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County Hall
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NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 10 November 2021

Notice of meeting

Strong Communities Select Committee

Thursday, 18th November, 2021 at 10.00 am,
County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
PART A: SCRUTINY AND CRIME DISORDER MATTERS		
No matters to discuss.		
PART B STRONG COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE		
1.	Apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Public Open Forum. Select Committee Public Open Forum ~ Guidance Our Select Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to share your thoughts on any proposals being discussed by Select Committees, you can submit your representation via this form Please share your views by uploading a video or audio file (maximum of 4 minutes) or; Please submit a written representation (via Microsoft Word, maximum of 500 words)	

You will need to register for a [My Monmouthshire account](#) in order to submit the representation or use your log in, if you have registered previously.

The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

If representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the Select Committee meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Select Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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|------------|---|-----------|
| 4. | Public Protection 2020/21 Performance Report & Division's response to the Coronavirus pandemic | 1 - 34 |
| | To consider the performance report for the service. | |
| 5. | Strategic Equality Plan | 35 - 72 |
| | Scrutiny of the Annual Monitoring Report 2020-2021. | |
| 6. | To confirm minutes of the previous meeting | To Follow |
| 7. | Action list | |
| 8. | Strong Communities forward work programme | 73 - 74 |
| 9. | Cabinet & Council forward work programme | 75 - 92 |
| 10. | Date and time of next meeting | |

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Peter Clarke	Llangybi Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Tony Eason	Dewstow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Christopher Edwards	St. Kingsmark;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Linda Guppy	Rogiet;	Liberal Democrats
County Councillor Roger Harris	Croesonen;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Val Smith	Llanbadoc;	Independent Group
County Councillor Jamie Treharne	Overmonnow;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Ann Webb	St Arvans;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Sheila Woodhouse	Grofield;	Welsh Conservative Party

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Welsh Language

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Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Committee Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role?
3. What outcome do Members want to achieve?
4. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?
5. Discuss the committee's approach:
 - Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
 - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works?
6. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
7. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
8. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated.

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

(iii) Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

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SUBJECT:	PUBLIC PROTECTION 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT & Division's response to the Coronavirus pandemic
MEETING:	Special Strong Communities Select Committee
DATE:	18th November 2021
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To undertake scrutiny of service delivery across Public Protection services for the financial year 2020/21, with comparison to previous years. The Public Protection division comprises of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Animal Health and Licensing.
- 1.2 To recognise the emphasis on dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic over last 18 months, as a concerted public health response, and how this has impacted on the day-to-day work of Public Protection Services.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the attached report – Appendix One - entitled 'Public Protection Performance Report 2020/21'.
- 2.2 Members understand how the Division's service priorities have had to be rapidly reassessed in response to the on-going Coronavirus pandemic. An addendum report, Appendix Two, specifically outlines the types of work Officers have been engaged in since April 2020, in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. As there is some recovery to return to 'business as usual', determined by the longevity of the need to control the spread of the virus remaining a national public health priority, Officers welcome Members views on priority areas going forward. Members to consider whether they would like to scrutinise a specific area of Public Protection work in 2022/23.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In January 2015 Cabinet requested that Public Protection performance was reviewed regularly by this Committee to assess any negative impacts. Initially six-monthly reports were provided to Strong Communities Select committee, but for the last two years this has been presented annually as agreed in 2019.
- 3.2 The attached report, Appendix One, summarises performance for the twelve month period of 2020/21, and highlights the following -
 - The four service teams have been diverted from normal service delivery by the need to respond to the on-going pandemic. Where services have been maintained, often physical

visits have been replaced by virtual meetings and resolving problems remotely. All service requests have continued to be risk assessed and physical visits made when deemed essential, eg. to respond to a complaint from a vulnerable housing tenant, and checking compliance with Covid Regulations when national restrictions were in place. Such activity cannot be undertaken remotely.

- As detailed in Appendix One, reactive work has continued with some noticeable increases in demand. Two examples – statutory nuisance complaints rose from 471 19/20 to 602 20/21, representing a 28% increase; Trading Standards experienced an increase from 547 advice/complaint inquiries in 19/20 to 1,018 in 20/21, a 86% rise.
- Due to the focus on reactive responses, inevitably there was slippage in our proactive activity – note drop in food safety inspections, housing visits, private water inspections and animal health visits.
- External Governing Bodies will be aware of Public Protection’s prioritisation of the response to Covid, including Commercial EH staff being almost entirely diverted to Track and Trace and investigating clusters in schools, care homes, local workplaces, etc. Senior Leadership are fully aware of the service’s switch in prioritisation over the last 18 months, so we will be able to provide a robust response to any Governing Body queries on why proactive activities have dropped so significantly.
- Annual reports will continue to be made to this Committee to assess performance over time, and help inform future priorities noting the competing demands. Officers will endeavour to bring the 21/22 annual report before this Committee earlier in 2022, preferably May or June 2022.
- Services may struggle to take on any new statutory duties that protect the public and the environment, and therefore funding must be sought to support any new work.
- Future strategies for sustaining Public Protection services will be developed, (to include further income generation and collaboration), locally, regionally and nationally.
- A budget pressure mandate has been submitted within the Authority to secure further Public Protection funding from April 2022. This will go through corporate procedures and progress via the Council’s new budget pressures process in readiness for 2022/23.
- Services will improve linkages to the Authority’s Corporate Business Plan 2017/22 and other key drivers, for example the Chief Medical Officer Wales’ priorities.

