757	Castle Oak, Usk	25,871	25,871	0
90759	S106 – Recreation Croesonen	40,000	40,000	0
90760	S106 - Llanfoist and Llanwenarth Ultra	117,982	117,982	0
90761	Section 106 – Caldicot new 3G ATP	17,654	17,654	0
90762	S106 – Church Road Caldicot – Offsite Rec	4,494	4,494	0
90795	S106 - Pedestrian Improvement RE Land off Sudbrook Road	28,334	28,334	0
90797	S106 - Adult and Youth Recreation Portskewett	1,162	1,162	0
90799	S106 - Croesonen Infants Site, Abergavenny	23,374	23,374	0
90807	S106 – Combined 3 Monmouth Developments	343,516	343,516	0
	Sub Total Stronger Communities Select	2,953,669	2,739,509	214,160

Project Code	Project Description	Slippage Requested	Recommended Approved	Recommended Rejected
<u>Maintenance Schemes - Property</u>				
98725	Castle Park - Repl end of life fitting with energy efficient	32,915	32,915	
98735	Ysgol Y Finn - Replace end of life fittings	19,215	19,215	
98763	Undy Primary - Improve site fencing	12,362	12,362	
98693	Hilston Park - Repairs to Windows, door at fire escape and remedy water penetration in	11,350	11,350	
95912	Thornwell Primary - Re-render panels	19,812	19,812	
98717	Cross Ash - install biomass boiler	9,077	9,077	
98718	Trellech Primary - install biomass boiler	73,470	73,470	
98721	Various School Kitchens - Provisions of gas interlocks	42,315	42,315	
98830	Park Street School - H&S Works *1	42,499	0	42,499
98831	Thornwell Sewerage Division	110,825	110,825	
95895	Penyrhiw - improvements to treatment plant	62,335	0	62,335
98699	Slaughterhouse Arches - Continue Stonework repairs & repointing	26,277	26,277	0
98703	Various Properties - Removal of Asbestos Materials from various buildings 14-15	19,512	0	19,512
98708	Abergavenny LC - Replace CHP Plant	77,450	77,450	0
98711	Chepstow LC - Replace CHP plant, Flues. Heat curtain to entrance	93,685	93,685	0
98768	Jubilee Way Toilets	2,838	2,838	0
	Sub Total Property Services	655,937	531,591	124,346
	TOTAL	11,111,647	10,773,141	338,506

*1 Park Street School costs recorded against another project, slippage request to repay other budget

SUMMARY RESERVE POSITION. Year ending 2014-15 (prior to Statement of Accounts Audit)

			2013/14	2014/15				2015/16			
Account	Cat2	Cat2(T)	C/F	Contributions From Revenue To Reserves	Contributions From Reserves to Revenue	Contributions From Reserves to Capital	C/F	Contributions From Revenue To Reserves	Contributions From Reserves to Revenue	Contributions From Reserves to Capital	C/F
Council Fund											
Council Fund (Authority)			-7,080,000	-31,000			-7,111,000				-7,111,000
School Balances			-988,044	-152,000			-1,140,044				-1,140,044
			-8,068,044	-183,000	0	0	-8,251,044	0	0	0	-8,251,044
Earmarked Reserves:											
Sub-Total Invest to Redesign			-2,208,161	-84,772	803,591	5,820	-1,483,521	-60,228	397,362	402,095	-744,292
Sub-Total IT Transformation			-946,845	0	104,357	202,648	-639,840	0	0	103,091	-536,749
Sub-Total Insurance and Risk Management			-1,968,388	-282,000	0	0	-2,250,388	0	0	0	-2,250,388
Sub-Total Capital Receipt Generation Reserve			-244,246	-357,048	133,390	7,562	-460,342	0	153,845	79,512	-226,985
Sub Total Treasury Equalisation Reserve			-1,124,693	-203,506	338,175	0	-990,024	0	0	0	-990,024
Sub-Total Redundancy and Pensions Reserve			-744,243	-500,000	644,307	0	-599,936	0	325,434	0	-274,502
Sub-Total Capital Investment Reserve			-1,636,445	0	0	15,500	-1,620,945	-15,500	518,541	10,070	-1,107,834
Sub-Total Priority Investment Reserve			-2,468,935	0	495,451	190	-1,973,294	0	417,000	648,877	-907,417
YG33	38886	Single Status & Equal Pay Reserve	-1,051,834		1,051,834		0				0
YG33	38910	Museums Acquisitions Reserve	-59,798				-59,798				-59,798
YG33	38924	Elections Reserve	-58,183	-25,000			-83,183	-25,000	0		-108,183
YG33	38949	Grass Routes Buses Reserve	-186,528		25,913		-160,615	-5,000	25,913		-139,702
Restricted Use Reserves											
YG33	38901	Chairman's Reserve	-36,754				-36,754				-36,754
YG33	38916	Youth Offending Team	-382,226				-382,226				-382,226
YG33	38919	Building Control trading reserve	4,416	-4,906			-490				-490
YG33	38926	Outdoor Education Centres Trading Reserve	-157,017	-33,263			-190,280				-190,280
YG33	38927	School Library Service Trading Reserve	90,573	-194,786	104,213		0				0
YG33	38890	Education Achievement Service	-69,469		69,469		0				0
YG33	38891	I Learn Wales	0	-48,674			-48,674				-48,674
			-550,477	-281,629	173,682	0	-658,423	0	0	0	-658,423
Total Earmarked Reserves			-13,248,776	-1,733,955	3,770,701	231,720	-10,980,311	-105,728	1,838,095	1,243,645	-8,004,299
TOTAL USEABLE REVENUE RESERVES			-21,316,820	-1,916,955	3,770,701	231,720	-19,231,355	-105,728	1,838,095	1,243,645	-14,355,343

1. Revenue Outturn Forecast

1.1 The combined budget and outturn forecast for this portfolio is,

Service Area	Budget Mth 9	Virements	Outturn Budget	Outturn Actual	Variance Outturn	Variance Mth 9	Variance Mth 6	Variance Mth 3
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive's office	7,376	(13)	7,363	6,954	(409)	(384)	(207)	(133)
Operations	17,861	172	18,033	17,851	(182)	103	232	385
Corporate	17,941		17,941	17,367	(574)	(183)	(116)	(94)
Appropriations	7,521	(257)	7,264	7,271	7	(243)	8	(307)
Financing	(149,237)		(149,237)	(149,898)	(661)	(635)	(648)	(502)
Total	(98,538)	(98)	(98,636)	(100,455)	(1,819)	(1,342)	(731)	(651)

1.2 The more significant over and underspends are,

	Overspend predicted £'000	Underspend predicted £'000	Cause
Chief Executives Office		409 (25 improvement)	Policy Division breakeven, reduced costs in Democracy Division (£133,000) and £276,000 savings in Finance division
Operations – Highways		438 (64 improvement)	Predominantly extra highway agency income, supplemented by additional fee income earned in traffic management and traffic & development and reduced costs in highways operations
Operations – Property		48 (81 improvement)	Pressures from schools meals continues but has improved and is now £57,000, cost of maintaining public conveniences exhibits a £38,000 overspend. These pressures are mitigated by £30,000 savings in maintenance, £103,000 savings in public accommodation, and staff savings in procurement team of £57,000, compensating for extra net costs in main property budget of £38,000 and office services (£11,000)
Operations – Home to school transport	334 (25 improvement)		Predominantly the pressures experienced in home to school transport of £472,000, compensated by net savings from external contract e.g. taxis tenders (£69,000) and net income from public transport subsidy grant (£69,000). The breakdown of Home to school transport overspend equates to £235,000 employees, £170,000 vehicle costs, £17,000 supplies and services and reduced income £50,000.
Operations – Transport	33 (61 improvement)		Predominantly car parking income deficit

Operations – Waste & Streetscene		63 (52 improvement)	Streetscene, training unit and waste financial reporting has been amalgamated into one Division, such that the favourable position is effectively due to the additional income from Grounds maintenance experienced this year compensating for cost pressure in the other 2 areas. There has been widespread re-engineering of services within this Division which has involved £264,000 redundancy costs that they've managed to absorb within year.
Corporate		574 (391 improvement)	Corporate includes a variety of costs that only crystallise in the last quarter. The underspend reported is caused by national park levy underspend £11,000, additional dividend from Joint Crematoria Committee £105,000, reduced audit fee (£135,000), NNDR refunds in respect of Council property appeals £116,000, Income received in respect of previously written off debts £110,000, additional Pension strain costs of £97,000 compensated in part by saving in single status budget £76,000), Underspends in the Council's insurance account from reduced level of claims £67,000, contract extension renegotiation £26,000, and staffing savings of £17,000.
Appropriations	7 (42 worsening)		Predominantly net reduction in interest payable (£235,000). Asset sale slippage results in £79,000 savings in disposal costs deferred. £60,000 interest receivable due to higher rolling investment balance than anticipated, and £34,000 reduction in anticipated borrowing repayment costs caused by slippage of previous years capital programme which covers for a further reduced net call from reserves of £415,000.
Financing		661 (26 improvement)	Extra Council tax receipts and reduced CT benefits
Total		1,819	

2. 2014-15 Savings Progress

- 2.1 The savings required by 2014-15 budget process, identified in appendix 1, are not fully secured.
- 2.2 Operations savings totalling £1,412,000, £1,187,000 (an increase of £20,000 against that reported at month 9) are anticipated to be made, £156,000 deferred to 2015-16 and £69,000 reported as still not achievable.
- 2.3 At outturn, Operations Directorate exhibit a favourable outturn of £182,000, so even though it hasn't made savings totalling £225,000, it has effectively made ad hoc savings of £407,000 to compensate, but it really needs to convert these ad-hoc savings more formally into replacing savings unlikely to be made.
- 2.4 Of Chief Executives savings totalling £923,000, the full extent continues to be reported as delivered.

3. **Director's Commentary (Head of Operations – Roger Hoggins)**

The out turn figure of £182,000 underspend on budget demonstrates a commitment by officers to bring the Operations services below budget in support of the known corporate budget pressures, apparent during the financial year. However whilst the overall performance is creditable there are aspects of the budget that have caused ongoing concern in year. In particular budget decisions surrounding passenger transport have proven unrealistic such as a reduction in SEN transport costs, unrealistic income improvements and reductions in overtime payments. Furthermore the school meals budget has shown improvement in the last quarter of the year but this will need further efforts to retain this performance going forward. The car parking budget has also improved with the charge increase agreed during the year but more work is required to produce the new order and implement the modernisation of the service.

On a positive note the highway budget has out performed the budget largely due to increased fee income and reduced operational costs, coupled with extra income from our trunk road agency agreement. This is welcome but we are aware that Welsh Government is reviewing the trunk road management arrangements and this will affect the funding we associate with providing services to SWTRA. It should also be noted that the waste and street scene underspend of £63,000 has absorbed one off redundancy costs of £264,000 demonstrating a major improved performance against budget but once again looking forward there are potential budget pressures, especially surrounding the processing of recyclates that will need careful budget management and forecasting in the coming years.

The out turn underspend should be viewed as positive performance particularly in the knowledge of significant budget reductions within Operations services and the reduced staffing available to implement the changes. It will be an even greater challenge to achieve such a performance in the coming financial years.

4. **Capital Outturn Forecast**

- 4.1 The capital budget has been revised to £8,156,000 from £8,487,000. This was made up of £6,235,000 2014-15 allocation, £7,192,000 slippage from 2013-14 (although £3,433,000 related to the new library provision and was decommitted from budget at month 9 in favour of revised projects being brought forward through 2015-16) less slippage accepted to move budget into 2015-16 of £2,940,000. The 2014-15 working budget has decreased net since December by £331,000, the effect of net £82,000 additions to the programme and £413,000 in the form of additional slippage requests to 2015-16. The latest additions comprise

	£'000
Increase to Sc 106 budgets	74
Budget creation Fixed asset costs purchased from revenue that better meet capital definitions	122
Reduction in property maintenance (comprising net effect of virements to other Select areas and also moving expenditure to revenue)	(56)
Reduction in infrastructure budgets	(58)
Total	82

- 4.2 Slippage at month 9 equated to £2,527,000 at month 9, approved manager requests at outturn equate to £2,940,000

	Outturn £000	Month 9 £'000
Fixed asset disposal	364	342
Access for all scheme	261	270
Infrastructure repairs	671	287
IT systems	181	297
Section 106 schemes	705	661
Development Schemes	126	75
Granville St & Weybridge St Car Parks	200	200
County Farms maintenance	145	100
Low cost home ownership	33	8
Property maintenance	200	287
Renovation Grants	54	
Total	2,940	2,527

- 4.3 The outturn exhibits a net underspend of £547,000, however £216,000 of this relates to a transport grant scheme not progressing which was highlighted as early as month 6 that it wouldn't be spent and for which we will need to repay WG grant so there isn't a saving that can be offset against other schemes in reality, and of the £5,000 saving evident against the "old" County Hall demolition, half of any additional costs and half of any underspend are shared equally between MCC and Torfaen CBC.

So the more transparent position concerning Stronger Communities portfolio at outturn was a net underspend of £328,500 (i.e. £547,000-£216,000-£2,500).

5 **Supporting Financial Monitoring Workbooks (ctrl click to access)**

Important: Please do not Check Out Files

[Revenue Monitoring Chief Executives Office Outturn](#)

[Revenue Monitoring Operations Outturn](#)

[Revenue Monitoring Corporate Outturn](#)

[Capital Monitoring Outturn](#)

1. Revenue Outturn Forecast

1.1 The combined budget and outturn forecast for this portfolio is,

Service Area	Budget Mth 9	Virements	Outturn Budget	Outturn Actual	Variance Outturn	Variance Mth 9	Variance Mth 6	Variance Mth 3
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Community led delivery	2,458		2,458	2,344	(113)	47	70	107
Commercial & people development	4,040	104	4,144	4,192	48	(34)	(16)	79
Enterprise management	103		103	117	14	0	0	0
Development Planning	408		408	323	(85)	(33)	(100)	0
Tourism, life & culture	3,071	3	3,074	3,193	118	152	101	46
Total	10,080	107	10,187	10,169	(18)	132	55	232

1.2 The more significant over and underspends are,

	Overspend predicted £'000	Underspend predicted £'000	Cause
Community led delivery		113 (160 improvement)	Net underspends in Asset Management (£58,000), Housing (£100,000) and Community Hubs (£9,000), compensating for pressures in whole place costs (£37,000) and Community Education (£17,000).
Commercial & people development	48 (82 worsening)		Savings in People Services (£55,000), and net IT cost savings (£18,000) compensating for additional rates and maintenance costs on Innovation building (£36,000), an increased net cost on business growth and enterprise (£84,000)
Tourism, Leisure & culture	118 (34 improvement)		Net saving/income within cultural services of £26,000. Leisure and sports development exhibits an adverse £53,000 situation, predominantly the net effect of cycling events. But the main cost pressure remains in Tourism (£92,000) and most significantly Caldicot Castle and Country park, the overspend has reduced by £27,000 since month 9 largely through Countryside team and Rights of way savings.
Development Plans		85 (52 improvement)	Reduced draw upon reserve funded expenditure in 2014-15 to be undertaken in 2015-16
Enterprise management	14 (14 worsening)		Additional staffing costs incurred by Directorate over and above that reported in Divisions

Total		18	

2. 2014-15 Savings Progress

- 2.1 The savings required by 2014-15 budget process, identified in Appendix 1, are not all fully secured.
- 2.2 Of Enterprise savings totalling £1,366,000, £1,329,000 are manifest at outturn (an increase of £23,000 since month 9 following improvement in ICT savings).
- 2.3 £37,000 of savings remain reported as unachievable and reflects a shortfall in Shire Hall, Museums, Castles and Tourism mandate.

3 Director's Commentary (Kellie Beirne)

I am pleased to report a positive outturn position with a year-end surplus of £18k. The effort to generate over £1.3m worth of sustainable efficiencies and new income has been a remarkable one and achieving over 97% of the total contribution required of Enterprise – much of which has been income generation is a positive and encouraging result. Services such as Leisure, Estates, Housing and IT etc are focussing increasingly on new opportunities for income generation and demonstrate the potential that lies ahead for further development in new ways of working. Not only does this work impact our bottom line, it creates enormous social and economic value for our communities and shows that our efforts to develop an enterprise culture are paying dividend.

4 Capital Outturn Forecast

- 4.1 The working capital budget for the year is £283,000, a reduction on £14,000 budget reported at month 9, caused by an increase in the level of slippage approved at outturn over that reported at month 9. The original budget was made up predominantly from slippage brought forward from 2013-14 and £82,000 worth of in year revisions reported previously in respect legal costs incurred in relation to Abergavenny regeneration. The Council has successfully defended the claim and the Abergavenny regeneration project exhibits a net £85,000 underspend against budget as a significant element of the costs incurred have been transferred to the plaintiff.
- 4.2 The capital programme in respect of Economy and Development portfolio exhibited an £175,000 favourable variance, split between the credit on Abergavenny regeneration of £85,000 and the underspend of £90,000 in respect of regional development plan work.
- 4.3 The £531,000 slippage relates to

	Outturn £'000	Month 9 £'000
Cattle market	227	198
Brewery Yard retentions		3
Caerwent House	300	300
Rural development plan work		16
Sc106 scheme	4	
Total	531	517

5 Supporting Financial Monitoring Workbooks (ctrl click to access)

Important: Please do not Check Out Files

[Revenue Monitoring Enterprise Outturn](#)

[Capital Monitoring Outturn](#)

**Adult Select Committee Portfolio
Position Statement and Prospective Scrutiny Points**

Appendix 6

1. Revenue Outturn Forecast

1.1 The combined budget and outturn forecast for this portfolio is,

Service Area	Budget Mth 9	Virements	Outturn Budget	Outturn Actual	Variance Outturn	Variance Mth 9	Variance Mth 6	Variance Mth 3
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult Services	6,830		6,830	7,125	294	131	163	128
Community Care	19,840		19,840	19,767	(73)	(47)	(38)	(8)
Commissioning	1,950		1,950	1,944	(5)	12	10	(6)
Partnerships		347	347	347				
Resources & Performance	1,028	(37)	991	892	(98)	(55)	(83)	(83)
Total	29,648	310	29,958	30,075	118	41	52	31

1.2 The more significant over and underspends are,

	Overspend predicted £'000	Underspend predicted £'000	Cause
Social Care – Adults			
Disability Equipment (Gwices)	4 (3 worsening)		
Day Centres	71 (83 worsening)		Effect of staffing and additional transport costs, the latter the service presumed would be picked up from elsewhere in the Directorate
Residential care	182 (49 worsening)		Employee efficiencies and savings not deliverable, Mardy Park partnership pressure
Community Meals	22 (6 worsening)		Shortfall in income
Domiciliary care		8 (4 improvement)	Predominantly the effect of one off intermediate care funding
Transition cooperative partnership		46 (static)	Secondment cost borne by partner
Management team	11 (10 worsening)		
Monnow Vale partnership	59 (static)		Net staffing cost increase due to primarily to increased customer volume subject to an historic agreement that precludes passing equitable cost proportion to partner
Community Care		73 (26 improvement)	Net effect of regional Frailty programme not spending to plan, results in loan repayment to WG being less than budgeted
Commissioning		5 (17 improvement)	
Resource and performance		99 (44 improvement)	Reduced premises, IT and net salary saving

Total	118		
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2. **2014-15 Savings Progress**

- 2.1 The savings required by 2014-15 budget process, identified in Appendix 1, are not fully secured. Of Social Care savings affecting Adults totalling £962,000, £845,000 are anticipated to be made, none deferred to 2015-16 but £117,000 not achievable. This exhibits a £6,000 adverse effect since month 9, consequential to community meal volume expectations not meeting mandate savings levels.

3. **Director's Commentary (Social Care & Health – Simon Burch)**

The final outturn position for 2014/15 delivered an overspend of £1.524m, an increase of £230K on month 9 predictions.

The main division contributing to the overspend is Children's Services of £1.407m, as a result of 34 external placements and 5 fostering placements over and above the budget. In addition, legal costs and the continued use of agency staff still represent a pressure plus £36K DNA costs to be met from reserves. On a more positive note £900K has been provided to the 2015/16 Children's Services budget and on 6th May Cabinet agreed a further £421K to the budget. Additional reserve funding of £153K is in place to address the agency pressures and strengthen our in house fostering and how we respond to Special Guardianships. These proposals are designed to impact on demand from 2016 onwards.

In terms of Adult Services, we had a year-end overspend of £117K representing 0.4% of the budget, as a result of not being able to meet the £95K additional payments mandate and falling short by £22K of the £30K Community Meals mandate. Community Meals has embarked on a new active marketing and rebranding campaign in order to increase sales.

On a positive note the Community Care budgets continue to exhibit good news and despite demographic pressures, it is pleasing to note at outturn delivering a £72K underspend.

4. **Capital Outturn Forecast**

- 4.1 The working capital budget for the year is £320,000, a net increase since December of £47,000. There was no slippage from 2013-14, and is predominantly relates to upfront funding of Swift software replacement of £200,000 which will ultimately be funded from IT licence revenue savings within SCH.
- 4.2 The net increase is caused by the introductions of Intermediate Care funded scheme (£82,000) previously administered through the SCH revenue budget, and reduction to the 2014-15 budget from the slippage requested in respect of Swift IT project totalling £35,000.
- 4.3 The outturn exhibited a £5,000 overspend in property maintenance costs consequential to Mardy Park replacement boiler costs.

5. **Supporting Financial Monitoring Workbooks (ctrl click to access)**

Important: Please do not Check Out Files

[Revenue Monitoring Social Care & Health Outturn](#)
[Capital Monitoring Outturn](#)

1. Revenue Outturn Forecast

1.1 The combined budget and outturn forecast for this portfolio is,

Service Area	Budget Mth 9	Virements	Outturn Budget	Outturn Actual	Variance Outturn	Variance Mth 9	Variance Mth 6	Variance Mth 3
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children's Services (Social Care)	6,957	(347)	6,610	8,017	1,407	1,220	745	583
Youth Offending Team Partnership		347	347	347	0			
Sub Total Social Care	6,957	0	6,957	8,364	1,407			
Individual schools budget (CYP)	44,165	28	44,193	44,161	(32)	54	(225)	0
Resources (CYP)	1,506		1,506	1,640	134	83	45	(12)
Standards (CYP)	5,682		5,682	5,598	(84)	(17)	250	38
Youth services (CYP)	797		797	764	(33)	(28)	(25)	0
Sub Total CYP	52,150	28	52,178	52,163	(15)	92	45	26
Total	59,107	28	59,135	60,527	1,392	1,312	790	609

1.2 The more significant over and underspends are,

	Overspend predicted £'000	Underspend predicted £'000	Cause
Social Care – Children			
Looked after children	932 (120 worsening)		Proportion of more significant unit cost cases
Joint adoption	6 (1 improvement)		Reflective of anticipated activity
Fostering & allowances	67 (static)		Predominantly foster carers travel allowances – no budget
Disability equipment (Gwices)		26 (2 improvement)	Reduced activity against budget
Therapeutic services		9 (static)	
Counsel costs	56 (14 improvement)		Anticipated in line with 2013-14 activity
Young person's accommodation		46 (12 worsening)	Reduced activity
Respite home		60 (5 improvement)	Premise closed whilst new carers identified and assessed
Team Costs	519 (85 worsening)		Staffing costs, predominantly use of agency staff and conveyance of client pressure
Unaccompanied asylum seeking children, local		32 (8 improvement)	

safeguarding board and misc. underspends			
Sub Total SCH	1,407		

	Overspend predicted £'000	Underspend predicted £'000	Cause
Children and Young People			
Resources delegated to schools		32 (86 improvement)	Outturn reflects further unutilised reserve funding offsetting additional delegation to schools of £42,000
Standards		84 (67 improvement)	The favourable variance belies the extent of contra over and underspends evident in the Division. Breakfast club overspends for the year were £102,000, and significantly affected by expenditure in last quarter caused by extra staffing incurred in meeting demand for places. There was also a £6,000 pressure in early year's service. These overspend is mitigated by savings within ALN service of £193,000.
Resources	134 (51 worsening)		The outturn is reflective of a variety of cost pressures e.g. Recovery Board and tribunal costs, unbudgeted IT migration costs, and reduction in SEG grant in year impacting adversely upon the level of grant administration costs that are recoverable. SLA contracts with schools overspent by net £23,000 and management experienced an excess of post 16 SEN costs than anticipated.
Youth services		33 (5 improvement)	General underspend in service, improvement since month 9 caused by staff vacancy
Subtotal CYP		15	
Total Children and Young People	1,392		

2. 2014-15 Savings Progress

- 2.1 The savings required by 2014-15 budget process, identified in Appendix 1, are not fully secured.
- 2.2 Of Social Care - Children savings totalling £68,000 £36,000 are anticipated to be made, none deferred to 2015-16 but £32,000 are regarded as not achievable. This exhibits no change since month 9.
- 2.3 Of Children & Young people Directorate savings totalling £722,000, £562,000 are reported to be made none deferred but £160,000 regarded as not achievable. This exhibits an adverse change to the ALN contingency mandate of £107,000 since month 9.

3. Schools reserves

- 3.1 Schools balances, as indicated in the main report from para 3.2 onwards exhibits a significantly different position than forecast through the year. Whilst this would generally be positive, this volatile effect is caused by improvement grant administration and efforts will need to be made to consider how best to report combined position to avoid the potential for “double counting”. The following table indicates anticipated reserve levels for each school. Bracketed amounts indicate a surplus position and non-bracketed amounts a deficit.
- 3.2 One notable change is the creation of the first cluster based reserve for the Chepstow area as a practical example of how schools are intent to share ideas and resources.

	Opening Reserves (Surplus)/ Deficit 14-15	In year forecast at Month 9 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Difference reported from Outturn to Month 9 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Outturn position (Surplus)/ Deficit	Reserves to be carried forward to 2015-16 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Notes
Abergavenny cluster						
E003 King Henry VIII Comprehensive	(114,518)	219,285	(147,732)	71,553	(42,965)	Significant positive variance to Month 9 wholly attributable to expenditure that was transferred to the school's grant cost centre at year end. More information to follow from the school's Business Manager.
E073 Cantref Primary	(68,138)	18,260	(4,525)	13,735	(54,403)	£7k planned building and materials expenditure not undertaken by year end, £4k income received from EAS at year end in respect of teaching and learning support and excellence in numeracy programme, £3k additional savings realised against utility budgets set, all offset by an overspend against the school's grant cost centre that was written back to school budget.
E072 Deri View Primary	79,952	(65,358)	(36,357)	(101,715)	(21,763)	Approval sought for £12k ICT costs to be transferred to PDG. Utility savings of £13k and additional lettings income of £5k as a result of increased community usage. £3k additional ALN funding received to support a pupil where costs were already forecasted.
E035 Gilwern Jnr & Inf	(41,057)	18,097	(15,953)	2,144	(38,913)	£8k less expenditure incurred on supplies and services, £2k savings against utilities, £2k additional ALN funding received, plus £1k teaching and learning support funding received at year end.
E037 Goytre Fawr Jnr & Inf	(4,709)	(5,270)	(18,854)	(24,124)	(28,833)	£4k received at year end from EAS for the excellence in leadership programme, £3k utilities savings, £8k staffing costs transferred to grant cost centre.
E041 Llanfair Kilgeddin CV Jnr & Inf	(22,611)	20,712	(10,022)	10,690	(11,921)	Premises savings of £4k compared to M9 as a result of lower utility costs and the non-requirement of the R&M contingency, £3k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS.
E093 Llanfoist Fawr	(32,933)	(21,572)	(19,761)	(41,333)	(74,266)	Positive variance to Month 9 wholly attributable to the deferral of ICT investment into 15-16.
E044 Llantillio Pertholey Jnr & Inf	(65,340)	28,173	(10,058)	18,115	(47,225)	£7k savings on buildings R&M budget not fully required, plus £3k savings on utilities.
E045 Llanvihangel Crocorney Jnr & Inf	40,656	(19,768)	(5,849)	(25,617)	15,039	£3k staffing savings due to the lesser requirement for agency cover, £1k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS, £1k additional savings on utilities.
E090 Our Lady and St Michael's RC Primary School	(23,663)	(29,314)	12,163	(17,151)	(40,814)	Forecasting variance wholly attributable to increased costs of supply cover at the school.
E067 Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	(32,161)	9,415	(43,457)	(34,042)	(66,203)	£9k savings on buildings R&M budget not fully required, plus £10k savings on utilities, £8k received at year end in respect of a healthy schools grant, Welsh interventions and teaching and learning support, £5k lower than anticipated music provision costs that will now impact on 15-16, £4k savings on staffing as a result of a lesser than anticipated cost of supply cover, plus supplies and services spend £4k less than forecasted at Month 9.
Caldicot cluster						
E001 Caldicot Comprehensive	(60,620)	46,338	(67,086)	(20,748)	(81,368)	Majority of variance to Month 9 relates to additional income being received late in the financial year: £21k additional ALN funding received; £17k maternity and sickness compensation; £8k PF income, £7k mentoring grant. In addition £15k utilities savings were achieved.
E068 Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary	(21,991)	(7,837)	(8,019)	(15,856)	(37,847)	£3k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS, £3k more music tuition monies received than anticipated at M9, £2k donation received from PTU at year end to offset specific expenditure.
E094 Castle Park	97,998	(49,122)	(9,148)	(58,270)	39,728	£6k funding towards Read Write Inc. project received, plus £2k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS.
E075 Dewstow Primary School	(106,113)	56,284	(76,766)	(20,482)	(126,595)	Significant positive variance to Month 9 due mainly to the transfer of £29k staff costs & professional fees to the school's grant cost centre. In addition, £17k of premises and supplies and services spend has been deferred to 15-16 and the costs of supply cover were £9k less than anticipated. The school also received £11k ALN funding in Q4 to support a statemented pupil where costs were previously factored in and other smaller income streams included teaching and learning support, nursery top up and numeracy and literacy support.
E034 Durand Jnr & Inf	(44,725)	19,075	(28,111)	(9,036)	(53,761)	Considerable savings due to a maternity absence being covered at a lower rate, £9k salaries transferred to PDG at year end, £3k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS.
E048 Magor Vol Aided Jnr & Inf	(31,137)	12,984	(18,309)	(5,325)	(36,462)	Positive variance to Month 9 due to income being received late in the financial year - this included £7k for the Read Write Inc. project, £7k CRAMP grant and £5k ALN funding to support a statemented pupil.
E056 Rogiet Jnr & Inf	(83,152)	33,548	(20,274)	13,274	(69,878)	£13k salaries transferred to SEG at year end. Other small savings due to outdoor play investment being deferred to 15-16 and utility costs being lower than anticipated.
E063 Undy Jnr & Inf	(10,117)	(12,511)	(19,052)	(31,563)	(41,680)	£9k savings against premises as a result of lower building and utilities costs. Supplies and services planned spend was revised in Q4 in light of draft 15-16 budgeted deficit. The school also received £4k additional ALN funding in Month 12.
E069 Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	17,914	(32,173)	(3,893)	(36,066)	(18,152)	£5k income received at year end from the EAS re teaching and learning support and Welsh interventions, offset partially by additional staffing costs.

	Opening Reserves (Surplus)/ Deficit 14-15	In year forecast at Month 9 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Difference reported from Outturn to Month 9 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Outturn position (Surplus)/ Deficit	Reserves to be carried forward to 2015-16 (Surplus)/ Deficit	Notes
Chepstow cluster						
E002 Chepstow Comprehensive	214,589	170,411	3,687	174,098	388,687	As per month 9.
E091 New Pembroke Primary School	(79,671)	66,215	(20,093)	46,122	(33,549)	Additional savings to Month 9 as a result of sickness and maternity absences compensated and covered at lower costs.
E057 Shirenewton Jnr & Inf	(81,568)	27,026	(23,737)	3,289	(78,279)	Balance of projects transferred to new cost centre E096.
E058 St Mary's Chepstow RC Jnr & Inf	(813)	(13,131)	(4,564)	(17,695)	(18,508)	£2k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS. Additional small saving due to slightly lower utility costs.
E060 The Dell Jnr & Inf	(50,107)	7,593	(40,696)	(33,103)	(83,210)	Staff costs were £8k less than forecasted at Month 9 mainly due to supply and PPA cover being lower than anticipated. £12k worth of premises improvements have been deferred to 15-16 and utilities were £3k lower than expected. ICT costs were reviewed and savings of £4k materialised, plus the school also utilised £4k less of their consumables budget than was previously reported. The school also received funding at year end for teaching and learning and numeracy support.
E061 Thornwell Jnr & Inf	(16,136)	(3,099)	(29,763)	(32,862)	(48,998)	£9k additional ALN funding received, £14k of staff costs were transferred to the school's grant cost centre after approval sought from the EAS Challenge Advisor, £3k funding allocated to support the Read Write Inc. initiative, £2k grant funding received to support a traveller, plus £2k teaching and learning support funding received at year end from the EAS.
E096 Chepstow Alliance	0	0	(28,092)	(28,092)	(28,092)	Balance of projects transferred from E057.
Monmouth cluster						
E004 Monmouth Comprehensive	(130,975)	0	21,124	21,124	(109,851)	Overspend in-year mainly as a result of departmental capitation spend that had been deferred from previous financial year.
E032 Cross Ash Jnr & Inf	(47,987)	13,415	(31,316)	(17,901)	(65,888)	£13k saving compared with Month 9 against staffing as a result of lower than anticipated levels of supply and maternity absence covered at a lower grade, utilities expenditure £9k less than anticipated, £4k PTFAs monies donated to offset expenditure, and cost of music provision £2k less than forecasted.
E092 Kymin View Primary School	(34,355)	12,151	(22,430)	(10,279)	(44,634)	£9k savings achieved against utilities, £5k of staffing costs moved to PDG, £5k income received at year end to support teaching and learning and the Read Write Inc. project. Cost of music provision also lower than previously forecasted.
E039 Llandogo Jnr & Inf	5,780	16,937	(10,370)	6,567	12,347	Improved position compared to Month 9 as a result of £7k staffing costs moved to the school's grant cost centre and £3k income received at year end to support teaching and learning.
E074 Osbaston Church In Wales Primary	(48,712)	7,955	(15,239)	(7,284)	(55,996)	In Q4 the school were given approval to transfer £5k ICT costs to their grant cost centre. In addition, £4k staffing costs were also transferred. £3k of utilities savings were realised and the school also received £3k for the spring term in respect of the Read Write Inc. project.
E051 Overmonnow Jnr & Inf	(33,729)	25,893	7,510	33,403	(326)	Negative variance to Month 9 is due to the requirement of additional supply staff as a result of course attendance and higher levels of sickness.
E055 Raglan Jnr & Inf	(41,259)	(9,311)	(12,176)	(21,487)	(62,746)	£12k saving compared to Month 9 forecast as a result of the school deferring spend on supplies and services into 15-16 in conjunction with the move to their new site.
E062 Trellech Jnr & Inf	(33,605)	(15,063)	(24,220)	(39,283)	(72,888)	£10k savings on utilities, £5k income received at year end from the EAS re teaching and learning support and excellence in leadership. £4k ICT costs attributable to PDG and transferred at year end.
E064 Usk CV Jnr & Inf	(28,687)	5,036	(165)	4,871	(23,816)	As per Month 9.
	(933,700)	551,274	(781,603)	(230,329)	(1,164,029)	
Special Schools						
E020 Mounton House	(18,464)	33,952	10,466	44,418	25,954	Negative variance to Month 9 is due to funding only being received for a Youth Worker from a neighbouring LA that was, in the end, only funded to August 31 st (where we were led to believe the full 12 months would be covered).
E095 PRU	(35,992)	30,627	3,406	34,033	(1,959)	As per Month 9.
	(54,456)	64,579	13,872	78,451	23,995	
	(988,156)	615,853	(767,731)	(151,878)	(1,140,034)	

4. Directors' Commentaries

4.1 Social Care & Health (Simon Burch)

The final outturn position for 2014/15 delivered an overspend of £1.524m, an increase of £230K on month 9 predictions.

The main division contributing to the overspend is Children's Services of £1.407m, as a result of 34 external placements and 5 fostering placements over and above the budget. In addition, legal costs and the continued use of agency staff still represent a pressure plus

£36K DNA costs to be met from reserves. On a more positive note £900K has been provided to the 2015/16 Children's Services budget and on 6th May Cabinet agreed a further £421K to the budget. Additional reserve funding of £153K is in place to address the agency pressures and strengthen our in house fostering and how we respond to Special Guardianships. These proposals are designed to impact on demand from 2016 onwards.

In terms of Adult Services, we had a year-end overspend of £117K representing 0.4% of the budget, as a result of not being able to meet the £95K additional payments mandate and falling short by £22K of the £30K Community Meals mandate. Community Meals has embarked on a new active marketing and rebranding campaign in order to increase sales.

On a positive note the Community Care budgets continue to exhibit good news and despite demographic pressures, it is pleasing to note at outturn delivering a £72K underspend.

4.2 Children & Young People (Sarah McGuinness)

Schools' commentary:

Given another difficult budget settlement for schools, I am encouraged that the level of school balances at outturn is £152,000 higher than at the beginning of the financial year. The impact of budget recovery plans and opportunities for schools to make in year savings and utilise grant funding have made a significant contribution to the end of year position for many of the schools.

I am delighted that the number of schools in a deficit position has decreased from six to five, and I am pleased that the majority of those schools remaining in a deficit have made considerable progress during 14/15 to reduce their deficits and have robust recovery plans in place, that are being monitored closely by the CYP Finance team.

School based redundancy costs were high for the authority in 2014/15 and are likely to remain high in 2015/16 as schools lose staff due to challenging financial settlements.

CYP Directorate commentary:

The Directorate's outturn position is an under spend of £15,000, which, given the challenging settlement awarded, represents a significant improvement on the prior few financial years' performance.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN) remains a volatile area for the Directorate where movement in pupil placements has a considerable impact on budget. A decrease in the need for pupil placements outside of the Authority has resulted in a reduced spend for 14-15 as we have been successful in finding local provision at a lower cost.

Cost centre managers have increased efforts to improve value for money and have utilised their budgets with greater efficiency, where each service area has been able to contribute in some way. This continual and collective review will be brought to the fore in 15-16 as the Directorate's settlement becomes even tighter.

5 **Capital Outturn Forecast**

- 5.1 The capital budget for the year is £5,752,000, a reduction on £1,256,000 reported at month 9. This was made up of £4,044,000 2014/15 allocation, £3,067,000 slippage from 2013/14, revisions of £5,909,000 (a net reduction of £69,000 on month 9 levels), less slippage proposed to transfer budget into 2015-16 of £7,268,000.

The net reduction in budget is the consequence of,

	£'000
Budget creation Attic Conversion for foster carer	26
Reduction in property maintenance (comprising net effect of virements to other Select areas)	(96)
Total	69

- 5.2 Slippage requests approved at outturn increased to £7,268,000 from £6,081,000 reported by managers at month 9.

	Outturn £'000	Month 9 £'000
21 c schools feasibility	260	813
21 c schools build	6,439	4,962
Access for all scheme	136	150
Thornwell school works	27	33
Green Lane school works	38	25
Rogiet school works	13	
Castle Park school works	4	
Upgrade school kitchens	19	
Property maintenance	331	98
Total	7,268	6,081

- 5.3 The capital outturn for Children and Young People portfolio exhibits a £22,000 underspend.

5. **Supporting Financial Monitoring Workbooks (ctrl click to access)**

Important: Please do not Check Out Files

[Revenue Monitoring Social Care & Health Outturn](#)
[Revenue Monitoring Children & Young People Outturn](#)
[School Balances Outturn](#)
[Capital Monitoring Outturn](#)



SUBJECT: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN and BUDGET PROCESS 2016/17 to 2019/20

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 3rd June 2015

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: WHOLE AUTHORITY

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To highlight the context within which the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will be developed for 2016/17 to 2019/20
- 1.2 To agree the assumptions to be used to update the MTFP, and provide an early indication of the level of budget savings to be found.
- 1.3 To agree the process for developing the MTFP and budget for 2016/17

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the budget assumptions outlined in paragraphs 3.5 to 3.15 in the report are agreed and updated during the budget process should better information become available.
- 2.2 That the budget process as outlined in paragraph 3.22 is adopted including member budget scrutiny and consultation conducted through all-member seminars, Member and Officer Working Groups, Community Engagement, Select, and Consultation meetings (for Business Rate purposes).

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background To Date

- 3.1 Members will know that the budget and Medium Term Financial planning process has had a consistent theme over recent years. Since the financial crisis in 2008 the level of resources available to public services has been under pressure. Over the last five years the Council has had to manage a reduction in service budgets of £22.8 million. Funding from Welsh Government has reduced in each of these five years between 1.7% and 4.9% with the exception of 2013/14 where there was a slight increase of 0.39%. At the same time pressures on the budget have been increasing in terms of demographic growth, demand and expectations in children's services, contract price inflation and redundancy costs.
- 3.2 This has proved to be a significant challenge to the Council and the process that has been adopted has sought to maintain a medium term view on the financial position and plan savings targets for this period. This is essential given the lead in time for making some of the changes required. In January Cabinet approved a balanced budget for 2015/16 and acknowledged an indicative MTFP position which forecast the gap in resources over the remaining three year period as £10 million. This is over and above the £5.32 million savings already identified in the Plan. Early identification of these savings targets has provided the much needed lead in time required to make significant changes to services. This position needs to be reviewed, but clearly there is more to do.
- 3.3 The year end position report elsewhere on this agenda, continues to demonstrate the tightening of our financial position. The report also assesses the delivery of the savings identified for 2014/15, and further work will be required to assess the level of alternative savings required. Overall the outturn position was just under budget, but means that there is no buffer that we have previously relied on to replenish our reserves. A review of the earmarked reserves position has been undertaken at outturn to ensure that the right reserves are available for our key priorities, investment in redesign of services and inevitable workforce changes.

The Future

- 3.4 The rolled forward MTFP, capturing the next four year window produces a gap of £13 million. This figure is based on all the existing assumptions, savings and pressures previously agreed for inclusion in the model. There is a need to review all aspects now to provide a basis on which to scenario plan for the future, whilst recognizing that we are building from an extremely challenging starting point.

MTFP assumptions on funding

Aggregate External Finance

- 3.5 The picture emerging since the March 2014 budget has been one that indicates that the period of financial restraint in public sector is set to continue for some time to come. Whilst Wales had not fared as badly as England from the 2010 Spending Review, that position changed last year with a worsening settlement than previously had been indicated.

In the absence of indicative AEF figures from WG the base model reflects 4.3% reductions across the four years. This is based on the letter received from WG suggesting that it would be prudent to assume that current trends in Local Government funding will continue and that

scenario planning for a range of challenging settlements beyond 2015/16 will be required. It is difficult to predict what the final outcome will be from the next spending review/budget and WG decisions around NHS protection. A 1% reduction in funding equates to about £1 million so the absence of any firmer indication is a big risk.

- 3.6 Council Tax – assumptions have been maintained at 3.95% across the 4 years
- 3.7 Fees and charges – 2.5% increase is assumed however this may be further refined following the development of an Income Generation Strategy in due course.
- 3.8 Reserves – the outturn report elsewhere on this agenda provides the current status of general and ear marked reserves. It indicates that the general reserve is at 4.7% of net revenue budget so at the low end of the target range of 4% to 6%. Also this is the second year where earmarked reserves have not been able to be replenished. The outturn report recommends using reserves that are no longer required to replenish those that are being depleted, but the overall trend is a decline in earmarked reserves as we use over £2 million a year. Additional reliance on reserves, except for one off investment that has a net on going benefit to the revenue budget, needs to be avoided. Ear marked reserves are an important part of the MTFP strategy for managing the changes required and are key to financial resilience in times of extreme financial challenge.

MTFP Assumptions on Expenditure

3.9 Pay award (APTC only) – 1% (Pay awards for school based staff to be funded from cash limited delegated budget)

3.10 Staff vacancy factor 2% (except schools which is 0%)

3.11 Pension costs

- Next actuarial review of LGPS will be as at 31 March 2016. It is impossible to predict what the valuation result will be but it is considered reasonable to work with the existing Employer’s contribution rate as a base case scenario, until such time as further information becomes available.
- Pension Auto enrolment from 2017/18 onwards
- Full year effect of the increase in Teachers Employer’s contribution rate (2016/17) to be funded from cash limited delegated budget

3.12 National Insurance (NI)

- There is an impact on NI of changes to the Single Tier Pension. Under current rules, workers in final salary pension schemes can opt out of the earnings related State Second Pension known as S2P
- To reflect the fact that they do not get the second state pension both the “contracted out” worker and their employer pay a lower rate of national insurance
- The new single tier pension will abolish these contracting out rules increasing the Council’s NI costs

3.13 Prices

- It is proposed that no general price inflation is provided within the plan. 1.7% has previously been built in based on the GDP deflator
- It is instead assumed that directorates will absorb non-exceptional inflation within their existing resource base
- If there are material pressures resulting from fee increases or contract price inflation then this will need to be separately identified and evidence based prior to inclusion in the model

3.14 Capital financing

- Capital financing costs are currently based on the approved Capital MTFP, this will be revised when the next Capital MTFP is reviewed

3.15 Demographic pressure

- The increase in older population has been recognized as a pressure in adult social care of £250k for 2016/17 and 2017/18
- A recent report to Cabinet identified the increasing pressure relating to the demand in Children social services as £483k

3.16 Other pressures

- Specific grants – it is expected that a number of grants may be transferred into the main WG funding, for the purposes of this model, it is assumed that all grants continue as currently. If grants are transferred into Revenue support grant then these will not be automatically hypothecated to the purpose for which the grant was given. If specific grants cease, it is expected that the activity will cease. Continuance of an activity following grant funding ceasing, would require a business case to assess each case on its merits.
- Other areas are currently being reviewed to establish whether there is a pressure that cannot be managed or mitigated and therefore needs to be recognized explicitly within the Plan and these will be highlighted in subsequent reports. One pressure that falls into this category is redundancy payments. Whilst there is a £300k budget for school based redundancy, other redundancies have either been managed within existing budgets or drawn from reserves. As such payments will be a feature of costs for the foreseeable future, consideration needs to be given to providing a budget for them.

3.17 The assumptions highlighted above are based on the best information available at the current time, however they will be subject to variation as new information comes to light and our forecasting techniques are refined. What is clear is that there will be a significant gap in the MTFP to find and £18 million will be a working target until more information becomes available. Savings of £5 million are already indicated in the Plan but require review to ensure they are still achievable.

3.18 There are a myriad of other potential pressures which have not been factored in due to the difficulty in estimating the impact. Included in this list would be any further changes in demand for services, legislation changes, (eg. Reform of the arrangements for paying for Social Care and Support), WG requirement to protect schools budgets, review of the structure of local government across Wales, changes to specific grant funding streams and welfare reform.

3.19 The budget monitoring reports later in the year will be assessing the achievability of delivering the savings identified for 2015/16, and the scale of other pressures manifesting in this year of account. It is clear that with the prospect of further reductions in resources, services need to manage within the budgets set and where it is not possible to achieve the savings originally set alternatives must be found and approved to ensure that this is the case. An assessment of the security of delivery of the savings already set in future years of the MTFP is also being undertaken, again with the clear message that if the original savings are not now feasible alternatives are found and brought through the process for approval as quickly as possible.

How we take this forward

- 3.20 The Council has recently approved a variety of documents signaling the direction of travel for the organisation recognising the challenge outlined above. The Partnership has recently set out its Continuance Agreement identifying 4 objectives for the period to the end of the term. These objectives are reflected in the Improvement Plan, and how we support our people through the recently agreed People Strategy. Clearly the challenge is getting increasingly harder and all our resources will be required to ensure that all options are explored and evaluated to make the best possible use of the diminishing resource available, and still meet the priorities and aspirations of the Council.
- 3.21 Schools and frontline social care protection, has been a requirement of Welsh Government in recent years. However, the extent of the problem is such that all service areas of the Council need to form part of the plan to manage the gap in the MTFP. The scale of this challenge in terms of the capacity of the organisation to deliver and the difficult choices that may have to be made cannot be underestimated.

Process

- 3.22 The need to get working on possible solutions has meant that work has started earlier with Members receiving this outline report in June rather than September. The timetable for this work has been adjusted to learn the lessons of previous years. Starting earlier, there is scope to build in more thorough options appraisal with a wide variety of stakeholders and enable engagement and consultation processes, and influence on the emerging plan to be clearly documented. Setting the new path for the Council with a much reduced and further reducing resource base is needed now. This is not going to be an easy task and will involve difficult decisions. It is therefore suggested that the process for developing proposals for the MTFP would follow the steps outlined below:
- A fundamental re-think about what services should be delivered, who should receive them, and the models by which they should be delivered to reduce cost and improve efficiency. Key strands of the work will involve:
 - A continued drive for efficiency and focusing on what matters to citizens
 - Service Redesign including demand management, use of technology to enable digital access to services.
 - Moving to enabling services to be delivered via an array of alternative commissioning arrangements and/or collaboration
 - Income generation – taking opportunities to commercialise services, maximize income generating potential from all the authorities assets and seeking and sourcing new income streams
 - Service reduction, including stopping or closing some services
 - The process for developing ideas into active projects (through structured steps, including option appraisal and an early assessment of Equality impacts) needs to take place over the coming months. This will need to involve as many people as possible including Cabinet, Select committees, working groups, staff and communities.
 - Whilst proposals for next year are key deliverables in a shorter timescale, a longer term horizon is also needed.

- The ideas that are sufficiently developed during this process will be captured for contributing to the MTFP gap and the profile of savings estimated. Specific proposals for the 2016/17 budget will be captured and presented to Cabinet in July where possible, but at this stage it is anticipated that there will still be significant work to do on the initial ideas and the involvement of members and communities will need to be undertaken over the Summer. The underlying MTFP model will also be updated to include new information as it becomes available, specifically information from Welsh Government on the settlement.
- Formal consultation on the budget proposals will then take place through the normal Select committee cycle over October and November. As part of the consultation process the budget proposals will also be considered by the Authority's Equality and Diversity Group.
- Final proposals will be presented to Cabinet in January 2016 after consideration of any consultation feedback. The budget will then go to Council and the statutory requirement to set a Council Tax for the following year, will take place at the end of February.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To ensure that short and medium term budgets are constructed to maximize available resources in favour of the Council's priorities and based on the best available knowledge of local and national funding and expenditure pressures.
- 4.2 To provide the opportunity for full and informed engagement, consultation on and scrutiny of budget proposals and processes.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Nil at this stage

6. EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS:

The significant equality impacts identified in the assessment (Appendix 1) are summarised below for members' consideration:

There are no significant equality impacts identified at this stage. As part of the budget process, individual budget proposals will be assessed for their equality impacts as they are developed. If the equality impacts identified on individual proposals are significant then a full impact assessment will be required and this may affect the timescales for the introduction of any such proposal.

Consultation with the protected characteristics will be covered as a minimum by engagement with the Authority's Equality and Diversity Group.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Implications

7.1 There are no safeguarding implications directly linked to this report.

7. CONSULTEES:

Strategic Leadership Team
All Cabinet Members
Head of Legal Services
Head of Finance

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Nil

9. AUTHOR:

Joy Robson - Head of Finance

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

What are you impact assessing	Service area
MTFP and budget process 2016/17 to 2019/20	Finance
Policy author / service lead	Name of assessor and date
Joy Robson	Joy Robson 14/05/15

1. What are you proposing to do?

Set the scene for budget setting and review of MTFP

2. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics in a **negative** way? If **YES** please tick appropriate boxes below.