3.3 Appendix Two outlines some specific actions in direct response to the pandemic. It also provides a comparison of six months performance across 3 time periods –

1st April to 30th September 2019, pre-pandemic

1st April to 30th September 2020, first six months of pandemic

1st April to 30th September 2021, 12 to 18 months later

Officers across the Division have provided timely and professional advice to all enquirers on how to protect themselves, others in their settings (for example schools and workplaces), and their customers. Keeping up with the various Welsh Government guidance, both generic and service specific, has been challenging and Officers have done well in reducing viral spread whenever possible.

4. REASONS:

4.1 The Cabinet decision log from 7th January 2015 stated:- 'Noting the continually changing legislative landscape in the future, it was decided Strong Communities Select Committee would receive six monthly performance reports on Public Protection services'. As stated in 3.1, it was agreed in 2019 to report annually to allow Members to scrutinise performance across the Division.

4.2 It is important Members are aware how typical Public Protection services have been affected by the pandemic.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None as a consequence of this report.

6. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS, (incorporating Equalities, Sustainability, safeguarding and corporate parenting).

Assessments were previously completed for the Cabinet report 7th January, 2015. This report serves to update the position in relation to performance, and therefore does not require a further assessment.

7. CONSULTEES:

Public Protection service managers (& contributors)
Chief Officer, Social Care, Safeguarding & Health

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Report to Cabinet, 7th January 2015, entitled 'Review of Service Delivery in Public Protection Department'.

9. AUTHOR:

David H Jones, Head of Public Protection

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644100 **E-mail:** davidjones3@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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REPORT TO STRONG COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE**PUBLIC PROTECTION COVID RELATED RESPONSE to 30th SEPTEMBER 2021****(1) Environmental Health – Commercial**

Work streams for Commercial team during pandemic	Initial workload	Ongoing
Commercial work moved towards being more reactive than proactive, noting surge in inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early reactive work to pick up complaints of social distancing and open premises • Advising on changing business types and diversifying for business to remain open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All service requests continue to be dealt with • Higher risk food safety visits slowly being resumed from October 2021
Contact Tracing (TTP)	Setting up a tracing service from scratch, working with Health partners & 4 LA's in Gwent Setting up working procedures for all tracers and advisors in TTP service Initially entire Commercial EHP's, with some from the other 3 PP teams	Getting capacity right for current number of Covid-19 cases, contacts of those cases, and ensuring balance right in team for winter/spring 2021/22 Various update training, scripts for telephone service, data management, reports to WG, etc. Challenge in providing a 77 hour a week service, 9am to 8pm, 7 days a week
Key workers accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting all know holiday accommodation providers, informing of requirements of closing and availability of business grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with others to get list of premises taking key workers • Setting up procedure, protocol and templates for approval – sharing with Gwent LA's
Legionella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers attended on-line training on risks of legionella from water systems in premises that have closed. • Identification from database of all premises that will be affected and need to carry out safety procedure before opening up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting all premises to advise of risk of legionella in water systems through e mail, phone contact, social media – this is virtually every premises that has water on premises • Respond to enquiries received
Business grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All businesses recorded on data base contacted via e mail (707 identified) on availability of grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to call backs for advice and signposted to Enterprise section
Care Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New admissions guidance and working with PHW to raise awareness in care homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closely working with Commissioning Officers in SCH • Regular Q and A sessions set up on Teams with care home providers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Officers up to speed on guidance and attend on-line training from PHW • Information sent out to Commissioning (SCH) Officers • Regular contacts set up with care homes • Liaison re PPE provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular contact with care home providers • Investigation of all cases and contacts • Liaison with PHW/ABHB on cases in different closed settings (including assisted living and private hospitals)
Domiciliary Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold meeting with a number of Dom care agencies providing advice on PPE with SCH Commissioning Officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EHO contacts send to Dom care agencies for support • Providers forum attended by officers to answer questions
Diversification of businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses that had to close turned to delivery of meals and/or fruit and veg takeaway service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses have now reopened, guidance and advice provided on Covid risk assessments and 'reasonable measures'

Service Request type	1st April to 30th September 2019 – pre pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2020 – start of pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2021 - 12 to 18 months later
Food	401	229	236
Health, Safety & Welfare	59	66	52
Covid	0	558	324
Misc. inc. events & TEN's	349	53	104
Other	76	12	93
Total	885	918	819

The global pandemic has had an unimaginable effect on the operation of the team. Communicable disease control for the county sits within the team but we are also responsible for the enforcement of the WG Covid-19 regulations. The implementation, resourcing, structuring, training and running the Track & Trace team in Monmouthshire has taken massive effort. At its' height we had 87 staff added to a team of 9. The Commercial EH response has been recognised by PHW and ABUHB partners, together with excellent feedback from recipients of the T&T service, which is a huge credit to the team. The pandemic continues and Officers are still fully involved in T&T work and responding to identified clusters in a range of settings.

Due to the pressures on the team unfortunately the 21/22 business plan for the year was only started in October. The team has been down to 30% capacity at times during 2021 due to unavoidable sickness. Officer sickness absence was below 20 days last year, but since April this year it has amounted to 273 days. This has had an enormous impact on any recovery or normal statutory work, due to minimal staff needing to deal with the Covid response in schools and care homes, and creating significant strain on remaining Officers.

From Sept 20 –Sept 21 1,741 service requests were recorded of which 951 were Covid related, (prior to Covid around 1,400 pa.). However, it is estimated that only a third of Covid service request were actually recorded on the system so the figure could easily be nearer 2,500. Currently 2 out of the 4 Officers available in the team are on care sector work continuously.

To get back on track, methods of carrying out block inspections, taking into account risk and service request demand, are being planned.

Any inspections that the team have managed to carry out have had to have follow up enforcement action in far greater frequency than prior to the pandemic, adding to existing workloads. It is estimated that 80% of hygiene visits now need follow up enforcement action.

(2) Environmental Health – Public Health

The reactive work undertaken by the team has continued throughout the pandemic. As previously reported, the early stages of Q1 and Q2 20/21 saw an increase in some areas of work. These have been maintained in 21/22 in the noise, fly tipping areas and the recent trend of year on year increase in overall service requests continues, as illustrated below:

Comparison of service requests 1st April to 30th September 2021 with same period 2020

Service Request Type	1st April to 30th September 2019 – pre Pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2020 - start of Pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2021 - 12 to 18 months later
Noise nuisance complaints	197	252	266
Smoke nuisance complaints	41	113	47
Fly tipping	110	187	213
Rats and mice	38	70	56
Total service requests types	1018	1231	1284

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The easing of the movement restrictions has enabled the team to catch up on certain aspects of work such as the annual inspection programme of our industrial/commercial permitted sites and petroleum sites.

The 3 month public consultation on a proposed Public Spaces Protection Order for dog controls (dog fouling, dogs on leads and dog exemption areas), endorsed by Strong Communities Select on the 12th March 2020, was suspended in 2020 because of the pandemic. However the consultation commenced on the 26th July 2021. Over 1300 completed surveys have been returned and these will help inform a further report to this Committee early 2022.

Workload remains very high and the team has not been able to commit time to recover lost ground in other proactive areas. These include private water supply investigations, inspections of potentially high risk residential accommodation situated above fast food outlets and our inspection programme of the 18 licensed holiday caravan sites in the County.

In June 2021 the team was successful in recruiting an EHO to fill a temporary post. The new recruit, however, has been providing a leading role for the authority in Track & Trace throughout the pandemic and has had to continue with these duties because of the continuing high Covid numbers.

(3) Licensing

The Licensing team has strived to keep businesses running throughout this difficult time. Guidance was provided to the trade immediately on receipt from Welsh Government via e-mails and website updates. Licensing continues to play an active part in Monmouthshire's Business Forum and Re-Opening Town Centre projects, with the aim of keeping businesses as successful as possible during a pandemic.

This year the hospitality sector had to deal with a number of changes and adapt quickly in order to keep their businesses viable. Licensing played an active part in giving advice through every stage through bulletins and visits to ensure each premises was clear in how they should keep their staff and public safe. The team have worked closely with our partners in Gwent Police, visiting not only the hospitality sector such as restaurants, pubs and clubs but also shops and takeaways. The hospitality sector had 3 legislative changes content with since April. Initially permission was granted to open outdoors and Licensing worked with Highways as a consultee for pavement licensing, providing guidance on safe measures to put in place such as screens and sanitisers. In May 2021 they were able to open indoors with live music, although discos were not permitted noting it would encourage dancing. Again advice and visits were made to ensure social distancing measures, face masks being worn, table service and screens were in place. The third change during this period was in August when Wales changed to Alert Level zero (AL0) lifting most restrictions. This sector still had to carry out a risk assessment on the 'reasonable measures' they would put in place to prevent the spread of Covid. Licensing attended Pubwatch meetings to encourage good practice during the on-going pandemic.

Many events returned after AL0 and the team guided event organisers to ensure safe working, correct licensing permissions were in place and they had a robust Covid risk assessment. Licensing worked with 30 event organisers that included the Shire horse show, Balter Festival, Abergavenny food festival and the Usk show. Not all events that would normally take place occurred in 2021, but they are likely to return again next year.

As well as working hard to assist people at such difficult times, the team had to continue issuing licences and check on compliance. A number of businesses changed the way they operated and varied their licence to accommodate this. The team dealt with 18 night time economy premises that required action dealing with breach of licence conditions, anti-social behaviour, noise issues and drug taking at some venues.

The taxi trade were able to continue during the pandemic, but they too had to ensure face coverings were worn by both drivers and passengers. Advice was given by Licensing on sanitisation and wiping down of hard surfaces such as door handles that passengers would touch after every journey. We put a policy in place to ensure that should a screen be fitted in a vehicle it met with safety standards in the case of a collision. It was recognised that the classroom environment for safeguarding training and knowledge test, a requirement to get a drivers licence, would no longer be possible, so on-line training and testing was provided. This was gratefully received by the taxi trade and will be retained going forward.

A comparison of 'service requests' and 'inspections' for the six month periods indicated is provided below –

	1st April to 30th September 2019 - pre-pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2020 - start of pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2021 12 to 18 months later
Service Requests	456	340	406
Covid Service Requests	0	130	98
Routine inspections	112	4	18
Covid Inspections	0	56	144

(4) Trading Standards and Animal Health

Our Trading Standards and Animal Health service has maintained its' key functions including responding to consumer issues especially where victims are vulnerable, or the issue is high risk such as scams/fraud, product safety or animal disease control.

Complaints and enquiries for the six month period 1st April to 30th September have seen a decrease from the same period as last year, as 2020 was the period where Covid enquiries from businesses were at their highest -

	1st April to 30th September 2019 Pre Pandemic	1st April to 30th September 2020 start of Pandemic	1/04/2021 – 30/09/2021 12 to 18 months later
Complaints/Enquiries	365	588	463

Protecting vulnerable residents, and prioritising high risk/harm issues - Several Coronavirus related scams, frauds and trading malpractices were identified either locally or elsewhere in the country.