Age		Race	
Disability		Religion or Belief	
Gender reassignment		Sex	
Marriage or civil partnership		Sexual Orientation	
Pregnancy and maternity		Welsh Language	

3. Please give details of the negative impact

4. Did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below including any consultation or engagement.

The budget process will include public engagement on the ideas and proposals for budget savings as they come forward

5. Please list the data that has been used to develop this proposal? eg Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service user data, Staff personnel data etc..

N/A

Signed.....Joy Robson.....**Designation**.....**Head of Finance**.....**Dated**.....14/05/15.....

The “Sustainability Challenge”

Name of the Officer completing “the Sustainability challenge” Joy Robson		Please give a brief description of the aims proposed policy or service reconfiguration Report sets the scene for budget setting and review of MTFP	
Name of the Division or service area Finance		Date “Challenge” form completed 14/05/15	
Aspect of sustainability affected	Negative impact Please give details	Neutral impact Please give details	Positive Impact Please give details
PEOPLE		All aspects of the budget proposals will be considered for impact as they are put forward	
Ensure that more people have access to healthy food			
Improve housing quality and provision			
Reduce ill health and improve healthcare provision			
Promote independence			

Encourage community participation/action and voluntary work			
Targets socially excluded			
Help reduce crime and fear of crime			
Improve access to education and training			
Have a positive impact on people and places in other countries			
PLANET			
Reduce, reuse and recycle waste and water			
Reduce carbon dioxide emissions			
Prevent or reduce pollution of the air, land and water			
Protect or enhance wildlife habitats (e.g. trees, hedgerows, open spaces)			
Protect or enhance visual appearance of environment			
PROFIT			

Protect local shops and services			
Link local production with local consumption			
Improve environmental awareness of local businesses			
Increase employment for local people			
Preserve and enhance local identity and culture			
Consider ethical purchasing issues, such as Fairtrade, sustainable timber (FSC logo) etc			
Increase and improve access to leisure, recreation or cultural facilities			

What are the potential negative Impacts	Ideas as to how we can look to MITIGATE the negative impacts (include any reasonable adjustments)
➤	➤
➤	➤

➤	➤
➤	➤

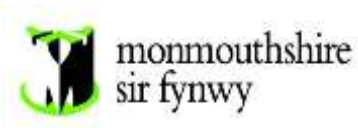
The next steps

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **positive impact please give full details** below

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **Negative Impact** could you please provide us with details of what you propose to do to mitigate the negative impact:

Signed Joy Robson

Dated 14/05/15



SUBJECT: COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION ANTI-FRAUD POLICY

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 3RD JUNE 2015

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: COUNTY BOROUGH WIDE

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Council's new anti-fraud policy detailing the investigation process for Council Tax Reduction Fraud.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the following:
- That the new Council Tax Reduction Anti-Fraud Policy is approved
 - That the Policy is scrutinised on a regular basis by the Adults Select Committee

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background

- 3.1 The Government's Welfare Reform programme includes the establishment of a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) across the United Kingdom administered and controlled by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 3.2 The Single Fraud Investigation Service is responsible for the investigation of all the main social security benefits, tax credits and Housing Benefit.

- 3.3 Housing Benefit is included even though responsibility for delivering the benefit falls to local authorities. The DWP believes that by bringing fraud investigation of Housing Benefit into the single organisation it will create efficiencies and enable a more holistic and rounded view of an investigation taking into account other benefits and tax credits. However, Council Tax Reduction fraud investigation is not included in SFIS and responsibility for this remains with local authorities.
- 3.4 The implementation of SFIS has been gradual with local authority officers given the opportunity to transfer to the new organisation. The three Monmouthshire and Torfaen officers transferred together with the Housing Benefit investigation function in March 2015.
- 3.5 As indicated above Council Tax Reduction (CTR) fraud investigation is not part of the new arrangement. The Shared Benefit Service has retained a jointly funded fraud investigator position to deal with CTR fraud. This is still a significant administrative responsibility despite the transfer of Housing Benefit casework to the DWP. The person is also the single point of contact for the two authorities with the new SFIS service.
- 3.6 Given the change of administrative responsibility the Council is seeking to ensure it has an appropriate policy framework in place to investigate, prevent and deter CTR fraud.
- 3.7 The Council's benefit fraud investigation is delivered by the Shared Benefit Service hosted by Torfaen County Borough Council. This service has been successful in delivering a high quality and efficient benefit service to the residents of Monmouthshire.
- 3.8 The Council Tax Reduction Anti-Fraud Policy (at Appendix 1) details the Shared Service policy regarding the investigation, prevention and deterrence of Benefit fraud.
- 3.9 The Council is committed to ensuring Benefit entitlement is only paid to those that are legitimately entitled and that every attempt is made to eradicate fraud from the benefits system.

Council Tax Reduction Anti-Fraud Policy

- 3.10 The Policy sets the legislation and governance arrangements for the investigation of CTR fraud. The powers available to gather intelligence and prosecute CTR fraud are defined in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2013.
- 3.11 The Policy defines fraud for the purposes of investigation, setting out the professional standards expected of investigating officers, the sharing of information with the DWP and the gathering of intelligence in support of a fraud investigation.
- 3.12 The Policy sets out how an investigation should be conducted and the decision making process, the sanctions that may be applied if fraud is proven including the public interest test for pursuing a prosecution.

3.13 The overall purpose of this Policy is to ensure we have a transparent process in place to protect public funds defining clearly all the stages of an investigation. The Policy, if approved, will be promoted and publically available on the Council's website.

4. REASONS:

To ensure the Council has an approved policy in place for the investigation of Council Tax Reduction Fraud.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There are no financial issues as a result of this proposed policy. The approach being taken will ensure fraud and associated overpayments of benefit are prevented or minimized.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The Policy contains a detailed statement relating to the equalities impact of its implementation and affirming the standards that should be applied.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There are no safeguarding implications directly linked to this Policy. In developing this Policy the Authority seeks to prevent, detect and deter any fraudulent activity linked to the awarding of Council Tax Benefit and in so doing seeks to reduce any monies owed to the Authority.

8. CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Cabinet Members
Head of Legal Services
Head of Finance

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

10. AUTHORS:

Richard Davies – Head of Benefits
Joy Robson – Head of Finance

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644270

E-mail: joyrobson@monmouthshire.gov.uk

The “Equality Initial Challenge”

Name: Joy Robson Service area: Chief Executives - Revenues Date completed: 13 th May 2015		Please give a brief description of what you are aiming to do To adopt an Anti-Fraud Policy for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	
Protected characteristic	Potential Negative impact Please give details	Potential Neutral impact Please give details	Potential Positive Impact Please give details
Age	None	There is no direct impact upon the citizens of Monmouthshire within this Policy	None
Disability	None		None
Marriage + Civil Partnership	None		None
Pregnancy and maternity	None		None
Race	None		None
Religion or Belief	None		None
Sex (was Gender)	None		None
Sexual Orientation	None		None
Transgender	None		None
Welsh Language	None		None

Please give details about any potential negative Impacts .	How do you propose to MITIGATE these negative impacts
➤	➤
➤	➤
➤	➤
➤	➤

Signed: Joy Robson

Designation: Head of Finance

Dated: 13th May 2015

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

What are you impact assessing	Service area
The adoption of an anti-Fraud Policy for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Chief Executives - Revenues
Policy author / service lead	Name of assessor and date
Joy Robson	Ruth Donovan 13 th May 2015

1. What are you proposing to do?

To seek approval of the Council Tax Reduction Anti-Fraud Policy and to recommend that this be scrutinised on a regular basis by the Adult Select Committee.

2. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics in a **negative** way? If **YES** please tick appropriate boxes below.

Age		Race	
Disability		Religion or Belief	
Gender reassignment		Sex	
Marriage or civil partnership		Sexual Orientation	
Pregnancy and maternity		Welsh Language	

3. Please give details of the negative impact

None

4. Did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below including any consultation or engagement.

N/A

5. Please list the data that has been used to develop this proposal? e.g. Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service user data, Staff personnel data etc..

Following the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service, the Local Authority has retained responsibility for Council Tax Reduction Fraud. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to administer and arrange their affairs appropriately. This proposal is in addition to the existing Policy for Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy. The Policy also draws from existing Legislation and Policies as listed on page 3 of the proposed Policy.

Signed: R Donovan **Designation:** Assistant Head of Finance Revenues, Systems & Exchequer **Dated:** 13th May 2015

The “Sustainability Challenge”

Name of the Officer completing “the Sustainability challenge” Ruth Donovan		Please give a brief description of the aims proposed policy or service reconfiguration To seek the adoption of an Anti-Fraud Policy for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	
Name of the Division or service area Chief Executives - Revenues		Date “Challenge” form completed 13 th May 2015	
Aspect of sustainability affected	Negative impact Please give details	Neutral impact Please give details	Positive Impact Please give details
PEOPLE		There is no direct impact upon the citizens of Monmouthshire	
Ensure that more people have access to healthy food			
Improve housing quality and provision			
Reduce ill health and improve healthcare provision			
Promote independence			
Encourage community participation/action and voluntary work			

Targets socially excluded			
Help reduce crime and fear of crime			
Improve access to education and training			
Have a positive impact on people and places in other countries			
PLANET			
Reduce, reuse and recycle waste and water			
Reduce carbon dioxide emissions			
Prevent or reduce pollution of the air, land and water			
Protect or enhance wildlife habitats (e.g. trees, hedgerows, open spaces)			
Protect or enhance visual appearance of environment			
PROFIT			
Protect local shops and services			

Link local production with local consumption			
Improve environmental awareness of local businesses			
Increase employment for local people			
Preserve and enhance local identity and culture			
Consider ethical purchasing issues, such as Fairtrade, sustainable timber (FSC logo) etc			
Increase and improve access to leisure, recreation or cultural facilities			

What are the potential negative Impacts	Ideas as to how we can look to MITIGATE the negative impacts (include any reasonable adjustments)
➤	➤
➤	➤
➤	➤

➤	➤
---	---

The next steps

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **positive impact please give full details** below

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **Negative Impact** could you please provide us with details of what you propose to do to mitigate the negative impact:

Signed : R Donovan

Dated: 13th May 2015



Council Tax Reduction Anti-Fraud Policy

Richard Davies
Head of Revenues and Benefits, Torfaen
Head of Benefits, Monmouthshire
April 2015

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Section 1

Background

This document describes the Council's anti-fraud policy in relation to the Council Tax support local scheme. It is intended to inform the public of the anti-fraud policy pursued by the Shared Benefits Service Fraud Investigations Officers.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to administer and arrange their financial affairs appropriately in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. It is therefore extremely important that the Council applies an appropriate and effective anti-fraud process as part of the administration of Council Tax Reduction.

In developing this policy it is the Council's objective to prevent, detect, correct, punish and deter fraudulent activity in relation to Council Tax Reduction.

This policy relates solely to fraud and corruption in relation to Council Tax Reduction.

For information regarding general matters of fraud and impropriety please refer to Council's Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

Legislation and Governance

All relevant officers are expected to comply with appropriate legislation, codes of practice and corporate policies when executing duties in relation to fraud.

It is imperative that the following codes, legislation and policies are adhered to in order to succeed in executing the fraud process:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 2000
- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement)(Wales) Regulations 2013
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Council's Health and Safety Policy
- Fraud Investigation Procedures
- Shared Benefits Service Memorandum of Understanding
- The Code for Crown Prosecutors
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Code of Conduct for Investigators

This is not an exhaustive list and therefore all officers should act in accordance with any appropriate legislation, corporate/departmental policies and codes of practice that are relevant to their duties in relation to this policy.

Equalities Impact

Our fraud investigators will always act with respect to pertinent legislation and without prejudice when executing its procedures and policies.

The Shared Benefits Service will ensure that all suspects of fraud will receive clear and understandable correspondence making them aware of their legal rights and informing them of all the possible outcomes to an investigation.

The anti-fraud process will not discriminate for or against any individual according to gender, race, sexuality, gender identity, age, disability or belief.

The Shared Benefits Service will never knowingly release information in relation to an investigation where it is contrary to current legislation or is believed to cause harm or vulnerability to any individual's security or beliefs.

Section 2

What is Council Tax Reduction Fraud?

For the purposes of this policy fraud is perceived to be:

Knowingly or dishonestly making a false statement or representation with intent to gaining a financial advantage through a Council Tax Reduction
Or
Knowingly or dishonestly failing to give prompt notice of a change of circumstances, with intent to gaining a financial advantage a Council Tax Reduction

For the purposes of this policy corruption is perceived to be:

The soliciting or accepting of an inducement or reward that may influence the action of a person.
Or
Causing or allowing someone to produce false documents/information or causing or allowing someone in failing to notify a change with intent to gaining a financial advantage through a Council Tax Reduction

The Council approach the investigation of both fraud and corruption in the same manner within the boundaries of their procedures and the constraints of appropriate legislation.

Anti-Fraud Policy

The following measures are pursued in order to minimise the risk of fraud and to prevent, detect, punish and deter fraud in Torfaen and in Monmouthshire.

Claim Checking and Verification of Proofs

The Shared Benefits Service maintains a consistent process of claim verification, whereby the local authority obtains original documentation when assessing council tax support. Proof of identity / National Insurance Number is also obtained when the claimant first applies.

Fraud Investigations

We employ officers who investigate Council Tax Reduction fraud. The Shared Benefits Service is committed to maintaining fraud staff levels and resources, which are proportionate and pertinent to local requirements.

All counter fraud officers receive specific and specialised training in order that they are able to execute their duties in an appropriate and professional manner. Officers will sift and evaluate all referred allegations. All pertinent allegations that pass the risk evaluation will be appropriately investigated for fraud.

All fraud officers employed by the Shared Benefits Service are designated 'Authorised Officers'. This enables counter fraud officers specific use of authorised investigative powers within the parameters of the law. These powers are to be used only for investigative purposes and not to verify claims.

Training

All relevant frontline staff will be appropriately trained to detect irregularities and possible fraud with respect to claims for Council Tax Reduction. All relevant frontline staff will be given fraud awareness training in order that they are able to identify and refer cases of possible Council Tax Reduction fraud. Refresher training will be given appropriately.

Information Sharing

By law, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will be able to share their information with local authorities in order to corroborate the personal and financial circumstances of an applicant in relation to Council Tax Reduction.

In order to prevent, detect and investigate fraud Council is entitled to obtain information from the DWP and HMRC in relation to a Council Tax Reduction claim. Information supplied by these external agencies may be used as evidence in the investigation and criminal process.

The Shared Benefits Service will support the investigation of Housing Benefit fraud by supplying information required to the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS). In addition, referrals relating to Housing Benefit fraud will be notified to SFIS.

Intelligence

The Shared Benefits Service will make appropriate use of intelligence sources through effective and prudent use of data. By maintaining a single point of contact, information and intelligence will be lawfully, consistently and reliably obtained and disseminated to and from internal and external agencies in order to support criminal investigations. Information and Intelligence will be obtained from a number of sources such as credit agencies, financial institutions, government agencies, the police and the public.

Fraud Hotline

Monmouthshire and Torfaen promote the use of a dedicated fraud hotline to assist members of the public in reporting potentially fraudulent activity in the two localities. In addition, contact information for Housing Benefit referrals is also publicised.

Communication

All claimants are provided with documentation written in plain English wherever possible. In addition, information will be written in a clear and understandable format to ensure that claimants are aware of their responsibilities to provide accurate and timely information, in relation to their current circumstances and changes of circumstances. Facilities can be made available for the translation of claim documents into specific languages, when appropriate.

Publicity

The Shared Benefits Service will publicise the results of individual cases, which have resulted in a conviction in the criminal courts. However, details of individuals or individual cases that are not subject to public interest will not be communicated to any third party with respect to pertinent legislation.

Section 3

Authorised Officers

The Shared Benefits Service will appoint officers who are authorised to obtain specific information in relation to Council Tax Reduction investigations. Authorised powers are set out in the Council Tax Reduction scheme (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (Wales) Regulations 2013 in accordance with section 14A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

An authorised officer is legally entitled to obtain information in order to make relevant enquiries or examine records relating to any person claiming Council Tax Reduction.

In addition and subject to proportionality, the employment and financial records of a person who is related to an investigation by association may also be checked, for example partners of claimants. A local authority can prosecute an employer or any third party that obstructs an authorised officer in executing their duties.

Counter fraud officers employed by the Shared Benefits Service will be appointed as authorised officers in accordance with the law. An authorised officer is able to obtain, when appropriate and proportionate, information regarding the personal details of an individual suspected of or party to an offence relating to Council tax support fraud. Information may be requested from establishments, businesses or institutions in order to obtain the relevant circumstances of an individual suspected of any offences in relation to Council tax support.

Directed Surveillance

All fraud officers are trained to execute appropriate and proportionate use of directed surveillance in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

Directed surveillance will be carried out in an investigation where it is deemed appropriate and proportionate in accordance with the RIPA 2000 code of practice.

In addition, officers will observe and comply with corporate surveillance standards as directed by the authorising officers and solicitors as set out in the Council's RIPA 2000 policy.

Authorisation to carry out surveillance for may only be granted by the one of the following officers:

- Richard Davies – Head of Revenues and Benefits
- Peter Williams, Chief Internal Auditor, Torfaen

All surveillance requests, reviews and cancellations must be recorded retained, and signed by the authorising officer.

Once an application for directed surveillance has been counter signed by an authorising officer it must then be presented to a Justice of the Peace for approval. An officer will not be authorised to execute directed surveillance until a RIPA 2000 application has received appropriate approval from the Justice of the Peace.

All surveillance requests are time bound, and all amendments and renewals relating to directed surveillance requests must be appropriately authorised.

Each Council's internal audit section will maintain all records of authorised surveillance accurately and conveniently so that they are readily available for inspection on request for the Commissioner for Surveillance or the Audit Commission.

Section 4

Sanctions and Prosecutions

The power to apply a sanction or prosecute will only be based when appropriate. Fraud investigators will give careful consideration of taking further action against anyone who has committed fraud in order to obtain Council Tax Reduction. The details of each fraud case will be taken into account and measured against the evidential and public interest test stated in the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Any case failing to meet the requirements associated with either test should not be considered suitable for sanction or prosecution.

Appropriate Enforcement Action

In all cases investigated the Fraud Investigator will supply an investigation report to the Head of Revenues and Benefits showing the officer's actions, conclusions and recommendations regarding the investigation. The Head of Revenues and Benefits will then make the final decision as to whether it is appropriate and proportionate to take further enforcement action against the person or persons subject to investigation. Further enforcement action means prosecution or offering an alternative sanction (administrative penalty).

Excess Council Tax Reduction Recovery Only

In certain cases no criminal proceedings will be taken against the person who has committed an offence and caused or could have caused excess Council Tax Reduction to be awarded.

Any excess Council Tax Reduction that has been awarded to a person will be returned to the individual's council tax liability whether it is subject to an offence or not.

No further enforcement action will be taken a person who has committed an offence if it is decided that:

- it is not in the public interest to pursue criminal proceedings or a sanction
- the offence is considered to be so minor it is not proportionate to consider criminal proceedings or a sanction

Caution

A caution is a non-statutory disposal for offenders aged 18 years or over. It is administered as an alternative to prosecution. A caution can only be considered when there is sufficient evidence to justify instituting criminal proceedings and the offender has admitted the offence during an interview under caution (IUC).

If the offender is subsequently prosecuted for an offence relating to excess council tax the caution may be cited in Court.

Cautioning is based on the principle that no authority is under an obligation to prosecute when offences have been established.

Council procedure for cautioning is based on guidelines issued by the Ministry of Justice for the use of simple cautions by police officers and Crown Prosecutors.

The caution is not maintained on police records and is not required to be declared to any third party by the recipient.

The aims of the caution are:

- To offer a proportionate response to low level offending where the offender has admitted the offence;
- To deliver swift, simple and effective justice that carries a deterrent effect;
- To record an individual's criminal conduct for possible reference in future criminal proceedings relating to Council Tax Reduction offences
- To reduce the likelihood of re-offending;

Circumstances where a caution might be appropriate are:

- The person is 18 or over
- The person has admitted to an offence in an interview under caution
- The person has not offended before
- Criminal proceedings are not the first option
- Penalty action is not appropriate

The Shared Benefits Service may consider administering a caution as an alternative to prosecution providing all the following requirements have been met:

- The evidential criteria for prosecution are satisfied.
- A caution is appropriate for the offence and to the person, having given consideration to the offender's previous record relating to similar offences
- The person has fully admitted the offence during an interview under caution (IUC).

The list of considerations and conditions to offer a caution is not exhaustive. The decision to offer a caution rests with the local authority dependent on the individual circumstances of a case.

If an offender refuses to accept a caution the case may be referred to Legal for consideration of prosecution.

Penalty as alternative to prosecution

The legislation governing the use of a financial penalty as an alternative to prosecution where a person has fraudulently claimed Council Tax Reduction is contained in section 14C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The conditions by which a penalty might be used are described in regulation 11 of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (Wales Regulations 2013).

Penalties may be offered as an alternative to prosecution when a fraudulent claim -

- (i) Caused excess Council Tax Reduction to be awarded
- (ii) Could have caused excess Council Tax Reduction to be awarded.

In accordance with the legislation a penalty offered as an alternative to prosecution will be a minimum of £100 or 50% of the fraudulent excess Council tax support claimed by the offender (rounded down to the nearest penny) whichever figure is greater. A penalty should not exceed £1000.00. A person does not have to accept the penalty.

Agreeing to accept the penalty will give offenders immunity from prosecution for identified offences relating to Council Tax Reduction.

An offender who has agreed to pay the penalty is entitled to withdraw their agreement within 14 days of signing the original agreement. If an agreement is withdrawn the local authority will be legally entitled to prosecute the offender.

Any case considered appropriate for a penalty must also be suitable for prosecution.

Factors considered in deciding whether to offer an administrative penalty as an alternative to prosecution are:

- The evidential criteria for prosecution are satisfied
- Any known previous offences for fraud
- The prospect of timely payment.

A penalty is offered to an offender at a specially arranged interview.

The penalty will be added to the appropriate person's council tax liability.

All conditions relating to the penalty will be stated at the point of notification.

Refusal to accept a penalty or withdrawal from an agreement to accept a penalty will result in an offender losing immunity to prosecution for a Council Tax Reduction offence

Prosecution

Prosecution will be considered against someone who has committed an offence in order to receive Council Tax Reduction. The Shared Benefits Service will administer the sanction it deems appropriate with respect to the individual circumstances of each case.

The Fraud Investigator will decide if it is appropriate to recommend prosecution of an offender subsequent to carrying out an evidential and public interest test. An appropriate enforcement action form is completed which, conveys the decision making process. The Head of Revenues and Benefits will consider each decision and approve as appropriate.

Normally, prosecution will only be considered where the financial value of the claim exceeds £2,000.

If it is decided that prosecution is the most effective means of dealing with an offence, the service will instruct the appropriate legal section to examine the evidence of a case for suitability in order to pursue or reject legal proceedings.

The legal service will provide reasons why a case is to be pursued or rejected to the Fraud Investigator.

Prosecution of an offender will take place in a Magistrates or Crown Court.

The Decision To Prosecute

When a Fraud Investigator has established an offence relating to Council Tax Reduction the investigation file will be passed to the Head of Revenues and Benefits. A report will set out the officer's conclusions and recommendations regarding the investigation. The Head of Revenues and Benefits will make the final decision with respect to appropriate enforcement action.

As part of the fraud process the Fraud Investigator may refer to The Code for Crown Prosecutors as a guide to establishing the value of prosecuting offenders by referring to the evidential and public interest tests. The Code for Crown Prosecutors states that a case worthy of prosecution must pass an evidential and public interest test.

Evidential Test

In making a decision to prosecute, the local authority must be satisfied that there is enough evidence to provide a 'realistic prospect of conviction'. A realistic prospect of conviction is an objective test meaning that a jury, magistrate or judge hearing a case which, is properly directed in accordance with the law, is more likely than not to convict the defendant of the alleged offence. Evidence must be able to be used in a court of law. It must have been gathered appropriately, in accordance with the law and be from a reliable source.

If a case does not pass the 'evidential test' it must not go ahead no matter how important or serious the offence seems. If the case does pass the evidential stage then it should move on to the second stage to decide if a prosecution is appropriate in the public interest.

Public Interest Test

The Shared Benefits Service will always consider public interest judiciously and will balance the factors for and against prosecution objectively.

In making the decision whether it is in the public interest to prosecute, the following factors will be considered:

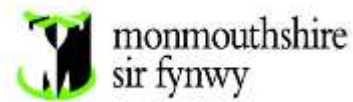
Some Common Public Interest Factors In Favour Of Prosecution

- The seriousness of the offence;
- a conviction is likely to result in a significant sentence;
- the defendant was in a position of authority or trust;
- there is evidence that the offence was premeditated, e.g. the Council tax support claim was false from its inception;
- there is evidence that the defendant instigated and organised the fraud;
- there is previous incidence of fraud;
- there are grounds for believing that the alleged offence is likely to be continued or repeated, based on any history of recurring conduct;
- the alleged offence, irrespective of its seriousness, is widespread in the area it is or was committed;

Some Common Public Interest Factors Against Prosecution

- the court is likely to impose a nominal penalty;
- the offence was committed as a result of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding (factors balanced against the seriousness of the offence);
- the impact of any loss of funds can be described as minor and was the result of a single incident, particularly if it was the result of misjudgment;
- there have been long and avoidable delays between the offence taking place and the date of the trial, unless:
 - (i) the offence is serious
 - (ii) the delay is caused in part by the defendant
 - (iii) the offence has only recently come to light
 - (iv) the complexity of the offence has caused a long investigation;
- the defendant is elderly or is, or was at the time of the offence suffering from significant mental or physical illness, this is balanced against the seriousness and complexity of the offence
- the defendant has put right the loss that was caused (though defendants must not avoid prosecution purely on the basis that they have cleared a debt or paid compensation);
- Any voluntary disclosure;
- Social factors such as domestic abuse, or substance abuse

The various reasons listed above both for and against prosecution are not exhaustive. The factors that apply will depend on the facts in each individual case.



SUBJECT:	VALE OF USK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	3rd June 2015
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To approve the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy 2014-2020 (LDS) the overarching document which will inform the activities to be delivered and funded through the Rural Development Programme (RDP).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To approve the Vale of Usk LDS to be reviewed on an annual basis, in line with Welsh Government (WG) requirements.
- 2.2 To underwrite a 20% match funding contribution requirement to fund the RDP activities in the Monmouthshire wards, acknowledging that a level of budget provision already exists within the existing 2007-2013 RDP activities.
- 2.3 To establish a designated earmarked reserve to carry forward any unspent MCC match fund contribution in any given year that will be required to match fund the 2014-2020 programme.
- 2.4 To endorse the current Partnership with Newport City Council (NCC) with MCC acting as Administrative Body.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 As a predominantly rural county, the main source of European funding for Monmouthshire is the RDP. The current programme for the funding period (2007 – 2013) ended in May 2015 and a new funding bid was submitted to WG in September 2014 for the 2014-2020 funding period.

- 3.2 RDP LEADER funding is slightly different to most European funds in that the activity is governed by an independent local body, a Local Action Group (LAG) representing local people from the public, private and third sectors. Since 2001 the LEADER funding in Monmouthshire has been governed by the adventa LAG. However in this funding period, WG have not only extended the RDP coverage areas but also stipulated that local authorities are required to brigade forces to reduce administrative costs.
- 3.3 As a result an approach was made by NCC and it was agreed that, for RDP funding purposes, a joint LAG would be formed with Newport, namely the Vale of Usk LAG. The Vale of Usk LAG was therefore established in January 2014 to oversee the governance, strategic direction and successful delivery of the Vale of Usk 2014-2020 LDS funded via the RDP and WG (80%) with 20% match funding support from project sponsors. The LAG territory covers the rural wards and service centres of Monmouthshire and Newport and succeeds the adventa LAG established in 2001, which previously governed the rural wards of Monmouthshire only.
- 3.4 The total population covered by the Vale of Usk LAG area is 82,019. This is made up of the Monmouthshire rural wards population of 56,854 with an additional 10,341 located in the service centre areas plus the rural wards population of Newport of 9,231 with an additional 5,593 in the service centres.
- 3.5 The development and design of the LDS recognises the need to undertake actions that will provide consensus within the new rural territory across Monmouthshire and Newport to “*combine and integrate to achieve the maximum results*”. Following a community engagement process undertaken in the summer of 2014, findings were reviewed to ascertain how the LEADER approach can add value and avoid duplication. As a result a vision was agreed on how RDP funds will be used to generate the right change for the area which is to develop:

“A connected territory, in a beautiful landscape, focussed on fostering thriving communities and building resilient local economies whilst embracing the natural and cultural assets of the area”

- 3.6 A complimentary hierarchy of objectives were also agreed which will underpin activity undertaken under the five key RDP themes which are:
- Adding Value to local identity and natural and cultural resources
 - Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains
 - Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services
 - Renewable energy at Community level
 - Exploitation of digital technology
- 3.7 As a result of WG funding requirements, it has also been agreed that funding will be allocated according to the priority weighting that each of the themes were given by respondents during the consultation process. As a result activity will take place under all five themes but particular

emphasis will be placed on the 'Exploitation of Digital Technology' and 'Adding Value to local identity and natural and cultural resources'. This can of course be adjusted to reflect changing needs as part of the annual review process.

- 3.8 Once the new programme is launched in July 2015 the LAG will make a regular call for projects under all five themes and, following the completion of an initial expression of interest, communities of interest will be invited to apply for funds where appropriate. Support to develop projects will come from the Authority's RDP delivery team which will be 100% funded through the RDP. The delivery team will be much smaller than the last funding period, reducing from fifteen to a core team of six, due to a reduction in the funding allocation from WG following an extension of the coverage of the programme and a shift in emphasis between the two RDP programmes, from actual project delivery to facilitation, up-skilling, mobilisation of community resources and volunteering.
- 3.9 To reduce costs WG has also stipulated that there will be one lead partner or 'Administrative Body' in administrative and financial matters relating to the delivery of the LDS. Given their significant experience, MCC will be the Administrative Body for the Vale of Usk LAG and a Collaboration Agreement has been drafted determining the joint arrangements to discharge these function which includes employment and management of the RDP delivery team. A report will be coming forward regarding the re-purposing and renaming of the Council's Community Interest Company from CMC² to Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise and it's re-positioning as a wholly external Enterprise-focussed vehicle. Should this proposal be approved it would include the 'spinning out' of the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise team (which includes the RDP delivery team), into the Council's CIC on a secondment basis. However, the Administrative Body status and RDP funds will remain with the Council.
- 3.10 The draft Local Development Strategy was submitted to WG in September 2014 and presented to Economic and Development Select Committee in October 2014. Since then some minor amendments have been made following requests for further information with regard to operational issues and full WG approval has now been received (see Appendix Two). The LAG is therefore intending to commence the delivery of the 2014-20 RDP programme with effect from 1st July 2015, the team has been secured and is mobilised.

4. REASONS

- 4.1 Monmouthshire communities benefited significantly during the 2007-2013 RDP to the tune of £11.2M. The new 2014-2020 RDP brings £2.79M of funding to the Vale of Usk area which has the potential to:
- Make the area more connected in terms of rural programme identity and linking common assets for mutual benefit;
 - Provide more opportunity for communities to learn from each other with the opportunity for Monmouthshire as a mature rural development area to share lessons learnt with Newport whilst also trialling new ideas and projects;
 - Consolidate the significant investment that has taken place in Monmouthshire through previous rural development programmes and extend the reach in terms of physical and digital improvements and community led initiatives;

- Recognise the value of countryside and landscape and how this connects rural and semi-urban places. This will be key in making the Vale of Usk area coherent and understanding how the environment can play a part in access, heritage, identity, mobility, tourism, exploration and realising local economic development initiatives;
- Place digital technology as a horizontal activity as a way to delivering smart, dynamic and enterprising communities and businesses underpinned by a culture which provides support, training and mentoring opportunities.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The RDP provides the authority with the means, through a 20% match funding contribution, to access a significant revenue grant funding opportunity. The proposed vision outlined in 3.5 above is consistent with the Authority's vision to build sustainable and resilient communities and is wholly aligned with the Whole Place approach.
- 5.2 This is a significant programme with a £2.79M RDP funding provision. The costs for administering and managing delivery of the programme amount to £697,500 and are 100% funded.
- 5.3 The total implementation programme amounts to £2.62M with the Authority and NCC's funding packages amounting to £2.14m and £473,000 respectively. EU/WG funds 80% of these costs, with constituent authorities match funding the remaining 20%. This requires the Authority to underwrite match funding of £428,573 based on Monmouthshire's eligible wards. The remaining £94,552 will be underwritten by NCC.
- 5.4 The revenue match funding contribution for MCC will be payable over the seven year life of the 2014-2020 RDP programme. An estimated profile has been established that indicates that greater levels of expenditure will be incurred in the latter stages of the programme. The match funding contribution therefore peaks in year seven at £103,557 (4%) with lower levels of match funding being required in the earlier years of the programme. Given that the average match funding contribution per annum of £61,225 falls within the existing 2014/15 revenue budget that exists to support the previous programme it is proposed that a designated earmarked reserve is used to carry forward any unspent MCC match funding contribution in any given year that will be required to fund the latter years of the 2014-2020 programme.

6. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The decisions highlighted in this report have no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications.

7. SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 As indicated in the Sustainability and Equality Impact Assessments that can be found in Appendix One it is clear that through the planned activities associated with the delivery of the new 2014-2020 RDP programme, there are many opportunities to address issues such as rural

and social isolation; digital exclusion; and reduced carbon emissions through local community energy programmes. There are also opportunities to work with local organisations to increase footfall in Monmouthshire's local high streets; increase employment opportunities and raise awareness of local procurement opportunities.

8. CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Economy and Development Select Committee Members
Cabinet Members
Head of Legal Services
Vale of Usk LAG
Wider Monmouthshire and Newport Communities

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy (Appendix Two)

10. AUTHORS:

Peter Davies, Head of Commercial and People Development– peterdavies@monmouthshire.gov.uk (01633) 644294
Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise– cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk (01633) 748316

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM – Appendix One

What are you impact assessing	Service area
The Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy and Rural Development Programme activities	Enterprise
Policy author / service lead	Name of assessor and date
Kellie Beirne	C Fallon, 7 th May 2015

1. What are you proposing to do?

To deliver a programme of activities and projects which will be funded by the RDP and guided by the aims and objectives specified within the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy.

The Vale of Usk area includes rural wards in Newport therefore a partnership between the two authorities now exists whereby RDP activities being undertaken in Monmouthshire wards will be underwritten by a 20% match funding contribution from MCC and NCC will provide match funding for the activities undertaken in their rural wards. MCC will act as Administrative Body for the whole programme area.

2. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics in a **negative** way? If **YES** please tick appropriate boxes below. **No**

Age		Race	
Disability		Religion or Belief	
Gender reassignment		Sex	
Marriage or civil partnership		Sexual Orientation	
Pregnancy and maternity		Welsh Language	

3. Please give details of the negative impact

n/a

4. Did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below including any consultation or engagement.

n/a

- 5. Please list the data that has been used to develop this proposal? e.g. Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service user data, Staff personnel data etc.

Secondary research data collated during the community engagement exercise UK Govt Data, Welsh Govt Data, MCC and NCC Data

Signed.....C Fallon.....**Designation**...Head of Economy and Enterprise ...**Dated**.....7th May 2015.....

The “Sustainability Challenge”

Name of the Officer completing “the Sustainability challenge” C Fallon		Please give a brief description of the aims proposed policy or service reconfiguration. To deliver a programme of activities and projects which will be funded by the RDP and guided by the aims and objectives specified within the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy.	
Name of the Division or service area Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise		Date “Challenge” form completed 7 th May 2015	
Aspect of sustainability affected	Negative impact Please give details	Neutral impact Please give details	Positive Impact Please give details
PEOPLE			
Ensure that more people have access to healthy food	n/a	n/a	Raise awareness of local food production and outlets.
Improve housing quality and provision	n/a	n/a	n/a
Reduce ill health and improve healthcare provision	n/a	n/a	n/a
Promote independence	n/a	n/a	n/a

Encourage community participation/action and voluntary work	n/a	n/a	Raise awareness of local volunteering opportunities and encourage community participation through the delivery of community projects and initiatives.
Targets socially excluded	n/a	n/a	Raise awareness of rural isolation, digital exclusion and local community participation opportunities.
Help reduce crime and fear of crime	n/a	n/a	n/a
Improve access to education and training	n/a	n/a	Offer access to training opportunities and ICT exploitation activities.
Have a positive impact on people and places in other countries	n/a	n/a	Opportunities will exist through the delivery of transnational cooperation projects.
PLANET			
Reduce, reuse and recycle waste and water	n/a	n/a	Raise awareness of recycling opportunities.
Reduce carbon dioxide emissions	n/a	n/a	Encourage use of community transport schemes.

Prevent or reduce pollution of the air, land and water	n/a	n/a	Encourage local procurement therefore reducing carbon dioxide emissions.
Protect or enhance wildlife habitats (e.g. trees, hedgerows, open spaces)	n/a	n/a	Encourage positive use of natural habitats.
Protect or enhance visual appearance of environment	n/a	n/a	Encourage positive environmental programmes.
PROFIT			
Protect local shops and services	n/a	n/a	Work with local organisations to increase footfall and spend by encouraging citizens to shop locally thus protecting local shops and services.
Link local production with local consumption			Raise awareness of these issues and encourage positive participation.
Improve environmental awareness of local businesses			Work with local organisations to raise awareness of these issues and encourage positive participation.
Increase employment for local people			Work with local town centre organisations to help ensure the towns hold a mix of sectors and services which support each other and further enhance the

			town's offer and vitality.
Preserve and enhance local identity and culture			Encourage activities which will enhance and preserve Monmouthshire's local identity and culture.
Consider ethical purchasing issues, such as Fairtrade, sustainable timber (FSC logo) etc.			This will be considered as part of the RDP programme of activities.
Increase and improve access to leisure, recreation or cultural facilities	n/a	n/a	The team aims to work with local organisations to create a quality environment where people can access leisure facilities easily and efficiently.

What are the potential negative Impacts	Ideas as to how we can look to MITIGATE the negative impacts (include any reasonable adjustments)
➤ n/a	➤ n/a

The next steps

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **positive impact** please give full details below

Through the planned activities associated with the delivery of the new 2014-2020 RDP programme there are many opportunities to address issues such as rural and social isolation; digital exclusion; and reduced carbon emissions through local community energy programmes. There are also opportunities to work with local organisations to increase footfall in Monmouthshire's local high streets; increase employment opportunities and raise awareness of local procurement.

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **Negative Impact** could you please provide us with details of what you propose to do to mitigate the negative impact:

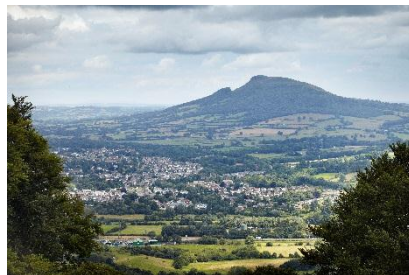
n/a

Signed C Fallon

Dated 7th May 2015

LEADER 2014-2020

VALE OF USK LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



MARCH 2015



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu
Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi
mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development: Europe Investing in
Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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i. **NAME OF LAG AND CONTACT DETAILS**

Name of Local Action Group	Vale of Usk
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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALES

Proposed Start Date (no earlier than 1 January 2015)	1 st July 2015
End Date (no later than 31 December 2021)	31 December 2021

1. STRATEGIC FIT

1.1 Definition of the area and population covered by the strategy

1.1.1 Background

The Vale of Usk Local Action Group (LAG) was established in January 2014 to oversee the governance, strategic direction and successful delivery of the Vale of Usk 2014-2020 Local Development Strategy (LDS) which is funded via the Rural Development Programme (RDP) and Welsh Government (80%) with 20% match funding support from project sponsors. The Vale of Usk LAG territory covers the rural wards of Monmouthshire and Newport and succeeds the adventa LAG, established in 2001, which previously governed the rural wards of Monmouthshire only.

1.1.2 Key facts:

- The total population covered by the Vale of Usk LAG area is **82,019**. This is made up of the Monmouthshire rural wards population of 56,854 with an additional 10,341 located in the service centre areas (using 30% eligibility factor) plus the rural wards population of Newport of 9,231 with an additional 5,593 in the service centres;
- In June 2012, 79% of Monmouthshire's population (highest in Wales) and 77% of Newport's population were economically active of which 74% and 69.8% respectively were in employment;
- However, in 2011, average gross weekly full-time earnings in Monmouthshire stood at £494. (Weekly full-time earnings by workplace were £427.00 in 2013, NOMIS) This was the ninth lowest in Wales indicating that although those living in Monmouthshire are amongst the highest earners, those working in Monmouthshire have some of the lowest earnings suggesting a strong element of out-commuting;
- Approximately 2.1 million people visit Monmouthshire, and 2.37 million people visit Newport each year;
- Tourism contributes £163.5 million to Monmouthshire's local economy supporting 10.1% of employment; in Newport tourism contributes £207.11 M to the local economy supporting 2784 jobs; and
- In 2011, Monmouthshire had 663 active businesses per 10,000 of the population. This is the second highest level in Wales, however over 80% of these businesses are micro enterprises with few or no employees. 23% of all local VAT/ PAYE registered businesses are based within rural areas of Newport.

The headline objective for Monmouthshire and Newport Wards in terms of the new LEADER programme is to ensure that people in the locale benefit from an economy which is prosperous and supports enterprise and sustainable growth. This is based around a need to embrace the counties truly entrepreneurial spirit whilst adding true value to local communities.

Given the high level of micro enterprises and low earnings a wide range of employment and training opportunities are needed in the LAG area, not only for our young people who are starting out but also for our older people whose retirement age has been extended.

The largest employer in Monmouthshire and Newport is the Public Service sector where 34.7% (2013) and 30% respectively of people are employed however the reported budget cuts over the next four years are likely to see this percentage reduce significantly. There is therefore a need for more bespoke support for businesses to assist in the development of start-ups and support existing enterprises, providing local networking opportunities and actively encouraging job creation. This will help bridge the forthcoming gaps and reduce the need for increased out-commuting and migration which will also reduce the carbon impact in the counties whilst supporting the local economy.

The natural environment of the LAG area is its biggest asset but the associated terrain and restricted planning regulations present their own problems in terms of economic sustainability due to the understandably protectionist nature of planning policies. The Brecon Beacons National Park and the Wye Valley are two areas nationally recognised as places of natural beauty that create excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation and wildlife tourism. The area has extensive heritage sites and areas of historical significance with an estimated 26 castle sites.

However while tourism contributes significantly to the local economies, it has the potential to contribute much more. The proposed LEADER programme would aim to encourage local communities to take a more active role in maximising sustainable economic advantage and competitiveness from their cultural and natural assets by encouraging product development to encourage visitors in the off peak seasons. Monmouthshire and Newport already have strong Destination Marketing strategies so the aim of activities detailed in this strategy are to encourage communities to work closely with the LAG to identify opportunities for sustainable development that maximise the economic potential whilst reducing the environmental impact on the landscape.

While the take-up of broadband is high in the LAG area, coverage and performance in rural areas is poor which in part is due to the terrain. This can act as a barrier to encouraging new enterprise into the county, as well as exacerbating rural isolation in outlying communities. There is also a growing demand and need for ICT exploitation support and training activities which is particularly pertinent in the farming sector where farmers are being encouraged to submit claims, etc. 'on line'. This coupled with the Superfast Cymru Broadband rollout and other WG ICT exploitation schemes present real opportunities to digital inclusion and ICT exploitation for communities.

Agriculture also faces other challenges. Monmouthshire particularly is predominantly a rural county having a relatively low population density of 100 people per square kilometre compared to an average for Wales of 141 per square kilometre. In fact, over 60% of the population is concentrated in 20% of the county area i.e. the M4 corridor and Abergavenny district. A dependence upon traditional farming in Monmouthshire has led to a struggling rural economy with poor employment opportunities and as a result, depopulation. The decline in agricultural activities has also had a significant impact on the landscape as some traditional farm holdings have been sold off to 'hobby' farmers who have developed different uses for the land rather than agriculture.

It is also the LAG's intention to take steps to address poverty. The LAG area will experience a significant increase in its older population during the next 10 years and the gap in life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas is significant and must be closed. It

has also been found that between 35-40% of families in social housing accommodation in the LAG area will be negatively affected by the new welfare reforms with over 360 households making a homelessness application to the Councils in 2011/2012, with 65% of tenants in social housing in receipt of benefits. The LAG area also experiences fuel poverty in households in the most deprived wards which also needs to be addressed.

It is LAG's overall intention to work towards achieving 'The ten key characteristics of a Sustainable Rural Community'¹ – this will establish our communities as economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally sustainable;

- A population with a viable age structure i.e. a healthy mix of old and young;
- A diversified economic base beyond the primary agricultural and production sectors;
- A viable and sustainable primary sector which provides both fresh food and other needs;
- A rural population with the physical and mental health which is at least as good as it is elsewhere;
- Access to an attractive and clean environment;
- Pride in the local identity i.e. history, culture and environment;
- Widespread business ownership i.e. high rates of locally financed and initiated new small enterprises;
- Public agencies working together towards common goals and agreed values;
- Local communities working together to assess risks and prepare for change; and
- Healthy rural communities doing their own development and not having it done to them by others.

1.1.3 Population Analysis

As noted the total population of the LAG area is 127,964. The eligible areas to be covered can be viewed in the attached maps highlighting the relevant wards (Monmouthshire see *Appendix One*, Newport see *Appendix Two*). The population size and distribution is broken down as follows:

Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire is a rural county, geographically, the seventh largest in Wales. However, although its population has risen from 84,885 in the 2001 census to 91,323 in the 2011 census it remains one of the least densely populated counties in Wales. Half of the population live in the main towns of Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Caldicot and Chepstow whilst the other half live in the rural areas. Tables one and two following, detail the ward population in 2011 which has been split between rural wards and service centre wards for clarity.

¹ 'Commission for Rural Communities' a think piece by Prof John Bryden and Amanda Bryan, based on the 'Dynamics for Rural Areas in Europe (DORA)' project

Table One: Monmouthshire's Rural Wards

Caerwent (1, 791)	Llanelly Hill (3,899)	Mill (2,482)	Shirenewton (2,201)
Crucorney (2,121)	Llanfoist Fawr (1,868)	Mitchel Troy (1,253)	The Elms (3,658)
Devauden (1,480)	Llangybi Fawr (1,861)	Overmonnow (2,388)	Trellech United (2,759)
Dixton with Osbaston (2,569)	Llanover (2,284)	Portskewett (2,133)	Usk (2,834)
Drybridge (3,432)	Llantillio Crossenny (1,755)	Raglan (1,928)	Wyesham (2,119)
Goetre Fawr (2,393)	Llanwenarth Ultra (1,447)	Rogiet (1,813)	
Llanbadoc (1,299)	Mardy (1,469)	St.Arvals (1,618)	

Table Two: Monmouthshire's Service Centre Wards

Caldicot Castle (1,919)	Dewstow (1,983)	Larkfield (2,014)	St.Mary's (1,847)
Cantref (2,036)	Green Lane (2,069)	Priory (2,196)	Severn (1,689)
Croesonen (2,437)	Grofield (1,853)	St.Christopher's (2,582)	Thornwell (2,749)
Castle Abergavenny (1797)	Lansdown (2,196)	St.Kingsmark (3,158)	West End (1,944)

Newport

Conversely Newport is predominantly an urban county with 145,736 residents with 7.6 people per hectare compared to 1.1 in Monmouthshire. There are therefore only five eligible wards in Newport, two rural wards and three service centres as per the breakdown in tables three and four below.

Table Three: Newport's Rural Wards

		All usual residents		Area (hectares)		Density (number of persons per hectare)
Ward	Llanwern	2961	2.03%	3988	20.93%	0.7
Ward	Marshfield	6270	4.30%	3549	18.63%	1.8

Table Four: Newport's Service Centre Wards

Ward	Graig	6159	4.23%	1434	7.53%	4.3
Ward	Caerleon	8061	5.53%	1394	7.32%	5.8
Ward	Langstone	4425	3.04%	3034	15.92%	1.5

1.1.4 Cross Boundary working

The submission of this joint Local Development Strategy is clear evidence of the LAG's intention to work across administrative boundaries. The Vale of Usk LAG area incorporates both Monmouthshire and Newport wards and offers a sensible and tangible opportunity to form a partnership between two areas which already work closely together. This is not only because both counties share transport and infrastructure systems but also because they have already done so very successfully, especially in terms of tourism. This is exemplified through the long established Wye Valley and Vale of Usk tourism Destination Marketing area/brand.

However, the membership of the LAG also offers opportunities to extend cross boundary working further as exemplified by the appointment of a regional Officer of Natural Resources Wales. The Wye Valley AONB and Brecon Beacons National Park have both been members of the previous adventa LAG since its inception in 2001 and as a result strong working relationships have been established. Although not named as proposed members of the Vale of Usk LAG it is the intention to appoint staff members of the organisations as advisors to the LAG working groups to ensure that this relationship is maintained.

The extent of these relationships has been exemplified particularly well in the current LEADER cooperation project which is managed by adventa, [Walking with Offa](#). This is a strategic cross border project which has brought together rural development and tourism bodies along the Welsh-English border to promote walking, sustainable tourism and transport along either side of the Offa's Dyke National Trail, both the Wye Valley AONB and the BBNPA are partners. It is the intention of the LAG to submit a Phase II application for this RDP delivery period.

Other examples of cross geographical border working in the area include the [Wye Valley and Forest of Dean tourism association](#) who have participated fully in RDP activities during the last 2007 – 2013 funding period and will be invited to do so again. In addition [Severn Wye Energy Agency](#) has been a key partner in delivering current energy projects. It is the LAGs intention to continue working with these and many other cross border organisations during the next phase of delivery.

1.1.5 Extension of the current partnership

At the time of the initial submission of the LDS in September 2014 Monmouthshire County Council had been approached by Torfaen County Borough Council to extend the current partnership with Newport City Council to include their rural territories within this application. Although all partners were in agreement in principle, Torfaen County Borough Council decided not to pursue a partnership arrangement. The reason for this is it would have had a detrimental effect on their overall funding allocation as their individual LAG status would have been revoked, resulting in a rescinding of the £500,000 individual LAG allocation.

1.2 Description of Integration

In order to attain maximum value for money and avoid any duplication of effort this strategy takes into account current local, national and regional programmes, to ensure complementarity at a strategic level.

1.2.1 LEADER - Complementarity, Coherence and Consistency

The development and design of this LDS has recognised the need to ensure its objectives and resulting actions provide consensus within the new rural territory across Monmouthshire and Newport, to “*combine and integrate to achieve the maximum results*”. Through the community involvement process and through strategic officer discussions findings have been reviewed to ascertain how the LEADER approach can add value and not result in duplication. This has been undertaken in the following way:

- Understanding what has been achieved through adventa to date and how to build on historical rural development investment and where new and added value activity can take place and create sustainable impact;
- Reviewing emerging programmes and projects within the territory and assessing whether the RDP can complement or not;
- Hosting workshop based sessions to look at synergy and linkages between the two local authority areas and how common projects can be co-ordinated; Examples of this include;
 - Living Levels Partnership
 - Destination Management Plans
 - Strategic paths and trails
 - Community transport; and
- Assessing project ideas and proposals that have arisen through the on-line survey and through face to face engagement in terms of pulling together local support measures and looking at both spatial and sectoral linkages so that maximum benefits are achieved.