Business advice e.g. supply chain issues, compliance, product safety etc.- This pandemic is affecting businesses very differently depending on their trade and has led to a number of approaches for advice.

Product safety, animal health, ongoing criminal cases and investigations - Several areas of work have continued to ensure the ongoing safety of people and animals. It would also be inappropriate to pull away from work to investigate and prosecute criminal offences as this might further encourage criminals as they feel they can 'get away with' crimes.

Due to the typically negative effect on businesses, many have diversified into products they do not normally manufacture or import, without due regard to PPE or biocidal controls that apply. For example, intelligence received resulted in hand sanitiser being sampled and submitted for analysis. This showed that the product did not provide the level of protection claimed putting users unknowingly at unnecessary risk. This led to a further six

products being submitted for analysis and, whilst the levels of alcohol were above the minimum required to be effective, all products had either warning, other labelling issues or were misleading in their description.

Examples of Coronavirus related scams –

Here are just some of the scams we are aware of, but it must be noted that fraudsters come in all forms and can contact residents or businesses at the door, by phone, post or online.

- People offering miracle cures for coronavirus – there is no specific treatment for coronavirus (Covid-19).
- The council DO NOT need to enter houses to do a deep clean
- Bogus healthcare workers claiming to be offering ‘home-testing’ for coronavirus
- Emails claiming that you can get a refund on taxes, utilities or similar are usually bogus and they are just after your personal and bank details.
- Fake products that say they can protect you or cure coronavirus. These will not help and are designed to just take your money
- New mobile phone apps that claim to give you updates on the virus, instead they lock your phone and demand a ransom
- People offering to do your shopping and ask for money upfront and then disappear

Page 11 One incident included a lady in her 80’s who, despite self-isolating, was compelled to answer the door by a stranger who tried to demand £220 in cash to complete a health and safety check. The team have experienced complaints of fraudsters trying to steal people’s bank details by misleading families into believing they need to cover payments for school meals whilst the schools are closed, or business details being altered in order to obtain Government support funding by deception through multiple submission of false claims.

In addition the team have supported Environmental Health colleagues by allocating two Officers to support the Track & Trace effort during its’ peak, and responding to non-food/non-licensed premises for any Covid related enquiries.

Work unable to be delivered to date has included Minimum Unit Price inspections which would have brought in close to £5,000 in total, also the feed delivery work has been delayed. It is hoped that this will still be delivered by the end of March 2022 but additional opportunities to generate income though will have been missed due to lack of capacity. This also puts additional pressure on resources required to sustain existing capacity.

Animal Health and Welfare

Animal Health have continued to operate and deal with ongoing investigations and complaints despite the pandemic. Whilst there were some initial reductions in attendance at market, it was soon encouraged by Welsh Government as intelligence showed an increase in welfare problems both at market and in animals arriving at slaughter during that early period.

Most significantly was an ongoing farm welfare problem that resulted in the need to seize 128 cattle. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, there was a significant delay in the Court system and so the Order Hearing was unavoidably delayed for several months, now concluded. The associated prosecution was successfully concluded in June this year – guilty pleas were eventually entered for 12 charges and the sentence handed down was

12 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 2 years. Disqualified for holding cattle for 10 years, costs £5,239 to be paid within three months (collection order) and victim support of £122.

Following the execution of a warrant on an unlicensed dog breeder, a dog and her 8 puppies and two older puppies were taken into possession under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. A pre-trial agreement was reached for all the puppies to be signed over for rehoming and the mother returned but on the agreement that she would be neutered. All puppies were successfully rehomed with considerable costs of the operation recovered.

The Trading Standards Wales Dog Breeding Project, being led by Monmouthshire, underpins the delivery of some of the actions identified in the Animal Welfare Plan for Wales due to be launched this month. It will challenge illegal dog breeding, offer support to local authority animal health services to respond to assertions of animal cruelty and will allow local authorities some capacity to focus on wider animal health and welfare work. This is another example of local authorities turning policy aspirations into action and delivering much needed support and change.

REPORT TO STRONG COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

18th November 2021

PUBLIC PROTECTION 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2015 Cabinet requested that Strong Communities Select Committee receive six monthly performance reports on Public Protection services. Members wished to review the impact on performance of budget reductions implemented since April 2014. For the last few years Public Protection performance has been brought to this Committee for scrutiny annually, as previously agreed.
- 1.2 The Public Protection division comprises four distinct teams -
- (i) Environmental Health, Commercial
 - (ii) Environmental Health, Public Health
 - (iii) Licensing
 - (iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of Public Protection services can be summarised as follows –
- a. Protect people from harm and promote health improvement.
 - b. Promote a fair and just trading environment for the public and businesses.
 - c. Improve the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability.
 - d. Ensure the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise risk to human and animal health.

2.2 These four outcomes contribute to Wales' seven well-being goals. They directly help achieve a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. It also resonates with this Council's Corporate Business Plan 2017/22, approved in February 2018, which sets out our priorities under the current administration to 2022.

3. **RESOURCES**

3.1 **Staff resource**

(i) Environmental Health – Commercial:-

- 5 Environmental Health Officers (1 FTE has been seconded to TTP since Sept 20), 4.8 FTE's (Full Time Equivalents)
- 2 Commercial Services Officers, 1.6 FTE's
- 1 Systems Administrator, 1 FTE

(ii) Environmental Health – Public Health:-

- 5 Environmental Health Officers, 5 FTE's
- 2 Enforcement Officers, 1.6 FTE's

(iii) Licensing:-

- 5 Licensing Officers, 4 FTE's

(iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health:-

- 3 Trading Standards Officers, 3 FTE's
- 1 Senior Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Senior Animal Health Officer, 0.4 FTE (Other 0.6 FTE Regional Co-ordination role funded by WHoTS)
- 3 Animal Health Officers, 2 FTE (1 temporary to 21st December 2021, 1 temporary to 30th September 2023)

(v) Support team:-

- 5 Support Officers, 4.1 FTE's

Above staff resource adds up to a total of 34 staff, 30.1 Full Time Equivalents. The Public Protection division also comprises the Authority's Registrar and Corporate Health & Safety services, but this report covers 1.2 services only, as directed by Members in January 2015.