From the analysis and taking into account the need for coherence and consistency of approach to integration the following choices have been made in relation to generating the right change for the area. These include:

1. The need to make the area connected in terms of rural programme identity and association in terms of delivery as well as linking assets that are common to both or have a mutual benefit of partnering;
2. The need for communities across the territory to learn from each other, with the opportunity for Monmouthshire as a mature rural development area to share lessons learnt with Newport; there is also the opportunity for innovation and some trail-blazing for Newport to trial new ideas and projects that Monmouthshire has never piloted before;
3. Recognition that significant investment has taken place in Monmouthshire through previous rural development programmes and that new investment needs to now bring about consolidation and extend the reach in terms of physical and digital improvements and community led initiatives; this

- approach is about whole place and community;
4. The value of countryside and landscape and how this connects rural and semi-urban places is key to making the Vale of Usk area coherent and understanding how the environment can play a part in access, heritage, identity, mobility, tourism, exploration and realising local economic development initiatives; and
 5. The need to place digital technology as a horizontal activity as a way to delivering smart, dynamic and enterprising communities and businesses, supported by a training and mentoring culture.

1.2.2 Strategic Policy Fit

The following policies are key instruments and statements that will relate to the strategy in future development and delivery.

Welsh Government

Wales Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP)

The main strategy and framework that is directing this LDS is the Wales Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP), a seven year European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) programme funded by the European Union and Welsh Government.

The Wales RDP 2014-2020, submitted to the European Commission on 11 July 2014, can provide £953m of European and Welsh Government funding to rural Wales to help:

- increase the productivity, diversity and efficiency of Welsh farming and forestry businesses, improving their competitiveness and resilience, reducing their reliance on subsidies;
- improve the Welsh environment, encouraging sustainable land management practices, the sustainable management of our natural resources and climate action in Wales; and
- Promote strong, sustainable rural economic growth in Wales and encourage greater community-led local development.

There are 6 Rural Development Priorities which set the context for the EAFRD and any actions that form part of the RDP 2014-2020 will fit within this structure of priorities:

- fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas;
- enhancing competitiveness of all types of agriculture and enhancing farm viability;
- promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture;
- restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry;
- promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors; and
- Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

It can be noted further in this LDS that the LAG has chosen to select “*promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural area*” as our key focus which has been prioritised through LAG and the community involvement process. This is in line with the Welsh Government’s Tackling Poverty agenda and Action Plan: Building Resilient Communities which details ‘Preventing poverty; Helping people to work and Mitigating the impact of poverty as its three key pillars.

Other Welsh Government Strategies

In Table Five below are detailed key strategies and policies that the LAG will consider and link to include:

Table Five: Key Strategies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Resilient Communities: Tackling Poverty Action Plan – Welsh Government • Woodland for Wales Strategy – Welsh Government • Partnership for Growth – The Welsh Government Strategy for Tourism – 2013-2020 • Pollinator Action Plan – Welsh Government • Pollinator Implementation Plan – Welsh Government • Food and Drink Action Plan – Welsh Government • Local Sourcing Action Plan – Welsh Government • ICT Strategy for Wales – Welsh Government • ICT Infrastructure Policy – Welsh Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Inclusion Stronger Communities – Wales Co-operative Centre • One Wales, One Planet – Welsh Government • Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition – Welsh Government • Sustainable Development Policy – Monmouthshire County Council • Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Strategy • Superfastcymru Wales broadband scheme • Town Centre Partnership Fund – Welsh Government • Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy – An Action Plan for Wales, 2010-2015
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The following section relates to local corporate, economic development and rural development/tourism development policy.

Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire’s Single Integrated Plan 2013

Monmouthshire’s SIP centres on creating and maintaining the County’s economic and environmental health, promoting social equity, and increasing citizen participation in planning and implementation. Health and well-being is central to quality of life, our economic success, interdependent with our success in improving

education, training and employment outcomes. An individual's ability to achieve their educational, social and economic potential is greatly influenced by their own sense of well-being. Across Monmouthshire, 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing' is being introduced at individual, community and organisational level to enable our communities to be more capable and resilient. Working towards this vision they have identified three themes which form part of a cohesive story about how the vision will be achieved.

- **Nobody is Left Behind:** we want to be a place of cohesive communities where everybody is treated with dignity and respect and has the same opportunity to achieve what they wish.
- **People are Confident, Capable and Involved:** we want Monmouthshire to feel safe and people to be confident. We want to create a place where people want to be involved; they are confident in themselves and their abilities and what they contribute to their own community.
- **Our County Thrives:** we want our county to thrive which includes the economy that supports our communities and families to live a good life. It also means that our environment, its range of habitats and biodiversity thrives.



Draft Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy

Monmouthshire's new vision for its Enterprise Directorate is *"to develop and promote an enterprising culture, which builds business resilience and creates excellent outcomes for our communities"* with the mission to *"build the enterprise capacity and reinvent our future"*.

The enterprise strategy is also supported by ["iCounty"](#) which is the County's digital centre piece and key means to ensuring technology contributes to the county-wide vision for building sustainable and resilient communities. The three strands to iCounty are:

- Enabling inclusive and connected communities
- Creating commercial products and assets
- Improving internal systems in order to continually reinvent the services that matter most to Monmouthshire's communities

The three strategic priorities of the draft Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy are:

1. Supporting business growth
2. Encouraging inward investment
3. Growing entrepreneurs

Cross cutting themes include the need to embrace and capitalise on digital technology opportunities and to raise skills levels, to meet the needs and aspirations

of individuals and employers, with a view to creating high level employment opportunities and raise wage levels.

In working towards Tomorrow's Monmouthshire success is built upon a place where:

1. Ideas can flow
2. A workforce where the relevant skills exist
3. Capital investment can be raised
4. Relevant infrastructure is in place and
5. There are opportunities for networking

There are other supporting local economic development, tourism and community strategies which include:

- "iCounty" strategy
- Monmouthshire Destination Development Plan
- Abergavenny Visitor Experience Development Plan and Feasibility

This strategy underpins a wide range of issue and areas of focus for rural development within the Vale of Usk area with digital and physical connectivity seen as a key strand to its strategic direction.

Whole Place Plan Approach

Under the banner 'Your County, Your Way' Monmouthshire County Council has embarked on a journey of cultural and organisational change to enable it to respond creatively to the needs and aspirations of the communities of Monmouthshire.

As part of this process, the Council aims to create opportunities that empower local communities to shape and enhance their future prospects, supported by the council but with residents, community organisations and the business community taking the opportunity and responsibility to themselves realise their shared aspirations and ambitions for their area. Whole place plans have formed part of the delivery of this cultural change with plans developed for the following communities and areas, with complementary proposals that embrace rural communities Community engagement has taken place in these areas, plans adopted, with some of the project areas highlighted below:

- Seven for Severnside Plan
 - Wales coast path/Festival of the coast
 - Local heritage proposals
 - Targeted business support
 - Integrated marketing
 - Low carbon Severnside
 - Digital Severnside
 - Start-up Severnside
- Bryn y Cwm Plan
 - Area tourism development plan – completed

- Area transport strategy
- Waste minimisation
- Local business and young people accessing work programme

There are also forward plans to deliver additional plans in Usk, **Chepstow and Monmouth across 2015-2021.**

Community Planning

The Whole Place Plan process has also been also augmented by community led plan work undertaken by adventa which includes community development activity in Llandogo, Llangybi, and Raglan with other engagement taking place in The Narth. A range of issues and ideas have been raised by respective communities as part of this LDS and community involvement process.

Newport

One Newport: Local Service Board Single Integrated Plan (SIP)

One Newport Local Service Board (LSB) works with local communities and other groups to identify actions to improve the quality of life of the people of Newport. It recognises that no single organisation can meet the total needs of a community, acknowledging a requirement to plan and deliver services in collaboration with other public and private sector organisations.

Its Single Integrated Plan contains the LSB's vision for improving Newport, has been developed around a set of priority themes, some of which contribute to this LDS:

- Skills and Work – by seeking to use and develop the local labour force
- Health and Wellbeing - by developing new green space, the physical environment and the impact on health and wellbeing connected to addressing area based multiple deprivation
- Safe and Cohesive Communities – activities have potential to develop and support social and community cohesion and improve neighbourhood engagement, planning and integration of services to meet local needs
- Economic Opportunity - Take forward opportunities for funding to support the development of the rural economy in Newport with a future focus on business development, digital technology and renewable energy.
- Economic Opportunity/ Physical Activity in the Environment – potential initiatives to increase participation in the outside environment, and encourage greater use of alternatives transport i.e. walking, cycle routes.

Newport City Council Economic Development Strategy 2011-2015

Newport's future economic performance will depend on how Newport rises to the challenge of the critical global business drivers to unlock its' underlying potential. Consultation with local businesses, commercial agents, investors/ developers, community groups and officers within the City Council all endorsed the following priorities for focused and concerted attention going forward:

- Improving Newport's Identity & Image.
 - Creating a Distinct Sense of Place.
- Building a Clear Vision for the Future through Strong Civic Leadership – backed up by Consistent Action for Delivery.
- Maximising Newport's Strategic Location through Improved Connectivity – embracing Sustainable Transport & ICT.

A ten point action plan identifies projects that will bring about a step change in Newport's economic performance. Below are those that link in to this LDS:

- Tackle Negative Business Perceptions
 - Implement Destination Marketing Plan & City Tourism Strategy: Ensure that the marketing of Newport is continued to attract new businesses and visitors to the area
- Engage Newport's Business Leaders in the Economic Vision
 - Business responsive education and training:
 - Respond to needs of local businesses
- Secure Sustainable Transport Town Status
 - Apply for Sustainable Travel Town Status
 - Improve public transport to Llanwern
- Continue to Invest in Local Business
 - Work with learning partners – skills match training and business needs
 - Tackle worklessness and improve economic activity rates
 - Develop stronger Business networks
 - Schools enterprise programme: Develop links between local businesses and schools
 - Social Enterprise Support: Support and foster social enterprise through grant assistance and sign-posting
- Establish Newport as a Green Business City
 - Re-balance land supply to accommodate "Good Industrial" occupiers: Ensure LDP delivers a broad range of sites to support the local economy
 - Encourage photo-voltaics where appropriate: Investigate opportunity for the creation of locally manufactured photovoltaic
 - Renewable energy strategy for the city: Establish Newport as a green city for potential investors
 - Green roofs initiative: Explore the scope for developing green roofs
 - Future proof city centre – Plugged in Places: Explore potential benefits of recharging points for electric cars
 - Waste to Energy Plan: Explore potential for utilising waste as an energy product
 - Enhance Local/Regional logistics – internet delivery growth: Continue to develop Newport's image as a digital city

1.2.3 LDS Integration

The range of RDP schemes and activities to which the LDS can make a contribution, is shown in the Table Six below:

Table Six: LDS Integration

Human and social Capital	LDS to signpost to activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge transfer and innovation• Advisory services• Co-operation• The European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability
Investment Measures	Where opportunities exist, the LDS will signpost activities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investment in Physical Assets• Farm and Business Development• Quality Schemes• Risk Management• Restoration of Agricultural Production Potential• Restoration of Forestry Potential
Area Based Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agri-Environment Climate• Organic• Forestry• Natura 2000/Water Framework Directive

Funding

In relation to funding, the LAG is aware of other European and domestic funding streams that are operational within the Vale of Usk territory. These include:

- European Regional Development Fund
 - Next Generation Broadband
 - Exploitation of ICT
 - TEN-T road and rail improvements
 - Business support
 - Business mentoring
- Community Innovation Fund
- Lottery Funding
- Natural Resources Wales
- Respective charitable trusts

The LAG will ensure that emerging projects and activities are screened in terms of avoiding duplication and ensuring maximum leverage is obtained through direct programme activity as well as signposting people to other forms of funding support for non-eligible projects and funding.

2. FINANCE AND COMPLIANCE

2.1 Management and Administration

2.1.1 Constitution: Rules and Principles

The Vale of Usk Local Action Group is governed by the rules and principles set by the European Commission and Welsh Government. As defined the governing principles are as follows:

Membership

- As the LAG is inclusive it needs to evolve to meet the changing needs of the area and priorities of the strategy. The LAG is therefore made up of a group of natural persons who represent businesses, local organisations, public authorities and other representation of local civic society to include a representative from the Administrative Body. A list of the current LAG members is detailed in section 2.1.2 below.
- The Administrative Body for the LAG is Monmouthshire County Council who is the lead partner in administrative and financial matters (see section 2.1.4 below).
- The LAG seeks to be gender balanced and have a fair representation of specific target groups addressed by the LDS e.g. young people, disadvantaged groups, vulnerable groups, etc.
- To avoid conflicts of interest neither public authorities nor any single interest group will have more than 49% of the voting rights at the decision-making level of the LAG.
- The LAG will ensure that at least 51% of votes in selection decisions are cast by members that are NOT public authorities and allow selection by written procedure. This is to ensure an inclusive and transparent process, diversity in the strategy and a reasonable spread of the projects across a range of different sectors.

Project Selection

- The LAG has designed a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of projects and activities which will be delivered using RDP funding this can be found in Section 2.1.7 below.
- The LAG will ensure that projects and activities demonstrate coherence with the LDS and are prioritised according to the weighting given to the theme and their subsequent contribution to meeting the objectives and targets of the strategy. Details of the themes can be found in section 2.1.3.
- The LAG will:
 - prepare and publish regular calls for proposals for projects and activities including defining selection criteria;

- Receive and assess applications for support;
 - Select projects and activities based on the priority weighting of the theme under which the project has been submitted, fix the amount of support and, where relevant, present the proposals to the Administrative Body for final verification of eligibility before approval; and
 - Ensure that written working procedures, rules and structures for decision-making are in place to guarantee the selection of projects is consistent with the objectives of the LDS whilst indicating how this in an instance of any conflict of interest;
- The LAG will monitor the implementation of the LDS and the projects that are supported and carry out specific evaluation activities linked to the LDS.

2.1.2 Vale of Usk LAG Members

In line with the LAG constitution and Terms of Reference the Vale of Usk LAG members are detailed in Table Seven below:

Table Seven: LAG Members

Chair: Alan Michie, Bryn y Cwm Forum (Third Sector)	
<i>Alistair Robertson</i> Babington Meadows Trust (Third sector)	<i>Gareth Baker</i> Monmouthshire Wye Valley Apiaries: (Private Sector) or alternative <i>Nicola Bradbear</i> Monmouthshire Bees for Development (Private Sector)
<i>Cllr Bob Greenland</i> Deputy Leader Monmouthshire County Council (Public Sector)	<i>Cllr John Richards</i> Newport City Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development (Public Sector)
Graig Community Council <i>John Harris – Voluntary Sector)</i>	John Davies, Bishton & Underwood Community Council (– Voluntary Sector)
<i>Rachel Harding</i> Natural Resources Wales (Public Sector)	<i>Clare Parsons Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (Public Sector)</i>
<i>Peter Cole</i> Vice-Chair Tourism Consultant (Private Sector)	Andrew Wall Business Development & Tourism (Private Sector)

In discussing the Membership of the LAG it has been agreed that in order to have equal geographic, sectoral and natural representation there will be three representatives from each geographical area; three regional strategic representatives to encourage cross boundary working and the Chair. **2.1.3**

Terms of Reference for the LAG

In order to fulfil its main purpose in being responsible for the successful delivery of the 2014-2020 LDS the LAG will:

- Develop a strategy which will address the needs and opportunities of the area in line with the following five themes:
 1. Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources;
 2. Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains;
 3. Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services;
 4. Renewable energy at a community level; and
 5. Exploitation of digital technology.

- Ensure that as a mandatory requirement a minimum of one cooperation project is supported which may be inter-regional or transnational in nature;
- Build the capacity of local stakeholders to develop and implement projects and activities including fostering their project management skills;
- The Administrative Body and the LAG, in particular with regard to a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and objective criteria for the selection of operations referred to in Article 34(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 will be adhered to;
- In addition to the above the LAG will adhere to the LEADER Guidance Notes Version.1 date 02/02/2015 with regards to project selection
- Promote, receive, assess and select projects and activities to be delivered that are not only in line with the objectives of the LDS but are also robust and offer good value for money;
- Assess projects against the weighting that has been allocated to each of the five themes following a prioritisation exercise which formed part of the LDS consultation process;
- Ensure that financial and monitoring targets for the LDS are set and met and reviewed regularly to include an annual re-assessment by Welsh Government;
- Assess the weighting of the five themes on an annual basis to ensure that the weighting is in line with community demand;
- Raise awareness of the programme, its aims and objectives in accordance with the Vale of Usk promotional plan for the 2014-2020 programme;
- Participate fully in Regional, National and European Network activities/ events wherever possible, in line with the requirements of the RDP; and
- Ensure that everyone is treated equally and that equality of opportunity is promoted in allocating resources, engaging local communities and in employing staff.

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- The maximum number of members on the LAG at any time will be 18 who represent the public, private and third sectors.
- There will be no more than one third individual members from each sector and each LAG member must represent only one sector;
- A LAG meeting will only be eligible with a quorum of 50% of total membership and be composed of representatives of public and private local socio-economic interests, in which, at the decision-making level neither public authorities nor any single interest group represents more than 49% of the quorum' as stated in Commission Regulation 1303/2013 Article 32.2(b).
- Only individuals from within the LAG area interest or with a sectoral interest in the delivery of the programme will be eligible to apply for membership;
- Each Member is required to abide by the LAG member protocol;
- Partnership members who are unable to attend a particular meeting may arrange for a substitute from their group/ organisation to attend in his/her place; If a member of the LAG is absent for two consecutive meetings, the Chairman shall have the right (in default of an acceptable reason being given by such member) to declare a vacancy, whereupon the individual shall cease to be a member; and
- Individuals with particular skills may be co-opted on to the LAG as non-voting advisors and for a specified period.

Changes to the Membership

- Changes to the membership will not be permitted if they result in the 49/51% balance being unachievable;
- All new applications will be considered by the LAG at the next available meeting or through written procedures. Successful applicants will be invited to attend the next available meeting/ event. Unsuccessful applicants will be written to by the Chair, outlining the reasons why their application was rejected; and
- An up-to-date list of members will be held by the RDP Programme Team and made available upon request.

The Chair and Vice-Chair

- The LAG shall hold an annual review process for the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair. Where there is more than one candidate, voting should take place. As the Vale of Usk is a newly formed LAG it has been agreed that the adventa LAG Chairman be requested to stay for the first year of its operation. Mr Alan Michie has extensive experience and therefore can make a valuable contribution in assisting the new LAG in its formation process.

2.1.4 Administrative Body

The Vale of Usk LAG has appointed MCC to act as the lead partner or **'Administrative Body'** in administrative and financial matters relating to the delivery of the Rural Development Programme EU funding entitlement for the period 2014 – 2020. A separate Collaboration Agreement exists determining the arrangements between the LAG, Newport City Council and Monmouthshire County Council to discharge these functions.

Although the LAG is responsible for the overall delivery of the LDS the management of project activities will fall to the Administrative Body, however the Administrative Body may commission 3rd party or delivery organisations to deliver projects on their behalf where specific expertise is required.

2.1.5 Operating Procedures

The LAG will be guided by their Terms of Reference as detailed above however below is a list of operating procedures and principles that will guide the operation of the Vale of Usk LAG:

- The LAG will meet at least four times a year with the Chair given discretion to call additional meetings as and when necessary;
- The Administrative Body will provide secretariat support to the LAG and its members;
- LAG meetings will be held at a venue within the programme area whenever possible, but may be located elsewhere to ensure full participation of members at all times;
- The Chair (in conjunction with the groups Secretariat) will have the right to invite representatives of other bodies to the Local Action Group to discuss particular issues where necessary;
- A LAG meeting will be postponed if less than 51% of non-public sector LAG members are present;
- An agenda will be circulated at least one week before each meeting. Members with significant items for discussion must notify the Programme Team of these in time for them to be included on the agenda;
- Minutes will be kept to record all decisions made by the LAG and to minimise the risk of any conflict of interest issues; and
- The LAG may establish Task and Finish working groups to undertake specific areas of work on its behalf, as and when required. Working Group members may include both LAG members and others co-opted for their specific skills.

Voting

- The LAG will seek to reach agreement on recommendations by discussion and consensus. On occasions when a formal vote is required each Member or

substitute shall be entitled to one vote and decisions will be made on the basis of a simple majority. A formal vote will not take place unless there are at least 51% of non-public sector LAG members present;

- In the event of an equal split of votes, the Chair will have the casting vote;
- LAG members with any personal or financial interest in a matter being discussed, must declare that interest and will not be entitled to vote on that item. This written declaration will be included in the minutes of the meeting to demonstrate non-discrimination and transparency; and
- Advisors are not entitled to vote.

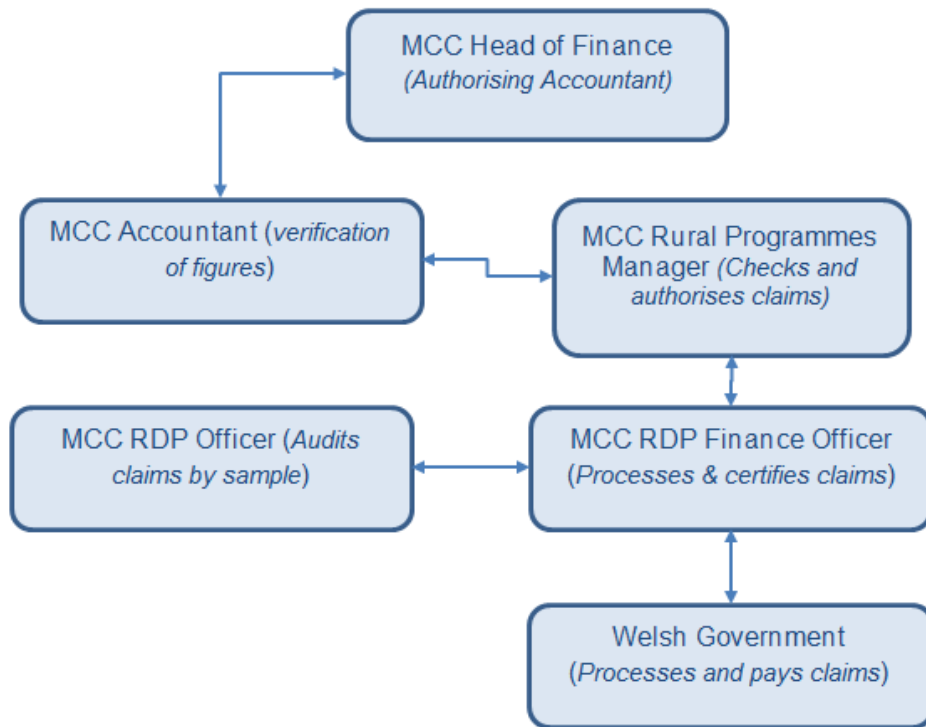
2.1.6 Compliance Procedures

As Administrative Body MCC will be responsible for all issues of compliance in relation to financial and administrative matters on behalf of the LAG, in terms of financial administration specifically MCC will follow the systems and procedures as detailed below:

- Claims will be submitted on behalf of the LAG by MCC to the Welsh Government quarterly in arrears (based on expenditure defrayed). Where 3rd party/delivery organisations are involved claims will be submitted to MCC and then aggregated before submission to Welsh Government;
- MCC will only claim eligible defrayed expenditure from Welsh Government that can be supported by evidence (i.e. an invoice) by the project;
- MCC will retain certified copies of the supporting evidence for inspection by Welsh Government during re-performance checks; and
- MCC will submit to Welsh Government a certified transaction schedule for each project in a format required.

As Figure One below details there is no individual with responsibility for more than one of the tasks of authorising, paying, or accounting for the funding. No officer within the Administrative Body will perform one of the tasks without their work being under the supervision of a second officer.

Figure One



2.1.7 Project Selection, Appraisal and Approval Process

The LAG is fully aware of the need to be very clear in how they set out the application and selection procedures and criteria for the projects to be funded via the LDS. It is the LAG's intention to operate in a fair, open and transparent manner to ensure applicants have a clear and consistent understanding of how they can apply for funds and the mechanisms that will be used to assess their applications. Full details of the management process can be found in Section 4 – Management and Administration.

The assessment criteria has been clearly linked to the results of the community consultation and the subsequent analysis as detailed in sections 3.1 and the Intervention Logic Table detailed in Appendix Three.

2.1.7.1 Project Selection

It is envisaged that a call will be made at regular intervals throughout the programme period.

Beneficiaries will be invited to submit EOIs and RDP animation staff will work with project applicants to screen out ineligible activity. Projects will then be presented and discussed at Theme Working Groups who will not only consider the project eligibility but also its fit with the Intervention Logic Table. Once projects are considered to be suitably worked up they will be presented to the LAG for consideration. It is envisaged that the approved EOIs will guide the priorities of the future activities to give balance to the themes as the programme is being developed.

Selection Process

a) Filtering EOIs

The filtering process will be performed by the Theme Working group comprising of LAG members (with special interests or skills in the particular theme that is being considered) with assistance from project officers and specialist advisors as required. Consideration will be required by the group for the following:

- Eligibility criteria against RDP and LDS specific criteria such as;
 - prioritisation of themes;
 - target beneficiaries ;
 - collective projects benefiting the wider territory thus providing greater economy of scale and improved value for money;
- Level of support (exact figures yet to be determined by the LAG);
 - That the finance required is proportionate to the PIs being achieved against the theme however consideration will be given to;
 - the risk of failure of larger projects;
 - the number of rural wards and service centres supported by a project; and
 - A maximum value for each project supported by theme.
 - That the target beneficiaries are proportionate to the value supported

- Budget availability versus demand for a particular theme being developed
 - Whether the EOI covers more than one theme
- b) Selection of EOI's for submission to the LAG

The selection process will require the following criteria to be considered;

- Extent to which projects contributes to achievement of the LDS and complements other activities and initiatives;
- That the EOI is in line with the specific themes criteria;
- Extent to which the EOI responds to identified need and is supported by evidence of prospective demand;
- Inclusion of realistic and measurable milestones and targets associated with Performance Indicators ;
- The project selection will use the following techniques;
 - Use an averaging scoring process which is theme specific and weighted by the LDS and WG priorities which will;
 - robust and consistent in its use;
 - be approved by the LAG before use ;
 - be quantitative; and
 - have a minimum project acceptance threshold score agreed
 - Have a methodology to rank EOI's where multiple EOI's for the same theme may be considered;
 - Have a mechanism for deferring EOI's even if the threshold score is achieved;
 - Have a mechanism for project approvals containing caveats;
 - Have a mechanism for rejection or recommendations for resubmission of EOI's; and
 - Have a mechanism for recording as evidence the decisions that have been reached

2.1.8 Declaration and Management of Conflict of Interest

In line with the LAG Terms of Reference the LAG will seek to reach agreement on recommendations by discussion and consensus. LAG members with any personal or financial interest in a matter being discussed, must declare that interest and will not be entitled to vote on that item. This written declaration will be included in the minutes of the meeting to demonstrate non-discrimination and transparency.

3. DELIVERY

3.1 Description of the Strategy and hierarchy of objectives

3.1.1 How can the LAG improve the area?

A **mild expansion of the economy** is taking place in the Vale of Usk area as population growth is causing growth in the labour force. However **planning policies are restrictive** as the **environment and landscape are important** and need protecting. The area is **comfortable but not rich**: unemployment and deprivation are low but wages and incomes are relatively low and there are small **pockets of**

relative deprivation. By developing and delivering this strategy the Vale of Usk LAG can improve and develop the area in the following ways:

- Trialling innovative processes that have the opportunity to be mainstreamed for example by the bee keeping industry with a pollinator breeding project;
- To support ICT, financial management and marketing skills workshops where professional and business services, fashion, cultural/craft/TV/film industries with e-commerce opportunities are helped to realise their potential;
- Growing the potential for Entrepreneurship and inward investment;
- Offering re-skilling opportunities to enable a wider range of job opportunities as well as engaging with education establishments to enable higher qualifications and skill levels;
- Retaining and encouraging School-leavers to return after obtaining skills; and
- Encouraging the take up and exploitation of digital skills and technologies to take advantage of the Superfast Broadband rollout currently being undertaken in Wales. This approach could support the land based industries who will be required to produce on-line financial returns. Organisations such as WFU or WYFA could be the beneficiary of any supported training.

3.1.2 The Hierarchy of objectives

3.1.2.1 Approach

The design and development of this Strategy and hierarchy of objectives has been informed through a combination of LAG workshops through to a range of community involvement opportunities that have been provided in recent months. The timeline for the development of the objectives commenced in December 2013 and has recently culminated with the 2014 SWOT analysis enabling the team to check assumptions against real community need and prioritisation.

The initial messages on what the LDS should address was first discussed in December 2013, when the LAG and Rural Partnership met to discuss the evaluation of Axis 3 and 4 under Business Case 2 of the 2007-2013 Rural Development Plan for Wales.

Table 8 - Process for Development of Hierarchy of Objectives



This workshop also provided the opportunity to discuss findings that could shape the emerging LDS. Some of the key points included:

- The programme’s success in supporting community facilities in becoming more energy efficient and comfortable places should now be used to encourage an increase in up-take and maximisation of their use, thereby increasing the number of activities offered in rural communities, supporting social inclusion, and job creation (for facilitators, sports instructors, etc.;
- Research has demonstrated that even the smallest interventions can be very successful, when coupled with imagination and vision, integrating with other initiatives to enlarge the reach and impact of projects; and
- Whilst the BP2 delivery approach has worked well and built capacities in delivery agents, it has required a substantial amount of resources from the RDP support team.

The workshop also agreed that all five RDP themes should be selected in terms of testing through the community involvement process and in developing the draft 2014-2020 LDS document. This was further endorsed at the July 2014 LAG meeting, where members sought wider community engagement, feedback and validation of the initial LDS ideas.

To facilitate this, as later detailed in Section 7 of this strategy, the LAG has undertaken extensive engagement with local residents, community and stakeholder groups and relevant organisations across the two Authority areas. Activities have included an on-line survey and face to face engagement exercises, all of which have been aggregated into a SWOT analysis and issues and ideas have been clustered into thematic groupings.

3.1.2.2 Findings

Findings from the community involvement stage centred on the following overarching results which have helped shape the LDS objectives.

- Figure Two demonstrates the **rating of importance and prioritisation** for each of the five LDS themes. The overall weighting illustrates the themes have been prioritised in the following order:

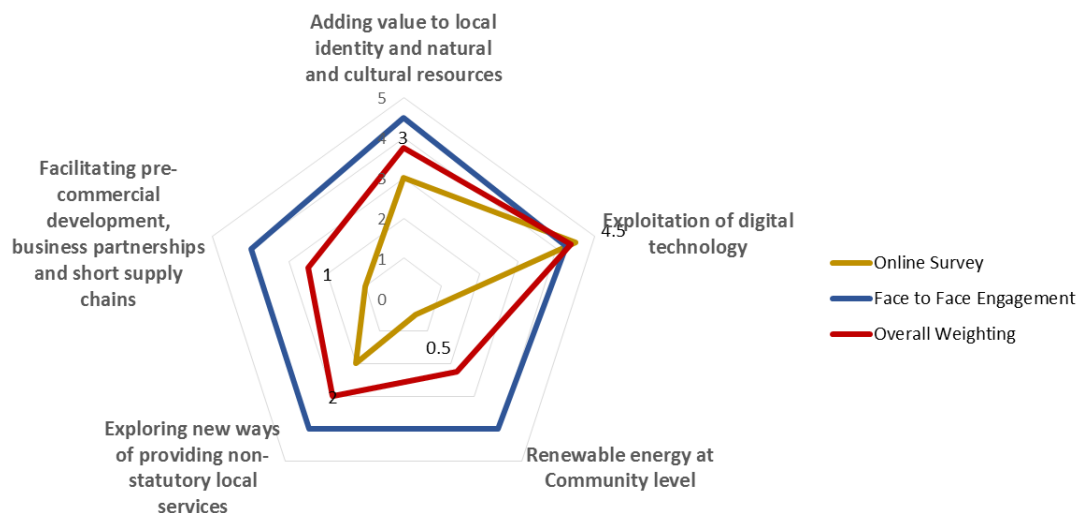
Ranking	
1	i) exploitation of digital technology and ii) adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources are equally weighted;
2	iii) exploring new ways of providing non-statutory services is not far behind in terms of weighting;
3	iv) Renewable energy at a community level and v) facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains both have equal weighting and importance.

Second to this, responses from the on-line survey and those collated via face to face engagement have also identified a number of common issues and themes that relate to the following areas:

- Need to develop connected places through people, place and technology;

- Need to extend digital advances across the wider territory in terms of access, learning, buying/shop local, training and building local enterprise;
- Need to focus on hubs that are physically and digitally connected that ensure sustainability of local assets, community, social inclusion, enterprise and networking;
- Need to ensure more isolated communities are connected in terms of transport, ICT, services as well as having access to local hubs, villages and communities;
- Need to provide places and the environment for rural business to network, cluster and be aided through more targeted support and advice;
- Need to ensure the wider destination is integrated in terms of tourism and other activities so that the whole territory benefits; and
- Need to ensure the countryside, natural assets and rural environment is maximised in terms of access, activity and use of resources, where appropriate, for renewable energy use.

Figure Two - LDS Thematic Ratings



In terms of the SWOT analysis, it was clear that the main focus of conversation was based on:

- fostering local development in rural areas;
- enhancing accessibility to, use and quality of information and communication technologies (ICT) in rural area; and
- Facilitating diversification through the creation of new small enterprises and jobs.

This wide range of focus leads the LAG to choose **RDP Focus Area Six** as the main area for attention, namely:

“Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas, with a focus on the following areas”.

The focus for the strategy is therefore a combination of the five LDS themes with some key drivers:

- Focus on key areas of activity to mobilise and exploit digital advances to enable communities to network, exchange ideas, foster and sustain activities, and develop products and services with technology being a key focus and cross cutting theme;
- Outwardly facing in terms of tourism destination management and information in relation to local hubs, communities and places, with the role of people and ambassadors having great importance;
- Encourage community hubs to align non statutory services to their daily function, as well as being places to demonstrate innovation and best practice e.g. community renewables, digital technology;
- Community hubs to also act as orientation and navigational points in terms of the immediate countryside, local and strategic walking/cycling trails whilst supporting volunteering, guiding and other activity;
- Wrapped around this is also the need to ensure the natural and cultural assets are safeguarded and managed so that they generate local economic prosperity as well as protecting and growing local habitats and green assets e.g. meadows, growing space, etc.

In determining this hierarchy of objectives a number of other factors have also been considered namely i) the new Vale of Usk territory of Monmouthshire and Newport and ii) eligibility of funding actions.

The Vale of Usk LAG is conscious that due to the wider geographical reach there is a need to ensure that the strategy and its objectives allow for incremental change and relationship building between the two specific areas. In addition there is also a need to allow for flexibility of approach in terms of baseline LEADER activity in the Newport area and maturity in Monmouthshire. Some rural communities in Newport will be “new” to the approach and it will take time for communities to familiarise themselves. Monmouthshire can also help Newport in terms of its historical experiences and lessons learnt leading to a smarter and value for money led approach in terms of delivery.

There is also a need to consider that numerous spatial relationships will create natural convergence through natural and cultural assets e.g. Wales Coastal Path as well as transient activity such as community transport. Whilst not the primary determinant of need, eligibility issues will also need to be addressed through animation, capacity building and trialling of ideas with and actions being implemented as a result.

3.1.2.3 Vision and Objectives

As part of the longer term strategy for this new territory, a vision is needed to ensure coherence and focus for the LAG and its constituent communities. The word cloud in

digital technology, up-skilling communities for community and social benefit, whilst addressing poverty, exclusion and isolation;

- To identify community hubs that can demonstrate the use of renewable energy and capitalise on natural assets e.g. community woodland, biomass to reduce the carbon footprint of Wales.

3.1.3 Earlier Influences

As detailed earlier, although Monmouthshire has significant experience in delivering RDP projects since the inception of adventa in 2001, this is the first outing for Newport. As a result Newport has looked to Monmouthshire for advice and support in terms of the influences from previous programmes and the potential to take the learning from these experiences to inform future activity.

Having been operational for over a decade there have been several examples of previous projects that adventa has delivered which have helped Newport realise their ideas for RDP activities. For example practical examples of previous programme successes include;



- **made in monmouthshire** - A very successful local procurement initiative involving Arts and Crafts businesses and food producers. Activity includes logo development, events promotions, interpretive flyers detailing product provenance, website <http://madeinmonmouthshire.com/> tourism trails, etc. The initiative now operates as a stand-alone cooperative and has been considered a best practice example by others including 'A Taste of Powys'.
- adventa's Food Forums – a network of food producers meeting quarterly. This initiative was considered a good example and was replicated across the South East Wales region.



- **sense of Monmouthshire** - A training programme for tourism operators aimed at increasing local knowledge and encouraging local procurement with a view to adding value to visitor's experiences. This has now grown into a 'Tourism Ambassador' training programme with a network of local volunteers who are operating county wide.

- **THE ADVENTA FOOD ACADEMY** - a successful children's event piloted at the Abergavenny Food Festival and now mainstreamed by the Food Festival committee along with an annual Food Conference which is now being operated by a local consultancy.



- **Walkers are Welcome** is a nationwide initiative launched in 2007 to encourage towns and villages to be 'welcoming to walkers'. As a direct result of

the Walking with Offa Cooperation Project the network has expanded rapidly and three towns have joined this innovative community-led scheme to benefit from Walkers are Welcome accreditation. In addition, at least 24 other towns have taken part in the exchange visits and networking events from the borderland area. With many receiving direct training in first aid, walk leader, interpretation, marketing, PR, how to lead walks for visually impaired, how to run a walking festival to name but a few. Plus in Monmouthshire four towns have become Walkers are Welcome accredited and the National Conference is due to be held here this year.

All of these projects and activities have had a direct bearing on the development of this new LDS and have helped form and identify the hierarchy of objectives that feature above.

3.1.4 Influence of earlier approaches on the development of this strategy

More recently Monmouthshire has taken some lessons from the current RDP programme and the LAG has been considering the outcomes of a recent interim review of Business Plan two activities.

Key Findings from this report have indicated that:

- The application process has been perceived as fair and transparent which therefore provides a sound basis for informing the project selection, appraisal and approval process of this strategy;
- Project managers/animators have assisted RDP beneficiaries extensively. It is believed that this has actively built capacity, increased knowledge and led to new project ideas and know-how in project implementation. The retention of key project officers is vital to the success of this strategy as it will ensure that the team can 'hit the ground running' and as such start delivery quickly whilst using existing skills to inform activities in new areas. Further detail to be found in Section 4;
- Systems set up by MCC for project monitoring and reporting were felt to work well and smoothly. Again this is a reason why Newport felt it important to appoint MCC as the Administrative Body so there would be no delay in having to reinvent new systems this again will add speed to the delivery process;
- Most project managers felt that there had been a positive impact on the quality of life in Monmouthshire as a result of the RDP activities namely: - improved social engagement and participation in community life; improved well-being through healthier living (e.g. outdoor activity); improved environmental quality impacting positively through increased volunteering; and an increase in job opportunities through the use of local suppliers. These activities therefore feature in the project activities that are being suggested so momentum can be built further whilst also supporting the Woodlands for Wales strategy in particular 'Woodlands for People' the strategic outcomes for which include 'More people enjoy the life-long learning benefits of woodlands and their products' and more people live healthier lives as a result of their use and enjoyment of woodlands'.

However the report also indicated some challenges that will need to be addressed by the new Vale of Usk LAG through this strategy:

- Due to the economic climate some business capital grant projects found beneficiaries unwilling to invest. As there are no grants in the new scheme this will obviously not be a problem going forward however;
- A number of delivery agents felt the co-creation process difficult and time consuming particularly the significant hand holding of beneficiaries in writing and designing projects making delivery unprofitable. As animation will be undertaken by the RDP programme team in this delivery period the trust already built by existing staff members will be vital in starting projects early and delivering them more efficiently and effectively;
- In the case of business development grants where grant conditions stipulated the creation of jobs for example, challenges were felt. It was felt that this worked against the LEADER objective to be innovative whilst also not reflecting the fact that jobs take time to evolve and create. With less emphasis on job creation and more emphasis of the potential for job creation along with facilitation and engagement it is hoped that businesses will get support which is more tailored to their needs; and
- The support required by delivery agents from MCC administration staff was much more intensive and involved than anticipated. It is expected that as animation staff will be employed in-house, less time will be spent supporting delivery agents in this funding period.

3.2 Co-operation and Networking

3.2.1 Incorporation of Co-operation

During its thirteen year history adventa has managed a number of LEADER cooperation projects the most recent being [Walking with Offa](#) a strategic cross border project. This project brings together strategic rural development and tourism bodies along the Welsh-English border to promote walking, sustainable tourism and transport along either side of the Offa's Dyke National Trail.

Although the final Evaluation report is yet to be produced initial findings from the interim Monitoring and Evaluation report indicate that two years on from the project's formal launch, the project has generated some important results. At a strategic level, the increased strength of the partnership is a notable achievement for a project of this scope, both in terms of geographic and stakeholder coverage. During the period 2011-2013, the partnership environment is perceived to have led to some genuine relationship building with individual partners having a sense of what everyone is achieving and how it is contributing to specific activities. A strong sense of project ownership and shared knowledge has also been widely acknowledged.

At an individual project level there are some key success stories including the business engagement activity and the public transport study. In relation to the former, feedback from beneficiaries has been very positive, and there is an expectation that benefits will continue to accrue. The latter has helped to get people

to start thinking about integration of transport at a strategic level across the whole area.

3.2.2 Future and wider Cooperation

Given the success of Walking with Offa, now proclaimed as a best practice example for cross border cooperation, it is the intention of the Vale of Usk LAG to build on this success and take this project into Phase II of delivery. Initial discussions have concluded that Phase II will operate with the same partners but the focus for activity will move towards conservation, heritage and business development. Preliminary consultation has highlighted the need to build on the sustainable tourism outputs achieved under Phase One with a stronger emphasis being placed on heritage and wildlife themes along with volunteer engagement and health.

Suggested activities include:

- Heritage and wildlife conservation and promotion, focusing on the border themes of:
 - The **power and prestige of the Church** linking Tintern Abbey, Abbey Grace Dieu, Llanthony Priory and Abbey Crucis and other churches and sacred sites within the border;
 - **Engineering Marvel** linking Tintern Abbey, Llanthony Priory, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Montgomery and Llangollen canals and the railways. Could include comparisons between the Dyke's engineers and those of other impressive man-made structures;
 - **Conflict, control and commerce**; The Dyke, Chepstow Castle, White Castle, Montgomery Castle, Clun Castle, Ludlow Castle, Shrewsbury Castle, Powis Castle, Chirk Castle and Castell Dinas Bran. The industrial areas of the Lower Wye, the canals and industries of Shropshire and the Dee Valley and the quarries and mills of the Clwydian Hills; and
 - **Outstanding wildlife** of the borders.
- Volunteer support and training for Right Of Way maintenance and habitat management
- Business development opportunities around walking, wildlife and heritage assets
- Event organisation and promotion
- Further development of Walkers Are Welcome towns
- Walks leader and Sense of Place training for volunteers and businesses
- Integrated, cross border public transport information

- Promotion of the area under the 'Irresistible Offa' strap line, including links to the Wales Coastal Path

There is also the potential to take Phase II to the next level and widen the partnership to develop a Trans-National cooperation project with two Member States. This will be investigated by the LAG during the initial phases of the 2014 -2020 programme.

In addition another approach has been made to the LAG from the BBNP and Powys County Council to develop a Cooperation project across the National Park via an Inter-Territorial Cooperation project. It is likely that this project will focus on tourism, transport, local food, local destination management, the development of local 'hub' communities and local regeneration however an action plan is yet to be determined.

It is the intention of the LAG to commit to at least one cooperation project that includes BBNP as a partner whether it be a National Park focussed Cooperation project or Phase II of the Walking with Offa project.

The Vale of Usk LAG takes cooperation seriously and under adventa, benefitted greatly from exchange experiences and best practice. The LAG's commitment to cooperation is further exemplified in the membership that Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise (Monmouthshire County Council) holds on the Wales Rural Network. During the 2007 – 2010 delivery period Cath played a lead role in the development of the Rural Broadband Toolkit for LAGs which has recently been released. The LAG looks forward to full participation in the Rural Network activities during the next delivery period and will include Newport representatives to enable them to expand their experience.

3.3 Innovation

The LAG approach to innovation in the territory will be centred on a number of processes and techniques. As a result new and innovative ways of working, along with products and services may well emerge from the process.

First of all the need to build a resilient, coherent and cohesive territory within rural Monmouthshire and Newport is an early objective in terms of communication, marketing and promotion and projecting a strong rural identity. The need to use innovative technology and systems that facilitate joint working will provide a smart and cost effective way of animating and delivering this strategy. This will involve:

- Website development and use of social media for engaging with the wider rural community, in addition to sector specific businesses and stakeholder groups; and
- Development of virtual thematic networks and co-delivery mechanisms.

However the use of more traditional methods will be used where needed in order to raise awareness of the digital opportunities that are available with a view to addressing digital exclusion, social isolation and tackling poverty.

The LAG also recognises that a key benefit of developing a larger rural territory of rural Monmouthshire and Newport is that there are some proven approaches that Monmouthshire, through adventa, have tried and tested that can be applied to Newport circumstances. Knowledge transfer and understanding inter-rural relationships will add significantly to the impact of rural development working and return on investment.

In developing the strategy, objectives and thematic actions a number of new and innovative ways of working, products and services have been identified that may emerge from the process. These are outlined in Table Nine overleaf:

Table Nine: Innovation Opportunities

Theme	Example of Innovation
1. Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of multimedia digital products that are content management based through community training and development; - To provide a common ground for players and actors in the rural tourism sector to engage, share and integrate ideas and solutions, by up-skilling with innovation tools and techniques to convert ideas into action and outcomes; - To increase skills in digital, sector/activity specific area to assist local enterprise growth and address digital exclusion whilst mitigating the impact of poverty and helping people into work; - To align products and services in a holistic way that allows for shared functions for example activities in community facing hubs that also have a dual purpose in terms of benefiting the visitor economy and addressing social isolation and exclusion.
2. Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide advice to rural enterprises that facilitates the development of complementary business clusters, shared resources through digital technology and linkages to on-line marketplace type media that supports short supply chain development.
3. Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To share knowledge and best practice between established and “new” rural development communities through toolkits, best practice exchanges, innovation days; - Assess and map physical and human assets and

	<p>look at ways of mobilising and maximising their use;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To explore local aggregation of rural suppliers and how these can be distributed/collected in terms of on-line technology, linking to other Welsh Government initiatives such as Town Centre Partnerships funding.
4. Renewable energy at Community level; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To convert community energy plans into more detailed feasibility studies and trial innovative renewable energy schemes at a community level to tackle fuel poverty; - To explore low carbon fuel in terms of rural community facilities and vehicles.
5. Exploitation of digital technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To apply digital technology to remote and isolated communities that brings together a suite of products and local services that can be tapped into and can be scaled up in terms of wider territory co-operation and collective working.

Finally the approach that is planned is based on ensuring a multiplier impact, specifically in Monmouthshire, relating to historical investment in rural areas, with rural communities seen as places to trial new ideas and approaches as well as extending projects and services across the territory so that programme identity and impact is fully met.

This will involve collaboration across the territory and a bringing together of partners, agencies, organisations and community groups. Where appropriate, for example in the use of digital technology, links with learning and research institutions will be facilitated through organisations such as Coleg Gwent and the University of South Wales.

3.4 Action Plan

Please refer to *Appendix Three: Intervention Logic Table*

3.5 Promotional Activity

Following on from the recent LDS community consultation where initial awareness has been raised of this new RDP programme across the LAG territory a reservoir of interest has been established. Once the new programme funding has been approved there will be a need to reinvigorate this interest with a view to encouraging interested parties to engage with the new programme activities and funding opportunities.

This re-engagement is likely to take the form of an initial programme launch which will be widely publicised across the territory via local press releases and social media. In addition a direct mail campaign will take place to encourage and develop one to one relationships, by introducing target beneficiaries to the team. In the past

programme launches have proved to be very successful in gaining initial interest and making connections.

To maintain interest following the initial launch, previous experience of operating RDP programmes has indicated that a strong website presence is critical not only in terms of promoting the programme but in disseminating information regarding the potential projects that can be funded via the programme as illustrated by the current [Monmouthshire rdp website \(www.monmouthshirerdp.org.uk\)](http://www.monmouthshirerdp.org.uk). A new website will therefore form the background of the promotional activities and will be a key cornerstone in the promotional and awareness campaign as well as being a useful information repository for target beneficiaries.

As part of the community consultation exercise consultees/stakeholders were asked firstly, if they would like to be kept informed of developments and secondly how they would like to be kept informed. A straight 50/50 response confirmed that half would like to be kept informed via website updates and the other half via invitations to rural networks and community meetings.

Taking into account previous and forthcoming project activities the following promotional activities are proposed as detailed in Table Ten below. For purposes of clarity the target market has been segmented into target audiences all of whom have been defined either as local stakeholders and influencers or target beneficiaries. The different forms of promotional activity have then been split between traditional and digital activity (with further definitions included) along with networking events. The target audiences have then been married up with the promotional activity that is considered best suited to their liking and therefore more likely generate interest and impact. A communications and marketing strategy will be developed once the RDP team are in place.

Table Ten: Promotional Plan

Target Audience	Traditional Activity	Digital activity			Networking Events
		Website	Twitter/ Facebook	E-newsletter	
	Press releases				
Local stakeholders and influencers	√	√		√	√
Target beneficiaries					
• Young people	√	√	√		√
• Older people	√	√	√	√	√
• Farming Families	√	√	√	√	√
• Community groups & organisations		√	√	√	√

Dissemination of Best Practice

However promotional activity is only one element of the promotional campaign. Lessons learned from cooperation activities have indicated that the best way to

disseminate best practice is either through the production of case studies which can be in the form of press releases or video case studies held on the programme website or by best practice visits. It is therefore proposed that a similar programme of activities be undertaken in this programme which will be factored into the resource requirements for respective projects.

EU Information and Publicity Guidelines

To ensure that full acknowledgement of RDP funding and that beneficiaries are clearly aware of the funding received from the EU, the management and animation team will work with them directly to ensure that Welsh Government's Information and Publicity Guidelines for the 2014-2020 RDP Programme are followed. These guidelines will ensure that the programme management team are fully compliant with the publicity requirements at each and every opportunity e.g. use of logos on stationery, websites, leaflets, etc.

Fly the EU Flag 9th May

Although a clear programme of activities has yet to be developed for 'Fly the EU Flag' week it is likely that a number of themed activities will take place during that week over the life time of the strategy. This is likely to take the form of showcasing how RDP funding can build links and benefit people, businesses, communities and the environment.

RDP Communications

During delivery of the last RDP programme the management team demonstrated a keenness to work with the RDP Communications team and the Wales Rural Network on planned launches/press releases in relation to LEADER activities. As this is a relationship that worked well and to mutual benefit, the programme team intend to build on this throughout the delivery of activities associated with this strategy.

4. MANAGEMENT OF OPERATION

4.4 Management and Administration

4.1.1 Collaboration

The Vale of Usk LAG was initially established following an approach from Newport City Council who wished to participate in the Rural Development Plan Programme but had no previous experience. It was felt that the a joint approach with the two counties would not only enable Newport City Council to benefit from Monmouthshire County Council's significant experience in delivering whole county LEADER and RDP activities but would also benefit both counties by sharing management and administrative structures for the two areas thus reducing administration and management costs. There are also numerous cross border projects in existence for example the joint Destination Marketing tourism campaign The Wye Valley and Vale

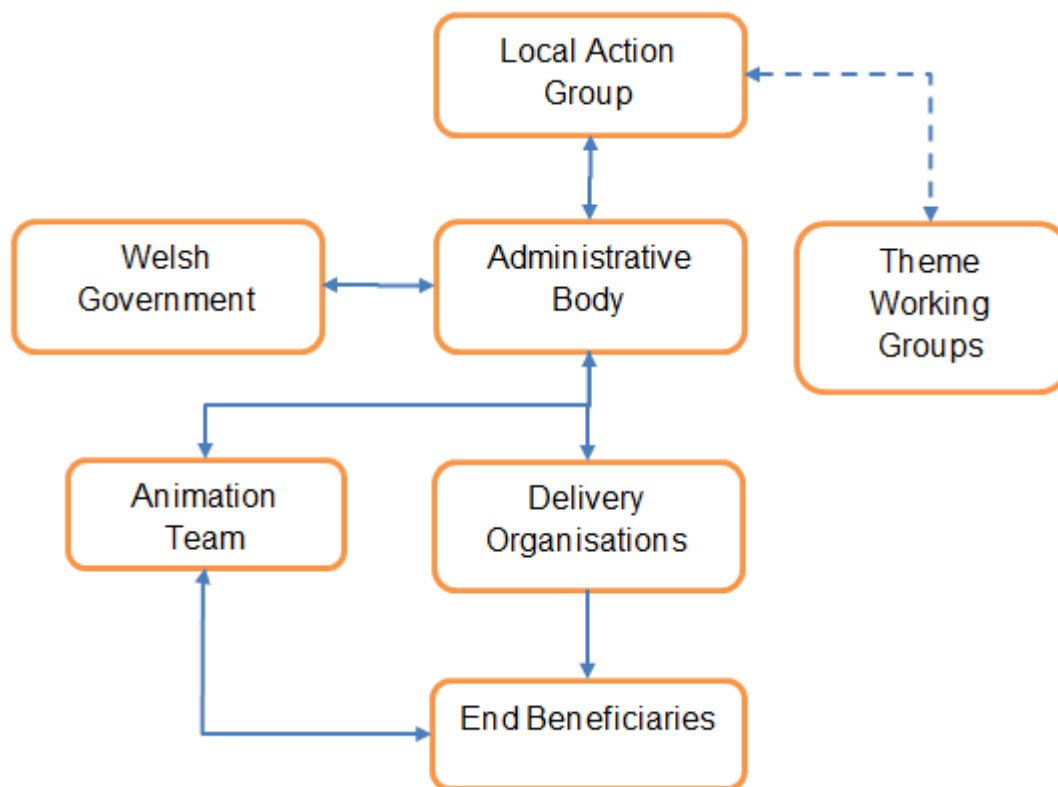
of Usk, the Gwent Levels project and the Wales Coastal Path promotional activities where the two counties already work together. This new joint LEADER venture will therefore present an opportunity for increased coherence and increased benefits from economies of scale.

4.1.2 Management and monitoring arrangements of the Strategy

Given their previous experience in managing LEADER and RDP programmes, the Vale of Usk LAG and Newport City Council have appointed MCC to act as the Administrative Body in administrative and financial matters relating to the delivery of the Rural Development Programme EU funding entitlement for the period 2014 – 2020. A separate Collaboration Agreement exists determining the joint arrangements to discharge these functions.

Although the LAG is responsible for the overall delivery of the LDS the responsibility for the management of project activities will fall to the Administrative Body as detailed in the flow diagram, figure four below:

Figure 4 – Programme Management



4.1.3 RDP Staffing Arrangements

In order to manage the programme effectively the Administrative Body will be responsible for:

- the recruitment and employment of the RDP staff engaged in the delivery of the Services;

- the training of staff to an appropriate level commensurate with the duties of the post;
- payment of remuneration; and
- payment of other staff costs including accommodation and support services.

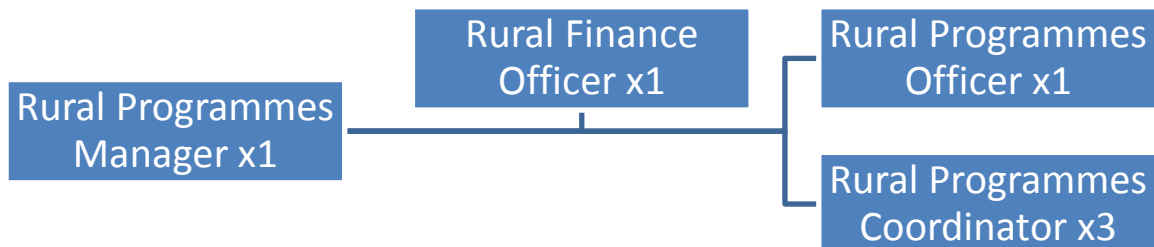
The Administrative Body shall have power to exercise all the rights of an employer in respect of the RDP staff and shall exercise all the usual establishment functions and overall control and supervision of such staff on behalf of the partners under the direction of the LAG.

The Administrative Body shall provide such accommodation, equipment and other moveable property required for the provision of the services by the RDP staff, together with such power, heat, telephone facilities and other services as are required. All staff costs incurred to be met from the running and animation costs equating to 25% of the LAG's financial allocation of RDP funding.

The Administrative Body may also commission 3rd party or delivery organisations to deliver projects on their behalf where specific expertise is required.

In terms of the Administrative Body staffing structure figure 5 below details a suggested organisational chart for which draft job descriptions have been developed. It is intended to start the programme with the Rural Programmes Manager, Rural Finance Officer, Rural Programmes Officer and three Rural Programmes Coordinators. The coordinator role is split between the animation and implementation roles. This gives an initial head count of 6 staff. As the programme gathers pace consideration will be given to increasing the Rural Programmes Coordinator headcount. The draft job descriptions can be found in *Appendix Four*.

Figure 5 – Staffing Structure



4.1.4 RDP Staff Training Plan

Although the need for a skills and training plan is recognised it is difficult to plan this out in the strategy as the team is not yet in place. However once the team has been appointed the following steps will be followed:

- Training needs analysis will be undertaken to identify the skills gaps or training needs in the team and prioritise them;
- Once identified the next step is to ask the team members what relevant skills they want to improve through training;
- Any training needed will need to be relevant and focused and guided by SMART (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time-limited) objectives;
- Learning preferences will also be taken into account as it is likely that each team member will prefer to learn differently. Different training options will be considered and training preferences acknowledged;
- A personal development plan will be formulated for each team member. This will help prioritise training needs to identify the best way to address them;
- Various options are likely to be considered e.g.:
 - ‘Off the shelf’ training for generic skills requirements e.g. marketing, capacity building, etc.
 - ‘In house training’ or ‘on the job’ training to enable team members to learn at pace and to apply new knowledge immediately.
 - ‘Job Shadowing’ to enable new employees to cover a lot of ground in a short space of time.

- Mentoring to encourage team members to engage with others outside the team or MCC and consider different opportunities and solutions to problems.
- Conferences, seminars, workshops and course so the RDP team members can engage with employees from other areas and benefit from cross border learning to discover how other RDP programmes are operating;
- One line courses to enable team members to progress at their own pace and complete the course at work or home;
- A budget has been set aside within the running and animation costs to cover any external training required; and
- RDP team members will be asked to review their training experiences to ascertain if their training is relevant and appropriate and to discuss how their new skills can be implemented. This will be ascertained via regular one to ones or using MCC's 'Check in Check Out' appraisal process.

Taking into account all of the above it is the intention of MCC to use staff previously employed on the last RDP programme to deliver the 2014 2020 Programme, where the skills match is appropriate. These staff have significant experience of programme and project management having all been employed by MCC for in excess of two years in a similar capacity.

5. VALUE FOR MONEY

5.4 Financial Delivery Profiles

Please refer to attached Financial Delivery Profiles in *Appendix Five* which details the projected spend of the programme.

6. INDICATORS AND OUTCOMES

6.1 Monitoring and Results

In *Appendix Five* a full list of performance indicators have been created of the results that are likely to be derived from the list of activities detailed in the Intervention Logic Table (*Appendix Three*) and the associated spend profile also detailed in *Appendix Five*.

Certain assumptions have been made in compiling these Indicators in terms of definitions. It has been assumed that 'Operations' is a project, rather than a **type of project activity** such as consultations, advice given, assistance given, awareness raising or dissemination etc. It has also been assumed that a community can relate to a geographical community, such as a village settlement or indeed a specialist geographical area such as an AONB, or indeed a cluster group. Finally, it has also been assumed that businesses can also include businesses within the social sector.

Higher level indicator figures have been given to those themes identified as priorities following wide community and business consultation as detailed in Section 3.1. Therefore it is expected that the strategy will focus primarily upon 'Adding Value to local identity and natural and cultural resources' then 'Exploitation of digital technology' and so these are reflected in the higher performance indicator figures. It has also been assumed that activity on these themes will commence earlier in the programme.

It should be noted that performance indicator levels are very low in 2015. The preceding adventa LAG had over ten years' experience of delivering LEADER projects therefore members understand that it takes at least a year and sometimes longer for businesses and communities to build up a sufficiently strong relationship with the LAG before activity at any level commences, and then performance can be recorded. The indicators are therefore purposefully weighted towards the middle and end of the programme.

It should also be noted that the performance figures for 'Number of Jobs Created' throughout the programme, occurs at the end in 2020/2021. Again, this is purposeful and is based on a thorough working knowledge of delivering LEADER programmes of this nature. LEADER activity is 'bottom-up' and its very nature means that considerable facilitation and development needs to take place before jobs come to fruition.

In terms of Co-operation the adventa LAG currently delivers the 'Walking with Offa' project and the indicators given are based upon the knowledge gained through the delivery of this project. Again the weighting of the indicators is very much towards the middle and end of the programme period, as the LAG has learnt that when initially establishing a project, working across LAG areas, can take a significant period of time before benefits are felt 'on the ground' through the activity. In addition,

the 'number of LAG's involved in Co-operation' figure has been placed at a lower level due to the number of territories now combining LAG's and operating on a larger geographical scale.

6.2 Evaluation Plan

In line with the Welsh Government's 2014-2020 Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines, proposals for evaluating the progress of the strategy will focus on three key activities:

- Consolidation of baseline data;
- Regular Monitoring of performance data and indicators (formative evaluation); and
- Evaluation (Interim and Summative)

6.2.1 Consolidation of Baseline Data

As mentioned throughout this strategy the fact that the predecessor adventa LAG has been operational for over ten years means that there is a mountain of baseline data already in existence for Monmouthshire. Most recent is the Interim RDP 2007 – 2013 Business Plan evaluation which has formed the basis of LAG discussions for this new strategy. That said the situation in Newport is very different. Newport has not previously operated a LEADER programme therefore the first point in the LAG evaluation process will be to build on the key facts detailed in Section 1.1.2 and the community consultation (Section 7 below), identify gaps in information and then undertake a data capture exercise to address this.

6.2.2 Regular Monitoring of Performance Data

In assessing project and programme performance regular collection of information at a local level will be undertaken from day one of the programme period using standardised collection methods. This will inform day to day management decisions of the team and allow staff and the LAG to identify where projects are failing to meet targets and provide insight into how the problem can be addressed. The information will also be sent to WG for inclusion in the Annual Implementation report and will also form the basis of the evaluation exercise.

The indicators detailed in *Appendix Four* are based on a number of assumptions that have been detailed in Section 6.1 above. Many assumptions have been based on past experience and judgement and all follow SMART principles. Currently only common RDP indicators have been included however the Administrative Body will work with the LAG and WG in future to identify and develop targeted and streamlined additional indicators that can be realistically and reliably collected to capture project specific outcomes, this will include detailing specific indicators that will explicitly relate to tackling poverty e.g. number of people receiving training, number of people no longer digitally excluded, etc..

Monitoring Systems

Systematic information and monitoring processes have already been established by the Administrative Body in the previous programme and are therefore robust. However when available, the Administrative Body shall use the electronic system developed by WG as per EC regulatory requirements, RDP staff will be trained accordingly. In addition, the Administrative Body will keep a record of the beneficiaries consent so that they can be contacted for future surveys and evaluation exercises.

6.2.3 Evaluation

The LAG recognise that the purpose of an evaluation is to make an overall assessment of the Vale of Usk programme however given previous experience on an Axis One project, the LAG would advocate a nationwide approach in terms of the delivery of the evaluation whilst recognising that an evaluation will need to be undertaken at the local level. This nationwide approach has previously been discussed and agreed in principle by Local Authorities at all Wales LEADER events and would take the form of the appointment of one consultancy or consultancy partnership to undertake a Wales wide evaluation so that a consistent approach can be undertaken and results compared exactly. This will enable WG to produce a Wales wide evaluation that can support decision makers in making policy and strategy decision but will also allow WG to gain a fuller understanding of what's being delivered at a local level.

The LAG would therefore support the appointment of an all Wales Steering Group to oversee the evaluation on behalf of all LAGs as evidenced by the recent Task and Finish LEADER group that has been in place during the development of this RDP programme.

For it to be effective it is essential that all LAGs are engaged to identify requirements and ensure consistency whilst also ensuring that safeguards are in place to capture all monitoring and evaluation data at a local level. It is envisaged that resources can be pooled so that benefits of scale can be enjoyed by all and value for money obtained. It is envisaged that once the Steering Group has been established, a brief will be developed and agreed so that an independent consultancy or consultancy partnership can be employed and associated documents such as an evaluation plan, terms of reference, contracts etc. be produced.

It is envisaged that the following likely methods of evaluation will be employed and will also be undertaken at a local level:

- Analysis of baseline data
- Analysis of monitoring data
- Stakeholder interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys and questionnaires

Once the evaluation documents have been produced it is anticipated that the reports will not only influence project implementation decisions on a local LAG territory level by taking into account local data but also at an all Wales National level. It is envisaged that dissemination of results at a local level will be via website updates, networking events, seminars, etc. This may also be replicated on a national scale by WG to ensure learning opportunities are maximised.

7. SUITABILITY OF INVESTMENT

Brief Description

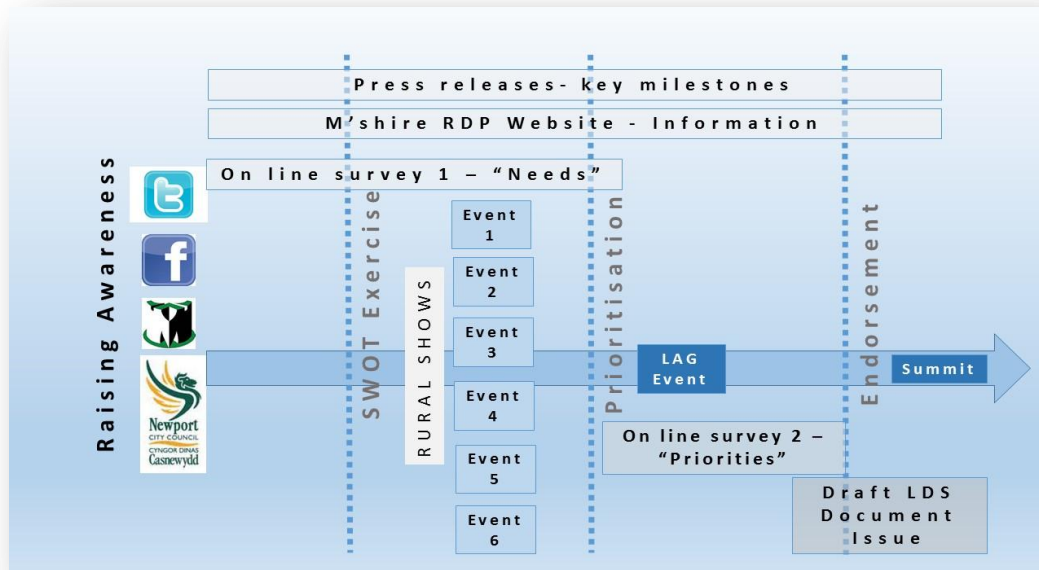
Over the past decade the adventa LAG has demonstrated a need and demand for specific rural development activities in the area, this is exemplified in section three where details of the 'earlier influences' can be found. However the SWOT analysis undertaken during the recent RDP consultation exercises has identified that rural areas still feel 'marginalised and neglected' particularly around the urban centres like Newport. This demonstrates a continuing demand for RDP funds and a LAG which will address existing and future rural needs. The fact that the newly formed and extended Vale of Usk LAG will also address the need to support the rural hinterland areas of Newport is clearly an added benefit.

The actions identified in this LDS are as a result of a series of consultation exercises which are detailed in this forthcoming section. As Monmouthshire is not in receipt of any other European funds and Newport funding is concentrated on the city centre area, the demand for the interventions detailed in the accompany intervention logic table are not currently being met through any existing provision and therefore there is no duplication of activity. Details of how the LAG will successfully deliver the actions and activities detailed in the intervention table is detailed in section five where proposed details of the LAG delivery team can be found. In addition, details of how this successful delivery will be measured can be found in the accompanying financial summary tables.

7.1Community Involvement

Figure Six below shows the approach and methodology the LAG adopted to ensure the various interests have been consulted in preparation of the strategy. The data has been taken from the LAG Communications Plan.

Figure Six - Communication Approach and Methodology



The process is based on four key steps:

1. Raising Awareness
2. SWOT Exercise
3. Prioritisation
4. Endorsement

Our specific target groups have been:

- Rural residents within Monmouthshire and Newport;
- Rural stakeholder groups and organisations;
- Formalised networks across the territory;
- Responsible officers within Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council that sit outside the Leader process, and other agencies and organisations.

7.1.1 Raising Awareness

To ensure stages 2 to 3 of the process were well attended and represented, there were a number of preparatory tasks that included i) liaison with respective communications teams at Monmouthshire and Newport Councils ii) Social media use and protocols iii) preparation of promotional flier and iv) Identification of existing networks and contacts across the rural area.

7.1.2 Social media and protocols

A number of Facebook and twitter accounts were used to inform people of ways to engage including community workshop dates, issuing the survey link and other updates. Protocols and agreement to content, frequency and handling of responses needs were agreed. Twitter account names used included: @adventamon, @monmouthshirecc, @newportcouncil, @chrisjonesregen.

7.1.3 Promotional Flier

To ensure everyone had the same information on how to engage with the LDS process, there was a need to develop a simple promotional flier electronically and printed. The fliers were distributed by email and in hard copy to groups, organisations, networks, elected members and the wider community.

7.1.4 SWOT Exercise – Engagement

The SWOT Exercise was the main focus of engagement in relation to the LDS development stage, with the main opportunities based around:

- Completion of on-line survey – needs based;
- The 2 no. rural shows in Monmouth and Usk;
- The 6 no. community drop in sessions across the Vale of Usk as detailed on the promotional flier.

7.1.5 On-line Survey – Need

The on-line survey met a number of objectives:

- Raised awareness of the opportunity to get engaged in the Vale of Usk LDS process;
- Helped build a cross section of view from residents, businesses and community organisations;
- Obtained contact details for future development and delivery;
- Allowed people that cannot make face to face engagement opportunities to still engage.

The initial on-line survey was focussed on need and sought views from respondents on the strengths and weaknesses of the area and some rating questions on existing

Figure 7 - Promotional Flier



support and infrastructure. The on-line survey was promoted through social media, local press, email networks and through other publicity.

The initial survey ran parallel to the face to face engagement events, with it being available by tablets or through the survey postcard route. The survey closed on the 15th September 2014.

7.1.6 Rural Shows/Community Drop In Sessions

The Vale of Usk LAG attended two rural shows - i) Monmouthshire Show on the 28th August and ii) Usk Show on the 13th September. The format for the shows and the community drop in sessions involved

1. Introductory panels explaining the purpose and process;
2. Animation techniques to encourage people to talk about issues and opportunities, involving:
 - a. Large map of the Vale of Usk area with issues and opportunities flags provided which members of the public filled in and pinned to the map;
 - b. Simple spider charts for residents, business and community groups to weight and prioritise rural issues and themes;
 - c. Large SWOT analysis;
 - d. Provision of on-line survey through tablets and where Wi-Fi was not available, paper versions provided;
 - e. Ideas post box.

7.2 Response and Evidence of Dialogue

Figure 8 - Evidence of Community Involvement and Dialogue



The community involvement process generated the following outputs:

- 8 no community drop in sessions/rural shows;
- 2 no press releases; and
- Over 50 specific social media uses with numerous retweets and mentions

In relation to engagement the following results were achieved:

- 317 people engaged with face to face through shows and community drop in sessions;
- 169 completed on-line survey over the period of one month; 25/75 split Newport/Monmouthshire; and
- 12 direct email correspondence on project ideas and general interest in the emerging programme

The following groups and organisations have been involved in the process, amongst others as detailed in Table Eleven below:

Table Eleven: Consultees

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bee Friendly Monmouthshire • Bridges Community Centre • Graig Community Council • Llandogo Community Led Plan Steering Group • Langstone Community Council • Magor & Undy Community Council • Marshfield Community Council • Mathern Village Hall Mathern Athletic Hall • Mitchel Troy Village Hall • Monmouth Neighbourhood Police • Monmouth Off Street Project • Monmouth Town Council • Monmouthshire Meadows Group • National Trust • Natural Resources Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penallt Community Led Plan Steering Group • Raglan Community Led Plan Steering Group • Raglan Conservation Group • Raglan Scouts • Raglan Village Hall & Recreation Association • RSPB Wales • The Narth Community Led Plan Steering Group • The Narth Village Hall • Trellech United Community Council • Usk Show Society • Vintage Vision • Severn Wye Energy Trust • Wye Valley AONB
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7.3 Prioritisation and LAG Meeting

On completion of the needs based phase of the LDS process, a synthesis of the community based SWOT weighting against LDS themes and project ideas was undertaken. This was presented to the LAG meeting on the 17th September where community/stakeholder organisations discussed the findings, emerging direction and action areas. Some of the charts and graphs shown in Figures 9 and 10 shows how we asked respondents to rate existing rural services, facilities, experiences and infrastructure with people also asked to visualise where they wish the territory to be in 2020 as well as looking at weighting of LDS themes.

Figures 9 & 10 - Evidence of Community Comment, Data, Analysis and Thematic Direction



7.3.1 On-line Survey – Prioritisation

The LAG is committed to undertaking a second on-line survey to those people that completed the initial “needs” survey and to those that provided details at the rural shows and drop in sessions. This survey will ask people to sense-check the

emerging priorities and activities for the LDS. Due to the tight timetable for LDS submission it is envisaged that this survey will be issued on the 6th October providing a short response period to rate and provide feedback on the priorities. The survey would be accompanied by a short executive summary of the LDS. The second on-line survey would assist us in terms of allowing feedback, maintaining longer term ownership as well as retaining interest in project delivery.

7.2 SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT has been created as part of the community and stakeholder involvement process. Responses have been aggregated from a combination of on-line survey, face to face engagement sessions and from LAG based workshops. Specific responses have been weighted in terms of frequency of response by showing a degree of frequency of 1 to 3, with 1 being mentioned at a normal level of frequency to 3 being emphasised or mentioned at a higher level of frequency by respondents. The full SWOT is detailed in Table Twelve below:

Table Twelve: SWOT

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong spatial location (3) • Communities are rural but still well connected (3) • Very active and strong sense of community (3) • Rural environment and landscape (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beauty, unspoilt, high quality are key assets ○ Diverse – hills to river to coast ○ Living rural areas that are creative and produce ○ Specific designations and environmental assets such as SSIs, AONBs meadows, etc. • Natural hubs or focal points cross the territory for community and visitors (3) • Environment and lifestyle is a strong attraction for businesses and investment (3) • Tourism experience is of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and connectivity across territory in terms of place, enterprise and residents/visitors (3) • Develop pilot hubs as a community focus, destination, integrated transport, parking, collection, distribution, learning, advice, etc. (3) • More superfast infrastructure (3) • Demand for digital led hubs and on-line communities that sign you to physical places (3) • Improve digital offer for visitors (3) • Connect ICT with green energy activities (3) • Better integrated tourism promotion across area (3) • Need to improve rural infrastructure – signage, furniture, structures, etc. (3) • Interest from groups and communities in digital infrastructure (3) • Opportunities for

<p>right quality and range due to investment to date (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique identity – location (2) • Strong social enterprise environment (2) • Physical heritage/cultural assets (churches, castles, museums) (2) • Good examples of community hubs and facilities (2) • Enhanced walking and cycling provision but need for maintenance (2) • Strong social capital (2) • Recognition of need to change in terms of local service delivery (2) • Local produce becoming more visible and known (2) • Strong brands in food and cycling (2) • High number of micro enterprises and businesses being run from home (2) • Diversity of business across territory (2) • Some digital experience e.g. Wikipedia, WIFI towns, community broadband (2) • Commitment from communities to renewables (2) 	<p>developing/extending community transport (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of underused land for pollination and local enterprise ideas (3) • Sustainability of rural services, halls and buildings – local service delivery is key to viability (3) • Greater use of social media and communications within communities (3) • Develop local enterprise hubs – extension of village hall (3) • Key strategic trails need to be supported through rural support e.g. Wales Coastal Path (3) • Untapped leisure and tourism clusters e.g. St Pierre area, lakes, Wales Coastal Path, etc. (3) • Support green vehicles and community transport (3) • More promotion of good practice, showcase and development studies on renewable projects (3) • Improve digital infrastructure and access for small businesses (3) • Extend farm/agri diversification and sustainability (3) • More mapping, community visioning support (3) • Bring back tradition e.g. orchards on levels (2) • Small renewable demonstration projects on village halls and community buildings (2) • More co-ordinated approach to supporting community energy schemes (2) • Additional rural housing to sustain communities, especially young people, that is in character and
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	<p>density (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow communities focussed on activity e.g. cycling community – local services, skills, guiding, etc. (2) • Woodland economy/management/community owned projects – small scale energy creation e.g. community bio-mass (2) • Opportunity for informal rural business support and networks (2) • Raise awareness of local creative, artisan, independent businesses and their products (2) • Making connections in terms of trails and links across the territory e.g. from Newport into Wentwood and into Usk Valley (2) • Integrated transport hubs e.g. realise Magor Railway Halt (2) • Develop new experience trails and products e.g. fashion and rural industries (1)
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural areas feel marginalised/neglected with urban centres having the focus (3) • Poor broadband – speed coverage – restricting micro enterprises and home working; restricting other e-learning, on-line activity (3) • Mobile phone signal poor and limiting local growth and communication (3) • Fragmented and inconsistent community and public transport, resulting in isolation and lack of work opportunities and community cohesion (3) • Business support is too generic; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging population – impact on health and care (3) • Diminishing local services such as health and care, libraries (3) • Changes to school catchments is fragmenting communities (3) • New housing is outstripping local infrastructure and services and damaging rural communities (3) • Loss of habitats – Monmouthshire Meadows (3) • Use it or lose it – e.g. public transport (3) • Loss of staff and resources (2) • Poorly located renewable energy schemes (2)

<p>we need more specialist advice (3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital isolation for specific communities that is impacting on access, poverty and skills gap (3) • Lack of rail links/halts (3) • Challenge of rurality for service delivery (3) • Resilience – e.g. reliance on volunteers (2) • Poor infrastructure preventing business development (2) • Poor incentives for FIT and lack of loan finance for renewables (2) • Lack of awareness of community renewable opportunities (2) • Lack of green/”transition groups in rural areas” • Sustaining local initiatives e.g. Made in Monmouthshire – maintaining co-ordination is a challenge (2) • Absence of tourism promotion and infrastructure (2) • Tourism town focussed not across the territory (2) • Lack of business clusters (2) • Family tourism not seen to be that coherent (2) • People still don’t like change (2) • Cycling networks fragmented in the levels (1) • Some town centres are under-performing which is having an impact on rural catchments (1) • Welsh language needs to be more visible in terms of physical identity and information, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global economics (2)
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<p>interpretation (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of way access areas points have access points that are cut off that reduces attractiveness of area (1) 	
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8. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

8.1 Cross-Cutting Themes

All activity detailed within the strategy and the accompanying Intervention Logic Table (*Appendix Three*) is designed to give due regard to the RDP's cross-cutting themes.

The cross-cutting themes are defined as:

- Equal Opportunities
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Sustainable Development and
- Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

The LAG's commitment to all four of these themes is evidenced by their decision to include all five RDP themes within this strategy whilst also working to the RDP Focus Area: 'Promoting social inclusion poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

The reason for choosing this path is that it will enable the LAG to ensure that it operates in a transparent and fully inclusive manner providing maximum and equal opportunity for all. Bearing this in mind, any service level agreements or grant allocations issued will also include the Cross Cutting theme requirements of the RDP programme including relevant performance indicators for example number of participants receiving in work training (NVQ2 and above) and the associated monitoring and reporting requirements. The Project Officer will also have responsibility for ensuring the integration of the cross cutting themes as part of their LAG secretariat responsibilities.

In terms of the themes the following consideration will be given:

Equal Opportunities and Gender Balancing

All activities delivered through this programme will provide equal opportunities for all and recognise the needs of everyone. Steps will be taken to identify and remove barriers to participation by disadvantaged groups. Positive action will be taken to support and assist all groups to overcome barriers to their participation, including:

- Lack of role models and community support;
- Lack of support for those with childcare and other caring needs;

- Language deficiencies, particularly for those for whom English or Welsh is not a mother tongue;
- Travel costs
- Lack of information about opportunities
- Access issues

Positive actions will therefore include:

- Ensuring there are opportunities for young people to make their voices heard;
- Identifying opportunities to work with schools and colleges and special interest groups such as young farmers;
- Capacity building activities with local groups, communities and businesses to enable them to pool advice and resources whilst reducing social isolation and increasing skills;
- Enhanced partnership working to maximise impact and reduce duplication;
- Providing opportunities for communities and businesses to trial new ideas with a view to raising skills levels and creating potential employment opportunities;
- Creating networking and mentoring opportunities by staging community capacity building events with a view to raising skills levels and reducing social isolation;
- Targeting of isolated individuals and groups by working with partners such as registered social landlords and voluntary organisations; and
- Ensuring community tools funded are bilingual and accessible and references positive images.

The Administrative Body also adopts an equal opportunities policy framework, which is all embracing. This is fully reflected in the flexible working practices that will be adopted by the RDP staff. The LAG will also adopt positive action measures to engage with isolated individuals, for example, supporting disabled people, those with care responsibilities, and those experiencing rural isolation. Rural isolation is an issue in the LAG territory despite good transport links this can be particularly experienced by single parents, young people, disabled people and the elderly.

Gender balance is also something that the LAG takes seriously, in all project based work, on working groups and sub-groups as well as any appointments will also be a consideration. However the LAG accepts that equal opportunities are not restricted to the issue of gender. In terms of project delivery services targeted at supporting business development for women has already been recognised in the form of networking opportunities.

Environmental Sustainability

The LAG adopts the Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development: 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. The LAG's landscape is one of its key strengths and indeed opportunities. The LAG therefore views the RDP 2014 – 2020 as a further opportunity to capitalise sensitively on this most natural of assets.

Activities will need to demonstrate how they support sustainable development and will have to consider their likely impact upon the environment,

Projects will be encouraged to link with the relevant Public Sector Sustainable Development Policies to help meet the challenge to provide more citizen based services such as for example, 'making the territory cleaner and greener'. This will include activities such as supporting volunteer development to manage conservation areas, promoting green infrastructure to enhance the local environment, marketing and promoting local products and markets, support for environmental enhancement business ideas, advice and support for energy check schemes and community energy schemes, etc.

Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion

As 'Promoting social inclusion poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas' is a key focus area for this strategy, advice and support for communities and individuals will be a key strand of project activity. This will take many forms but it is anticipated that examples will include opportunities to link with local business start-up schemes supporting individuals with specific needs; providing support and training to all sections of the territories communities on digital technology to combat digital exclusion and social isolation by supporting community hubs; working with voluntary groups and registered social landlords to identify opportunities to support intergenerational schemes for support and care; assessing the need for loan schemes; raising awareness of credit union opportunities; investigation of time banking, volunteering schemes, resource sharing opportunities and support surgeries via the proposed 'community hub model' and generally enabling access to isolated individuals and groups that could benefit from enhanced support.

The Welsh Language

Following the community consultation and the impending National Eisteddfod in Abergavenny in 2016 the LAG are aware of the need to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh in this RDP programme.

The LAG is supportive of the Welsh Language Commissioner's Strategic Plan 2013 – 2015 and its aims to increase the use of the Welsh language to ensure that the Welsh Language should be treated no less favourably than the English language and that people in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of Welsh if they choose to do so.

The use of Welsh in Project activities will therefore be encouraged with a view to broadening and strengthening the Welsh language and improving the experience of Welsh speakers. Examples include joint linguistic activities in digital development; promoting the Welsh language in tourism literature and tourism ambassador programmes to further the 'sense of place' experience; and encouraging the private sector to embrace the Welsh language in their day to day activities.

8.2 Supporting the Uplands

As the LAG territory is bordered by Upland Areas it is envisaged that the following activities will take place:

- RDP staff will be encouraged to work with communities in the Uplands areas to bring forward projects that will assist target beneficiaries e.g. farming families, particularly in areas such as ICT exploitation given the move towards the online Basic Payment Scheme;
- Partnership and collaboration with other RDP schemes such as Agriscop, Farming Connect and organisation such as farming unions and Natural Resources Wales will also be encouraged to avoid duplication;
- Links will also be made with other bordering LAG territories for example Powys to identify opportunities for collaboration. Powys is particularly relevant for the Vale of Usk LAG as the Black Mountains form part of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The LAG will therefore seek to exploit the Brecon Beacons National Park as a tourist destination by developing sustainable tourism opportunities such as walking, equine and cycling. Additional links will also be sought with the neighbouring Torfaen LAG whose landscapes also form part of Upland territories.

There is the potential for the current LAG territory to grow if a wider collaborative or cooperative partnership is to be formed with Torfaen. If this is the case then the Uplands Areas priorities will be considered as part of the prioritisation process.

9. LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

9.1 Mainstreaming Plan

As LEADER is an initiative which encourages innovation there is a need for the LAG to consider how the results of actions supported under LEADER can be disseminated. In addition the LAG also needs to consider how successful LEADER actions can be mainstreamed by other bodies to enable them to take them to the next stage of delivery.

Table Thirteen below details the five LEADER themes, the actions proposed under these themes (as detailed in the Intervention Logic Table in Appendix Three) and the potential bodies who have the potential to mainstream the activities.

Table Thirteen – Mainstreaming Plan

Theme One: Adding Value to local identity and natural and cultural resources	
Type of Action to be Supported	Action to be Mainstreamed to Whom
1. To develop integrated media for rural tourism providers and links with destination management areas through training, mentoring and co-ordinating promotional material at a strategic and local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Tourism Associations • Visit Wales • Local Authorities • WG e.g. ICT Exploitation Programme • Communities 2.0 • Protected Landscapes e.g. Wye Valley AONB, BBNP

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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To work with existing/emerging partnership projects that are developing natural and cultural asset led projects in terms of activity based tourism, heritage and cultural based tourism and look at ways of complementing local training, volunteering, guiding, environmental management 3. To develop local projects through groups such as social enterprises and through clustering activity tourism business so that a diverse range and quality of activity tourism is provided for a targeted segment of visitor 4. To support feasibility into new rural tourism products, facilities and attractions where support is given through feasibility, best practice exchange, etc. 5. To develop and manage natural assets that aids local economic prosperity and safeguards local biodiversity through volunteering support, training, marketing and promotion and networking with other groups across the territory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor Education Operators • Private Sector cooperatives • Mentrau Iaith, Eisteddfod Cymru
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Theme Two: Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains	
Type of Action to be Supported	Action to be Mainstreamed to Whom
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop rural business networks that provide specific sector support and forums for exchanging ideas and joint action 2. To develop a mentoring scheme for women in enterprise 3. To extend knowledge from Made in Monmouthshire and other food related initiatives into the wider territory that integrates experiences and develops unique offers in terms of food heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG e.g. Business Wales, Agri Food • Visit Wales • Private sector cooperatives • Wales Cooperative • Mentrau Iaith,

<p>and food linked to activity tourism</p> <p>4. To develop social enterprises that meet gaps in rural basic services, local visitor offer and other gaps in the local market</p>	
<p>5. To provide advice and support on digital technology in terms of on-line development, sales, linking to complementary businesses and developing local clusters</p> <p>6. To explore the development of shared support facilities within local community hubs and enablement of WIFI and other measures to ensure reliable connectivity in rural places</p> <p>7. To develop an integrated on-line market place that connects hubs, places, producers, local businesses with urban centres and complements other WG initiatives in terms of TCP support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG e.g. Digital Wales (ICT Exploitation Programme), Housing and Regeneration • Communities 2.0 • Mentrau Iaith
<p>8. To undertake research into local barriers to young people gaining employment in terms of mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities • WG Business Wales • Registered Social Landlords • Mentrau Iaith

Theme Three: Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services	
Type of Action to be Supported	Action to be Mainstreamed to Whom
<p>1. To implement proposals from community led planning in Monmouthshire in terms of business case/feasibility planning development</p> <p>2. To develop a shared toolkit scheme for rural communities in Newport, in addition to Monmouthshire in terms of rural community audits, mapping, action planning, etc.</p> <p>3. To strongly align local services through community hubs and understand usage of local assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities e.g. MCC Whole Place initiative • WG e.g. Tackling Poverty, Division, Digital Wales (ICT Exploitation) • Communities 2.0 • Community Transport initiatives e.g. MCC Grass Routes • Private sector cooperatives e.g. Made in Monmouthshire • Mentrau Iaith

<p>and how to maximise these in terms of value, patronage and loyalty</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To share knowledge on developed initiatives in Monmouthshire such as community transport, local food, digital apps with new rural communities through network events and pilot projects 5. To showcase local products, services, knowledge and solutions through community hubs through physical engagement and through virtual on-line sharing 6. To explore community hubs as a places to distribute and collect products that meet specific local gaps in services and ensure accessibility for all 7. To develop digitally led outreach projects that up skill rural communities in access, content management, social media integration, dynamic information, etc. 	
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Theme Four: Renewable energy at Community level	
Type of Action to be Supported	Action to be Mainstreamed to Whom
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To implement proposals from the respective Monmouthshire's Action Plans for Sustainability (MAPs) undertaken by Severn Wye energy 2. To develop demonstration projects associated with renewable energy with community hubs, transport, local facilities 3. To raise awareness of renewable energy initiatives and solutions amongst rural communities through local promotion 4. To establish networks with farmers and landowners to investigate likely supply and link to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG e.g. Farming Connect, Natural Resources Wales • Severn Wye Energy, Gwent Energy CIC, etc. • Carbon Trust, Ynni'r Fro, Renew Wales

<p>community led demand in terms of underused resources</p> <p>5. To promote low energy approach to visitors to the area in terms of consumption and awareness of alternative energy generation being provided</p> <p>6. Consideration of RHI 7 year capital grants available to communities and householders</p>	
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Theme Five: Exploitation of digital technology	
Type of Action to be Supported	Action to be Mainstreamed to Whom
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide training and support for rural communities in digital technology 2. To support farmers and land based producers with ICT support and diversification opportunities 3. To provide sector specific support in terms of short supply chain development, marketing, B2B and clustering local enterprises through digital mediums 4. To provide e-learning opportunities in digital technology through rural IT clubs linked to coffee mornings/ afternoon teas, etc. 5. To develop community based tourism interpretation initiatives that up skills communities in terms of content development and integration with visitor facing web resources 6. To trial new digital products through short leasing and market test ideas in terms of digital uptake, community learning, local economic development, amongst others 7. To explore the feasibility of linking rural producers and businesses with town/urban based web 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG e.g. Tackling Poverty, Division, Digital Wales (ICT Exploitation), Farming Connect, Visit Wales • National Farming Union, Farmers Union of Wales • Communities 2.0 • Mentrau Iaith • Private sector cooperatives e.g. Made in Monmouthshire • Protected Landscapes e.g. Wye Valley AONB, BBNP • Local Authorities

portals in terms of buy local with links to loyalty and secondary benefits	
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SECTION 10 – DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE

I am acting with the authority of the Local Action Group and certify to the best of my knowledge and belief the information provided in this Local Development Strategy application and supporting documentation are true and correct and the application for financial assistance is for the minimum required to enable the project to proceed.

I undertake to notify the Welsh Government in advance of carrying out any changes to the nature of this project.

I also confirm that I am not aware of any reason why the project may not proceed and that the commitments and activities can be achieved within the timescales indicated.

Local Action Group (LAG) Representative

Signed:	
Name:	
Chair/Deputy Chair LAG:	
Date:	

Administrative Body Representative

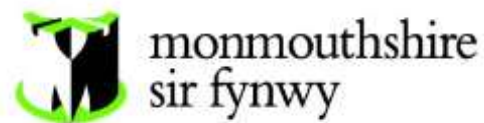
Signed:	
Name:	

Position in Administrative Body:	
Date:	

A signed hard copy of the Local Development Strategy must be received at the address below no later than 30 September 2014

Scheme Management Unit, Welsh Government, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. SY23 3UR

Please submit an electronic copy to: LEADER2014-2020@wales.gsi.gov.uk



SUBJECT: MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OBSTRUCTIONS ON THE HIGHWAY

STATIC ADVERTISING

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 3rd June 2015

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To seek approval for the adoption of a policy titled 'Provision of a Management of Commercial Obstruction on the Highway', in relation to 'Static Advertising opportunities' The Policy will cover various occasions when a business wants to use the Public Highway for reason of benefit to that company. It will bring a consistency to the policy, both within MCC processes and the wider Local Authority community by using a specific licensing and charging mechanism for any organisation seeking to make use of the public highway.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet approves the adoption of the new policy 'Commercial Obstruction on the Highway' having given due consideration to its constituent parts as listed below:

2.1 Static Advertising Policy

2.2 That a post be created to administer the various aspects of the policy (licensing, advertising, invoicing etc.) and that the post be funded from income generated through the scheme

In the future, further policy may be presented under the 'Commercial Obstruction on the Highway' banner. This will provide a single point of reference for all similar obstructions and their management. These will include.

2.3 'A' Board Policy,

2.4 Flyposter Policy,

2.5 Commercial Provision Policy,

2.6 Community Provision Policy.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Enforcement action taken by Highways Operation's Department forms a significant element of their work. This enforcement, usually against business and people, that are aware of the MCC's current policies / guidance, could be developed into a system that is more readily available, encompassing all private activity on the Public Highway. The policy will more effectively control apparatus in the highway and will recover the cost associated with enforcement.

3.2 Monmouthshire County Council has a statutory obligation to provide 'unhindered access to the Highway', while this Duty needs to be managed it currently uses valuable Council resources to provide the service of approval, of advice and of enforcement. Unfortunately this service is not consistent throughout Monmouthshire. We currently licence and charge scaffold, skip hire companies and markets for the use of the Highway space, but not other uses such as a business who occupy the highway for commercial purposes. This policy seeks to bring consistency, safety and clarity in this area.

Commercial obstruction of the Public Highway can be defined as an obstruction created by the placement of an object on the public Highway, for the purpose of private gain, without consent. Commercial obstruction of the Public Highway, in this instance it can be described as Static Advertising which is a new provision whereby Businesses can advertise from a static sign location, installed by Monmouthshire County Council, at commercial rates.

A typical sign used in NCC:



How an MCC approved sign may look



4. REASONS:

- 4.1 It is not unreasonable that the beneficiaries of service requests made to MCC should pay for the cost associated with those requests, especially when a failure to comply, with The Highway Act 1980, would normally lead to enforcement action being taken and possible fines and costs being charged.
- 4.2 An interest by Companies to use the public Highway as a site to benefit their business is evident throughout MCC. This benefit, usually through advertising or by the direct use of the Public Highway as a premise from which to sell goods or to supply a service, needs to be managed. However, this benefit can conflict with MCC's statutory Duty to '.... assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway....', Highway Act 1980 : Section 130, and needs to be managed effectively
- 4.3 It is the Duty of Monmouthshire County Council to control such activities. The use of a licence that has a charge that reflects the market value is used in this policy.
- 4.4 There is a clear need to offer, local business, the opportunity to advertise. Companies currently request to advertise away from their business, these are rejected because our Flyposter policy allows for only charitable organisations to do so. The ability to allow business to advertise while protecting Monmouthshire's liabilities in relation to its statutory duties can be seen a progressive policy
- 4.4 Feedback was received from Strong Community Select Committee, their concerns have been incorporated within the revised policy.

4.5 The use of a third party company to provide the marketing, selling and financial controls on the advertising space was considered. However to optimise income to MCC it is recommended that it is managed in house and performance reviewed in twelve months of implementation.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Staff resources are currently engaged in guidance and enforcement. A shift to guidance and licensing will require additional resources. An additional post is recommended to provide the detailed administrative support and financial control that the scheme demands.

5.2 Income generated by this proposal are outlined in document 3 'Management of Commercial Obstruction on the Highway report' (Appendix 1 part 2). With a 55% take up and with current proposed charges an average net surplus of £70,037 is anticipated in a full year inclusive of additional admin support. This addresses the relevant 14/15 and 15/16 budget mandates.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The significant equality impacts identified in the EQIA (document 2) and are summarised below for Cabinet consideration:

6.2 The access for all forums were consulted. The bringing together of policy that reduces and prevents uncontrolled proliferation of obstructions while providing a less cluttered environment was seen as a positive step forward.

6.3 The policy will provide an improving position for access and safety. The management of the unsolicited use of the Public Highway will ensure that the policy achieves an improving situation with regard Commercial Obstructions and will provide benefit to all Citizens

6.4 The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed at year 1, every 3 years after, and criteria for monitoring and review will include:

Enquiry numbers, accident / incident numbers, insurance claims, canvassing accessibility groups, canvassing business forums

7. CONSULTEES:

7.1 Cabinet Members

7.3 Strong Community Committee

7.4 Town and Community Council

7.5 CAIR

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

8.1 SUPPORTING PAPERS

0. This paper
1. Static advertising policy
2. EQIA

3. Static advertising report MCC 3, including Appendix 1: part 1 and 2
4. Static advertising report Immediate Solutions 4

9. AUTHOR:

Steve Lane, Operations Manager, County Highways

- 10. CONTACT DETAILS:**
- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Tel: | 01291 431678 / 07885 225972 |
| E-mail: | stevelane@monmouthshire.gov.uk |

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

STATIC ADVERTISING POLICY-

Rental of advertising space made available by Monmouthshire County Council

1. Introduction

1.1 Advertising on and around the Public Highway can degrade the local 'street scene' and can contribute to an impression of urban decay. There is an on-going concern regarding illegal advertising signs positioned throughout the County. There is a need to control advertising signs through education and enforcement, in a consistent and safe method, in Monmouthshire.

1.2 What is Static Advertising

Static Advertising is the new provision of sites adjacent to the Carriageway that can be made available for the advertisement of Local Business. These sites would typically consist of a single or double sign face, fixed to two posts that display an advert for a company. Initially they would be located in verges along sections of straight roads and will be installed by Monmouthshire County Council.

1.3 The problems associated with Static Advertising in the form of advertising signs on the Public Highway?

Monmouthshire County Council's Flyposter Policy currently covers this area but is not suitable for purpose. It causes confusion for Business who see Charitable and Community events being allowed to install displays. These businesses want to, but cannot, find any opportunity to advertise in public areas. This policy will enable a company to advertise legitimately while maintaining a standard, and it will allow revenue to be gathered through management in a proactive way.

1.4 Legislation

- (i) Under section 130 of the Highway Act 1980 (1) it is the Duty of the highway authority to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which they are the highway authority, including any roadside waste which forms part of the it.
- (ii) Under section 132 of the Highways Act 1980 (1) A person who, without either the consent of the highway authority for the highway in question or an authorisation given by or under enactment or reasonable excuse, paints or otherwise inscribes or affixes any picture, letter, sign or other

mark upon the surface of a highway or upon any tree, structure or works on or in a highway is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine, increasing on a second or subsequent conviction.

- (iii) Under section 149 of the Highway Act 1980 (2) if the highway authority for any highway have reasonable grounds for considering –
 - a. That anything unlawfully deposited on the highway constitutes a danger.....to the users of the highway, and
 - b. That the thing in question ought to be removed without the delay involved in giving notice..... Under this section, the authority may remove the thing forthwith.

2. Methods of Prevention

The Council aims to prevent infringement, and so protect legitimate Business, by enforcing the removal of any Commercial advert on the Public Highway that is placed without lawful authority or excuse.

2.1 Highways activity

The Authority's Highways division has an existing policy that covers their activities around controlling related advertising. Fly posters and advertising on their property.

'Control of Goods Displayed on the Public Highway' policy, adopted and effective from 1 April 2002. This covers aspects such as displaying of goods and advertising hoardings on public footways. The intention is to ensure a consistent approach, to ensure Highways Officers are clear when endeavouring to determine whether an obstruction is acceptable or not. This policy covers issues such as obstruction, for example where 'A boards' may cause an obstacle for people with disabilities (including the visually impaired) and people with pushchairs to negotiate. There is also reference here to the Council not adopting a rigid ban on street advertising. The policy refers to 'trader's livelihoods could be damaged by the imposition of a rigid ban. Some displays are considered to add colour and vibrancy to the street scene of our towns and are an accepted component of some retail businesses'.

It should be noted the policy was agreed following extensive consultation with the Town Councils covering Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow, Caldicot and Usk, their respective Chambers of Commerce and CAIR (Monmouthshire Disablement association). Each trader potentially affected by the policy received a letter and background information prior to 1 April 2002.

It should be noted that this existing Fly Poster policy only allows enforcement against a business and not legitimate access to advertising opportunities.

2.2 Planning activity

The Planning Enforcement team have no specific policy regarding dealing with illegal / legal advertising and fly posting, but deal with all complaints received. Planning consent for such signs would not be sort since the signs will be 'Highway' signs in the Highway.

Advertising by companies away from the Highway or where Monmouthshire County Council makes no provision, under this policy, will dealt with under the normal Planning mechanism.

2.3 General

This Authority is also signed up to the 'Enforcement Concordat' which lays down national principles of good enforcement. This includes reference to being open about our approach to enforcement, being helpful, proportionate and consistent. The Authority awaits further guidance from the newly formed Local Better Regulation Office regarding a new 'compliance code' which will outline similar enforcement principles.

Highway undertake regular, low level, enforcement against those who obstruct the public highway for Commercial benefit. This would typically be unauthorised advertising signs erected in and around the public highway such as on verges, highway fences and street furniture. This enforcement is carried out under the Highway Act 1980 section 132 and 149, it currently exceeds 80 occasions a year and continues to be a drain on resources. This aspect will be dealt with under the 'Fly Poster' policy.

3. Our Approach

- 3.1 This Authority recognises and supports the need and indeed the desire of Business to use the public Highway as opportunity to increase revenue through sales and advertising. However the Authority must adopt and manage a robust policy to ensure that the public and the Authority have adequate safeguards. This policy would cover the various occasions when a Business wants to use the Public Highway for reason of benefit to that company, effectively controlling static advertising signs near the highway.
- 3.2 In return for the use of this opportunity a Business will pay MCC a 'Static advertising' fee. This fee will be in the form of a 12 or 24 month agreement. Attachment 3 shows typical contract
- 3.3 in order to maximise the revenue from each opportunity, to reduce MCC's resource requirement and to provide a central contact, a partnership agreement with an experienced company, that can provide design and production expertise and also some installation and maintenance services, will be sort. Attachment 2 shows process.
- 3.4 Any complaints / enquires regarding Static Advertising on the Highway will in the first instance be recorded at our One Stop Shops. Highways would be the first point of reference for any Static Advertising on the highway complaints,

referring to colleagues in other teams where the situation demands – as outlined in Attachment 1. The ‘one point of reference’ will allow the Authority to measure numbers of complaints, any trends, and our effectiveness.