3.2. Financial resource

In 2020/21, the budget allocation and actual spend is shown below -

<u>SERVICE</u>	Budget	Net Spend
Environmental Health – Commercial	£465,744	£468,786
Environmental Health – General public health	£423,106	£375,089
Trading Standards & Animal Health	£338,640	£337,722
Licensing	£27,732	£15,087
Management & generic costs (eg software)	£115,989	£132,758
Total	£1,371,211	£1,329,442

The budget position for the 2020/21 year was a slight underspend of £41,769. This represents 3% of the total annual budget.

4. PERFORMANCE

4.1 Internal performance monitoring – the four teams within Public Protection each complete an annual Business Service Plan. These outline annual targets, specific projects etc. and progress is reviewed regularly both by the teams themselves and Departmental Management Team.

- 4.2 External reporting – regular returns are made to the Food Standards Agency, Health & Safety Executive, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Drinking Water Inspectorate, Welsh Government and other organisations.
- 4.3 In 2020/21 additional performance was monitored in relation to our Track and Trace service, with reports submitted to Welsh Government and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, (ABUHB).
- 4.4 **2020/21 Performance** (and comparison to previous years)

The right-hand columns summarises performance during the 2020/21 year. The left-hand columns cover the previous 4 years, to enable comparisons to be made.

The following table summarises performance data from the four service teams.

Figure One

<u>Service</u>	<u>2016/17 performance</u>	<u>2017/18 performance</u>	<u>2018/19 Performance</u>	<u>2019/20 Performance</u>	<u>2020/21 Performance</u>
Environmental Health (Commercial)					
Food safety full inspections	502 (100%)	513 (100%)	513 (100%)	561	28 - suspension of programme due to Covid response and businesses closed, (same as all other Welsh LA's)
Other interventions – sampling, verification etc (Not H & S)	483	427	285	336	
Total	985	940	798	897	
Inspection within 28 days of scheduled date	88.4%	87%	88.6%	86% (incomplete programme)	As business closed and inspections suspended due to Covid this figure not collected 20/21

Number of new businesses opened	130	110	151	134	101
Broadly compliant food businesses (high risk)	90.4%	94.3%	93.2%	93.4%	Proactive visits suspended
Broadly compliant food businesses – All	95.2%	97.4%	97.2%	96.9%	As above
Service Requests - food safety	718 (86% within target time) Total SR's 1340	736 Total SR's 1350	456 (85% within 3 working days) Total SR's 1463	720 (85% within 3 working days) Total SR's 1444	453 for food (78% within target) Total SR's 1,792 but major under recording – more likely 2,500
Food Hygiene training	219	257 food handlers trained	208 food handlers trained	123 food handlers training (courses in March cancelled due to Covid)	nil
Communicable Diseases cases dealt with	171 (4 outbreaks and one fatality)	183	210 including Typhoid outbreak	191 (includes one case of Covid before end of March 2020)	3,826 Covid 142 notifiable disease
Health and Safety notifications Notices served	63 accidents, 33 major events 10 Notices served	54 accidents, of which 9 reportable (serious injuries) 24 visits re asbestos also undertaken in the year.	41 accidents notified. 12 serious incidents investigated. 90 events reviewed 12 Notices served (gas and cellar safety)	58 accident notifications 11 serious incidents investigated 25 events reviewed 2 Notices served (gas safety)	Vast amount of proactive and reactive work in relation to Covid regs. Not all work recorded due to time constraints e.g Covid responses to schools and care homes

Environmental Health (General public health)					
Housing service requests (SR'S)	138 Total 127 within 3 working days = 92%	153 Total 133 within 3 working days = 86.9%	164 Total 141 within 3 working days = 86%	158 Total 133 within 3 working days = 84.2%	105 Total 70 within 3 working days = 66.7%
Noise	363 Total 318 within 3 working days = 87.6% 188 closed within 3 months = 51.8%	321 Total. 271 within 3 working days = 84.4% 173 closed within 3 mths = 53.9%	374 Total. 318 within 3 working days = 85% 152 closed within 3 mths = 40.6%	317 Total. 258 within 3 working days = 81.4% 181 closed within 3 mths = 57.1%	366 Total. 300 within 3 working days = 82% 199 closed within 3 mths = 54.4%
Statutory nuisance, excluding noise	179 Total 152 within 3 working days = 84.9% 84 closed within 3 months = 46.9%	142 Total. 122 within working 3 days = 85.9% 83 closed within 3 mths = 58.4%	176 Total. 145 within working 3 days = 82.4% 92 closed within 3 mths = 52.3%	154 Total. 127 within working 3 days = 82.5% 86 closed within 3 mths = 55.8%	236 Total. 209 within working 3 days = 88.6% 155 closed within 3 mths = 65.7%
Environmental Protection (fouling, littering, fly tipping etc.)	475 Total 448 within 3 working days = 94.3% 341 closed within 3 months = 71.8%	478 Total. 440 within 3 working days = 92.1% 302 closed within 3 months = 63.2%	484 Total. 446 within 3 working days = 92.1% 421 closed within 3 months = 87%	448 Total. 387 within 3 working days = 86.4% 395 closed within 3 months = 88.2%	705 Total. 651 within 3 working days = 92.3% 534 closed within 3 months = 75.7%
Pest Control	Total 74. 51 within 3 working days = 69%	Total 71. 54 within 3 working days = 76%	Total 78. 61 within 3 working days = 78.2%	Total 85. 66 within 3 working days = 77.6%	Total 113. 95 within 3 working days = 84%