- 3.5 Unapproved Static Advertisements will be removed by the Highways Operations Department and the business/organiser warned of the consequences by letter. Repeat offenders will be referred to our Legal Services Section by a Planning Enforcement officer, with a view to prosecute. This process is outlined under the current Fly Poster Policy. Our staged approach to action will be by way of the staged letters. Attachment 1.
- 3.6 Highways staff, in the interest of safety and clarity, will consider each site individually when determining its suitability for advertising signage. However, it is possible to set certain criterion that is relevant to all highway verge site locations, which must be followed regarding each advertising sign:
- The sign must include minimal information, and be pre-approved by MCC. Information may include company logo, name, web site, address, along with basic information regarding the business. Attachment 4 details a typical sign.
 - The sign must be at least 600mm from the carriageway edge.
 - Signs must not be installed at or near junctions where they can distract drivers (signs must be at least 30m from a junction)
 - Signs must not be installed at or near roundabouts where they can distract drivers (signs must be at least 30m from a roundabout)
 - Signs must be installed on straight sections of road, away from bends and where visibility sight lines are required height restrictions allow a maximum sign height of 1050mm above the carriageway
 - Signs must be installed on Monmouthshire County Council Highway adopted and maintainable land
 - Signs must be installed by MCC Highways trained operatives to ensure compliance with all Health and Safety requirements (sign face alterations maybe carried out by an approved company business or sign manufacturer subject to MCC approval)
 - If on installation, a sign becomes continually damaged (by any means such as vandalism, vehicle damage etc), then the site may be deemed inappropriate and the contract discontinued
 - MCC operatives will carry out any routine maintenance of the signs such as cleaning.
 - Sign post sites must only contain 2 signs, in highway verges, (one sign facing in each direction), this will ensure only small amounts of information are

available to road users, so as not to cause a distraction. More sign faces will be included at each point in carparks and open spaces.

3.7 Approved Advertising

We will not accept advertising of a racial, religious or political nature or any advertising which may be construed as offering services of a sexual nature. We will not accept advertisements from gambling organisations, manufacturers of tobacco or alcohol products. We will not permit advertising which we may reasonably consider to be objectionable. All advertisements will strictly adhere to the British Code of Advertising Standards Authority or any code of advertising practice that may supersede the same. Where advertisers are unsure or in doubt about the policy, they may seek guidance from Monmouthshire County Council Highways Operations Department.

4. Outcomes

- 4.1 The outcome sought is to ensure adequate opportunities exist, for the business need, to access good quality, local and affordable advertising methods. Quick and effective response to illegal obstructions. By consistent recording of incidents, working together better with early intervention, problems associated with unauthorised advertising will be reduced.
- 4.2 Officers involved with the policy will ensure all relevant Officers, including One Stop Shop staff, are aware of the content of this policy and monitor compliances, to update their procedures and provide some training on the concept of Static Advertising.
- 4.3 The policy will be reviewed after 12 months to ensure that the Static Advertising scheme is running effectively, and identify any necessary amendments.

5. Report Contributors

Steve Lane, Ryan Pritchard, Roger Hoggins

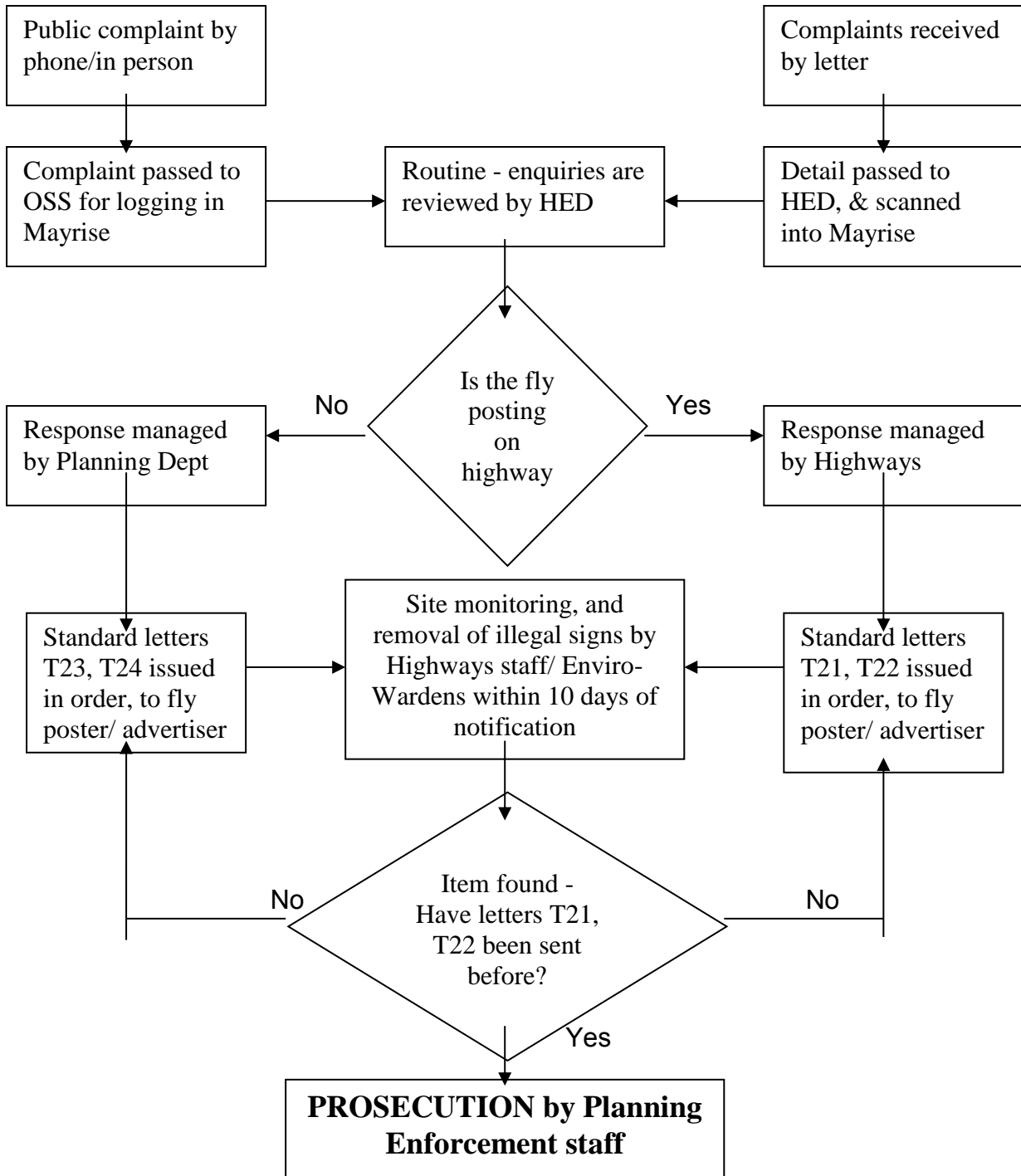
6. Report Authors –

Steve Lane, Ryan Pritchard

ATTACHMENT 1

Enforcement process as Fly Poster Policy

Process Flowchart for Static advertising / Fly posting complaints



Notes:

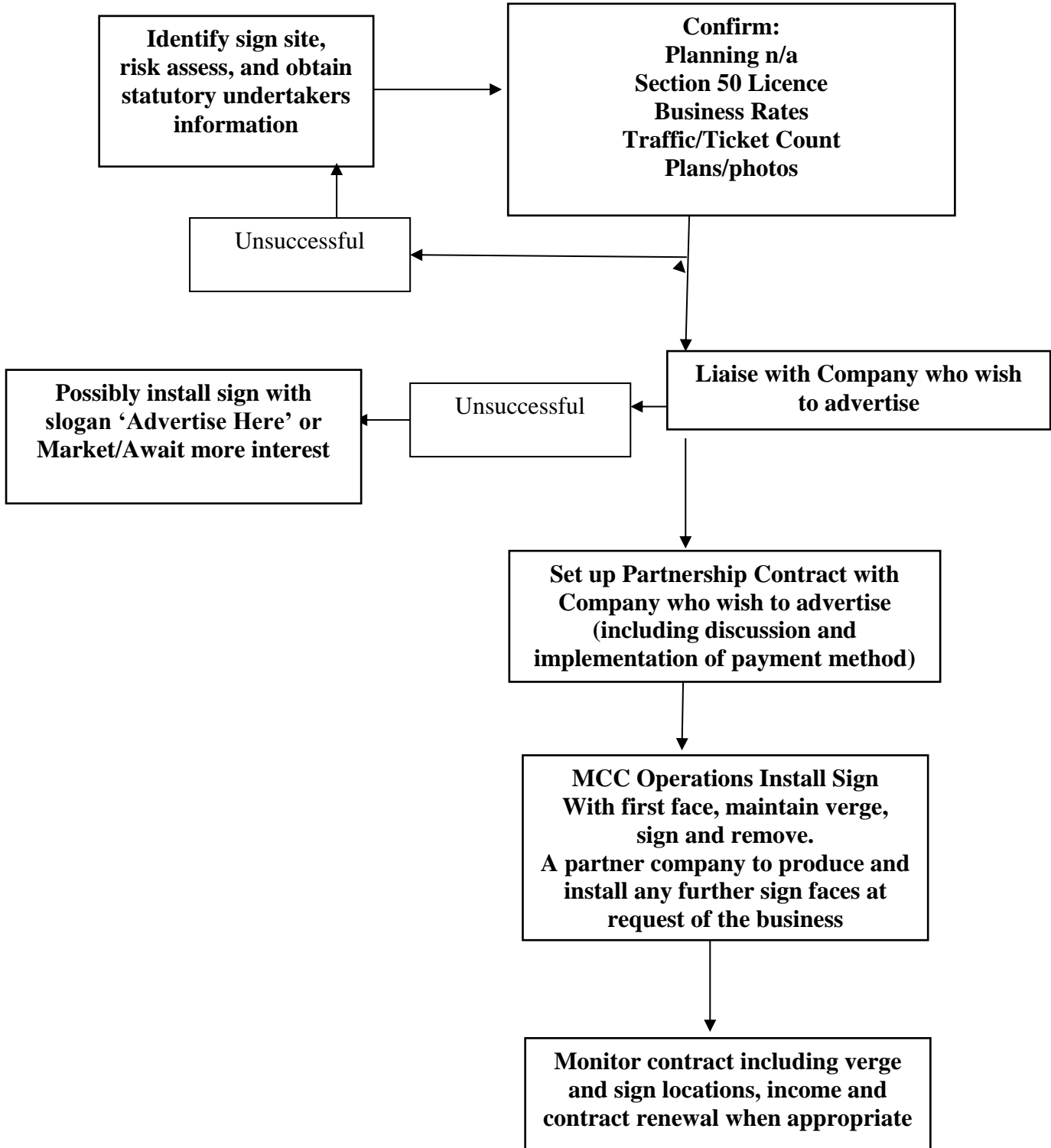
Mayrise = Highways enquiry system

HED = Highways Enquiry Desk

OSS = One Stop Shop

ATTACHMENT 2

Flow Chart showing procedure for Advertising sign management:



ATTACHMENT 3

Typical contract between Monmouthshire and Advertiser



THIS LICENCE is made on the (date) _____ **BETWEEN Monmouthshire County Council** of County Hall Democratic Centre, Rhadyr, Llanbadoc, Usk NP15 1GA ("the Council" or "the Licensor") and

[Name of Advertising Company] _____ of

[address of Advertising Company] _____ ("the Licensee") of the other part

IT IS AGREED:

1. (1) In consideration of the Licence Fee hereinafter mentioned the Council in pursuance of Section 50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 permits and licences the Licensee subject to the conditions of this Licence to retain the apparatus detailed in the Schedule ("the Advertising Signs") at the location specified in the Schedule.

(2) This Licence shall commence on [date] _____ i.e. the day the sign/signs are installed at the specified location and shall continue for a period of three years thereafter unless terminated earlier in accordance with the terms of this Licence. For the avoidance of doubt, this license is granted for a minimum period of one year (see 2.6).

(3) For the avoidance of doubt nothing contained in this Licence shall authorise the Licensee to use the airspace around within and above the Advertising Sign/Signs or to place any other advertising material equipment or other fixtures and fittings to or on the Sign/Signs or the site location.

2. The Licensee and the Council agree that the following conditions apply to this Licence:-

2.1 Payment of Licence Fee and Outgoings

The Licensee agrees to pay in each year of the Licence the Licence Fee of £ _____ plus VAT. A 20% non-refundable deposit to be paid at time of signing the License agreement, the remaining balance payable on the date of commencement of the License or in equal monthly instalments, the first instalment / payment being due 1 month from the date of commencement of the Licence .

2.2 Damaged Advertising Signs

In the event that the Sign/Signs become damaged by traffic accidents or are vandalised, the Council will arrange for replacement of the Advertising Signs on the first two occasions during the contract period. After this, at the Council's discretion, the license may be terminated as this site would be deemed unsuitable for roundabout sponsorship. (see 2.7.2)

2.3 Change of details for Advertising Signs

In the event of the Licensee changing its name or logo, the Licensee can apply in writing to the Council for consent for a new Advertising Sign reflecting the revised details. The change of Advertising Signs will be subject to such reasonable conditions as the Council may impose and a further fee will be payable.

2.5 Installation of Advertising Signs

Any installation and maintenance of Advertising Sign/Signs required under this Licence will be carried out by the Council, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.

2.6 Termination by the Licensee

If the Licensee no longer wishes to retain the Advertising Sign/Signs in place or wishes to terminate this Licence, the Licensee must give no less than three months written notice to the Council. This notice period is a statutory requirement and the Council cannot accept a shorter notice period.

Termination at any time throughout the period of this Licence will mean that the Licence Fee in respect of that year is still payable and if already paid will not be refunded. However, the Licensee will not be required to pay the Licence Fees due in respect of subsequent years.

2.7 Termination by the Council

2.7.1 The Council may by no less than 7 days notice in writing served on the Licensee terminate this Licence if:-

- a) the Licensee fails to comply with any provision of this Licence or the relevant part of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, or
- b) the Council is or becomes aware that the Licensee has parted with / sold its interest in the Sign/Signs.
- c) the Licensee is in circumstances which entitle the Court or a creditor to appoint, or have appointed a, receiver, manager, or administrative receiver, or which entitle the Court to make a winding-up order.
- d) the Licensee is in arrears for 14 days with any payment due under the terms of this license.

In the event of the Licence being terminated as above, the Licensee shall not be entitled to any refund of the Licence Fee paid. The Licensee will be required to pay any arrears of any payments due under this license which have not been paid in full.

2.7.2 The Council may by no less than 7 days notice in writing served on the Licensee terminate this Licence if the Council considers that the withdrawal of the Licence is necessary for the purpose of the exercise of their functions as a street authority or is otherwise necessary in the best interests of the Council. A fee to the nearest whole month prior to the sign being reported as damaged will be required to be paid, any outstanding monies should be paid within 28 days.

2.8 Removal of Advertising Signs

Where this Licence is terminated or expires, the Council will remove the Advertising Sign/Signs to which this Licence relates. In the interests of safety, removal of the Advertising Sign/Signs by the Licensee is not permitted. Once removed, the Advertising Sign/Signs will be retained by the Council.

2.9 Assignment of the Licence

Assignment of the Licence by the Licensee is not permitted. If the Licensee does not wish to continue with the Advertising Sign/Signs, then notification to terminate this Licence must be given to the Council under the provisions of clause 2.6.

2.10 Statutory Obligations

The Licensee is required to comply with the requirements of Section 50 and Schedule 3 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 in relation to this Licence.

2.12 Variations

Variations to this Licence will only be effective if in writing and signed by both the Council and the Licensee. However, extensions to the time period of this Licence to reflect any periods when the Advertising Sign/Signs are being replaced under the provisions of clause 2.2 shall be valid if in writing and signed on behalf of the Council. All such extensions shall be at the discretion of the Council. For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise expressly agreed in writing between the Licensee and the Council, no further Licence Fee shall be payable in respect of such extensions to the Licence period.

2.13 Service of Notices

Any notice under this Licence and any request for consent or approval may be served personally or by letter addressed in the case of the Council to the Council's Head of Highways and Waste, Regeneration and Culture, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall Democratic Centre, Rhadyr, Llanbadoc, Usk NP15 1GA (or such other address as the Council may notify to the Licensee) and in the case of the Licensee at their registered office or place or business. Any notice so given by letter shall be deemed to have been served three business days after the same shall have been posted

3. PROVIDED ALWAYS and it is hereby agreed that:-

3.1 This Licence shall not operate as any consent or authority other than pursuant to Section 50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

3.2 Any reference herein to any legislative provision shall be deemed to include a reference to any subordinate legislation rule order relative thereto and any statutory modification or re-enactment for the time being in force.

IN WITNESS thereof this Licence is executed the day and year first before written

Signed for and on behalf of Monmouthshire County Council

by: _____

PRINT _____

Date _____

Signed for and on behalf of

[name of advertising company] _____

by: _____

PRINT _____

Date _____

SCHEDULE

"The Advertising Signs"

An Advertising Sign/Signs displaying the Monmouthshire County Council Logo, web address and the Licensee's agreed inclusions will be installed at the following location:

_____ as shown for the

purposes of identification illustrated on the attached plan.

ATTACHMENT 4

e.g. of sign layout in MCC



e.g. a typical sign already used by NCC



The “Equality Initial Challenge”

Name: Service area: OPERATIONS Date completed:		Please give a brief description of what you are aiming to do. This report will allow obstructions in the Highway to be officially placed under a new policy and licencing regime. This will remove a degree of uncertainty about what a Citizen can expect.	
Protected characteristic	Potential Negative impact Please give details	Potential Neutral impact Please give details	Potential Positive Impact Please give details
Age			The proposal will reduce street clutter and some of the risks associated with uncontrolled Commercial Obstructions on the Highway.
Disability			
Marriage + Civil Partnership			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Race			
Religion or Belief			
Sex (was Gender)			
Sexual Orientation			
Transgender			
Welsh Language			

Please give details about any potential negative Impacts .	How do you propose to MITIGATE these negative impacts
➤ <i>There are no anticipated negative impacts only positive impacts</i>	➤ The new management procedure, this policy, will bring some certainty to the current situation, which is fragmented and does not encompass all aspects. Commercial Obstructions already exist, it is the proposal to formally agree / licence these Commercial Obstructions that will provided the positive impact
➤ Proliferation of uncontrolled obstructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of policy after year one and then as appropriate. ➤ Routine inspections will highlight hazards. ➤ Rigorous enforcement procedures in place that are communicated to all Staff involved in the process ➤ Clear / consistent guidance given to applicants
➤ <i>Affected parties not being engaged in new policy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ultimately bringing together existing guidance and policy into one place will simplify ➤ Consultation and fact finding with engagement of, Citizens, Business, other Authorities, CAIR, Legal, Planning, and front line Teams will ensure balance
➤	➤

Signed Steve Lane Designation Highway Operations Manager Dated February 2015

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

What are you impact assessing	Service area
Management of Commercial Obstructions in the Highway	Operations : Highways Operations
Policy author / service lead	Name of assessor and date
Steve Lane	Steve Lane February 2015

1. What are you proposing to do?

To ask Council to endorse the attached Management of Commercial Obstruction in the Highway Policy in its constituent parts:-

1. Static Advertising Policy

2. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics in a **negative** way? If **YES** please tick appropriate boxes below. **NO**

Age	No	Race	No
Disability	No	Religion or Belief	No
Gender reassignment	No	Sex	No
Marriage or civil partnership	No	Sexual Orientation	No
Pregnancy and maternity	No	Welsh Language	No

3. Please give details of the negative impact

N/a

4. Did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below including any consultation or engagement.

Consulted with Area Management teams. Strong Community Committee engaged. Limited engagement of Business Forums / Town and Community Council. Took internal Legal advice. Canvassed Citizen to help define need in areas of the Policy. Established Business need and so potential scale of problem. More consultation with interested groups to be held a focus event staged by Head of Service

5. Please list the data that has been used to develop this proposal? eg Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service

user data, Staff personnel data etc..

- Site based survey of scale / numbers of obstructions
- Canvassing of small sample of Citizens
- Consultation with Cair.
- Small sample of other Council Policy in this area

Signed.....Steve Lane...**Designation**...Area Engineer : Highways Operations...**Dated**...September 2014.....

The “Sustainability Challenge”

Name of the Officer completing “the Sustainability challenge” Steve Lane		Please give a brief description of the aims proposed policy or service reconfiguration Management of Commercial Obstructions in the Highway	
Name of the Division or service area Operations : Highways Operations		Date “Challenge” form completed September 2014	
Aspect of sustainability affected	Negative impact Please give details	Neutral impact Please give details	Positive Impact Please give details
PEOPLE		X	
Ensure that more people have access to healthy food		X	
Improve housing quality and provision		X	
Reduce ill health and improve healthcare provision		X	
Promote independence		X	
Encourage community participation/action and		X	

voluntary work			
Targets socially excluded		X	
Help reduce crime and fear of crime		X	
Improve access to education and training		X	
Have a positive impact on people and places in other countries		X	
PLANET			
Reduce, reuse and recycle waste and water		X	
Reduce carbon dioxide emissions		X	
Prevent or reduce pollution of the air, land and water		X	
Protect or enhance wildlife habitats (e.g. trees, hedgerows, open spaces)		X	
Protect or enhance visual appearance of environment			Reduce proliferation of street clutter and provide clarity and consistency for Citizens, MCC and Business
PROFIT			

Protect local shops and services	Guidance and Licencing will affect business flexibility and fees will affect their budgets		The guidance and licencing will enable new opportunities for Buisness while giving certainty to citizens and protecting MCC from associated third party claims
Link local production with local consumption		X	
Improve environmental awareness of local businesses		X	
Increase employment for local people		X	
Preserve and enhance local identity and culture		X	
Consider ethical purchasing issues, such as Fairtrade, sustainable timber (FSC logo) etc		X	
Increase and improve access to leisure, recreation or cultural facilities		X	

What are the potential negative Impacts	Ideas as to how we can look to MITIGATE the negative impacts (include any reasonable adjustments)
---	---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fees being set at unaffordable levels ➤ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigation into charges made by other Authorities in this area have been made. ➤ Licence fees, to display on the highway, reflect the cost of MCC issuing where no direct financial gain is made from the display ➤ Licence fees, to use the highway, reflect a below average fee (small sample of other Authorities) where a direct financial gain is made from the use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤

The next steps

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **positive impact please give full details** below

Clarity for the business and the citizen will be made. Clear licence stipulations, clearly displayed and rigorously enforced will ensure Citizens will experience a Highway with reduced clutter that will help fulfill MCC Duty to assert and protect the rights of the Public to the use and enjoyment of any Highway for which they are the Highway authority.

A need for Businesses to advertise is evident, they are doing so in an uncontrolled way at present. Provision to formalise advertising opportunities has been made in the policy. This provision will promote business to the widest local catchment possible.

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **Negative Impact** could you please provide us with details of what you propose to do to mitigate the negative impact:

Charges reflects commercial value and not the the cost of its yearly renewal. It will still clarify responsibilities of the Business and give certainty to the citizen. Initially enforcement will be light touch, unless immediate hazard is clearly identified, but enforcement will have financial implications at its conclusion.

Signed

steve Lane

Dated

September 2014

STATIC ADVERTISING SIGNS-

APPENDIX 1 part 1

**ON MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ADOPTED HIGHWAY VERGES AND OTHER
PRIME LOCATIONS**

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Executive Summary

The reports focus is the provision and erection of advertising signs displayed on the Monmouthshire County Council Adopted Highway and prime locations such as near pay stations within the car parks. The initial study concentrates on the Chepstow area of Monmouthshire as a sample location, exploring possible sites and detailing information regarding possible generation of revenue based on the concept and its findings.

The report demonstrates that the concept is viable, with the Policy effectively controlling static advertising signs near the highway and recover the cost associated with enforcement. A total of 40 possible sign locations at 13 different sites have been identified in and around key areas of Chepstow. Supplementary information concerning the scheme is contained within the Appendix.

The report conclusions are:

1. Table : indicates final summary of data and evidence gained from the detail report that follows, the figures are indicative of achievable figures with MCC acting as both management and operating team.

Trial Area : Chepstow	Service Provided by	Unit cost (per sign)	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Total	Notes
Income			-27,954	-27,954	-27,954	-83,862	Based on 55% of estimated occupancy figure of £53,
Expenditure	-						
Sign Manufacture	Blitz Multimedia	185	2,960	0	0	2,960	
Sign Installation	MCC Operations	150	2,400	0	0	2,400	
Planning Consent	MCC Planning	330	5,280	0	0	5,280	
Business Rates	MCC Rates	150	2,400	2,400	2,400	7,200	
Total Expenditure			13,040	2,400	2,400	17,840	
Surplus			-14,914	-25,554	-25,554	-66,022	
20% Admin Post (D)	MCC Employed		6,000	6,000	6,000	18,000	Administration post for V and funded from advertising
Less Contingency			2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000	Contingency : repairs, faces, clean and maintenance
Net (Surplus)/Loss			-6,914	-17,554	-17,554	-42,022	

Nb. Multi Signs £24,075 ((50%) £26,750-10%) + Single Signs £26,750 (50%) = £50,825 @ 55% occupancy

A Net Average Surplus of £14,007 per annum can reasonably be expected from the trial area. 4 other areas in Monmouthshire can also be expected to replicate these returns (Abergavenny / Monmouth / Caldicot and Magor / Rural Monmouthshire). This would increase the average anticipated net surplus to £70,035.

2. There is interest from a number of businesses on initial discussions concerning the scheme; St Pierre Hotel and Country Club are a primary interest. The scheme concept is at a stage of which a trial, at Chepstow can be initialised in the short term to develop the model.
3. The report has confirmed that the scheme could generate income for the authority to offset other highway section costs such as enforcement. Income rates for a 3 year contract period based on 55% occupancy are: Year 1 = £7k, Year 2 = £18k and Year 3 = £18k, giving a full contract income of £42k+ VAT over the 3 years **(Each year a £2k contingency fund is taken out to cover issues such as replacement signs)**.

There are also 2 important aspects to consider concerning the scheme:

1. In relation to staffing time and costs, a significant allocation will be required, which will develop if the scheme moves throughout the whole county. It is difficult at this stage to exactly predict this allocation, however, it may be reasonable to assume that a full time post may be required within a few years' time in order to manage the scheme and look at other alternatives in the future. This notion is supported in that Torfaen CBC has an officer responsible for their roundabout sign scheme, and to explore other similar avenues. Therefore, we can assume that in year 3 of the scheme, progression of the scheme will result in the need of allocation of a part time officer with an estimated salary of Scp Pay Band E (25-29) giving a cost to the Authority of approximately £6k.
2. Further exploration is required in relation to VAT of the sign values, and the need to pay this rate on the income gathered from the signs. As VAT standard rate is 20%, fees will be charged as, plus VAT, so that the surplus predicted will not reduce. The author will further explore the need and impact of VAT on the scheme, although currently it must be assumed that 20% will be VAT rate.

1.1 Background

Advertising on and around the Public Highway is an ongoing issue for both the Highway Operations and Planning Departments of Monmouthshire County Council. In order to address this issue, and work with businesses in the process, the proposal is to allow some form of advertising under a scheme. This scheme will then produce a surplus for the Council.

The author has researched a number of different avenues that can be explored in terms of sponsorship methods that are being utilised by Councils throughout Britain, the main methods include:

- ROUNABOUT SIGNING(incl floral beds)
- VEHICLES(recycling vehicles, lorries, vans, etc)
- STREET FURNITURE (dog bins, grit bins, benches etc)
- FLOWER PLANTERS
- LAMP POST BANNERS/FLAGS
- POSTER/BANNER SITES
- OTHER VARIATIONS: Gateway signage/features, refuse bags

It is clear that advertising is a vast area which may develop and expand into a number of the different areas if appropriate for MCC in the future. As a starting point for MCC this report will concentrate on the use of advertising signs, exploring aspects including costs, installation, legislation, planning, business rates etc.

As a trial location, the report will focus in and around Chepstow. The author has explored various signing options, some examples from one of MCC Operations main suppliers (Broxap) are shown below:



Display Board

PORTRAIT

These boards feature a mounting frame and a permanent display board to take graphics (supplied by others)...

[Learn More](#)

From: **£1,650.00**



Display Board

LANDSCAPE

Ideal for permanent graphics (supplied by others) such as tourist information....

[Learn More](#)

1. From: **£2,280.00**

Signage Columns



Standard Signage Column

BX 2410

This is produced by the addition of a steel bracket that holds a steel basket suspended on chains to create a hanging fe...

[Learn More](#)

From: **£750.00**



Stockport Column

BX 901-RT

Based on our most popular Manchester Bollard this column enhances any city centre....

1. From: **£675.00**

Although the above signs are appropriate for use within the 'old market style' towns of Monmouthshire, the prices show that they are very expensive options as the prices included are for purchasing standard options. Therefore it is advised to follow a more simple approach in terms of the signing, which will result in a more appealing venture for businesses as the sale prices will reflect this lower cost.

In order to produce this information the author has liaised closely with Torfaen County Borough Council and its advertising officer (Mrs Julia Miller) due to their experience and knowledge in running such schemes. Torfaen CBC operates an advertising scheme where they install the signs for businesses on many of the roundabouts throughout the county. However, as the report will highlight MCC will be considering signs for position solely on straight sections of road on the highway verge.

1.2 Cost of sign Manufacture

Blitzmedia (local company used by MCC) will charge approx. £185 for manufacture per sign including clips and posts. £75 extra if Blitz need to do the artwork for a sign.

1.3 Sign sizes

Above costing are for signs of 1050x750mm or 750x350mm, but size does not really matter as prices do not vary a great deal with size within reason. MCC envisage the signs to fall into parameters which vary depending on location e.g. roadside verge (1050x750) or open space (up to 750x350),

1.4 Outlay costs

Installation per sign approx. £150 (or less) – Carried out by MCC Highways Operations Operatives

Sign fabrication to include posts and fixings approximately £185.00. Blitzmedia will offer a design service to the business at an extra cost of £75.00 if artwork is required (this will not be included in estimates).

Planning consent = £330 (possible to pay per location rather than per sign). This fee is payable to MCC Planning Dept

Business rates are estimated at £150 per sign based of Torfaen's maximum roundabout sign rate (should be less as it's based on price and MCC signs less). This sum is payable also to MCC.

A nominal fee of £30 can be added to each sign to cover the cost of maintenance (such as cleaning, broken brackets etc).

Total cost based on 1 sign at any 1 location is £845.00.

Total cost based on 2 signs at any 1 location is £680.00 (Planning consent shared)

Total cost based on 3 signs at any 1 location is £625.00.

Total cost based on 4 signs at any 1 location is £597.50.

As shown, the cost of a sign reduces if the number of signs at a location increases as the signs share the cost of Planning Consent. In addition, cost of MCC installation will also reduce in a similar way, although this is difficult to quantify so will not be accounted at present.

Blitzmedia charge £45 to change the sign face as just a sticker so cheap/easy to replace sponsor. If an existing sponsor wishes to change a sign face, MMC will provide details to the business in order to liaise with Blitzmedia as previously and possibly charge a % fee on each occasion (not accounted for in calculations as nominal).

In addition it may be included in the contract that we will wash the sign once a year, but costs are minimal on this to the Authority as operatives can do this when in the area, for example, gully emptying near sign.

2.1 MCC Planning and Legal Input

Initially, the author has made contact with MCC Legal and Planning, and there was some resistance to this type of advertising due to issues they have with advertising by businesses as Monmouthshire being a rural location and advertising leads to complaints by the public. A joint meeting was the next course of action to discuss concerns and our proposals, this giving us a chance to discuss specific locations and determine possibilities.

A meeting was conducted (12th Sept 2013) with Paula Clarke from MCC Planning to discuss concerns with advertising sign proposals and any requirements regarding Planning Permission. The meeting was considered a success as the Planning Department seem supportive of the idea and would like to work with us to ensure that signs that are erected without paying the relevant fee (Planning consent £330.00) and securing our authorisation are acted upon via continued enforcement.

Another major benefit that came from the meeting is that we may not be required to apply and pay the fees for planning consent as previously mentioned above. Paula produced the following information regarding the legislation concerning planning consent which suggests it is not required:

The following are the classes of advertisements, specified in Part 1 of Schedule 3 to the English and Welsh Regulations (in Scotland, Sch. 4), for which deemed consent is granted for their display. In the description that follows, the classes that are similar for England and Wales and Scotland are described under the one heading and the differences, where there are any, are indicated. Where different provisions are made for the two areas under the same class number, these are described separately under that number.

1. Functional advertisements of local authorities, statutory undertakers, and public transport undertakers, and, in England, Government Departments, and, in Scotland, community councils (in Scotland, Class I)

(a) An advertisement (in England, not exceeding 1.55 m²) displayed wholly for the purpose of announcement or direction in relation to any of the functions of a government department local authority or to the operation of a statutory undertaking, or a public transport undertaking, or a community council, which are reasonably required to be displayed for the safe or efficient performance of those functions, or operation of that undertaking, and cannot be displayed by virtue of any other specified class. Illumination of these advertisements is not permissible unless, in England and Wales, reasonably required for the purpose of the advertisement; in Scotland, only if it is needed for purposes of warning.

(b) An advertisement displayed by the appropriate planning authority on land in their area (in Scotland, on land in respect of which they are the planning authority).

In England and Wales, in an area of special control (see below), no advertisement of this class may be displayed for which the authority could not have granted express consent.

2. Miscellaneous advertisements relating to the premises (in Scotland, the land) on which they are displayed (in Scotland, Class II)

(a) An advertisement, not exceeding 0.3 m² (in Scotland, 0.2 m²) in area, for the purpose of identification, direction, or warning, with respect to the land or buildings on which it is displayed. In England and Wales, illumination of such an advertisement is not permitted; in Scotland, illumination is permissible for purposes of warning.

A meeting took place with Mrs Pat Perkins from MCC Legal Department. Legal advice concerned ensuring that as Highways Engineers we assess the potential hazard such signs pose, and any risks are minimised and our insurer consulted on liability cover. A Section 50 Licence was also highlighted concerning the signs.

In relation to the Section 50 Licence, Paul Keeble from Traffic and Development agrees that this is an option and that a licence can be issued for the sites. Although there is a charge of £385.00 for a Section 50, Paul Keeble does not see any reason why this charge should be applied in this case i.e. there is no reason for MCC Highways to charge itself for an agreement with itself. Therefore, this fee will be ignored, unless further instruction is given via more senior officer/s.

2.2 Insurance Liability/Cover

On consultation with Martyn Woodford Principal Insurance Officer and Laurence Dawkins Health and Safety Manager in relation to the Advertising Sign Scheme, their views are as follows:

The key thing is that the legal advice that you have received re signage and division of responsibilities corresponds with the insurance implications. We will need to establish whose signs they are initially – I'm assuming the various businesses are simply hiring advertising space from us. If that is the case, Mon CC Public Liability Policy will cover any losses as a result of its negligence. The key to defending any potential claim is having documentary proof to back up the reasoning behind what we have done. In that respect, Risk Assessment and Guidelines should be well documented and readily available for us to provide to our insurers.

In relation to the comments, it is true that the signs are the property of MCC; therefore this satisfies the Public Liability Policy discussed. It is clearly important to risk assess and set guidelines in regard to the signs and the locations.

2.3 Traffic and Development Input

On consulting Graham Kinsella from MCC Traffic and Development concerning guidance on sign measurements in terms of visibility restrictions etc, Graham put forward the following statement:

“Normal highway signs should be 1.5m to underside of sign above carriageway level. But as the advertisement signs are not normal highway signs then this guidance would not be appropriate. Therefore each sign and location should be assessed on its individual merits and specify accordingly to ensure they do not pose a risk to road users in terms of visibility and the like.”

This highlights the fact that the sign sites must be considered and assessed, either for each individual site or as a blanket risk assessment to consider all sites.

2.4 Risk assessment

In terms of assessing and minimising the risks of accidents in relation to the signing being in place, it is difficult to cover all aspects of every site as locations may differ. It is therefore important to consider each site individually when determining its suitability for advertising signage. However, it is possible to set certain criterion that is relevant to all highway verge site locations, which must be followed regarding each advertising sign:

- The sign must include minimal information, and be pre-approved by MCC. Information may include company logo, name, web site, address, along with basic information regarding the business.
- The sign must be at least 600mm from the carriageway edge, this increasing to 1200mm on high-speed roads.
- Signs must not be installed at or near junctions where they can distract drivers (signs must be at least 60m from a junction)
- Signs must not be installed at or near roundabouts where they can distract drivers (signs must be at least 60m from a roundabout)
- Signs must be installed on straight sections of road, away from bends and where visibility sight lines are required height restrictions allow a maximum sign height of 1050mm above the carriageway

- Signs must be installed on Monmouthshire County Council Highway adopted and maintainable land
- Signs must be installed by MCC Highways trained operatives to ensure compliance with all Health and Safety requirements (sign face alterations maybe carried out by the business or Blitzmedia subject to MCC approval)
- If on installation, a sign becomes continually damaged (by any means such as vandalism, vehicle damage etc), then the site may be deemed inappropriate and the contract discontinued
- MCC operatives will carry out any routine maintenance of the signs such as cleaning.
- Sign post sites must only contain 2 signs (one sign facing in each direction), this will ensure only small amounts of information are available to road users, so as not to cause a distraction.

2.5 Business Rates

In terms of business rates for the signs/sign sites, specific information will be required relating to each location. All this information is currently not available due to the scheme not being in place, therefore, we can use assumed rates based on Torfaen CBC rate of £150.00. In theory (due to MCC charging less than Torfaen per sign) MCC business rates will be less than £150.00. Below shows information required on scheme start up:

From: Wheeler, Grant R [mailto:grant.r.wheeler@voa.gsi.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 August 2013 09:06
To: Morgan, Judith L.
Subject: RE: Business Rates Query

the simple answer is yes they are more than likely to be rateable. See Torfaen roundabout ad rights as a guide for size and value.

If Monmouth go ahead with the siting of the signs; don't send reports in straight away, as I will need lots of information in preparation and formulation of the values in advance:-

1. The address/location of the advertising right
2. The name of the party advertising from the site
3. The level of annual payment
4. The standard terms of occupation (who is responsible for maintenance etc)
5. The length of the agreement
6. Date sited
7. Invoice address

8. Size of display board - any illumination or effects

I will then inspect and assess where appropriate.

I hope this clarifies matters. I'm on leave from this afternoon for 2 weeks, if you have any immediate queries, Jean Homfray at this office has offered to assist otherwise you can contact me after 9th September!

Kind Regards

Grant

If the scheme becomes reality, then each location will be detailed in relation to its official/accurate business rate.

3.1 Approach of Businesses

A number of local businesses have been approached to determine interest and feedback regarding the project:

Curves – Curves fitness are a company based in Caldicot who regularly 'fly post' advertising within the county. The manager (Mr Simon Griffiths - sgriffuk@yahoo.com) has not yet responded to the enquiry. 22nd October update – response has been received from Mr Griffiths and he has expressed interest in the scheme in a request for more information to be emailed to him.

A Local Caldicot Estate Agent – this request originated via an enquiry from the newly formed Caldicot Town Team who had been approached by a local estate agent who wished to 'sponsor' Mitel roundabout. Information has been forwarded to the Caldicot Town Team detailing MCC advertising proposals concerning verges and awaiting reply from Estate agent and any other business the Team are aware of. The estate agents have expressed an interest in the scheme, and further contact will be sort.

St Pierre, A Marriott Hotel & Country Club – Ryan Pritchard/Steve Lane attended a meeting with St Pierre Hotel General Manager Mr Richard Lansberry 24th October 2013. The meeting was very successful, in that Mr Landsberry was impressed with our proposals and is keen to be a part of the scheme. Mr Landsberry understands the need for MCC to offer advertising opportunities such as this to businesses, but he emphasised that he would not support it for businesses outside Monmouthshire or competitors displaying advertisements near his premises. Figures were quoted of £1000 and £1500 per sign, depending on location, which Mr Landsberry accepted in principal as

our estimates at present. Chepstow racecourse, Synter Volkswagon, Curves, St Johns on the Hill and Highmore Carpets have also shown an interest.

3.2 Traffic Counts and Car Park Ticket Sales

Traffic Counts are an important aspect of this scheme, which will provide evidence in terms of the traffic volumes at the proposed advertising sign locations. This will assist to determine values of given sites, and show more 'premium' locations where a higher traffic volume occurs allowing a higher rate to be charged (or lower of course).

On the locations based around the Chepstow sign locations in the trial, there are 5 Traffic Count Sites that have been identified:

Site 1 – A48 St Pierre

Site 2 – Off A466 into Thornwell

Site 3 - A466 nr Highbeech R/A

Site 4 – A466 nr Chepstow Racecourse

Site 5 – Welsh St nr junc A466

A company (Sky High-Count On Us) has been instructed to undertake these traffic counts, and installation is imminent, monitoring will run for 7 days (all week). Data will then be forwarded to MMC on completion (awaiting data).

There is previous data available carried out in April 2012 at the A48 nr Pwllmeyric which shows the 7 day average count to be approximately 7,000 vehicles. This location is considered to be a heavier trafficked road within Monmouthshire so such a location would attract a 'premium'.

In addition to the traffic count information, car park ticket sales records can be obtained from MCC Passenger Transport Unit (Amanda Perrin – who is responsible for car parks) and utilised to determine parameters for sign site 'values'.

Figures have been obtained for Year 2012/13 for the car parks in Chepstow which have been identified in the trial:

CAR PARK	ANNUAL TICKET SALES (2012/13)
Drill Hall	5,000
Nelson Street	185,000
Welsh Street	132,000

Castle Dell	22,000
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Based on previous Traffic Count Information provided by Traffic and Development (this will be confirmed when the recent counts results are completed) and the car park ticket sales records, the following price parameters have been developed:

7 day average Traffic Count	Price Category
< 5,000 vehicles	1) Lower
> 5,000 vehicles	2) Higher
Annual Car park Ticket Sales	
< 50,000 tickets	1) Lower
> 50,000 tickets	2) Higher

3.3 Advertising Sign Values

As was discussed in the meeting with Richard Landsberry, the concept of this scheme is difficult to value in that it is not quantifiable really to a business (sign doesn't say how many people came through the businesses door due to the sign). Therefore, when determining the value of each sign face a number of aspects must be considered to ensure fair and accurate values are given:

- **Section 1.4 Outlay costs show an initial sign installation at a cost of £845.00.**
- **Enforcement** - surplus from the sale of the advertising signs will supplement the policing of illegal signs. Removal and enforcement of illegal advertising is currently a drain on Highways resources, therefore any additional funding is welcomed. An option worth considering is that as part of the enforcement, any illegal signs that are erected may warrant the Authority issuing fines to further increase this surplus.
- **Comparison of other Advertising** – below shows a breakdown of costs for advertising in 'Monmouthshire County Life' magazine, The 'Free Press' and the 'South Wales Argus'. The prices clearly show that for a business to advertise in any of the publications, costs would run into many thousands of pounds per annum.

Monmouthshire County life –

Monmouthshire County Life is a bi-monthly, glossy magazine looking at all that is great about Monmouth. Packed with special editorial features and advertising, this aspirational lifestyle magazine is aimed at people who have the time and money to enjoy the very best that Monmouthshire has to offer.

We'll also have a focus on weddings, the great outdoors, gardens, crafts, Monmouthshire people. We've continue with our **Eat Out Monmouthshire** platform looking at the fantastic array of restaurants, cafes, food producers, and chefs we have in the county. We will also look at Homes, Motors, Business along with our regular advertising platforms.

Online advertising...

Readers are now able to view **Monmouthshire County Life** in full online, just visit: www.monmouthshirecountylife.co.uk

A variety of advertising opportunities exist to promote to targeted readers on this site, from only **£10 per month!**



Advertising rate for single insertions

Inside front; back cover, page 3	£787.50
All other A4 pages	£525.00
Half page	£262.50
Quarter page	£157.50
Eighth of a page	£105.00
<small>(25% series discount – minimum 4 inserts) (All rates exclude VAT)</small>	

Next edition is out...

Publication Date:
27th December 2013

Advertising Deadline:
6th December 2013

(Dates are subject change)

Advertising rates per publication:

Monmouth and Chepstow Free Press – Weekly: Paid for title

advertising rates are £3.50 per column cm(excluding the front or back pages which are £5.00 per column cm. For example:

Quarter page - £224+vat

Front Page advert – 8cm x 4 column - £160 - 8cm x 5 column - £200 and the 8cm x 9 column strap - £360

Half page - £500

South Wales Argus and Business Argus – Daily paid for title

Advertising rates are calculated at £7 per column cm for Run Of Paper Advertisements, therefore:

15cm x 3 column - £315

Quarter page - £448

Half page - £756 – includes a 25% discount

Free Press, 5.3k copies purchased every week

Business Argus is our regular look at the Gwent business scene which is published in the **South Wales Argus every Tuesday**. we bring you an **eight-page supplement** packed with what's been going on in the local business community, opinion, comment, movers and shakers along with a selection of regular columns from the various sectors.

The **South Wales Argus** is the largest selling local newspaper in South East Wales. Long established as the leading newspaper throughout the area, this dominance is not only reflected in our daily sales and readership figures but through our high advertising response levels

Advertising rate for single insertions

Full Page	£2,016.00
Half page	£1,008.00
Quarter page	£560.00
10 x 2	£140.00
<small>(discount may be available) (All rates exclude VAT)</small>	

Why Choose Business Update?

Readers
51,727*

Online Users
251,236* Monthly

- **Comparison with the Torfaen Roundabout Signs** - Torfaen charge per annum for roundabouts: £4k (main routes such as Cwmbran Drive), then £3k and £2k depending on

location/vehicle usage. There is a location that they charge £1.5k for which is the lowest price due to its lower traffic flow. (all + VAT)

On reflection of the above information, we can now revisit the price categories already identified and give each a value:

Price Category	Sign Value (charged to business per annum)
LOWER	£1,000 + VAT
HIGHER	£1,500 + VAT

There are 40 sign faces identified at the 13 locations (see appendix for location plans and photographs) at the trial location of Chepstow, some locations have multiple sign faces available, and these are shown in the table overleaf along with the sign values:

Sign Location	No. signs possible	Price Category	Max. location value per annum
Barclays railings	4	HIGHER	£6k
A466 hill approach to Chep Racecourse	4	HIGHER	£6k
O/S Chepstow Racecourse (A466)	4	HIGHER	£6k
A466 nr High beech R/A	4	HIGHER	£4k
Welsh St jct A466 nr Racecourse	4	LOWER	£6k
Off A48 junc M4 into Thronwell	4	LOWER	£4k
A48 Parkwall Hill nr St Pierre	4	HIGHER	£6k
A48 Mathern (between Haysgate and	4	HIGHER	£6k

Baileys Hay)			
Welsh St Car park	3	HIGHER	£4.5k
Nelson St Car park	2	HIGHER	£3k
Drill Hall Car park (Lower Church St)	1	LOWER	£1k
Castle Dell Carpark (Bridge St)	1	LOWER	£1k
Bus Station, Thomas St	1	LOWER	£1k
			£53.5k + VAT

4.2 Conclusion

The report has explored the feasibility in relation to offering Advertising Signs to Private businesses within Monmouthshire, and its focus has been a trial concerning Chepstow to detail its findings. The report conclusions are:

- The report has confirmed that the scheme may result in an amount of surplus for the Authority, in addition to further income which includes business rates, installation of the signs, and Planning Consent where applicable. Surplus rates for a 3 year contract period based on 55% occupancy are: Year 1 = £7k, Year 2 = £18k and Year 3 = £18k, giving a full contract surplus of £42k over the 3 years.

- There is interest from a number of businesses on initial discussions concerning the scheme; St Pierre Hotel and Country Club are a primary interest. The scheme concept is at a stage of which a trial, at Chepstow can be initialised in the short term to develop the model.

4.2 Progression

It is important to note, a point raised by the St Pierre General Manager that the scheme does not promote animosity towards the Authority by allowing a competitor to advertise near another's business, for example the Celtic Manor outside St Pierre. This also demonstrates another point that the scheme should be concerned with promoting businesses within Monmouthshire only, again not to cause animosity.

The author has contacted MCC payments section and Sundry Debtors, and there is scope to process payments for the advertising, and this can be further progressed if/when the scheme/trial is confirmed to commence. In addition, Business rates can also be further confirmed.

In terms of progressing the scheme, the next course of action would be to start with St Pierre to get the trial at Chepstow started. They are a high profile business and this may generate more interest from other businesses as this was the case when Torfaen started the roundabout scheme. We can also install some other signs with the Authority details on with 'advertise here' type slogans.

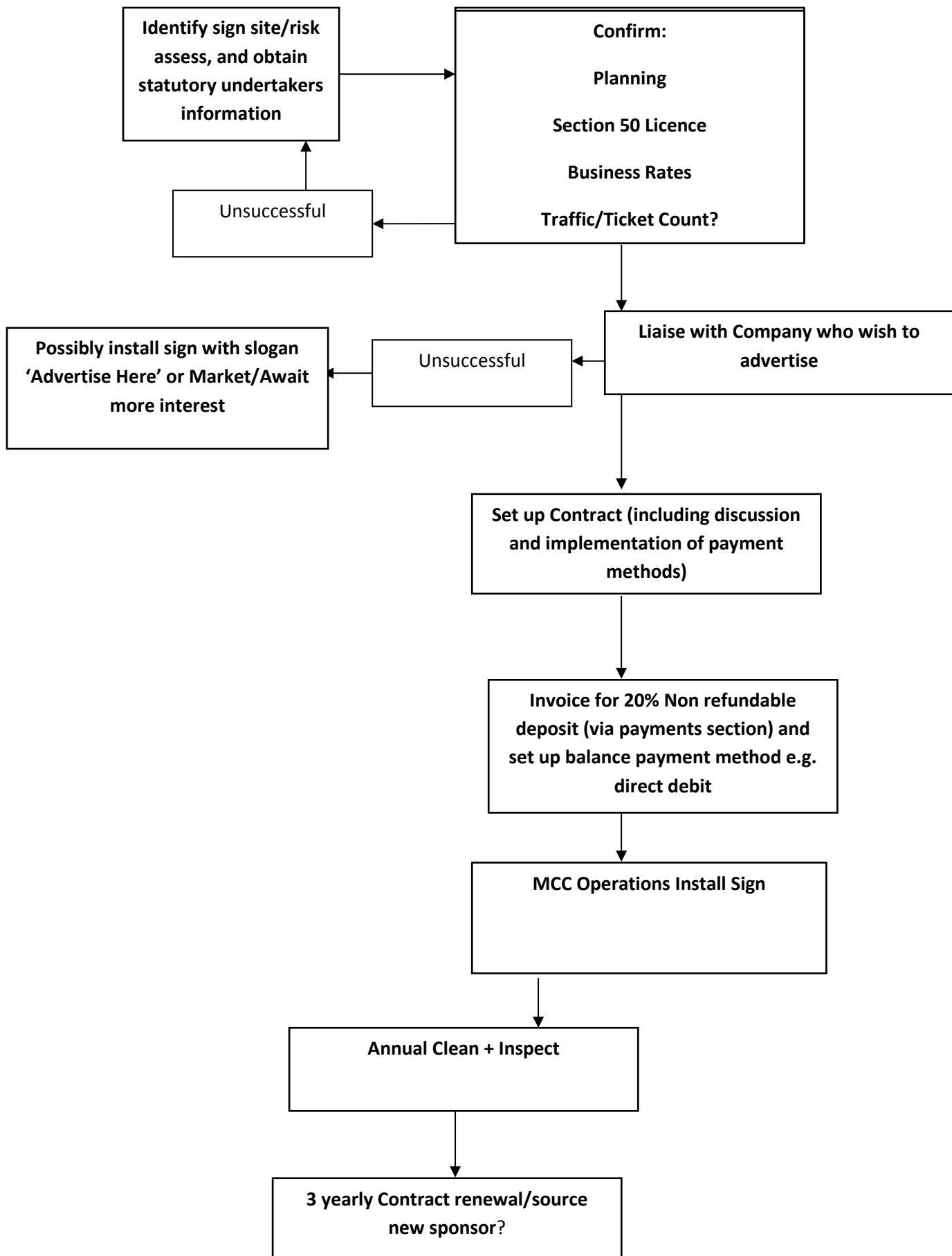
Meetings can also be progressed with Curves and the estate agent who have both showed interest in the scheme. Another possible major local business to be approached is Chepstow Racecourse as a number of the sites are near the racecourse, and there are regular issues with their advertising activities concerning MCC Highways Operations and Planning Departments.