Licensing					
Applications dealt with by Licensing	1645 (which includes 423 Temporary Event Notices (TENs) requiring a 24 hour turnaround	1668 which includes 383 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround	1813 applications dealt with (up by 145 on the previous year). This includes 425 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround (an increase of 42 TENs on the previous year)	1666 applications. This includes 384 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround (a decrease of 41 TENs on the previous year due to Covid lockdown in March and events being cancelled)	1142 applications (down by 524 on the previous year, 31% decline). This is as a direct result of Covid lockdown and restrictions. Only 2 TEN's within these applications and this is as a result of events not being permitted.
Inspections carried out	508 inspections (120 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	329 inspections (261 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	325 inspections (174 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	247 inspections (133 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment). Inspections were down by 78 due to long term sickness	237 inspections (no risk rated premises were included this year, concentrated on Covid advice/enforcement).
Service Requests carried out	879 service requests (816 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response).	868 service requests (784 - 90% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target).	974 service requests (895 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). An increase of 106 service requests from 17/18	821 service requests (739 - 90% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). A decrease of 153 service requests from 18/19	922 service requests, (846 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). An increase of 101 (12%) from 19/20

Trading Standards & Animal Health					
Trading Standards Visits	176	110	126	113	115
Trading Standards Complaints/Advice	428	452	443	547	1018
Citizens Advice Consumer Service	285 Referrals 785 Notifications	302 Referrals 808 Notifications	305 Referrals 863 Notifications	322 Referrals 922 Notifications	341 Referrals 956 Notifications
Animal Health Visits	411	258	219	324	231
Animal Health Complaints/Advice	298	264	242	266	282
Inspections at our: High Risk premises, Upper Medium premises.	No formal programme of inspection this year. Intel approach with focus on safeguarding in particular medical devices.	23% (25/107)	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures including loss of Feed officer now replaced	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures.	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures.
Feed Law Enforcement	118% - 223 Inspections	100% - 235	100% - 212	59% - 144 supplemented by 254 ceased trading visits.	Visits were suspended with database cleansing.
Programmed animal health inspections	No formal programme of inspection this year	10% (30/294)	No formal programme of inspection due to long term sickness.	No formal programme of inspection	No formal programme due to Covid
New Business Visits	52% TS 58% AH	56% TS 59% AH	29% TS (23/80) 66% AH (18/27)	56% TS (32/57) 73% AH (40/55)	61% TS (32/52) 74% AH (52/70)
Animal Welfare Complaints	90.4% within target response time	91.4%	92.6%	63%	74.5%
Vulnerable Scam Reports	9 visits contact with 121 individuals	10 visits contact with 135 individuals	12 visits contact with 149 individuals	10 visits contact with 159 individuals (running total)	0 visits due to Covid 187 individuals (running total)

Other					
Freedom of Information Requests (PP Total)	61	51	66	74	39
Events requiring advice via Safety Advisory Group	102	137	156	105	39, 30 cancelled due to national restrictions

5. **ANALYSIS AND ACTIVITY 2020/21**

A large element of Public Protection Officer time had to respond to Covid-19 work from the time of first lockdown. There were two significant impacts – (1) providing the Track and Trace (T&T) service for the county, involving setting up a 12 hours a day, 7 days a week response, ie. 84 hours a week. There have been fluctuations in the size of the T&T team, with up to 87 staff at its' peak, (mainly externally provided and directly financed by WG), depending on the case numbers and contact tracing guidance from WG. EH Commercial Officers led the T&T response with their capacity being 90% dealing with Covid. (2) Responding to the cases, determining likely sources of the Covid spread. This involved extensive work with care homes, schools and various workplaces. All sections of the Public Protection division provided advice and enforced the WG requirements of the Covid legislation, which changed regularly and had to be communicated to local businesses, event organisers, members of the public, etc.

5.1 **Environmental Health – Commercial – updated pandemic work activity recorded in supplementary report**

5.1.1 **Food safety (food hygiene and food standards)**

Delivery of food hygiene and standards inspection programme – there is 18 months of food safety inspections to catch up on, due to our Covid response work taking precedence, and over 100 unrated businesses in system. Taking into account the rest of this year's due inspections, the total outstanding at end of March 2022 will be 1,370. All Commercial EH Officers were engaged in setting up and working in TTP from May 2020 onwards. Majority of businesses were closed and those that were open given advice and visits as they sought to diversify, for example a rural public house choosing to provide a takeaway service to support their local community.

5.1.2 Business improvement – by giving advice to improve the food hygiene rating score of businesses, which has been recognised to improve both the economy and food safety. In 20/21 the team were unable to carry out advisory, income generating ACCESS visits due to time constraints and dealing with high risk responses.

5.1.3 Responding to complaints

Complaint numbers, due to Covid, trebled or more - working in response to Covid has meant not all work was recorded, eg. various contacts with schools and care homes. Much work was undertaken on Covid regulation interpretation and guidance to local businesses.

5.1.4. Communicable Diseases

Investigation of all cases of statutorily notifiable diseases received. Over 3,800 cases of Covid reported as a notifiable disease, and fewer infectious diseases reported as possibly people were not reporting or going to Doctors with symptoms of food poisoning. In 20/21 the team also liaised with major businesses which normally sit with HSE for enforcement, such as food manufacturers.

5.1.5 Income generation Income-generating consultancy work. Primarily through ACCESS programme and Primary Authority partnerships – not carried out. MCC organised an all Wales response to the Food Law Code of Practice and generated an income as a result of the intensity of work involved.

5.1.6 Health and Safety at Work

(a) Reactive service to ensure protection of employees at work particularly at high risk premises, together with advice on event safety. Proactive work was undertaken to secure certification of accommodation under Covid regulations, which took up a full time Officer's whole capacity during lockdown periods.

(b) Proactive projects – These were replaced by Covid compliance visits, such as supermarkets, and advisory calls, for example concerning legionella checks prior to reopening of businesses.

5.2 Environmental Health – Public Health

5.2.1 Housing

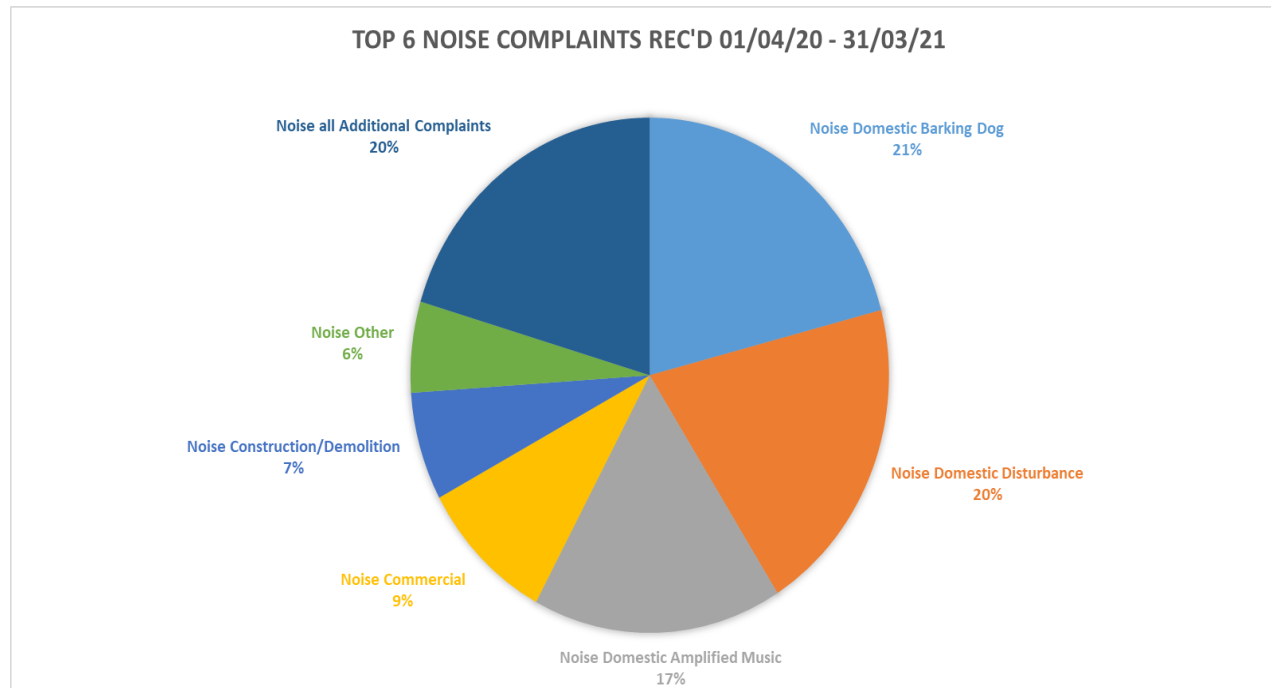
In 20/21 the team continued to provide an effective and early response to complaints and requests for advice in the private rented sector. The period saw a reduction in the number of service requests with 105 compared to 158 enquiries in 19/20, no doubt

influenced by the Covid pandemic. A total of 23 inspections were undertaken when the pandemic rules permitted, with 28 category 1 hazards (most serious) and 61 category 2 hazards identified. Of the total of 89 hazards a substantial number (35) relate to damp, cold and fire safety issues.

In the 23 dwellings inspected, 34 adults and 27 children were exposed to significant hazards. Officers engage with landlords, make clear their responsibilities under the Housing legislation and seek their cooperation to undertake the required works to remove the hazards identified. A range of enforcement actions are available and used where landlords do not cooperate such as the service of Improvement Notices and in the most serious cases Prohibition Orders. By the 31st March 2021, 10 adults and 10 children had been protected by landlords undertaking the required remedial works.

5.2.2 Noise

The 366 noise complaints received amounted to the 2nd highest recorded for the section close to the 374 complaints in 18/19. Complaints of noise from residential properties mainly barking dogs, loud music and domestic disturbance account for 58% of these (213). Noise complaints from commercial type premises and construction sites remain sizeable, especially given the Covid lockdown periods, with 34 and 25 service requests respectively. Officers endeavour to respond and deal with complaints quickly, with 300 responded to within 3 days (82%) and 199 closed within 3 months (54%).