Other possible methods to market the scheme include referring the scheme to Area services Officer Alan Browne to market to business attendees at the Business Forums he attends regularly. Also in order to reach the wider Business community within Monmouthshire, an advert could be Included on annual business rate bills for the scheme– this way every business within Monmouthshire will be aware of the service when they receive their annual rate bill.

The following page shows a flow to describe the path of action shows the procedure involved in Advertising sign placement

4.3 Flow Chart showing procedure for Advertising sign placement:

OPTION 1 MCC MANAGEMANT



FOR ALL YOUR PET'S NEEDS



FAMILY PETS



01291 123456

familypets@abc.com



monmouthshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
str fynyw

For more information Tel : 01633 123456

Email : Highways@momouthshire.gov.uk

Advertising Sign Agreement

THIS LICENCE is made on the (date) _____ **BETWEEN Monmouthshire County Council** of County Hall Democratic Centre, Rhadyr, Llanbadoc, Usk NP15 1GA ("the Council" or "the Licensor") and

[Name of Advertising Company] _____ of

[address of Advertising Company] _____ ("the Licensee") of the other part

IT IS AGREED:

1. (1) In consideration of the Licence Fee hereinafter mentioned the Council in pursuance of Section 50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 permits and licences the Licensee subject to the conditions of this Licence to retain the apparatus detailed in the Schedule ("the Advertising Signs") at the location specified in the Schedule.
- (2) This Licence shall commence on [date] _____ i.e. the day the sign/signs are installed at the specified location and shall continue for a period of three years thereafter unless terminated earlier in accordance with the terms of this Licence. For the avoidance of doubt, this license is granted for a minimum period of one year (see 2.6).
- (3) For the avoidance of doubt nothing contained in this Licence shall authorise the Licensee to use the airspace around within and above the Advertising Sign/Signs or to place any other advertising material equipment or other fixtures and fittings to or on the Sign/Signs or the site location.

2. The Licensee and the Council agree that the following conditions apply to this Licence:-

2.1 Payment of Licence Fee and Outgoings

The Licensee agrees to pay in each year of the Licence the Licence Fee of £ _____ plus VAT. A 20% non-refundable deposit to be paid at time of signing the License agreement, the remaining balance payable on the date of commencement of the License or

in equal monthly instalments, the first instalment / payment being due 1 month from the date of commencement of the Licence .

2.2 Damaged Advertising Signs

In the event that the Sign/Signs become damaged by traffic accidents or are vandalised, the Council will arrange for replacement of the Advertising Signs on the first two occasions during the contract period. After this, at the Council's discretion, the licence may be terminated as this site would be deemed unsuitable for roundabout sponsorship. (see 2.7.2)

2.3 Change of details for Advertising Signs

In the event of the Licensee changing its name or logo, the Licensee can apply in writing to the Council for consent for a new Advertising Sign reflecting the revised details. The change of Advertising Signs will be subject to such reasonable conditions as the Council may impose and a further fee will be payable.

2.5 Installation of Advertising Signs

Any installation and maintenance of Advertising Sign/Signs required under this Licence will be carried out by the Council, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.

2.6 Termination by the Licensee

If the Licensee no longer wishes to retain the Advertising Sign/Signs in place or wishes to terminate this Licence, the Licensee must give no less than three months written notice to the Council. This notice period is a statutory requirement and the Council cannot accept a shorter notice period.

Termination at any time throughout the period of this Licence will mean that the Licence Fee in respect of that year is still payable and if already paid will not be refunded. However, the Licensee will not be required to pay the Licence Fees due in respect of subsequent years.

2.7 Termination by the Council

2.7.1 The Council may by no less than 7 days notice in writing served on the Licensee terminate this Licence if:-

a) the Licensee fails to comply with any provision of this Licence or the relevant part of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, or

b) the Council is or becomes aware that the Licensee has parted with / sold its interest in the Sign/Signs.

c) the Licensee is in circumstances which entitle the Court or a creditor to appoint, or have appointed a, receiver, manager, or administrative receiver, or which entitle the Court to make a winding-up order.

d) the Licensee is in arrears for 14 days with any payment due under the terms of this licence.

In the event of the Licence being terminated as above, the Licensee shall not be entitled to any refund of the Licence Fee paid. The Licensee will be required to pay any arrears of any payments due under this licence which have not been paid in full.

2.7.2 The Council may by no less than 7 days notice in writing served on the Licensee terminate this Licence if the Council considers that the withdrawal of the Licence is necessary for the purpose of the exercise of their functions as a street authority or is otherwise necessary in the best interests of the Council.

2.8 Removal of Advertising Signs

Where this Licence is terminated or expires, the Council will remove the Advertising Sign/Signs to which this Licence relates. In the interests of safety, removal of the Advertising

Sign/Signs by the Licensee is not permitted. Once removed, the Advertising Sign/Signs will be retained by the Council.

2.9 Assignment of the Licence

Assignment of the Licence by the Licensee is not permitted. If the Licensee does not wish to continue with the Advertising Sign/Signs, then notification to terminate this Licence must be given to the Council under the provisions of clause 2.6.

2.10 Statutory Obligations

The Licensee is required to comply with the requirements of Section 50 and Schedule 3 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 in relation to this Licence.

2.12 Variations

Variations to this Licence will only be effective if in writing and signed by both the Council and the Licensee. However, extensions to the time period of this Licence to reflect any periods when the Advertising Sign/Signs are being replaced under the provisions of clause 2.2 shall be valid if in writing and signed on behalf of the Council. All such extensions shall be at the discretion of the Council. For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise expressly agreed in writing between the Licensee and the Council, no further Licence Fee shall be payable in respect of such extensions to the Licence period.

2.13 Service of Notices

Any notice under this Licence and any request for consent or approval may be served personally or by letter addressed in the case of the Council to the Council's Head of Highways and Waste, Regeneration and Culture, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall Democratic Centre, Rhadyr, Llanbadoc, Usk NP15 1GA (or such other address as the Council may notify to the Licensee) and in the case of the Licensee at their registered office or place or business. Any notice so given by letter shall be deemed to have been served three business days after the same shall have been posted.

3. PROVIDED ALWAYS and it is hereby agreed that:-

3.1 This Licence shall not operate as any consent or authority other than pursuant to Section 50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

3.2 Any reference herein to any legislative provision shall be deemed to include a reference to any subordinate legislation rule order relative thereto and any statutory modification or re-enactment for the time being in force.

IN WITNESS thereof this Licence is executed the day and year first before written

Signed for and on behalf of Monmouthshire County Council

by: _____

PRINT _____

Date _____

Signed for and on behalf of
[name of advertising company] _____

by: _____

PRINT _____

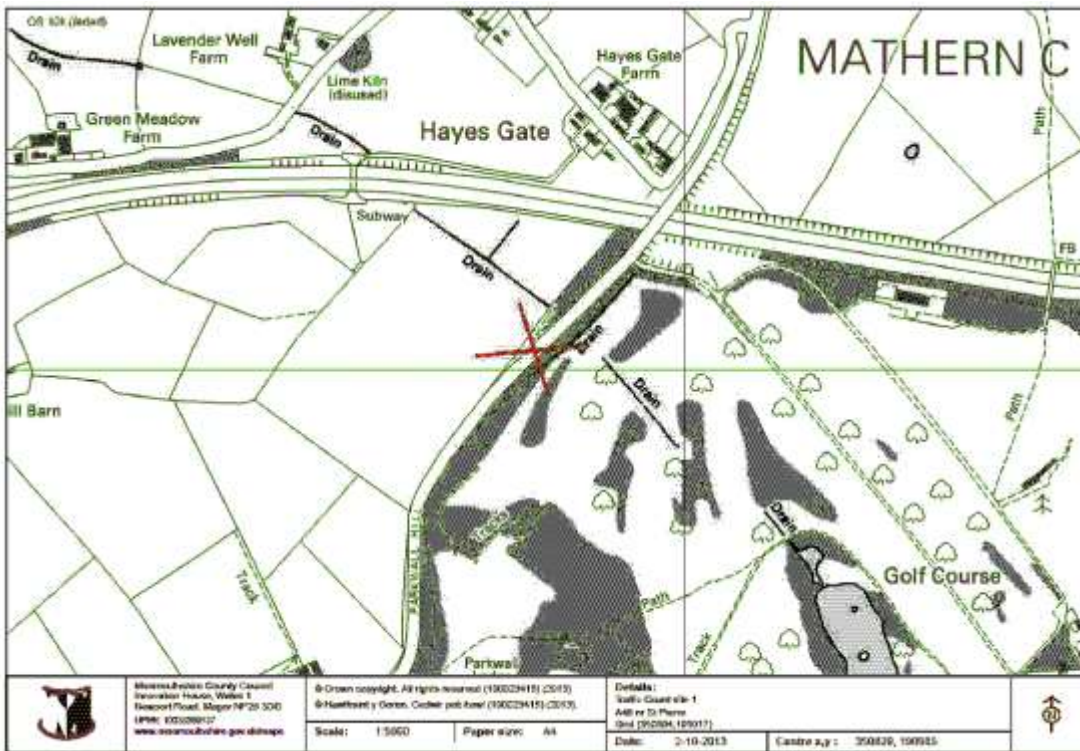
Date _____

SCHEDULE

"The Advertising Signs"

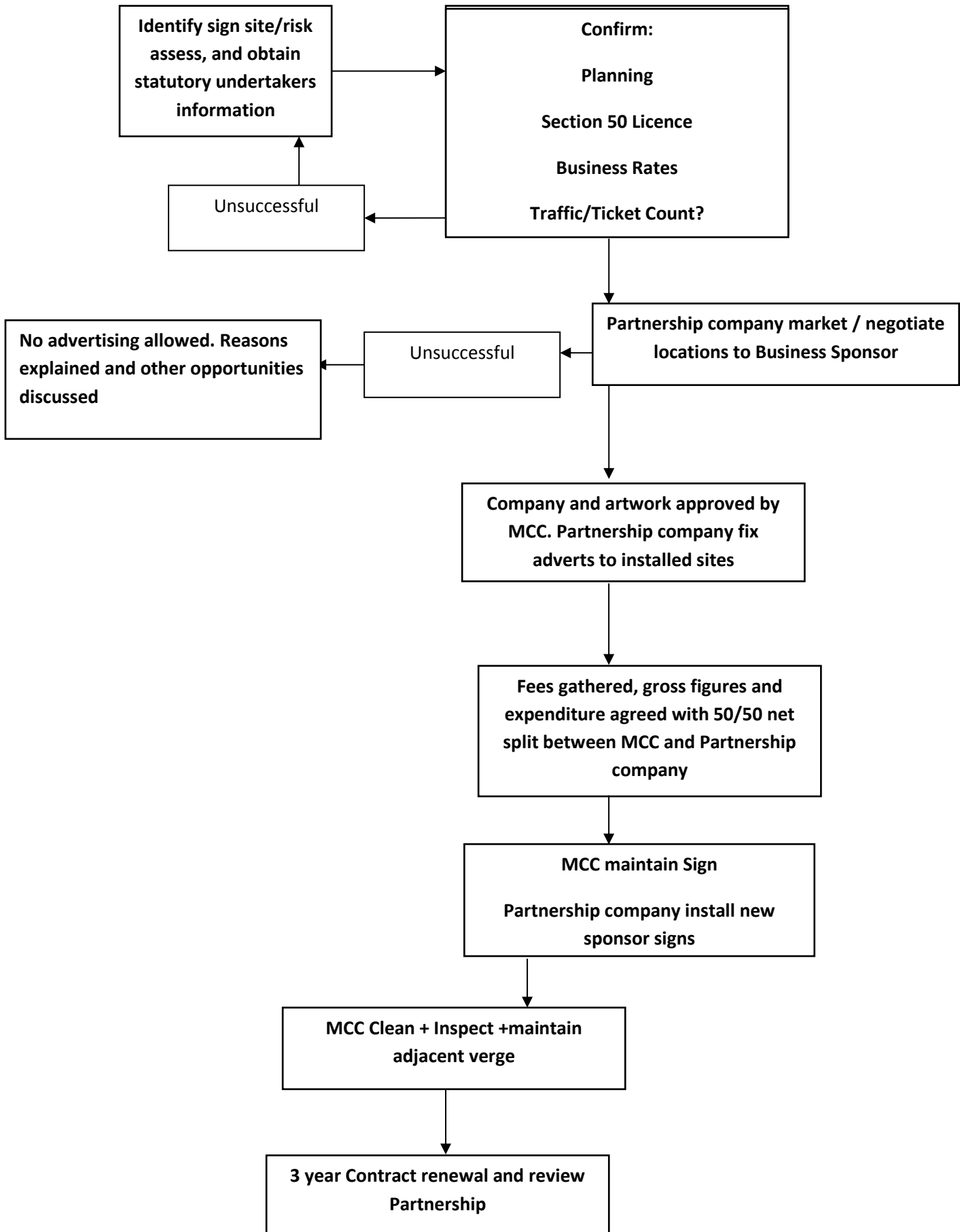
An Advertising Sign/Signs displaying the Monmouthshire County Council Logo, web address and the Licensee's agreed inclusions will be installed at the following location:

_____ as shown for the purposes of identification illustrated on the attached plan.





OPTION 2 PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT



APPENDIX 1 part 2

1.1 OBJECTIVE :

Provision of a Management of Commercial Obstruction on the Highway Policy. This would cover the various occasions when a Business wants to use the Public Highway for reason of benefit to that company. We currently licence and charge scaffold and skip hire companies for use of the Highway space. This review seeks to bring a consistency to the policy, both within MCC processes and the wider Local Authority community.

2.1 CURRENT SITUATION

Enforcement action taken by Highways Operation's Department forms a significant element of their work. This enforcement, usually against business and people, who are aware of the MCC's current policies, could be developed into a system that is more readily available, encompassing all private activity on the Public Highway. The policy will effectively control apparatus in the highway and will recover the cost associated with enforcement.

This policy is based on the following premise :-

1. It is not unreasonable that the beneficiaries of service requests made to MCC should pay for the cost associated with those requests, especially when a failure to comply, with The Highway Act 1980, would normally lead to enforcement action being taken. (e.g. a service request highlighting the need to fill a pothole is different from one requesting the opportunity to place scaffold or advertising on the highway).
2. An interest by Companies to use the public Highway as a site to benefit their business is evident throughout MCC (e.g. 'A' boards and Coffee tables). This benefit, usually through advertising or by the direct use of the Public Highway as a premise from which to sell goods or to supply a service, needs to be expanded. However, this benefit can conflict with MCC's statutory Duty to '.... assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway....', Highway Act 1980 : Section 130, and needs to be managed effectively

3.1 CONCLUSION :-

By managing and licencing access to the Public highway by Companies who benefit from its use MCC can help, through charges, to encourage vibrancy to the street scene in an area that is an accepted component of some retail business. Introduction of charges for requests and licences, in line with a number of other Authorities, MCC can be seen to be proactive and fair in its management of the Highway space. Consistency needs to be achieved by further consultation with business and interested forums. The proposal for fees (table 1) was derived through a small survey of other Authorities approach to this problem.

Table 1	A BOARD	SEATING / DISPLAYS	ADVERTS / BANNERS	'PITCH' one off
MCC PROPOSAL	£40 first application £40 renewal	SEATING / SALE RAILS / DISPLAYS. First application will always be £125. The annual renewal will be based on area occupied Use Sqm rates : 0 to 6 = £120 6 to 12 =£240 12 to 18 = £360 Larger areas not permitted	Continue with similar policy where by only charities are allowed to advertise and are not charged.	£75 first application £50 subsequent
Yearly rental 70% take up	288 x 70% x £40 = £8094	31 x 70% x £240 = £5208		MCC STREET TRADING POLICY DEALS WITH

4.1 INDEX

1.1	:	Objectives
2.1	:	Current Situation
3.1	:	Conclusion
4.1	:	Index
5.1	:	Background
6.1	:	Data and Evidence
7.1	:	Process for Flyposter, old and new
8.1	:	Process for 'A' Frame, old and new
9.1	:	New Overall Flow

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5.1 BACKGROUND :-

The prevalence of A boards, flyposting and seating areas throughout Monmouthshire appears to exceed 544 units (70 poster applications per year / 288 A boards present in Dec 2012 / 31 seating areas at 6 seats each (guestimate)).

The 544 units suggests a need and willingness to display or use the Public Highway, by business. The potential for a financial reward, for the business is made after some initial investment in the form of :-

1. Manufacture of flyposter, banners measuring 10 feet be 3 feet on occasions
2. Manufacture of A boards, varying from simply chalk boards to aluminium frames
3. Manufacture of seating areas, tables, chairs and barriers
4. Investment in benches and trees for community and memorial reasons

It should not be considered unreasonable to formalise an approval process for each of the above installations. A one off yearly fee for each A frame / each flyposter application (up to 12 signs) / each seat (0.5metre square). A fixed charge based on cost of facilitating and enforcement could be arrived at (circa £50 to £100 per application / year). A take up rate of 70% would deliver an income of around £25k per annum. Enforcement / management currently exceeds £17k per annum and is a continual drain on the Highway resources. These costs would reasonably be expected to reduce on time and actual fines / enforcement incomes will initially rise before falling off.

Memorial tribute in the form of planting and benches etc. providing they are backed by the community will only be subject to the first year's approval charge, as would the community council.

Sources of approval that require bringing into process and flows:

1. Flyposter : Flow 7.1
2. A frames : Flow 8.1
3. Table and chairs : No flow exists
4. Adhoc furniture, plants, sale rails etc. : No flow exists
5. Community / Memorial, benches and plantings etc. : No flow exists
6. Sale pitches, outside of official markets : No flow exists
7. Static Advertising provided by MCC, report dealt with elsewhere
8. Overall Process : Flow 9.1

Interested parties. Consultation / notification required

1. Head of Operations
2. Head of Highways and Flood Management
3. Head of Public Health and Culture
4. Head of Legal Services
5. MCC income / planning
6. County Councillors
7. Community Councils
8. OSS Managers
9. Business Forums

6.1 DATA and EVIDENCE

1. OPINION

The Opinion of Stakeholders has been sort through a small survey of the Public. This was done by asking a set of questions of people through OSS, calls and street corners. The sample consisted of 121 people who wished to express their opinion. The raw date is included in point 5 below.

CANVASSING : A BOARD : SOME CONCLUSIONS

There appears to be a solid support to allow the continuation of advertising with 'A boards' ('SIGNS ENCOURAGE BUSINESS AND GIVE CONTINENTAL FEEL' – 'ONE SMALL BOARD OUTSIDE SHOP IS FINE'), a solid feeling that safety, with rules that are followed, should be implemented by MCC. MCC have a number of Duties including removal of any obstruction and assert and to protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway. A significant, but small number of people do feel that their needs are not being protected ('SIGNS CAN BE A DANGER TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE SO BETER TO PLACE THEM AGAINST'-'CREATING OBSTACLES WHICH IS UNFAIR TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED'). There is a willingness to see a small charge, although not an overwhelming one, but it can be seen against a backdrop that a number of those who felt no fees should be made ('ENOUGH RATES PAID SHOULD NOT PAY MORE') also feel no rules should be set and not fines if the law is broken should be enforced. This is not a reasoned response and could result in proliferation of hazards ('SHOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED OUTSIDE A SHOP, IF NO RULES WE WILL HAVE SIGNS ETC EVERYWHERE').

A mandate exists to allow the continuation of 'A Board' use, but in a controlled way.

In order to protect the stakeholders rights and the Duties of MCC, given the financial pressure being imposed on the authority we are seeking support to adopt this policy in full. This would include an administration fee of £40 per year.

CANVASSING : CAFÉ AREA / DISPLAY AREA: SOME CONCLUSIONS

There appears to be a solid support to allow the continuation and expansion of Café areas ('CAFÉ SOCIETY IS GOOD', - 'THEY DO ADD VIBRANCY' – 'LOVELY TO SEE SEATS/TABLES IN CAFÉ AREAS. '), a solid feeling that safety, with rules that are followed, should be implemented by MCC. MCC have a number of Duties including removal of any obstruction and assert and to protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway. A significant, but small number of people do feel that their needs are not being protected ('ONLY ALLOW IF THEY DO NOT CAUSE OBSTRUCTION, - 'ENOUGH ROOM IS LEFT FOR PEDESTRIANS, PUSHCHAIRS, WHEELCHAIRS ETC' – 'SOME SECTIONS OF FOOTWAY TOO NARROW BUT GOODS ARE PLACED). There is a willingness to see a small charge, although not an overwhelming one, but it can be seen against a backdrop that a number of those who felt no fees should be made ('LEAVE SMALL BUSINESSES ALONE' – 'IS IT ANOTHER WAY TO SQUEEZE MONEY OUT OF SMALL BUSINESSES') also feel no rules should be set and no fines if the law is broken should be made. This is not a reasoned response and could result in proliferation of hazards ('IT IS A QUESTION OF DEGREE, ONLY ALLOW IF THEY DO NOT CAUSE OBSTRUCTION' – 'ONLY WHEN THEY DO NOT HINDER PEDESTRIANS').

The results suggests a mandate exists to allow the continuation of Café Areas and Display areas to continue and the expansion of the Café Society would encourage vibrancy and new business could be supported by all

In order to protect the stakeholders rights and the Duties of MCC, given the financial pressure being imposed on the authority, we are seeking support to adopt this policy in full. This would include a One Off approval fee of £125 on successful application / agreement. And an ongoing Annual licence based on the area occupied : less than 6m² = £120 or 6m² to less than 12m² = £240 or 12m² to 18m² = £360

2. ENFORCEMENT AND PERMISSION COST

ENFORCEMENT COST : first / second / third stage typical

Administration : first contact @ £10?	10
Administration : support and processing 60 mins @ £20 per hour	20
Supervisor : 3 stage communication by letter 45 mins each @ £35 per hour	26
Highway Operatives : 2 men and truck collect / store depot 60 mins @ £50 per hour	50
Operations Staff : chat + data collection for legal, 120 mins @ £30 per hour	60
	166 +legal

86 complaints in 12/13 therefore potential resources allocation worth £14,276 + legal fees (86 occs @ £146) was made. Enforcement would need to be more rigorous or faith in system would be lost.

APPLICATION COST : typical Flyposter

Administration : first contact @ £10?	10
Administration : support and processing 30 mins @ £20 per hour	10
Operation's staff : 30 mins each @ £35 per hour	17.5

82 applications in 12/13, therefore potential resource allocation worth £3,075 (82 occs @ £37.5) was made. Applications would increase and yearly renewals would need significant input.

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3. FEE COMPARISON WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES

	A BOARD	SEATING	ADVERTS / BANNERS	'PITCH' one off
NORTH SOMERSET CC	N/A	Initial fee £56 per table Upto 5 tables £56 per yr 5 to 10 tables £112 per yr	N/A	NO EVIDENCE
GLOUCESTER CITY C	£50 per yr	NO EVIDENCE	N/A	£20-£25 per day
DEVON CC		Initial £200 £85 renewal	N/A	NO EVIDENCE
TAMWORTH BC	£95 plan fee £25 licence £50 per yr	N/A	N/A	NO EVIDENCE
TEST VALLEY BC	N/A	£199 renewable each year	N/A	N/A
AVERAGE	£85 first yr £50 renewal	Based on 3 tables, 6 chairs or 6 Sqm approx.. £189 first year £113 renewal		
MCC PROPOSAL	£40 first application £40 renewal	SEATING / SALE RAILS / MISALANEUS. Use Sqm rates : 0 to 6 = £125 / £120 6 to 12 = £125 / £240 12 to 18 = £125 / £360 Larger areas not permitted	Continue with similar policy where by only charities are allowed to advertise and are not charged.	£75 first application £50 subsequent

4. EVIDENCE OF SCALE AND LOCATION OR BUSINESS NEEDS

Table 1			
A BOARD AND FLPOSTER COMMUNICATION : 1/12/11 TO 1/12/12			
	TOTALS	APPLICATIONS	COMPLAINTS
POSTER APPLICATIONS VIA ALL SOURCES	86	86	
POSTER / A BOARD COMPLAINTS VIA LETTER & EMAIL	52		82
A BOARD COMPLAINTS VIA CALLS & WALK UPS	16		
POSTER COMPLAINTS VIA CALLS & WALK UPS	14		

Table 2				
A BOARD, FLYPOSTER, SEATING AND MISCELANIOUS ACTIVITY : DECEMBER 2012				
	A BOARDS	FLYPOSTERS	SEATING AREAS	MISC
MONMOUTH	60	3	5	10
USK	20	0	3	8
ABERGAVENNY	90	3	14	10
CHEPSTOW	88	0	6	9
CALDICOT	17	0	1	1
MAGOR	13	0	2	3
TOTAL	288	6	31	41
Misc : planters and sale rails etc				

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5 CANVASSING SUMMARY

CANVASSING : A BOARD SUMMARY			
A Boards : A sign placed on the Public Highway, usually small triangular stands that are bright and colourful that advertise a shop / business	YES	NO	?
1. Do you find the signs helpful and informative?	88 nos 73 %	26 nos 22 %	6 nos 5 %
2. Do you find these signs a hindrance when visiting your town or village amenities?	26 nos 22 %	87 nos 73 %	6 nos 5 %
3. Have you ever, or know someone who has, tripped, bumped, knocked or had to squeeze past a sign and so be put at risk?	31 nos 26 %	85 nos 71 %	3 nos 3 %
4. MCC have a Duty to maintain unobstructed access to the Highway, do you think signs should be allowed on the public Pedestrian area or footway?	65 nos 54 %	46 nos 39 %	8 nos 7 %
5. MCC's duty to maintain unobstructed access to the Highway means that it could be liable if a claim is made against a business. Should Businesses comply with safety guidelines?	106 nos 88 %	10 nos 8 %	4 nos 4 %
6. Should businesses be fined if they continually hinder your access to the highway / footway and so break the law?	88 nos 74 %	23 nos 19 %	8 nos 7 %
7. No rates, fees or licences are paid by a business to use the Public highway for their private purpose, do you believe they should be licenced and pay a small fee to place items on the Public Highway?	69 nos 58 %	42 nos 35 %	8 nos 7 %
<p>Comments :</p> <p>SOME AREAS ARE FINE, BUT HIGHWAY SHOULD BE KEPT CLEAR AT ALL TIMES — WARNINGS SHOULD BE ISSUED BEFORE FINES — SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED AT ALL — IF THERE IS ROOM FOR A BOARD TO BE DISPLAYED WITHOUT HINDERING PEDESTRIANS THEY ADD TO ATMOSPHERE AND VIBRANCY — IF LOCATION ALLOWS SAFELY — ENOUGH RATES PAID SHOULD NOT PAY MORE — SIGNS OKAY OF PAVEMENT IS LARGE ENOUGH WITHOUT RESTRICTING WAY — SIGNS ENCOURAGE BUSINESS AND GIVE CONTINENTAL FEEL, THEY ARE OKAY SO LONG AS THEY LEAVE SPACE — CANNOT BELIEVE THIS IS A VIABLE POINT OF DEBATE, WE ARE A NATION OF SHOPKEEPERS — SIGNS CAN BE A DANGER TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE SO BETTER TO PLACE THEM AGAINST WALLS — 'A' BOARDS ARE ADVERTISING, THEY HAVE TO PAY TO ADVERTISE IN PAPERS ETC. SO WHY NOT PAY TO ADVERTISE ON THE STREET — SIGNS FOR SHOPS ARE FINE, SHOULD BE LICENCED BUT FEELS THEY PAY ENOUGH — ONLY ALLOWED IF THEY DO NOT CAUSE AN OBSTRUCTION — SHOULD FOLLOW RULES — DEPENDING WHERE THEY ARE PLACED CAN BE A NUISANCE — DEPENDS IF PEOPLE CAN GET AROUND — HELPFUL SO LONG AS NOT IN ANYONES WAY — NO PROBLEM SO LONG AS SPACE IS LEFT TO ALLOW PEDESTRIANS TO PASS — SHOULD ONLY BE ALLOWED OUTSIDE A SHOP, IF NO RULES WE WILL HAVE SIGNS ETC EVERYWHERE — SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED — BOARDS HAVE MULTIPLIED IN SOME AREAS CREATING OBSTACLES WHICH IS UNFAIR TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED — ONE SMALL BOARD OUTSIDE SHOP IS FINE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sample size 121, some chose not to answer all questions</p>			

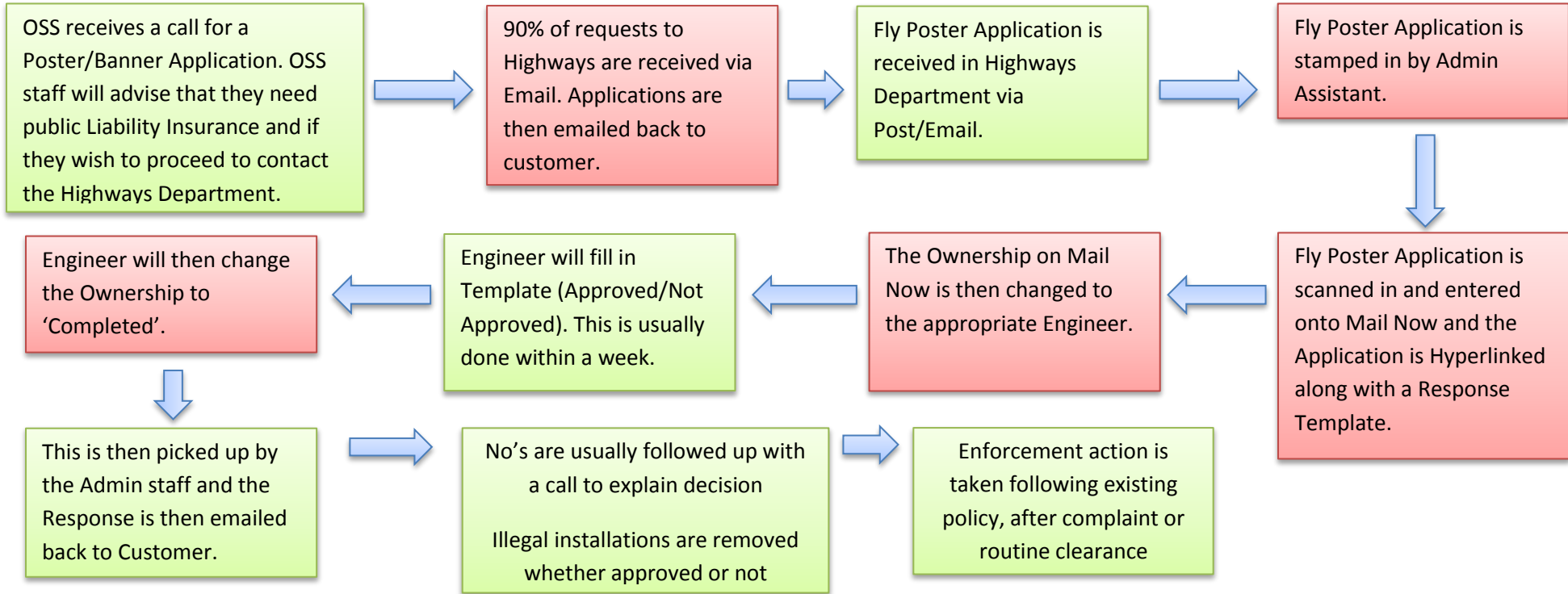
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CANVASSING : CAFÉ AREA / DISPLAY AREA SUMMARY			
Café area / Displays : A table or chair placed on the Public Highway or shelves, boxes and items for sale placed on the Public Highway	YES	NO	?
1. Do you find these areas pleasurable when visiting your town or village amenities?	95 nos 79 %	20 nos 17 %	5 nos 4 %
2. Do you find these areas a hindrance when visiting your town or village amenities?	19 nos 16 %	94 nos 79 %	6 nos 5 %
3. Have you ever, or know someone who has, tripped, bumped, knocked or had to squeeze past these areas and so put at risk?	24 nos 20 %	93 nos 78 %	2 nos 2 %
4. MCC have a Duty to maintain unobstructed access to the Highway, do you think seating / sale areas etc. should be allowed on the public pedestrian area or footway?	70 nos 59 %	40 nos 33 %	9 nos 8 %
5. MCC's duty to maintain unobstructed access to the Highway means that it could be liable if a claim is made against a business. Should Businesses comply with national guideline?	105 nos 87 %	9 nos 8 %	6 nos 5 %
6. Should businesses be fined if they continually hinder the access to the highway and so break the law?	92 nos 77 %	16 nos 13 %	12 nos 10 %
7. No rates, fees or licences are paid for by a business to use the Public highway for their private purpose, do you believe they should be licenced and pay a small fee to place items on the Public Highway?	70 nos 58 %	44 nos 37 %	6 nos 5 %
<p>Comments:</p> <p>KEEP ACCESS CLEAR AT ALL TIMES — SHOULD HAVE MORE PUBLIC SEATING — SHOULD NOT REDUCE TO LESS THAN TWO BUGGIES OR MOBILITY SCOOTER, PEDESTRIANS SHOULD NOT BE FORCED IN TO TH EROAD — MORE SEATINGFOR DISABLED — WARNING BEFORE A FINE — THEY SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWEED AT ALL, FINE IF ENCROACH — AS LONG AS TABLES AND CHAIRS ARE I A REASONABLY LARGE AREA THEY DO ADD VIBRANCY — APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE AND OUTSIDE TABLE AND CHAIRS CAN ADD TO VIBRANCY — SO LONG AS CARE IS TAKEN IN PLACING ITEMS IT SHOULD BE ALLOWED — TABLES AND CHAIRS BEEN PLACED FOR YEARS, SOME SECTIONS OF FOOTWAY TOO NARROW BUT GOODS ARE PLACED—ONLY WHEN THEY DO NOT HINDER PEDESTRIANS—CAFÉ SOCIETY IS GOOD, A SMALL LICENSE FEE COULD BE CHARGED AS ADMIN FOR COMPLIANCE — ROOM FOR BUGGY AND MOBILITY SCOOTER — GOOD TO SEE LOCAL BUSINESS FLOURISHING AND BEING MORE INVITING, DO NOT PUNISH THEM WITH MORE COSTS — CAFÉ AND PUBS ARE GENERATING BUSINESS FOR THE AREA AND WOULD REDUCE IF SEATING ETC. WERE NOT AVAILABLE — ROOM FOR PEDESTRIANS — LICENSE BUT NOT FEES — IT IS A QUESTION OF DEGREE, ONLY ALLOW IF THEY DO NOT CAUSE OBSTRUCTION — IF THEY ATTRACT BUSINESS THEN YES — IS IT ANOTHER WAY TO SQUEEZE MONEY OUT OF SMALL BUSINESSES — PUBLIC TRIP UP END OF!..., LEAVE SMALL BUSINESSES ALONE — SO LONG AS ENOUGH ROOM IS LEFT FOR PEDESTRIANS, PUSHCHAIRS, WHEELCHAIRS ETC. — IF CAUSING HINDERANCE THEN SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED — LOVELY TO SEE SEATS/TABLES IN CAFÉ AREAS.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sample size 121, some chose not to answer all questions</p>			

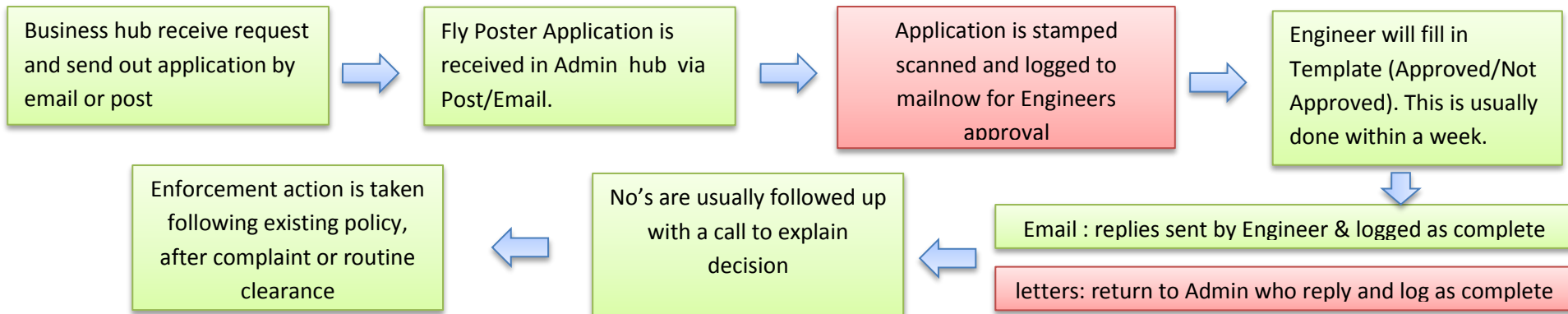
34 MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OBSTRUCTION ON THE HIGHWAY REPORT

7.1 PROCESS FOR FLYPOSTER : 86 applications 12/11 to 12/13

OLD



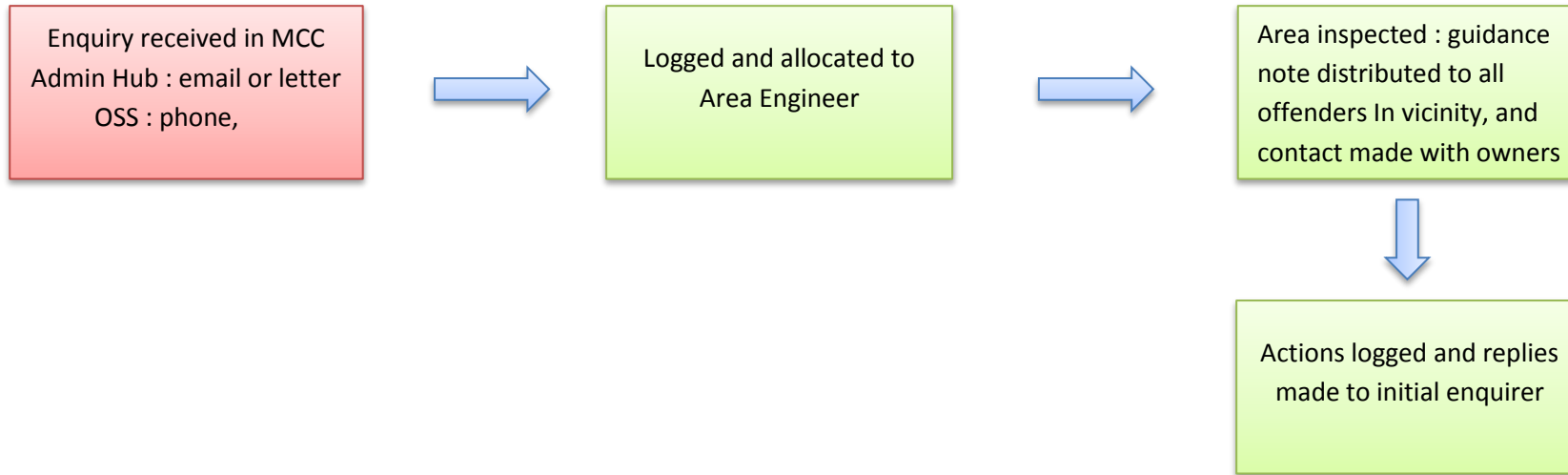
NEW



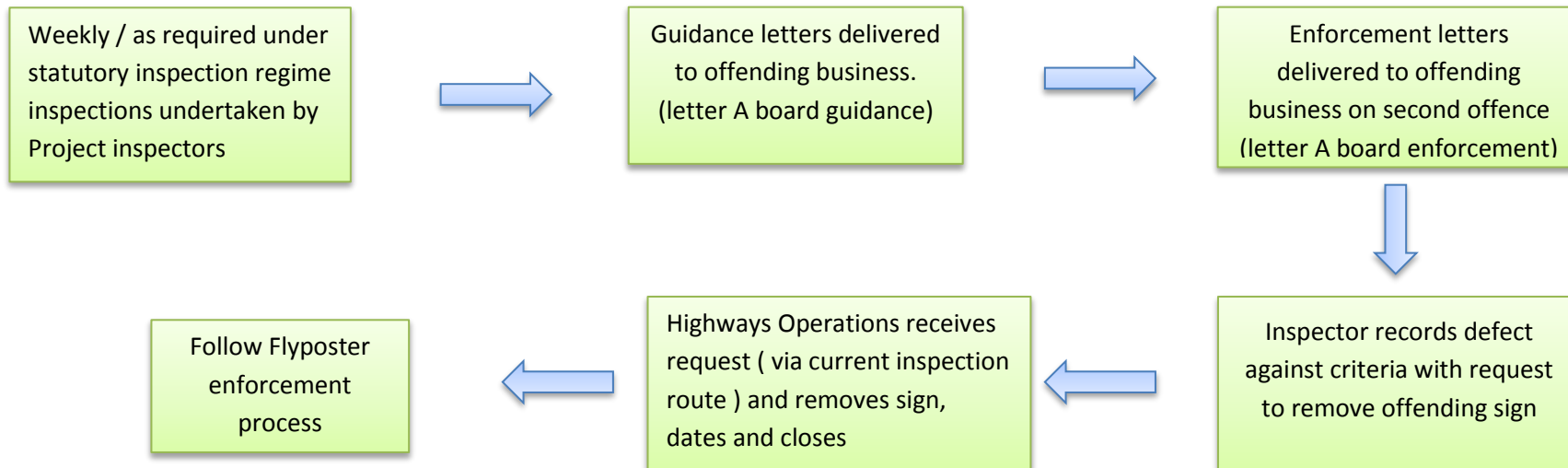
35 MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OBSTRUCTION ON THE HIGHWAY REPORT

8.1 PROCESS FOR A FRAMES : circa 41 complaints 12/11 to 12/13

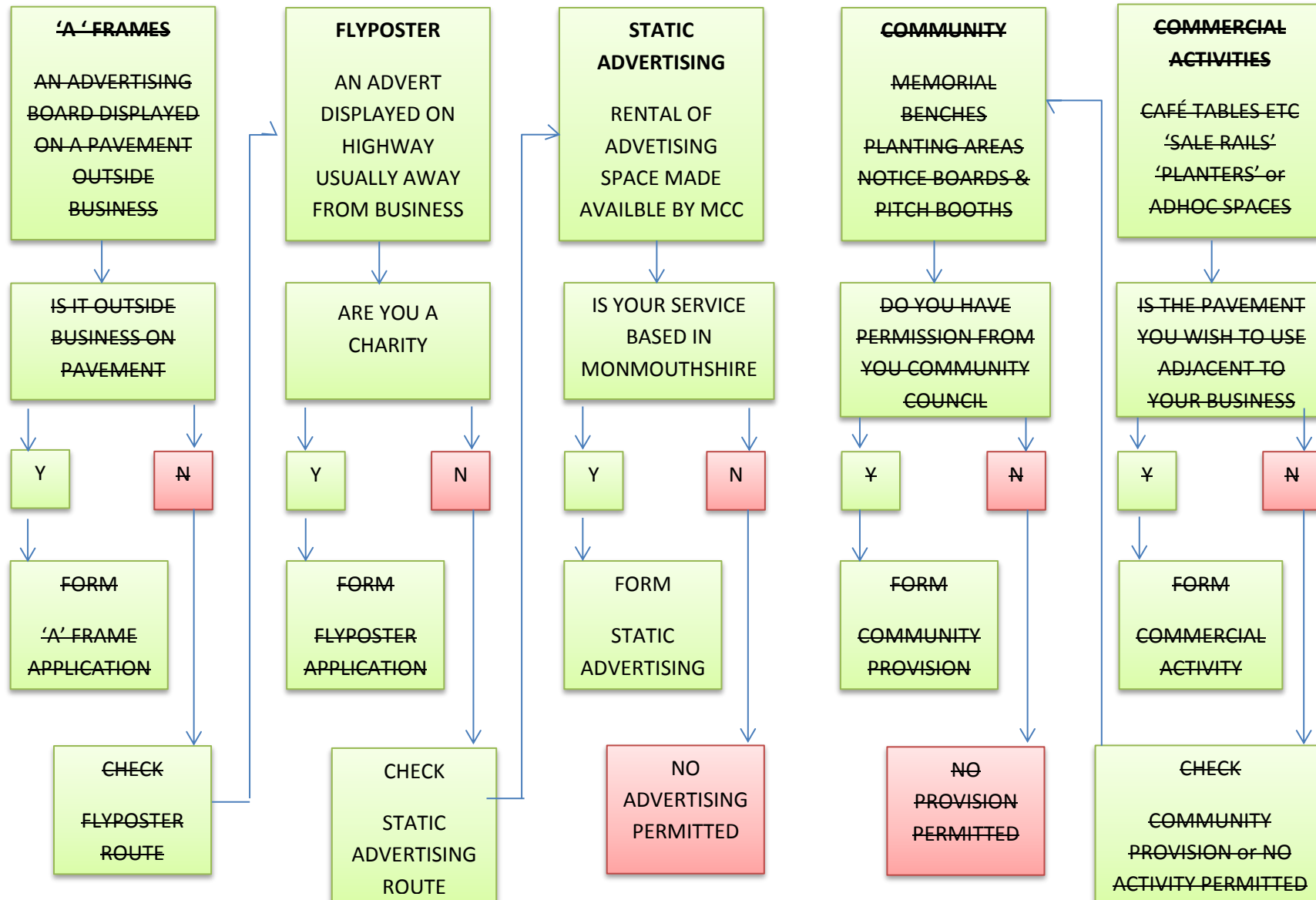
OLD



NEW



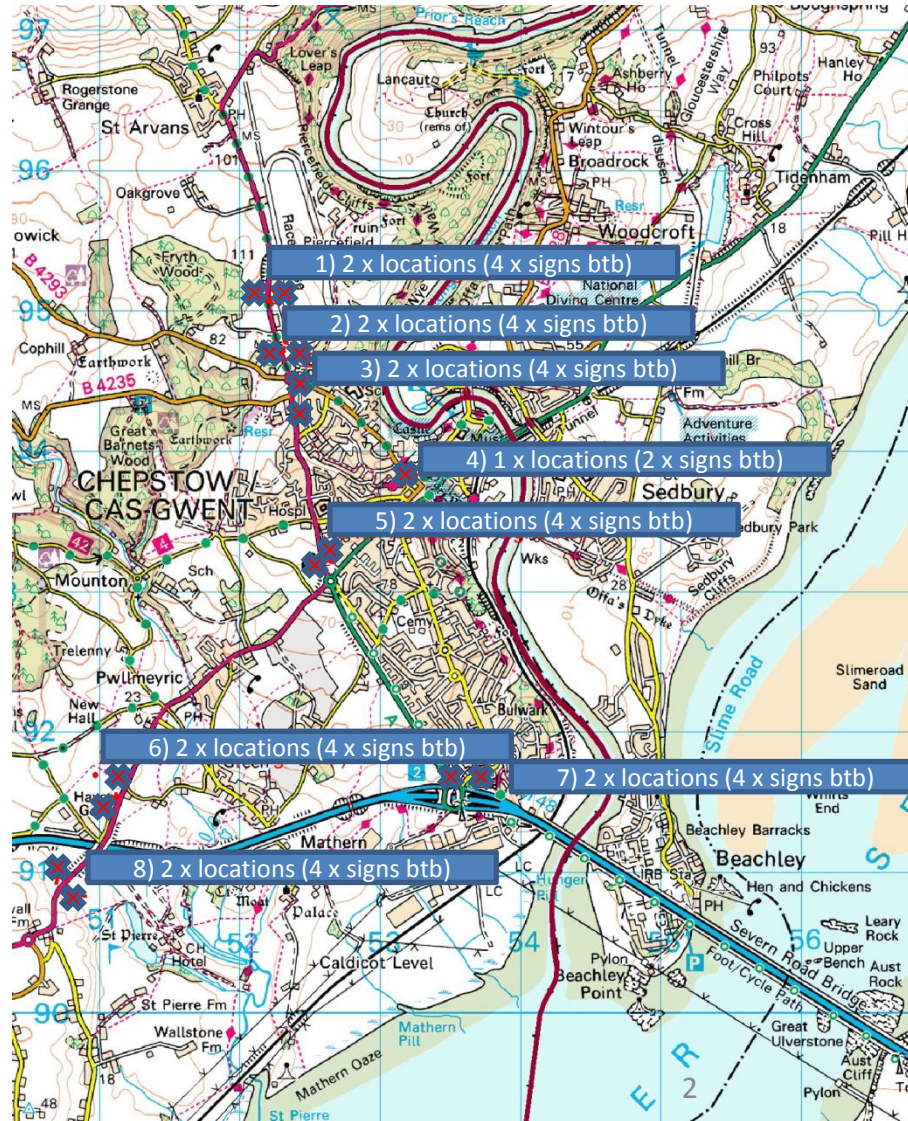
9.1 : NEW OVERALL FLOW



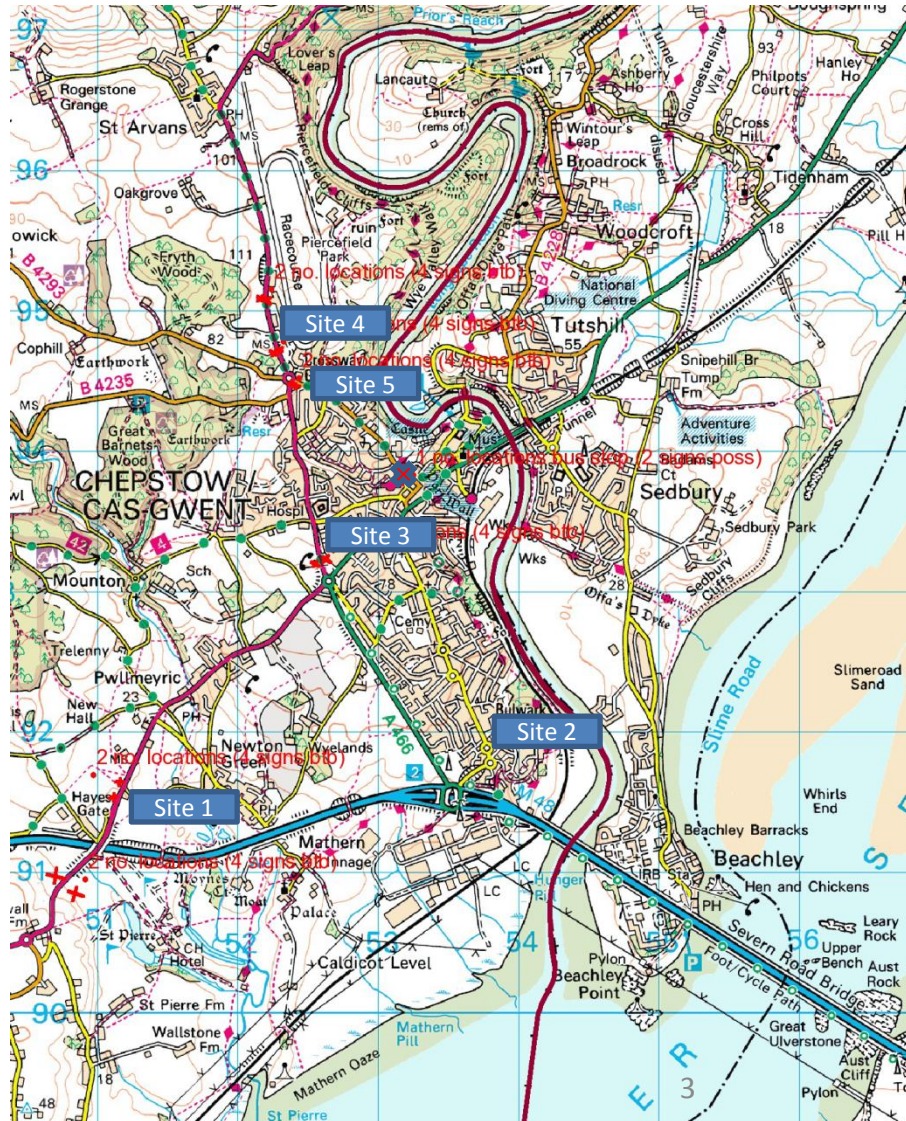
Monmouthshire County Council

Sponsorship Scheme 2014

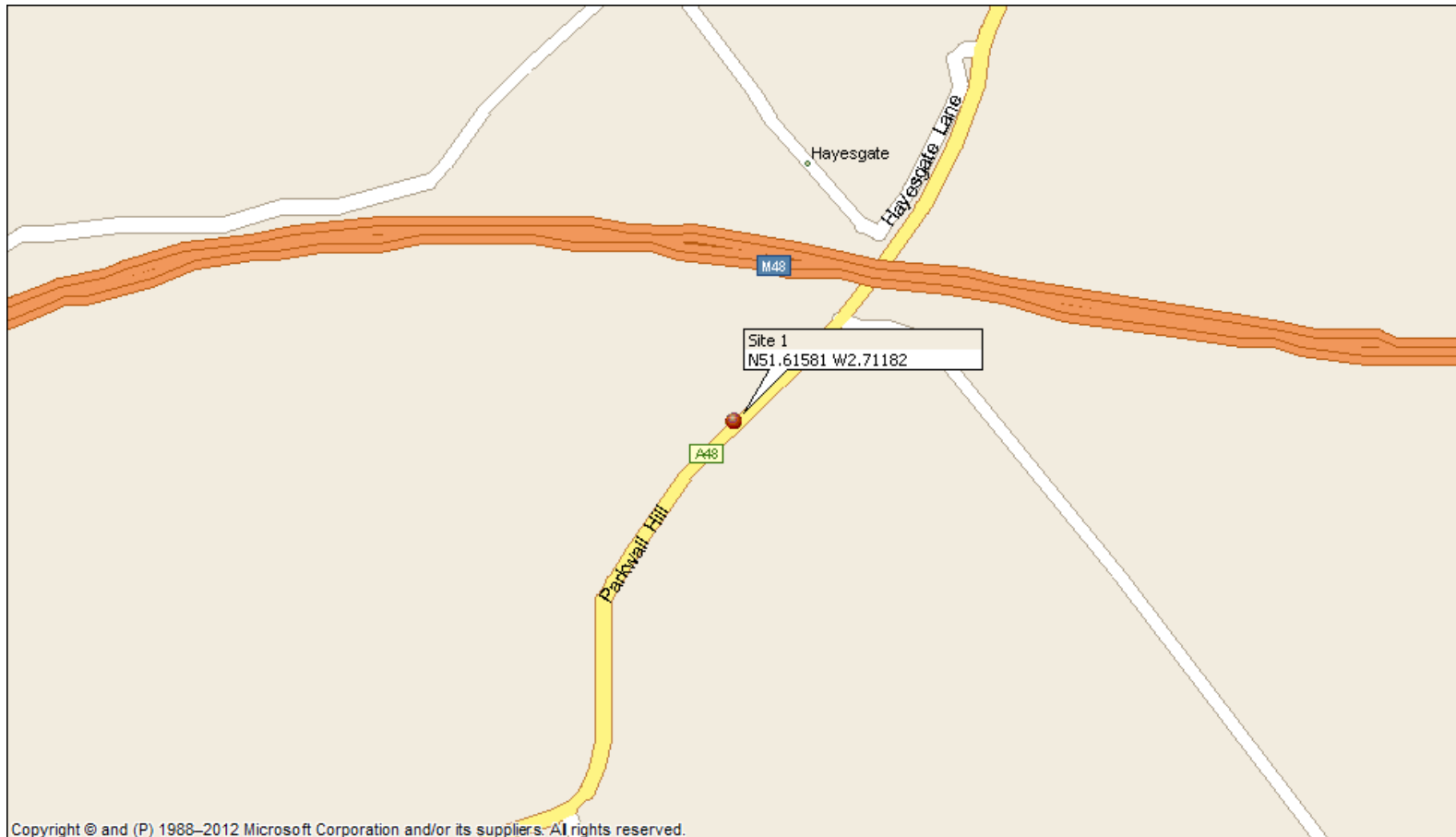
Chepstow Site Location Plan



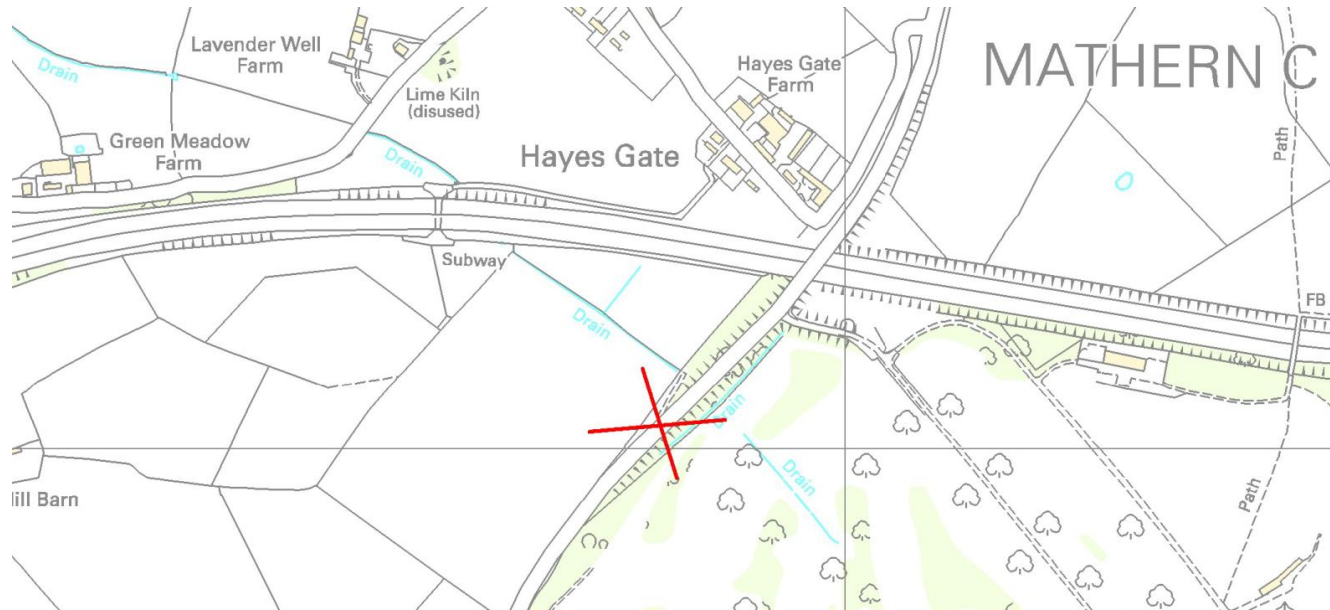
Chepstow Traffic Flow Figures



Site 1

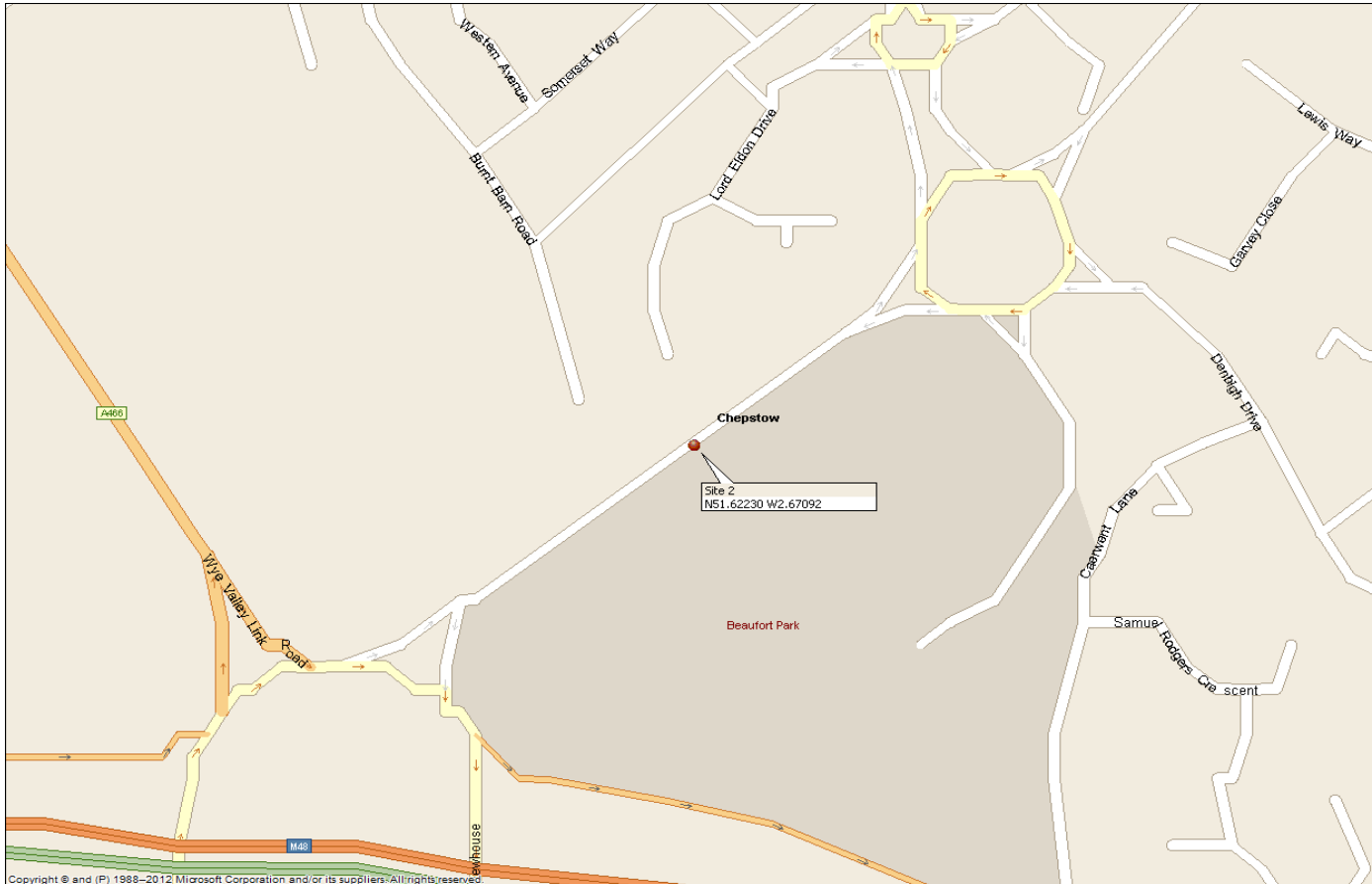


Traffic Count Site 1



1	A48 Parkwall Hill	N51.61581 W2.71182	Northbound	30 January 2014	05 February 2014	60	41822
			Southbound	30 January 2014	05 February 2014		41705
			Two-Way	30 January 2014	05 February 2014		83527

Site 2

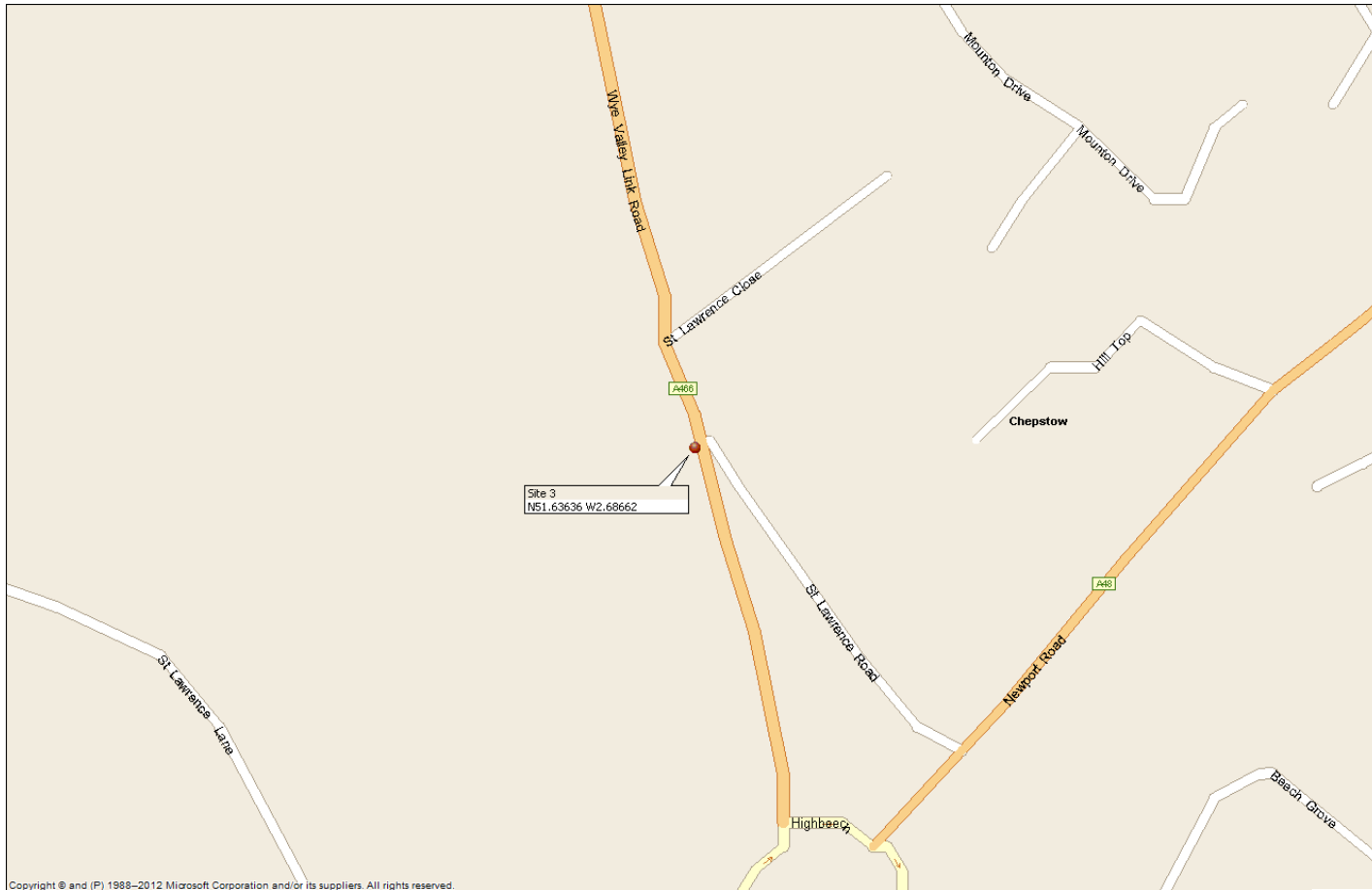


Traffic Count Site 2

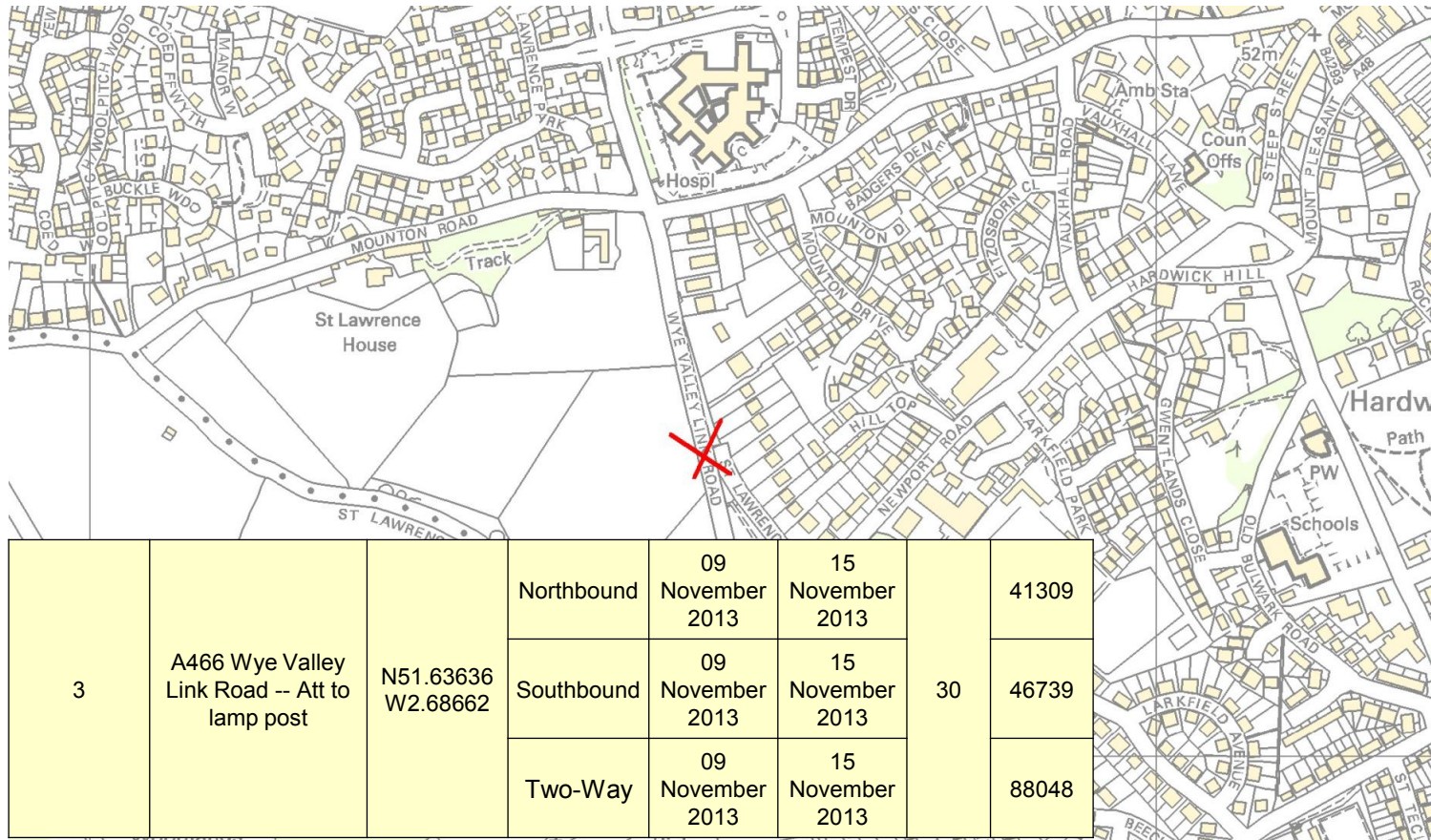


2	Unnamed Road -- Att to lamp post	N51.62230 W2.67092	Eastbound	09 November 2013	15 November 2013	60	22503
			Westbound	09 November 2013	15 November 2013		30159
			Two-Way	09 November 2013	15 November 2013		52662

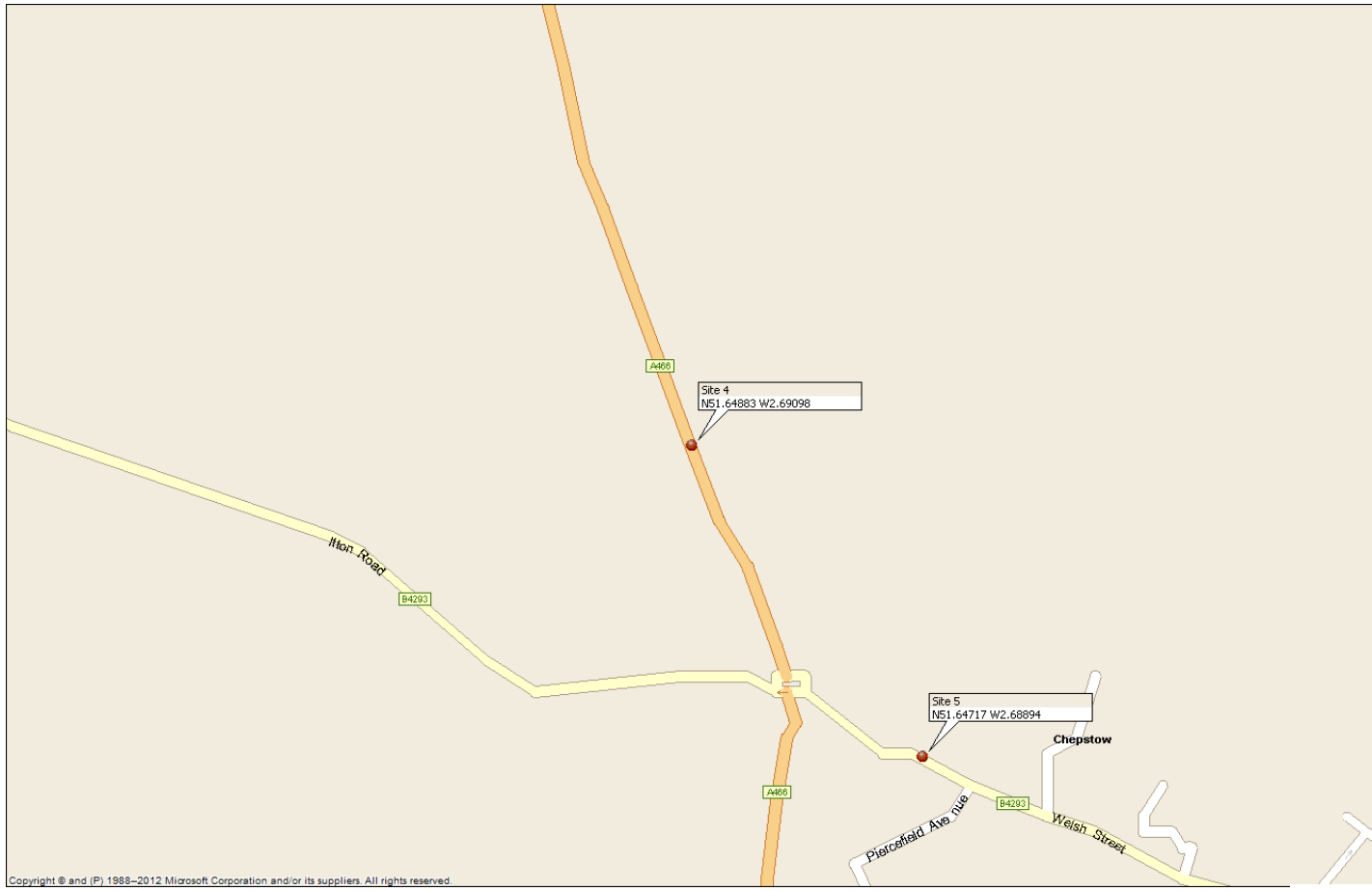
Site 3



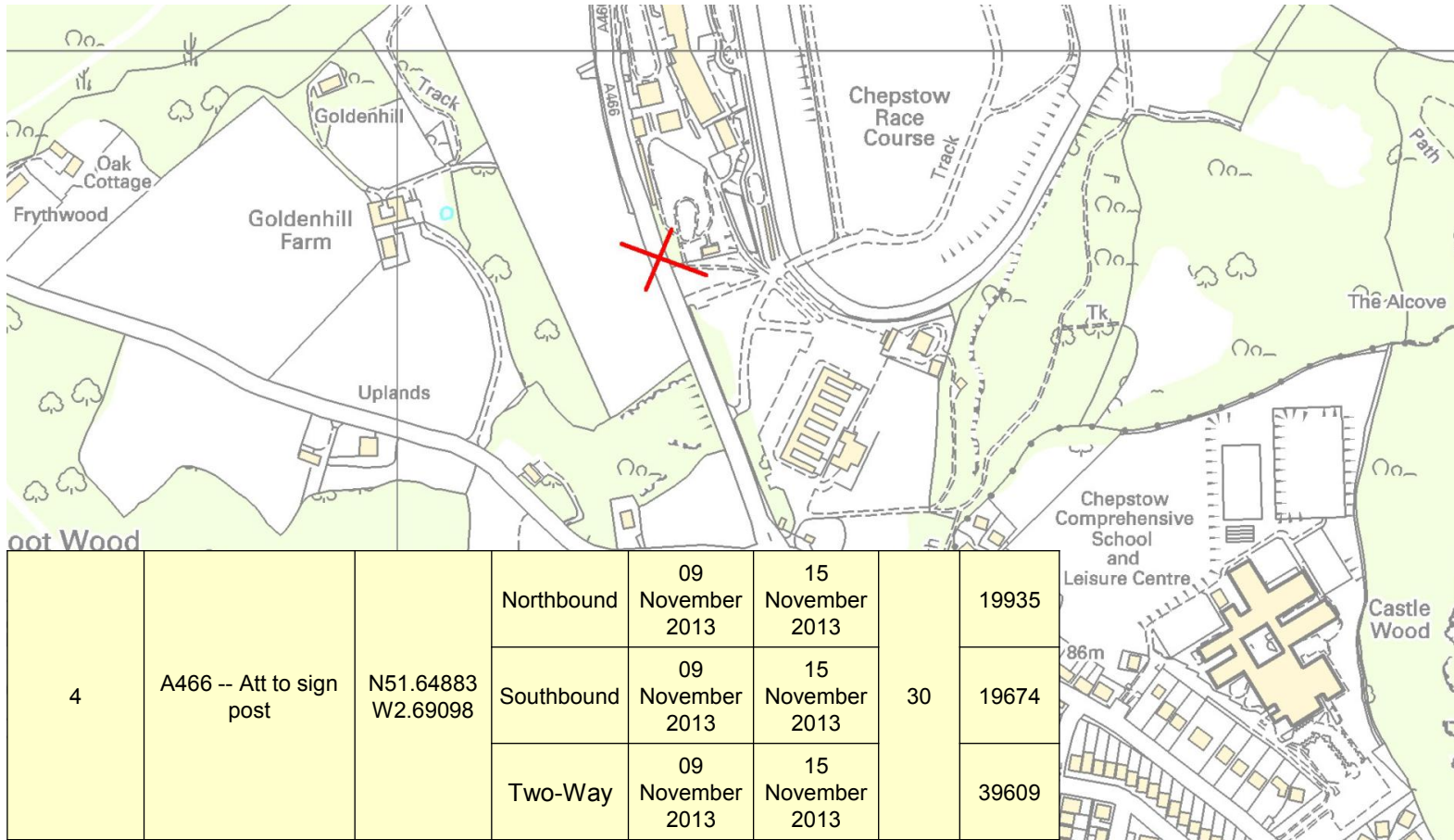
Traffic Count Site 3



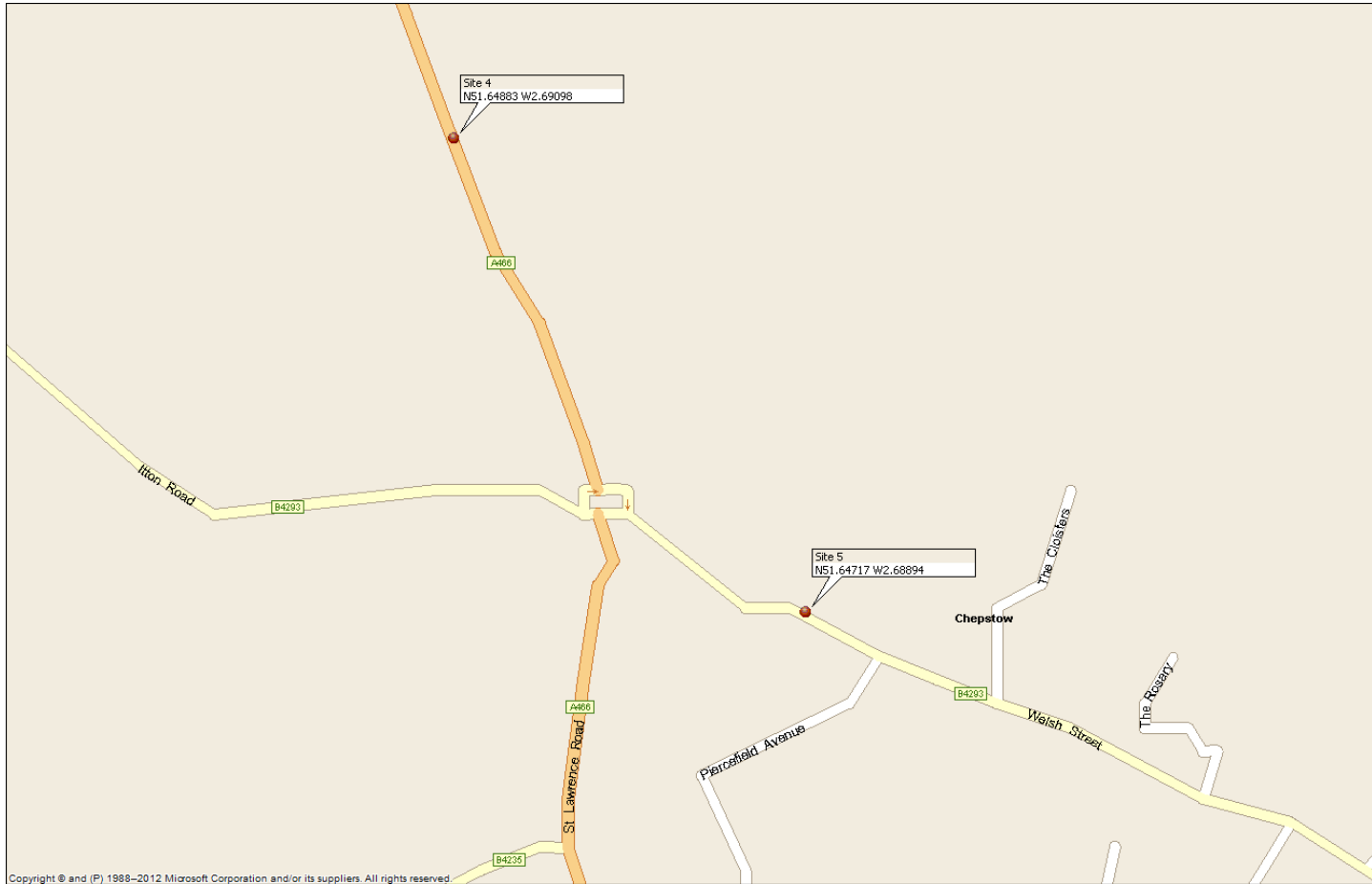
Site 4



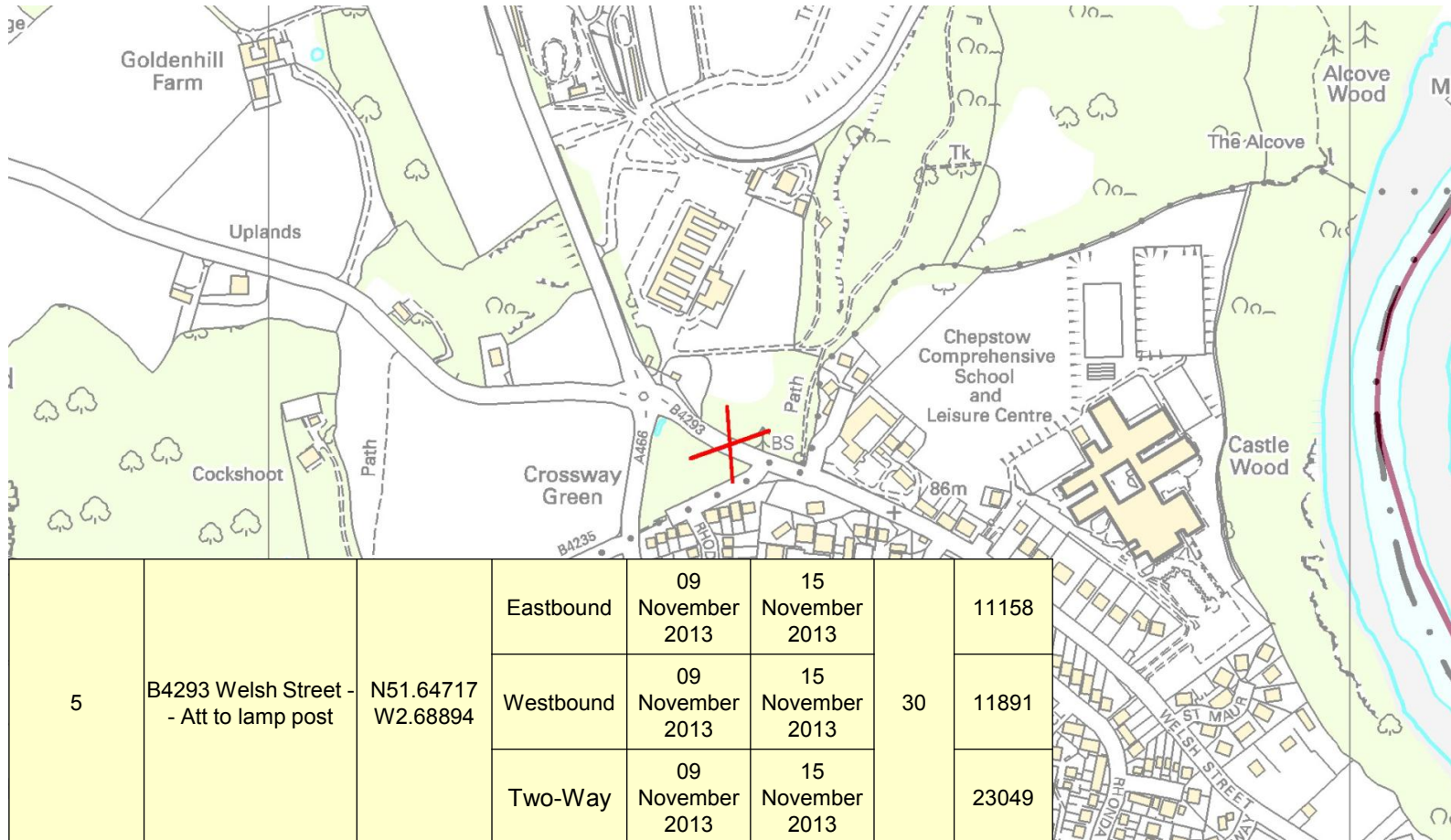
Traffic Count Site 4



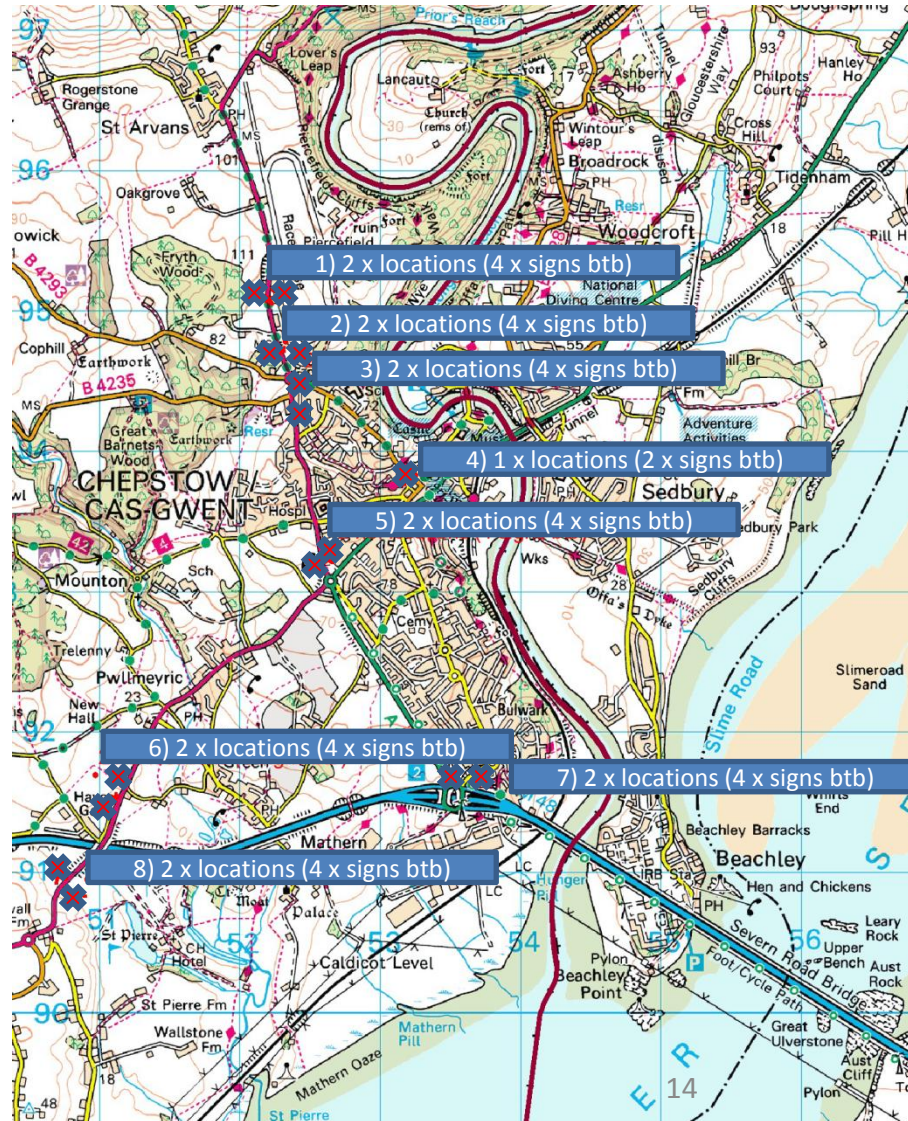
Site 5



Traffic Count Site 5



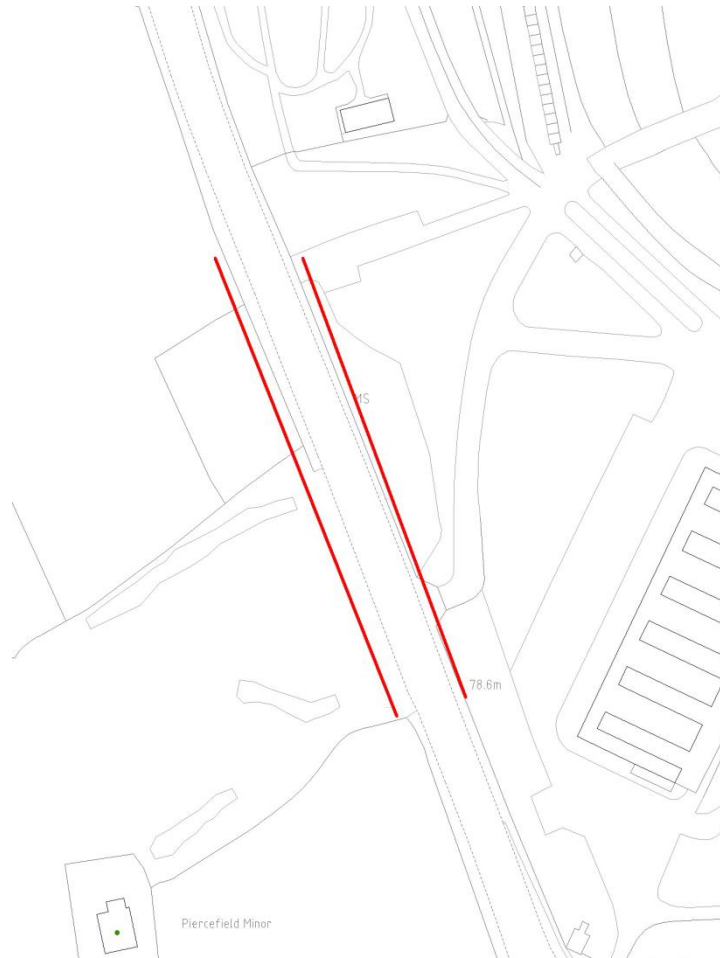
Chepstow Site Location Plan



1) A466 Outside Chepstow Racecourse



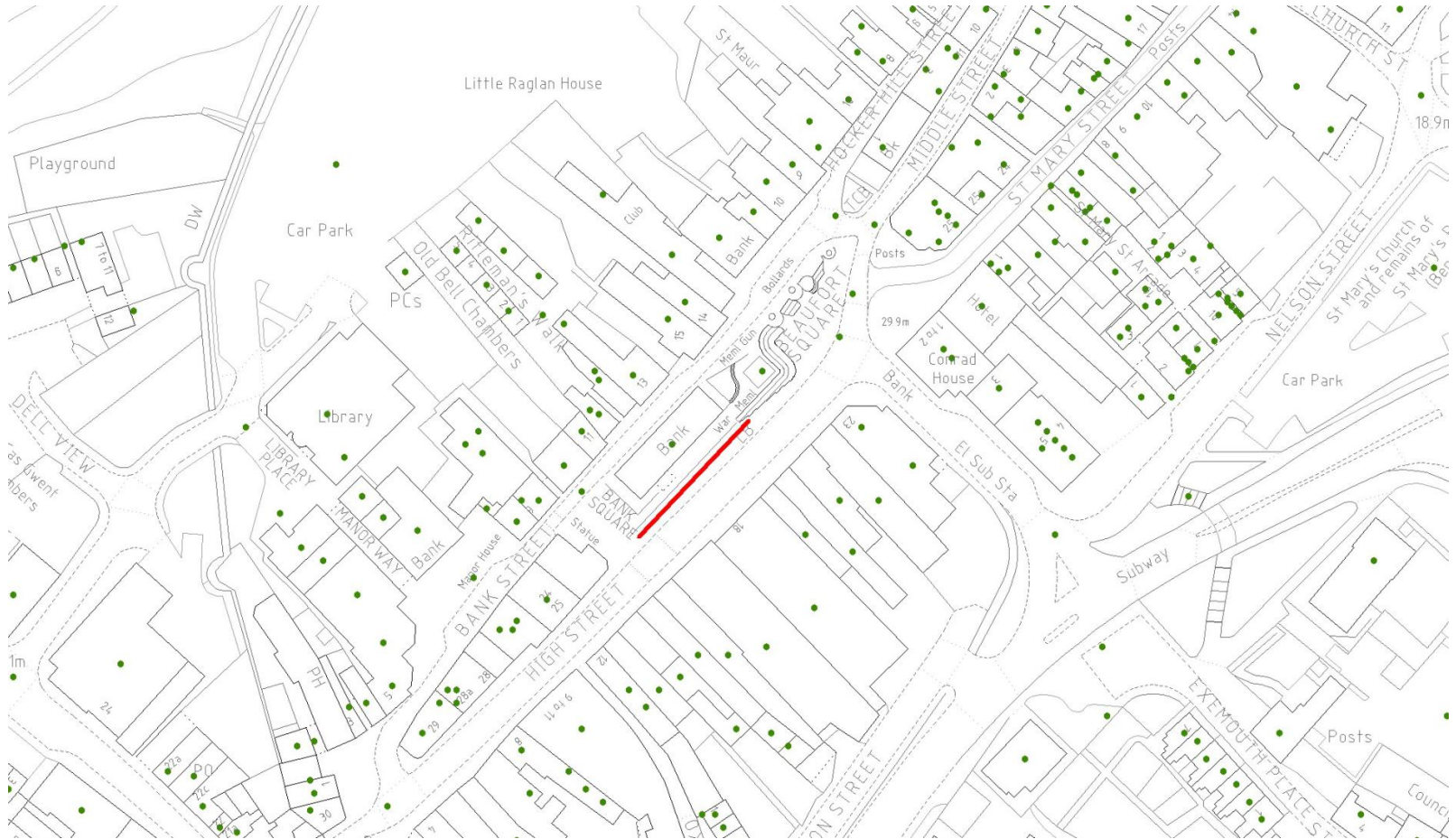
2) A466 on hill approaching Chepstow Racecourse



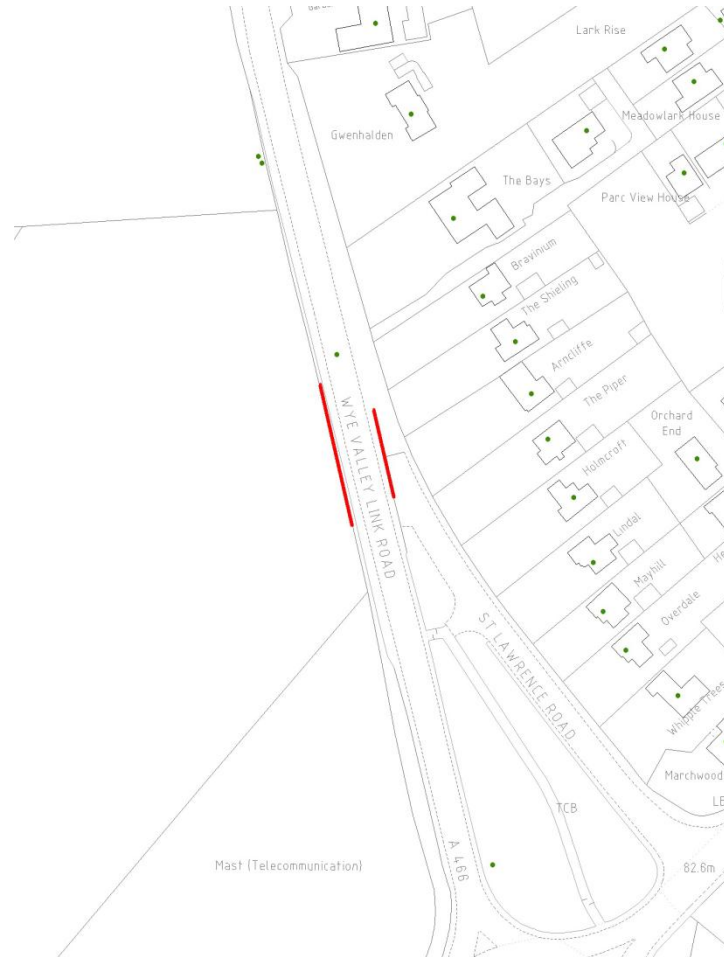
3) Welsh Street, nr Junc A466 below Chepstow Racecourse



4) High Street Chepstow, Barclays Bank Railings



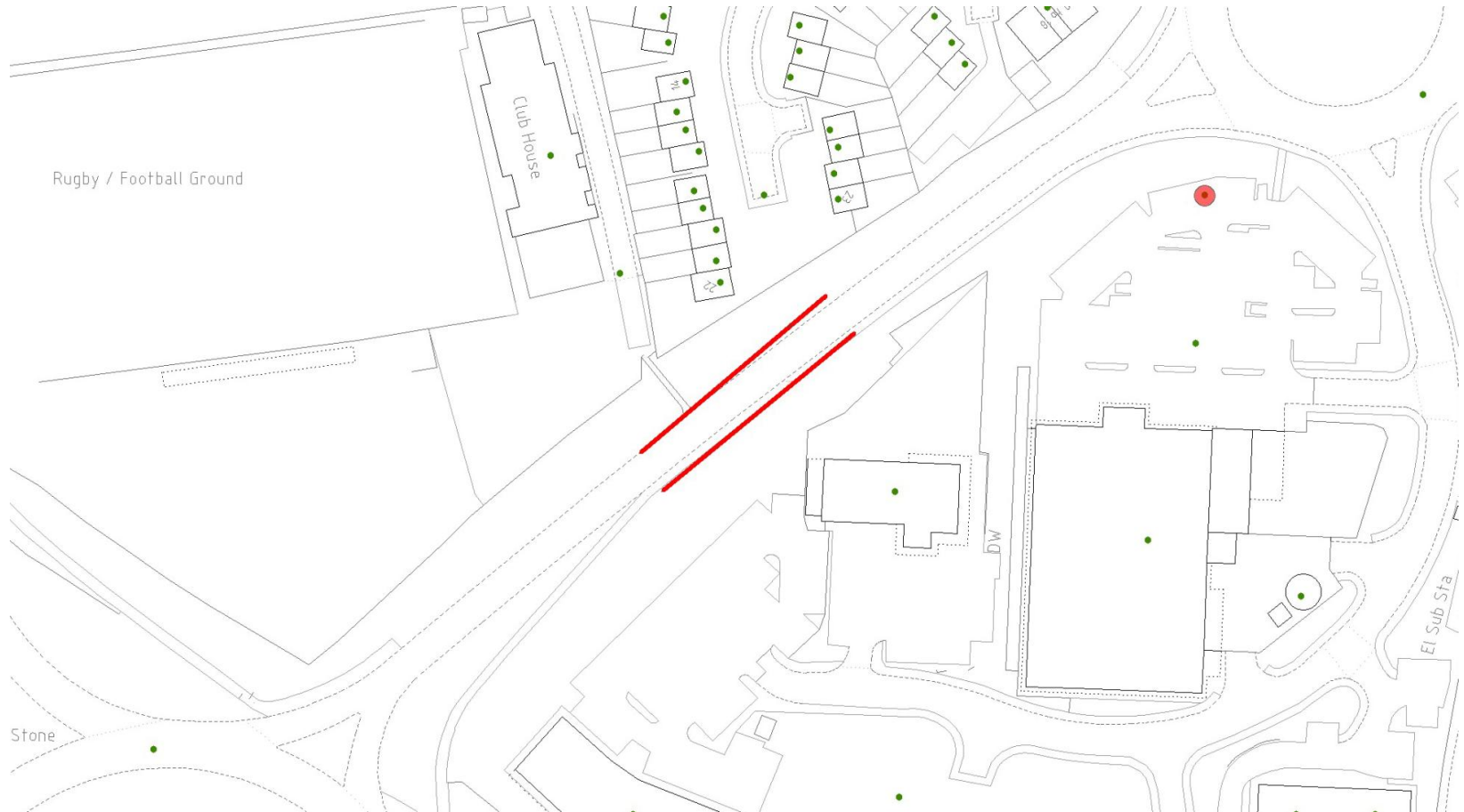
5) A466 Nr Highbeech RA



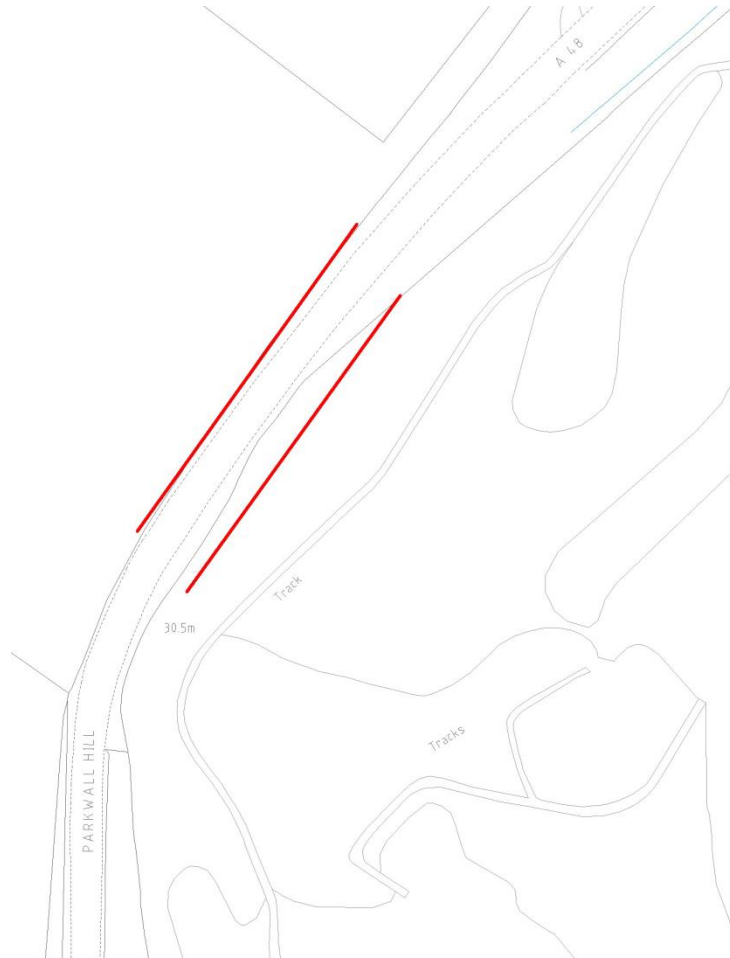
6) A48 Mathern between Hayes Gate and Baileys Hay



7) Off A466 Junc M4 into Thornwell



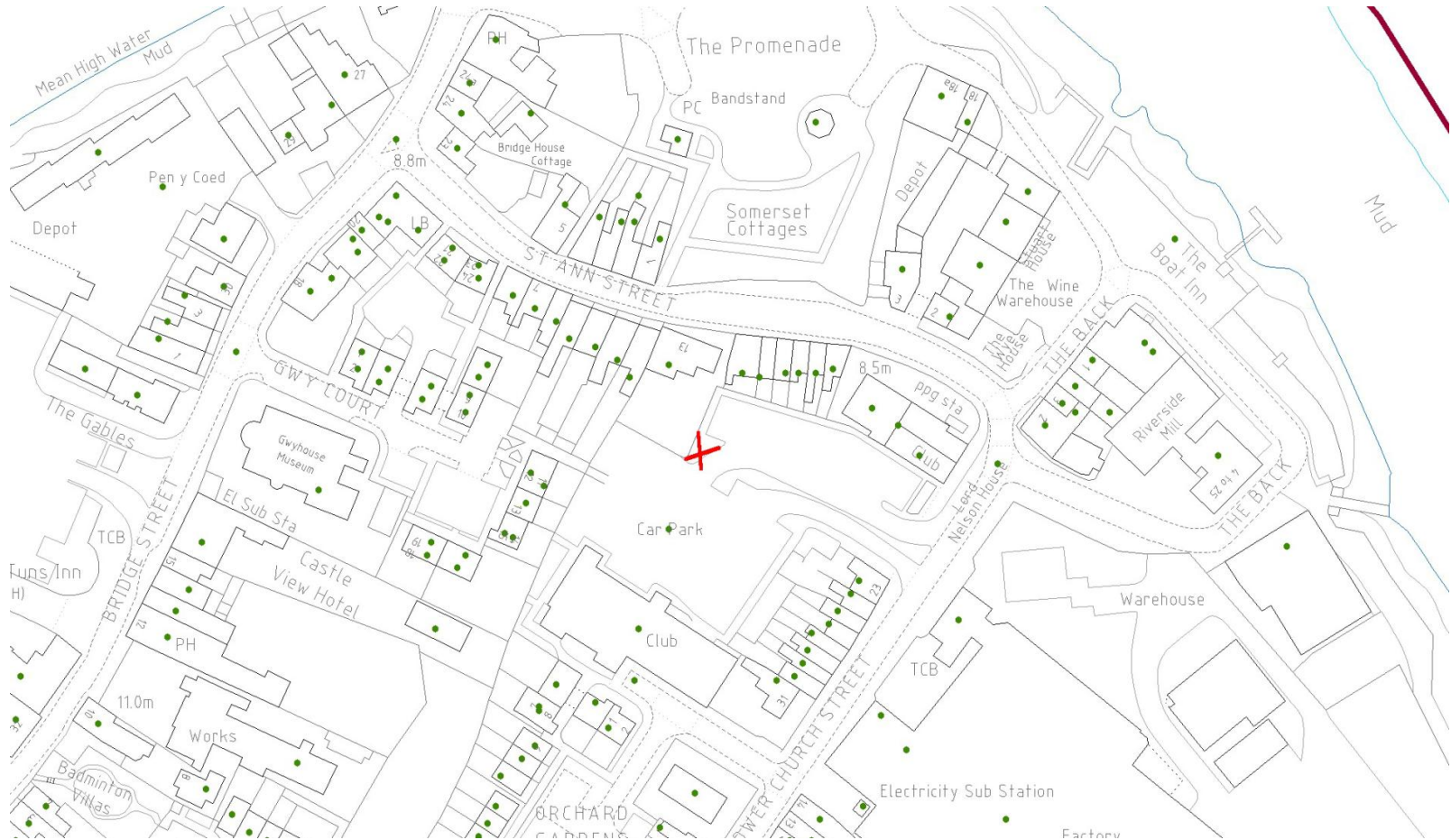
8) A48 Parkwall Hill



Car Park Figures

Machine	Description	20120401	20120501	20120601	20120701	20120801	20120901	20121001	20121101	20121201	20130101	20130201	20130301	Total
CH1	Drill Hall	294	401	455	462	364	354	510	414	324	325	336	431	4670
CH2	Drill Hall	86	95	116	124	231	79	44	0	0	0	0	0	775
CN1	Nelson Street	4111	5130	5301	5161	5340	4580	5315	4848	3986	4024	4324	4793	56913
CN2	Nelson Street	3071	2552	2319	2387	2540	2105	2427	2201	1844	2174	2080	2443	28143
CW1	Welsh Street	3629	4053	3871	4038	3998	3738	3969	3183	2995	2225	3005	3571	42275
CW2	Welsh Street	4555	4480	5151	5326	5177	5020	5298	5159	4804	4308	4584	4979	58841
CW3	Welsh Street	2527	3090	2613	2596	2726	2573	2249	2606	2145	2495	2405	2555	30580
CS1	Castle Dell	1351	1362	1595	1555	1792	1392	1288	843	628	724	1021	1197	14748
CS2	Castle Dell	750	649	776	801	1084	729	561	356	271	319	488	475	7259
Total	9	20374	21812	22197	22450	23252	20570	21661	19610	16997	16594	18243	20444	244204

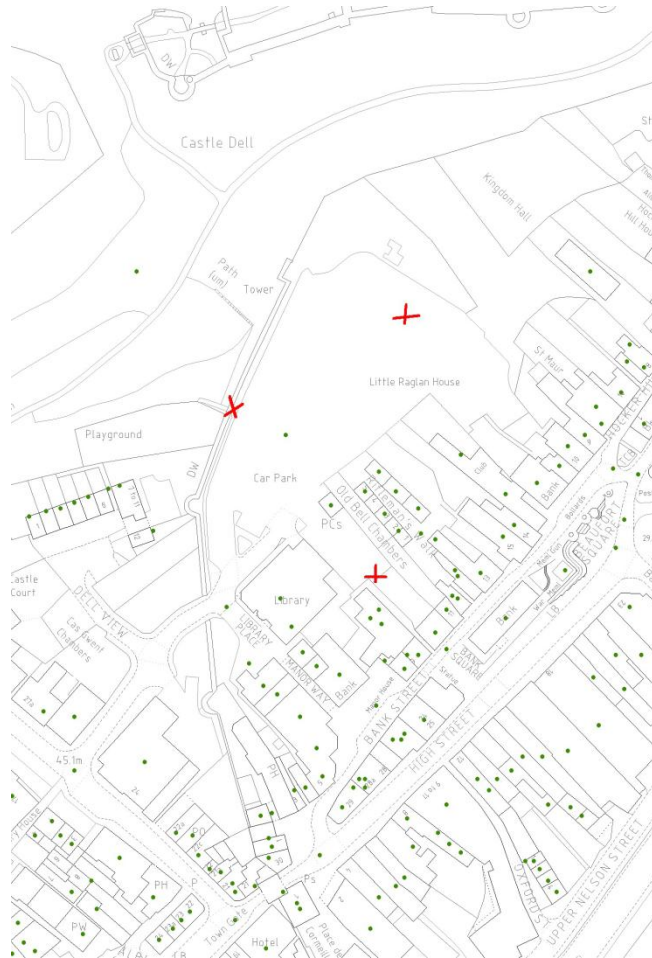
Drill Hall Car Park, Lower Church Street



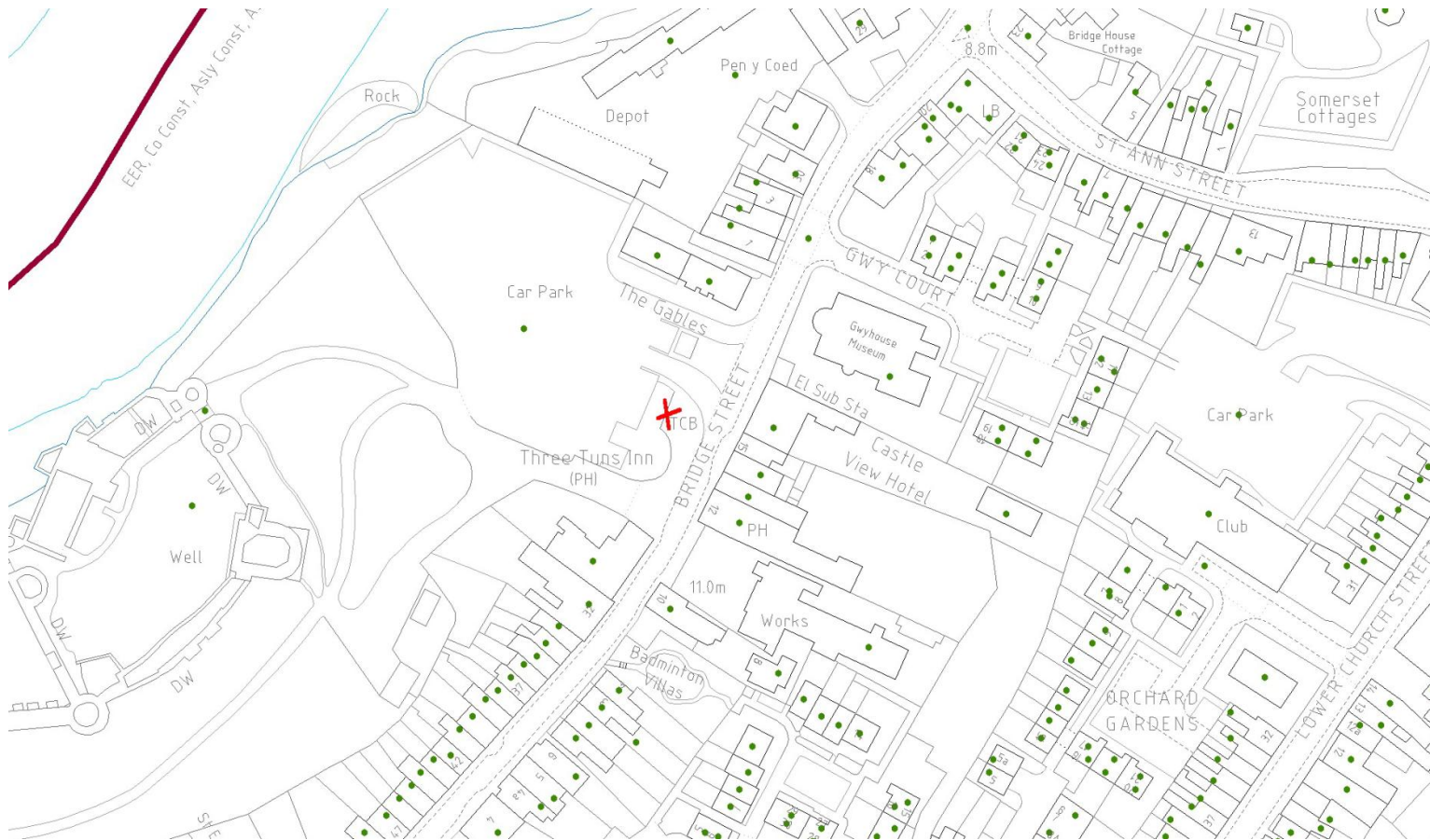
Nelson Street Car Park, Chepstow

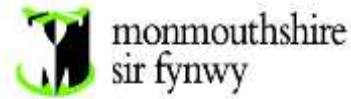


Welsh Street Car Park



Bridge Street Car Park (Chepstow Castle Car Park)





SUBJECT: CROESONEN SECTION 106 FUNDING

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 3rd June 2015

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: CROESONEN AND MARDY

1 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To consider the process for allocating £40,000 of funding from the Croesonen (Farm and Infants School) Section 106 Agreements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS: that

- 2.1 a new application/allocation process be undertaken in respect of the £40,000 available to be spent on adult and youth recreation projects in the Llantilio Pertholey Community Council area;
- 2.2 a new Assessment Panel be set up to consider the applications received and to formulate recommendations for future consideration by Cabinet.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In February 2011 Cabinet considered a report on the allocation of £78,300 worth of off site recreation funding from the Croesonen Farm and Croesonen Infants School Section 106 Agreements. At that meeting it was decided to allocate grants to ten local projects.
- 3.2 Of the ten projects awarded funding nine have been completed – one of the projects awarded funding has not been started so there is an outstanding balance of £40,000 that is still available to spend. There was no “spend by” clause included in either of these two agreements, so there is no deadline by which the funding has to be spent.
- 3.3 The approved scheme to which the outstanding balance of £40,000 relates was the creation of a small 3G (third generation) artificial turf training pitch proposed to be located at the Mardy Recreation Ground adjacent to the Llantilio Pertholey Community Centre. That scheme has not gone ahead as the applicant (Mardy Juniors Football Club) has been unable to raise sufficient match funding from other sources – the grant approved was £40,000 towards a project costing in excess of £100,000.

- 3.4 Mardy Juniors FC has developed an alternative proposal to provide a new grass pitch for use by the club as a base for training and competitive matches on another piece of land in Llantilio Pertholey, which it is proposing to lease from a local farmer. The club has obtained an estimate of cost from a local contractor for carrying out the necessary works to create the new pitch and associated facilities (access, car park and storage shed) and this amounts to £39,000 (£32,500 + £6,500 VAT).
- 3.5 The club has the second largest number of junior football registrations in the county and has a strong voluntary coaching network in place. The club's senior sides now have a secure future as a lease on the existing senior pitch at Mardy Recreation Ground has been secured until 2016. If the new junior pitch is developed as proposed this would secure the future for the club's junior section also until 2026 (with a ten year lease from the existing landowner).
- 3.6 However, the local members and the Community Council feel that, due to the time that has elapsed since the original grant allocation was agreed and the fact that the club has not raised any match funding for its project, the funding should be re-advertised so that local groups can submit applications for grants from the fund towards local projects. Essentially, this would mean repeating the application process that was undertaken in late 2010/early 2011 when the funding first became available. If Cabinet agrees to go through a further application/allocation process, there is nothing to stop Mardy Juniors re-applying for a grant from the available funding.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 There is no established procedure for dealing with unused Section 106 balances that have already been allocated to previously approved projects;
- 4.2 It is the usual practice to carry out an independent assessment of applications received before a recommendation is made to Cabinet on how to allocate Section 106 balances.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no resource implications arising from this report as the £40,000 has already been received by the County Council and is available to spend once agreement is reached on which scheme(s) to support.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

There are no sustainable development or equality implications arising from this report, although there may be some implications when the applications have been received.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications arising from this report, although there may be some implications when the applications have been received.

8. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet Members

Local County Council Members for Croesonen and Mardy

Llantilio Pertholey Community Council

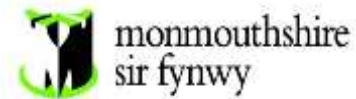
Assistant Head of Finance/Deputy S151 Officer

Strategic Leadership Team

Head of Legal Services

Monitoring Officer

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:Report to Cabinet on 2nd February 2011 entitled "Croesonen Section 106 Funding"**10. AUTHOR: Mike Moran****11. CONTACT DETAILS:****Tel:** 07901 854682**E-mail:** mikemoran@monmouthshire.gov.uk



SUBJECT: Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2014/15
MEETING: Cabinet
DATE: 3rd June 2015
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

To ask Cabinet to note the contents of the attached Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2014 – 2015 that has been produced in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language Act 1993. The Monitoring report details our compliance with the action plan in our Welsh Language Scheme, gives details of specific Welsh Language records all evidence of good practice carried out by the Council over that 12 month period.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To approve the report as a record of the Council's activities over the last year in respect of its compliance with its Welsh Language Scheme. The report will then be forwarded to the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office by the 30th June 2015 for their scrutiny, response and formal approval.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Council's Welsh Language Scheme sets out our commitments for the Welsh Language for a three year period 2012 -15 and the Annual Monitoring Report gives a detailed account of our compliance with the detailed time aligned action plan.

The Welsh Language Act 1993 has been superseded by the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and will shortly introduce Welsh Language Standards to replace the schemes. The Standards will be more prescriptive than the requirements of the old Welsh Language Act 1993 and we will need to assess where we need to target our efforts to ensure compliance.

4. REASONS:

Monmouthshire County Council has a statutory responsibility to produce an Annual Monitoring Report under the Welsh Language Act 1993.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There are no additional financial or human resource implications arising out of this monitoring report.

5.2 The Scheme will be published, on approval, on the Council's intranet and corporate website.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

There are no significant equality impacts identified in the assessment (Appendix 1).

The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed annually.

7. CONSULTEES:

All Cabinet members, Deputy Leader and Equality Champion, Welsh Language Support Officer, The Urdd, Menter Iaith BGTM, Monmouthshire Welsh Speakers, Head of Youth Services.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme 2013/16

9. AUTHOR:

Alan Burkitt Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644010

E-mail: alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2014 – 2015



Version Control

Title	Monmouthshire County Council Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report 2014 - 2015
Purpose	Legal document required under the Welsh Language Act 1993
Owner	Monmouthshire CC
Approved by	Cabinet
Date	15 /5 /2015
Version Number	One
Status	Official version
Review Frequency	Annual
Next review date	30/06/2016
Consultation	<i>GAVO ,Monmouthshire Equality and Diversity Group (MEDG), Corporate Equality Network (CEN), e mail to all stakeholders, Departmental Management Teams, Monmouthshire Welsh Speakers Network (Siaradwyr Cymraeg Sir Fynwy), Swyddogion Sir Fynwy (Welsh speaking staff).</i>

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Introduction

Monmouthshire County Council are proud to present this annual monitoring report which reflects the work done during the financial year 2014-15, identifies progress against the Action plan and gives details of good practice and any significant developments.

The Council continues to make significant advances in developing the scope and quality of its public information available through the medium of Welsh. Clear guidance and resources are in place for staff in relation to translation, the provision of services and Welsh Language requirements. We are continuing to work in partnership with the Welsh speaking residents of Monmouthshire and asking them to do the following:

- Using the Welsh version of the website when searching for Council information
- Advising when or where Welsh webpages or downloadable documents are not up to date or any other issues that may arise
- Looking at key strategic documents and responding to engagement correspondence to ensure that we are giving proper consideration to the Welsh Language in Monmouthshire.
- Sending them information regarding Welsh Language events, job vacancies etc.
- Acting as an interface between the Council, partners and Welsh Language groups etc to disseminate any Welsh Language information, events etc.
- Engaging with them to assist us in delivering the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Sir Fynwy a'r Cyffinniau

Financially it is without doubt a very challenging period for local government and with the imminent arrival of the Welsh Language Standards we will without undoubtedly be presented with some difficult challenges. It is however also an exciting time for Monmouthshire with the Council delivering the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol in 2016 in Abergavenny. With arrangements for this great event already well underway We are therefore presented with a fantastic opportunity to deliver an unforgettable event and have the opportunity to create a lasting legacy for the Welsh language and culture.

Paul Matthews
Chief Executive

Councillor Peter Fox
Leader of the Council

Councillor Phylip Hobson
Deputy Leader of the Council & Equality Champion

Welsh Language Scheme Compliance

Monmouthshire County Council's Welsh Language Scheme contains the following action plan of measures and target dates.

Action Plan 2013 -2014

Service Planning and Delivery

PARAGRAPH	MEASURE	YEAR TWO TARGET	PROGRESS	RESPONSIBILITY
4.1.1	Assess linguistic consequences of new policies or initiatives	YR1-Audit sample of Equality Impact Assessments to measure number of changes to Welsh language policies.YR2- As year 1, whilst seeing a percentage increase in effectiveness	Welsh Language one of the Protected characteristics considered carefully in the EQIA process. Included in the "Initial Challenge" and EQIA Screening document. Also one of the PC's in any MCC EQIA and Induction training. EQIA of The Council's financial savings proposals was a key piece of work that once more had the Welsh Language as an additional Protected characteristic. This process has once again had in depth conversations regarding charging for school transport and the right to Welsh Medium education.	Policy Officer Equality +Welsh Language/Authors of policies etc
4.1.2	Issue guidance to staff on assessing new proposals	Review guidance available and re-publicise	EQIA policy reviewed and sessions with Departmental Management Teams and Elected Members. Guidance revised, re-issued and re-publicised on "The Hub"	Policy Officer E+WL

4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6	Ensure the Council and any relevant third parties conform with Scheme	Bi-annual audit	Details regarding Welsh Language Act 1993 compliance are now included in contract documents. Any issues of non-compliance during monitoring will be formally addressed	Policy Officer E+WL/Procurement Team
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Dealing with the Welsh Speaking Public

PARAGRAPH	MEASURE	YEAR TWO TARGET	PROGRESS	RESPONSIBILITY
5.1.1, 5.1.2	Welcome correspondence in Welsh + English + reply in language of choice	Quarterly audit of procedures	All Welsh correspondence comes to Welsh Language Support Officer and Policy Officer E+WL for translation. They also ensure that responses are translated in return	Customer Access Manager/ Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL
5.1.3	Ensure equal timescale for replying to Welsh + English letters	Quarterly audit of procedures	All translations dealt with by the Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL therefore ensuring timescales are complied with.	Customer Access Manager/ Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL
5.1.4	Compile list of those wishing to receive correspondence in Welsh	Monitor database	Excel Database being kept by Policy Officer E + WL. Partner authorities also seem to struggle to address this particular issue	Policy Officer E+WL/Innovation Officer /SRS IT

5.1.5	Issue revised guidance to staff on correspondence in Welsh	Review, update and re-publicise guidance as appropriate	Welsh Language Scheme containing precise details published on "The Hub"	Policy Officer E+WL/Customer Access Manager
5.1.6	Ensure circulars and standard letters to public are issued bilingually	Compose document in conjunction with service areas outlining protocols	Circular and standard letters to the public are issued bilingually	All relevant divisional staff
5.1.7	Ensure that any correspondence in Welsh followed by Welsh response	Quarterly audit of procedures	All Welsh correspondence comes to Welsh Language Support Officer and Policy Officer E+WL for translation. Also ensure that responses translated in return	Customer Access Manager/ Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL
5.1.8	Ensure email correspondence in Welsh is replied to in Welsh	Quarterly audit of procedures	All Welsh correspondence comes to Welsh Language Support Officer and Policy Officer E+WL for translation. Also ensure that responses translated in return	Customer Access Manager/ Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL
5.1.9	Develop bilingual automated correspondence	Make all automated correspondence bilingual. Audit and review current procedures	Council tax, refuse and election material all produced bilingually automatically	Welsh Language Support Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL/Service heads

5.2.1	Answer telephone calls bilingually	Audit and review via 'mystery shopper' exercise.	Guidance has recently been sent to all Council staff	Customer Access Manager/Policy Officer E+WL/Menter Iaith BGTM
5.2.2	Provide telephone training and Welsh awareness training to new members of staff	Evaluation of current procedures	Telephone training and awareness session included as a part of the Staff Induction Programme and included in the Welsh Language Scheme	Corporate Training/Policy Officer E+WL
5.2.3	Issue guidance to existing staff on telephone calls in Welsh	Review 'Welsh Language Scheme - Guidelines for Staff' and re-publicise.	Guidance has recently been sent to all Council staff. Details in the Welsh Language Scheme and covered in staff Induction programme	Policy Officer E+WL/ Customer Access Manager
5.2.4	Provide bilingual corporate answer-phone messages	Audit and review current processes.	The departments have recently informed where corporate messages exist and meetings have been arranged to provide bilingual versions. The Policy Officer E+WL has arranged with officers to carry this out	Supervisor Reception/Customer Access manager/Policy Officer E+WL
5.3.1	Invite contributions at public meetings in Welsh or English	Review guidance, update and re-publicise	A Strapline is on all Council invitations to meetings.	Democratic Services/ Policy Officer E+WL

5.3.4	Develop a bilingual website	Review Welsh content. Monitor % of English content to % of Welsh content	Management system does not allow English pages to be loaded without accompanying Welsh versions. Siaradwyr Sir Fynwy are using and policing the site for us. Also the Comms Officer, WL Support Officer and Policy Officer E+WL audit on a quarterly basis to ensure the integrity of the site	Web Team, Policy Officer E+WL
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The Council's Public Face

PARAGRAPH	MEASURE	YEAR TWO TARGET	PROGRESS	RESPONSIBILITY
6.1.1	Establish a bilingual corporate identity	Review, update and re-publicise.	Corporate Identity Strategy (Branding Report) developed and in use.	Corporate Communications Team
6.1.2	Issue guidance on corporate identity	Review, update and re-publicise	Published on "The Hub"	Corporate Communications Team

6.2	Ensure new and replacement signs in public areas are bilingual and issue guidance on this	Audit and review current procedures and guidance. Re-publicise to staff.	All signage bilingual as custom and practice	Policy Officer E+WL/Property Services
6.2.5, 6.2.6	Encourage the use of Welsh name for the new developments and develop a standardised list of Welsh place-names	(a) Consult with Town/Community councils to ensure satisfaction with compiled list. (b) Create and publish a signage protocol document.	(a) Meeting held with Town and Community Councils regarding naming protocols. (b) Continue to use the standardised list of Welsh place names issued by the Welsh Language Board when advising on translation or accuracy of place name translation requests. Protocol developed and agreed with Highways and GIS officers who deal with the Land and Property Gazetteer.	Policy Officer E+WL/ Highways
6.3	Issue criteria on which documents should be bilingual	Review, update and re-publicise	As a part of the new Welsh Language Scheme an Editorial Policy was developed and published on "The Hub" as a separate document and as a part of the Welsh Language Scheme	Policy Officer E+WL
6.4.2	Issue guidance on producing forms	Review, update and re-publicise	The Welsh Language Scheme provides guidance and a link to the Welsh Language Commissioner on bilingual design. The Policy Officer E+WL and the Welsh Language Support Officer also advise departments on	Policy Officer E+WL

			bilingual design if required or requested.	
6.5.1	Issue bilingual and Welsh-language press releases where appropriate	Increase % of Welsh/bilingual press releases to 50%.	All press releases are now bilingual	Corporate Communications Team
6.6.1	Present exhibitions and displays bilingually	Raise % of Welsh exhibitions/displays to 20%.	Target reached as Policy and Performance team include the Communications team which ensure compliance.	Policy Officer E+WL/ Corporate Communications Team
6.6.2	Issue guidance on advertising and publicity	Review, update and re-publicise	The detail is all to be found in our Welsh Language scheme, Corporate Branding Guidelines and our Editorial policy.	Policy Officer E+WL/ Corporate Communications Team
6.6.3	Conduct public surveys bilingually	Conduct review of public surveys. Find % of Welsh/Bilingual surveys compared to English only.	Surveys are now carried out bilingually. The surveys are supported by the Partnership and Engagement Team who have the Policy Officer E+WL and the Welsh Language Support Officer as members to ensure compliance.	Policy Officer E+WL/Head of Partnership and Engagement/Divisional Heads

6.7.1	Produce official and public notices bilingually	Seek/compile a register of public notices. Make 30% of Welsh/bilingual notices compared to English only.	All public notices that are published on the internet are bilingual as they appear on the Council's Welsh and English sites. A meeting has been arranged between the Policy Officer E+WL, Head of Legal Services, representatives from Planning, Highways, Finance and Countryside to discuss the way ahead. Areas that need to be reviewed are notices in the press and outdoor notices.	Policy Officer E+WL/Head of Legal services, Highways, Planning, Countryside and Finance
6.7.2	Advertise for Welsh essential posts in Welsh	Current practice – advertised bilingually.	Welsh Language Scheme requires that Welsh Essential posts are advertised in Welsh only with a small explanation in English.	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL
6.7.3	Issue revised guidance on public notices and recruitment advertising	Review, update and re-publicise	A meeting with HR has confirmed the recruitment process.	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL
6.8.1	Ensure availability of language choice at Council meetings.	Audit and review procedures. Compose guidance in collaboration with the relevant officers. Add details to meeting correspondence	A Strapline inviting people to take part in meetings through the medium of Welsh is on the Council meeting official invitation notices.	Democratic Services/Policy Officer E+WL

Implementing and monitoring the scheme

PARAGRAPH	MEASURE	YEAR 2 TARGET	PROGRESS	RESPONSIBILITY
7.1.1	Develop a Welsh Linguistic Skills Strategy (WLSS)	Ensure implementation and re-publicise	Welsh Language Linguistic Skills Strategy monitored by the Corporate Equality Network (CEN)	Policy Officer E+WL
7.1.2	Establish whether there are specific posts where proficiency in Welsh is essential	Review current posts and demand via WLSS	This will be reviewed and when the standards for Monmouthshire are agreed.	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL/Heads of Service
7.1.3	Conduct surveys to establish the number of staff who speak Welsh or are learning Welsh and their location within the organisation	Review current posts and demand via WLSS	New starters recorded, and Social care staff being audited once again to gain awareness of staff skills to carry out the "Mwy na geiriau strategy"	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL/Divisions
7.1.4	Prepare strategy to address lack of Welsh speaking staff in particular service areas	Review current posts and demand via WLSS	As 7.1.2	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL/Divisions

7.2	Develop Welsh language training programme	Review current programme, implement new measures	Classes and taster courses arranged annually	Policy Officer E+WL
7.3	Consider linguistic ability when recruiting staff	Assess vacant posts for linguistic requirements	This issue has been addressed with HR and the process is in place.	Human Resources/ Policy Officer E+WL/Divisions
7.4	Encourage vocational training in Welsh language	Review and identify areas where training would be desirable	No take up as yet. Council will continue to offer.	Policy Officer E+WL / Corporate Training
7.5.2	Make Cysgliad software available to Welsh speaking staff	Collaborate with IT to assess processes/feasibility.	10 licences purchased and staff signed on to use software.	Policy Officer E+WL/SRS IT provider
7.6	Deal with complaints in Welsh	Review/Audit complaints protocols. Find % of complaints received in Welsh that are replied to in Welsh in the necessary timescale. Ensure that 100% of complaints received in Welsh are answered in Welsh/bilingually	100% of complaints received in Welsh are replied to in Welsh. 100% replied to in the necessary timescale. No complaints received in 2014-15	Corporate Customer Complaints Officer/ Policy Officer E+WL/Appropriate departmental or divisional officer

7.7.2	Prepare and submit Annual Monitoring Report to Welsh Language Board	Current practice	Annual Monitoring Report will go to Cabinet on the 15 th May and subsequently to the Welsh Language Commissioner before the 30 th June 2015	Policy Officer E+WL
8.1, 8.2, 8.3	Publicise Scheme	Current practice	Published externally on the Council's bilingual website, published internally on "The Hub" Will go to Siaradwyr Cymraeg Sir Fynwy (Welsh Speakers Network of 180 + people) and partner organisations upon final agreement by the Welsh Language Commissioner. Copy will go on Facebook and Twitter.	Policy Officer E+WL/Corporate Communications
8.4	Encourage development of Menter Iaith Initiative	Arrange bi-annual meetings between Menter BGTM and the Welsh Language Officer	The Policy Officer E+WL remains Joint Chair of the Menter Iaith and is fully on board with its continued development	Policy Officer E+WL
9	Review implementation of Scheme and targets.	Current practice	Progress reviewed regularly as part of detailed Project Plan monitoring in Performance reviews of Policy Officer E+WL by line manager. Also monitored by the Corporate Equality Network (CEN)	Policy Officer E+WL/Head of Resource and Performance Management

Welsh Language Frontline Services – Face to face service

- We have two main reception areas and 4 One Stop Shops that do not have fluent Welsh speakers (although we have one Welsh learner) but the other staff are well versed in locating the council's third party Welsh speakers when required. We do not currently have a contact centre although there are plans for a centre to be developed in the future and it has been formally agreed that two of the staff will need to be fluent Welsh speakers in order to provide adequate cover.

Management and administration of the scheme

- Governance - There are no changes to the governance and internal scrutiny of the Welsh language scheme
- Monitoring quality - The Policy Officer Equality and Welsh Language has been working closely with a Council residential home to ensure that a Welsh speaking resident with dementia is having elements of her care through the medium of Welsh under the auspices of the “Mwy na geiriau Strategy”
- Monitoring quality - The above officer also works closely with the Welsh Language Youth Worker to ensure that she has the opportunities to operate all across the Youth service.
- Contracts – road signage in relation to highways contracts are monitored to ensure that they are bilingual
- Complaints – there have been no complaints received concerning the implementation of the language scheme.

Welsh Language Skills

- Improvement of workforce skills – Cwrs Mynediad and Sylfaen training courses arranged and widespread advertising of “Say something in Welsh” course to encourage new and existing learners and those that need to refresh dormant skills.
- Human resources and skills (1) – 26 staff are being supported to learn on Cwrs Mynediad, Sylfaenand Uwchradd and 50 have started “Say something in Welsh”
- Human resources and skills (2) – 18 members of staff attended a two day taster course with Coleg Gwent.

MCC Welsh Language speakers – not including school based staff

Linguistic ability-

Rhugl/Uwchradd/Canolradd/Sylfaen/Mynediad

DNC

Did not
complete

Name	Dept	Location	Ability	Course/area raised	Qualif Grade
David Barnes	Partnership + Engagement	Coed Glas	Rhugl	Gwynllyw	B/B
Leigh Beach	Licensing	Melville Theatre	Rhugl	Gwynllyw	
Alan Burkitt	Partnership + Engagement	Usk	Rhugl	WLPAN/ GCSE & A Level	A/A (2nd lang)
Mark S Davies	Architects	Magor	Rhugl		
Ted Davies	Refuse Collector	Abergavenny	Rhugl	Dosbarth Nos	Pass
Megan De Silva	Aber/Chep/ Mon Museums	Chepstow Museum	Rhugl	Gogledd	
Jaime Evans	Action for Children	SLA S/Care	Rhugl	Ysgol Cwm Rhymni	
Ioan Gealy	Legal	Usk	Rhugl	Aberystwyth	
Hywel Griffiths	Social Services	Tudor St	Rhugl	Ysgol Cwm Rhymni	
Lee Godwin	IT (SRS)	Blaenafon	Rhugl	Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw	
David Jones	Councillor	Crucornau	Rhugl	Penrhyncoch	
Sarah McGuinness	CYP	Usk	Rhugl	Cwm Rhymni	
Bethan North	CYP/Healthy schools	Usk	Rhugl	First language speaker	
Mike Richardson	Environmental Health	Monmouth	Rhugl	Aberdyfi/Caerfyrddin	
Siân Sexton	Training Manager	Magor	Rhugl		
Pete Tamlyn	Social Services	Severn View	Rhugl	Abertawe	
Alun Thomas	Environmental Health	Monmouth	Rhugl	Caerfyrddin	
Jill Thomas	Human Resources	Magor	Rhugl	Castell Newydd Emlyn	B/E
Alun Thomas	Social Services	Home Care Aber	Rhugl		GCSE
Roma Zdbeilo	Youth Services	??	Rhugl		
Elen McElroy	Social services	Mental Health	Rhugl	Hywel Dda Res Centre	Chepstow
Liana Cox	Social Services	Student	Rhugl	Student 2 years 1/10/14	07548 918822
Carol Ann Young	Youth services	Face 2 Face	Rhugl	Mounton House	07723 422358
Beth Oram	Youth Services		Rhugl	Mounton House	
Jacalyn Richards	Social Services	Youth Offending	Rhugl		
Claire Jones	CYP	SPLD	Rhugl		
Adrian Woods	Leisure		Rhugl	Cwrs Mynediad - Uwch	studying
Arwel Rowlands	Social Services	Mardy Park	Rhugl		Llanrhug Gwynedd
Carys Twist	Social Services	Budden Cres	Rhugl		

Angharad Reed	CYP	Magor	Rhugl	Sir Gâr	
Simon Burch	Social Services	Magor	Uwchradd		
Liz Williams	Finance	Magor	Uwchradd	Cwrs Mynediad - Uwch	studying
Guy Delamere	Regeneration	Usk	Uwchradd	Cwrs Mynediad - Uwch	
Wayne Moriarty	Social Services	Severn View	Uwchradd	07736 004113	
Morag Sinton	Planning Countryside	Usk	Uwchradd	Cwrs Uwch 2	studying
Sarah Keogh	Social Services	Home Care Aber	Canolradd	GCSE higher tier	
Heather Heaney	Social Services	Safeguarding	Canolradd	Lefel A/Uwch/Maestrioli	
John Davies	Property Services	Magor	Sylfaen	Rhydaman	
Sharon Randall Smith	CYP	Magor	Sylfaen	Diploma in Welsh	
Dewi Jones	Communications	Magor	Canolradd		
Carolyn Derosaire	Road Safety Officer	Raglan Depot	Canolradd	Cwrs Mynediad/Lefel O	
Dan Davies	Events Officer	Usk	Sylfaen	Lefel A	A
Clare Morgan	Social Services	Maindiff Court	Sylfaen	OCN x4/WJEC entry/foundation	
Mark Langley	Planning	Countryside	Canolradd	Lefel O	
Lisa Roberts	Resources	Raglan Depot	Sylfaen	Cwrs Mynediad/ Sylfaen	
Tracey Finnis	Housing		Sylfaen	Cwrs Mynediad x 3	
Leanne Jones	Social Services S/Worker	Fostering	Sylfaen	Cwrs Sylfaen	studying
Cllr Sara Jones	Councillor	Llanover	Sylfaen	WLPAN 1	
Janet Phillips	Highways	Raglan Depot	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad 2 years	
Lindsay Gauntlet	Highways and Waste	?	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad 2 years	Studying Sylfaen
Angela Guest	Sundry Debtors	Magor	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad 2 years	
Roger Joy	Street lighting	Pontypool	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad Yr 1 x 2	
Cllr Giles Howard	Councillor Gilwern/Llanelli Hill	Magor	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad/ T Training	
Debra Hill-Howells	Estates	Magor	Mynediad	GCSE pass/Cwrs Myned	studying parents course
Rachael Rogers	Curator	Abergav Castle	Mynediad	Sylfaen pass - 5 years study	
Julie Taylor	Castle custodian	Abergavenny	Mynediad		
Simone Teunissen	Economic Development	Aventa	Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	
Alison Nowell	Receptionist	Magor	Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos 2 years	
Rhian Cook	Project Support Officer	Coed Glas	Mynediad	Cymraeg I'r teulu	
Tracey Thomas	Youth Services Manager	Magor	Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos complete	
Cllr Linda Guppy	Councillor	Caldicot	Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos	
Cllr Maureen Powell	Councillor	Abergavenny	Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos	
Hazel Ilett	Scrutiny Officer	Usk	Mynediad	WLPAN (DNC)/Cwrs Mynediad	
Rob Tranter	Head of Legal Services	Usk	Mynediad	DAB BG	

Peter Mullen	Highways	Raglan Depot		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	
Paul Keeble	Highways	Magor		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	
Jess Roberts	Comms	Usk		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	
Amy Gullick	Democracy + Performance	Usk		Mynediad	GCSE C	
Tudor Baldwin	Legal	Usk		Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos 2 years	
Linda Watkins	Legal	Usk		Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos 2 years	
Steve Beard	Social Services			Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	
Carol Phillips	Social Services	May		Mynediad	Newport Trainee s/worker	
Sacha Brown	Social Services	Chepstow		Mynediad	Trainee s/worker	
Alis Bedell	Social Services	Abergavenny		Mynediad	School 10 years ago	
	Cwrs Mynediad Year 2					
Helen Nevill	Social Services	Magor		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad 1 - 15	studying
Sandra Wood	Social Services			Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	studying
Liz Thomas	CMC2	Magor		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	studying
Louise McGuinness	Aventa			Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	studying
Jo Collett	Social Services	Youth Offending		Mynediad	Cwrs Mynediad	studying
	Cwrs Mynediad Year 1					
Bridget Barnet	Part + Engagement	Usk		Mynediad		
Kirstin Major	Part + Engagement	Usk		Mynediad	School	
Alison Howard	Sustainability	Magor		Mynediad		
Julie Edwards	CYP	Magor		Mynediad		
Richard Garner	Countryside	Magor		Mynediad		
Donna Williams	Planning	Usk		Mynediad		
Samantha Ravenshill	Supporting People	Magor		Mynediad		
Annie Bartlett	Legal Services	Usk		Mynediad	Dosbarth Nos 2 years	
Ann Jones	Library services	?		Mynediad		
Cheryl Haskell	Social services	Budden Cres		Mynediad		
Carolyn Jones	CYP	Peripatetic		Mynediad		
Leigh Tomala	CYP	Home tutor		Mynediad		
Aleksander Szwagrazak	CYP	St Marys Chep		Mynediad		
Karen McCorriston	Mon/Torf YOT	Pontypool		Mynediad		
Olive Dicks	Social Services	Chepstow		Mynediad		
	2 Day taster course	19th + 25th June 2013				
Julie Edwards	Arch Rowan Williams	Caldicot		2day taster		
Richard Wellington	Parking warden	Abergavenny		2day taster		
Amelia Wheatstone	Partnership + Engagement	Usk		2day taster		
Owain Jones	Partnership + Engagement	Usk		2day taster		
Amy Elliott	Partnership + Engagement	Usk		2day taster		

Geraint Spacey	Youth Offending	Mamhilad	2day taster	
Jo Collet	Youth offending	Mamhilad	2day taster	
Andrea Williams	Youth Offending	Mamhilad	2day taster	
Pete Mullen	Highways	Raglan Depot	2day taster	
Nicola Taylor	Budden Cres	Caldicot	2day taster	
Wendy Mustow	Highways	Raglan Depot	2day taster	
Sue Dryburgh	Social Services	Magor	2day taster	
Helen Dodds	Tourism	Tintern Station	2day taster	
Rebecca Hollis	Tourism	Tintern Station	2day taster	
Yvonne Davies	Tourism	Tintern Station	2day taster	
Paul Keeble	Highways	Raglan Depot	2day taster	
Debbie Blakebrough	Councillor	Trellech United	2day taster	
Jo Goodwin	Communications	Usk	2day taster	
	2 day taster course	4th + 11th June 2014		
Carolyn Jones	SPLD		2 day taster	
Claire Lewis	Public Health + Culture	Chepstow Library	2 day taster	
Gareth Hayward	Customer service OSS	Monmouth	2 day taster	
Richard Garner	Rights of Way	County Hall	2 day taster	
Sally Ann James	Insurance	Magor	2 day taster	
Stacey Harris	Highways	County Hall	2 day taster	
Karen Roberts	Secretary	Chepstow Comp	2 day taster	
Jason Jones	Care Worker	Severn View	2 day taster	
Fran Baldwin	Care Worker	Severn View	2 day taster	
Sally Davies	Care Worker	Severn View	2 day taster	
Annie Bartlett	Legal - searches	County Hall	2 day taster	
Isobel Roberts		Boverton House	2 day taster	
Bridget Barnett	50+ Co-ordinator	County Hall	2 day taster	
Andrew Mason	CCTV	County Hall	2 day taster	
Angela Noble	Schools Literacy		2 day taster	
Karen McConniston	Youth Offending service		2 day taster	
Pennie Walker	SEWREC	Newport	2 day taster	
Say Something in Welsh Pilot				
Val Tamlyn	Maerdy Parc	Abergavenny		
Steven Clarke	Maerdy Parc	Abergavenny		
Mike Jones	Highways	Usk		
Tom James	Part + Engagement	Abergavenny		
Amy Elliot	Transport	Raglan		

Becky Pritchard	Transport	Raglan			
Ian Saunders	Leisure				
Dave Jones	Environmental Health	Abergavenny			
Jill Thomas	H/R	Magor			
Heather Heaney	CYP	Magor			
Tracey Thomas	Youth Services	Gilwern			
Alison Nowell	Reception	Magor/Usk			
Dan Davies	Corporate services	Usk			
Bernard Boniface	Social services	Monmouth			
Steve Beard	Social services	Monmouth			
Matt Gatehouse	Performance	Usk			
Rachel Rawlings	Area sevices	Abergavenny			
Ali Page	Maerdy Parc	Abergavenny			
Julie Fry	Severn View	Chepstow			
Richard Garner	Countryside	Usk			
Youth services	30 members of staff				

Performance analysis

Identify risks for next year

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 will be a significant risk to this council due to

1. its range and depth of requirements for compliance
2. The potential reasonableness and proportionality of some of the proposed standards recommended for Monmouthshire
3. The limited number of Welsh speakers currently employed by the Council to cope with potential demand
4. A shortage of Welsh speakers in key front line roles. We do have a third party system of Welsh speakers that can mitigate this.
5. Difficulty in attracting appropriately qualified Welsh speaking officers to this part of Wales
6. The potential attitude of some of the Monmouthshire public to the new Welsh Language Measure
7. The Eisteddfod Genedlaethol is coming to Monmouthshire in 2016 and the increased demands brought about as a result of this may present a challenge.
8. The financial situation faced by the Council will make it increasingly difficult to mitigate some of these potential risks.

Priorities for next year

1. Ensure that the whole Council is aware of the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and that the structures and systems are in place to ensure compliance.
2. A great many of the requirements of the Measure are already being carried out but not consistently. One of the challenges and priorities will be to ensure compliance across all directorates in the prescribed timescales.
3. To work closely with the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol to ensure that it will be a festival to remember.
4. To demonstrate that there is a genuine support from within the Council for the promotion of the Welsh Language and culture which is already such an integral part of this unique County.
5. Increase the number of Welsh speakers employed in key front line roles.
6. Ensure the integrity of the Website through regular audits.

Evidence of good practice

- A Pilot of the Caldicot Comprehensive model of Welsh Club is to be run in 3 other comps – Welsh Bacc 6th form Welsh A level students are to be supported by Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw students and the Menter Iaith
- Youth Services have appointed a dedicated Welsh Language Youth worker – Sept 2014
- WESP (Welsh Lang Forum) re-established by the Council
- Leisure services publicity etc now all bilingual
- All Adult Education notices translated into Welsh
- An audit was undertaken on the website to ensure that any issues were ironed out
- 20 members of staff attended a 2 day in Welsh Language taster session June 2014
- Welsh Language Training for staff caring for elderly lady with dementia under the “Mwy na geiriau” Strategy
- “Say something in Welsh” Pilot commenced with 50 members of staff signed up - October 2014
- 18 members of staff attended Cwrs Mynediad 1 and 7 Cwrs Mynediad 2
- “Diwrnod Shwmae” was actively supported by the Council with activities in the two main offices – Usk and Magor
- A death was registered upon the request of the family at Nevill Hall Hospital Abergavenny entirely through the medium of Welsh for a resident of Monmouthshire

Summary of Welsh Language Work carried out by the Monmouthshire Youth Service

Social media contact: Facebook and Twitter. Facebook contact is minimal, however it is still a platform to spread a message. The greatest strength with the Welsh language feeds are Twitter. Having started analysing the Twitter feed since mid-February 2015, we are able to reach to communities within Monmouthshire and those outside as well as other Welsh speaking communities/organisations worldwide. During an 18-day period in February 2015, @MYS_Cymraeg had 3.2 thousand impressions. This has been climbing throughout March 2015 and has risen to 10.3 thousand impressions (in a 28-day period). More young people and their families are connecting with us through the feeds as well as other Welsh organisations and movements, so the Welsh feeds are essentially 'socially networking' online. Monmouthshire County Council are also following and retweeting some comments, so we are able to reach the necessary audience through them.

Christmas Card Competition: This was one of the first Welsh projects and encouraged competitors to use Welsh. There were only a few entries (5), mostly from junior groups, however those that did enter embraced the essence of the competition. Supporting staff: Aneirin Jones

Clwb Cinio Cymraeg: After consulting with the Head of Welsh at King Henry VIII School, Rhian Dickenson, we both decided it would be worth trialling a dinner time club. Unfortunately there was not enough interest. The number of attendees for each week were: Week 1 – 0; Week 2 – 5; Week 3 – 0. After consulting with the Head of Welsh, we agreed that it would be worth trying something new in September. Supporting staff: Rhiannon Taylor, Steve Caswell, Rhian Dickenson (KHS)

Santes Dwywnen: This was a two session event. Working with the Inclusive Club, we made salt dough decorations and painted them. This was a positive activity and the young people responded very well. There were approximately 6/7 participants. Supporting staff: Rebecca Kent, Rhiannon Taylor, Laurie? (Volunteer)

Contact with E2C regarding Welsh provision in the area: The overall response was very negative with young people not displaying an interest in the Welsh language nor its culture. They could not see any relevance to them or how it could help them in the future. Supporting staff: Aneurin Jones, Gavin Breen, Charlie-Jade Atkins

Dathliadau Dewi Sant: This was a one-off event that was very successful. There were entries from all over the county in both senior and junior categories. Due to the success of this event, it would be possible to hold something similar again and has potential to move around the county. There were 10 entries and approximately 15 young people came to Abergavenny Youth Centre to support the event. Supporting Staff: Centre staff across the county, Eleri Carrington (Menter Iaith BGTM), Alan Burkitt (MCC).

Welsh Language Toolkit: I am currently working on a toolkit of activities and competition ideas that other members of the Youth Service can use. Essentially a Welsh 'go to' toolkit. This also includes ready-to-use presentations suitable for young people about the impending Proclamation Ceremony and Eisteddfod which is coming to Monmouthshire and District in 2016.

What has worked well over the last 12 months?

Competitions; one off events; activities which have a cultural focus.

What have the challenges been in the last 12 months and how have you overcome them?

The obvious challenge within the Monmouthshire area is its linguistic nature. This also means that demand is not obvious, so a different approach has been adopted. As cultural events are well received, there needs to be emphasis targeting young people through this channel.

Developing interest and motivating young people seems to be a general challenge. Many young people are openly uninterested in Welsh language and culture in Monmouthshire.

Lack of knowledge amongst staff. However, many have started to ask questions and have shown an interest. This is not going to be an over-night process, but this querying is a good start.