5.2.3 Environmental Protection

Period 20/21 saw a very large increase in the number of complaints with 705 comparable with the previous high of 484 in 18/19. Of these 423 related to fly tipping incidents. The team had to adapt to the pandemic to ensure investigations were undertaken safely. For example, face to face interviews of potential suspects were suspended for much of the period, with formal interview letters being widely used as an alternative. Evidence gathered resulted in 4 fixed penalty notices being issued for fly tipping related offences with 2 not being paid and therefore progressing to prosecution in 21/22.

The team continues to lead, together with colleagues from the Waste and Street Cleaning section, in the sixth year of the '**Give Dog Fouling the Red Card**' scheme which now has 26 participating Town and Community councils. The scheme is about collaboration, maximising resources and raising awareness that dog mess must be bagged / binned. Members continue to report generally good news, although dog fouling hot spot areas continue throughout the county with fouling on play areas and sports pitches especially frustrating.

Members views have helped inform the decision to explore the potential for dog controls (fouling, dogs on leads / exemption areas) in the county to be provided in a Public Spaces Protection Order. Stronger Communities Select endorsed recommendations in a report March 2020 to commence a 3 month public consultation. The consultation was suspended because of the pandemic but progressed 26th July – 26th October 2021, the findings of which will be reported on early 2022.

5.2.4 Private Water Supplies

The team has the responsibility for fulfilling the Council's duty of risk assessing all 'large' and 'small' private water supplies (PWS), where water is intended for human consumption. Improvements are undertaken where necessary to ensure a wholesome and sufficient water supply is provided.

We currently have 119 'small' and 64 'large' supplies, the vast majority of which have received an initial risk assessment. There is an ongoing statutory requirement to risk assess supplies every 5 years and this area of largely proactive work has been highlighted consistently in the last 5+ years in the service plan as an area of significant resource pressure.

Additional resource resulted in some progress in the 2017/19 period, but the lockdown periods in 20/21 meant that this area of work was largely suspended. The current situation reads:

41 of the 64 known large supplies in high risk category = 64%

61 of the 119 known small shared / domestic tenancy supplies in high risk category = 51%

5.2.5 Pest Control

Complaint levels remain very similar with 113 received compared with 85 in 19/20. The majority of these relate to rats (98).

5.2.6 Construction

Engagement with the developers of the A465 dual carriageway scheme and a number of large house building projects continued throughout 20/21. Our interest is to ensure that the contractors do all that can be reasonably expected to control noise, dust and air pollution levels. A substantial work commitment is needed in these areas which is generally not reflected in the Service Request statistics, with successful engagement hopefully resulting in low complaint numbers.

5.2.7 Air Quality

For the first time the team failed to meet the inspections targets for the industrial permitted sites and petroleum certified sites which we have responsibility for from a pollution legislation perspective. Visits suspended during the lockdown periods meant 9 of the 17 industrial permitted sites due (53%) and 8 of the 18 petroleum certified sites (44%) were undertaken. Achieving these visits

and ensuring continuing compliance and liaison with the companies involved, given the circumstances, is testament to the hard work and perseverance of the team.

Monitoring continued of traffic related pollution (nitrogen dioxide) in our 4 major towns and advice given in meetings of the steering groups in the Chepstow and Usk Air Quality Management areas.

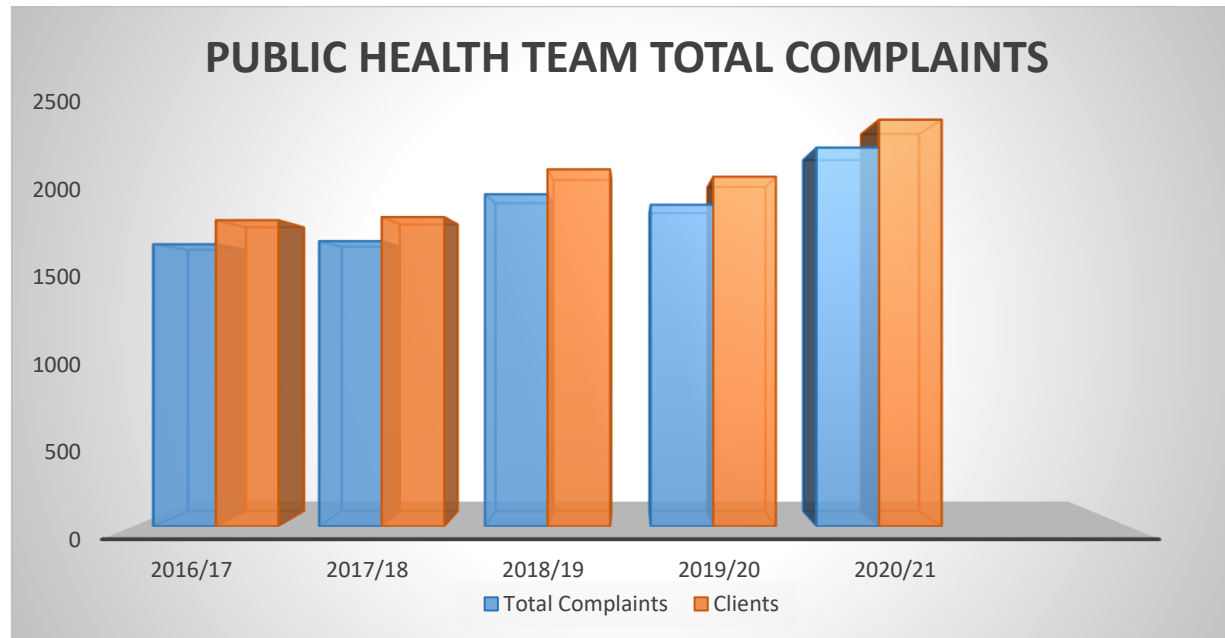
There remains just one location in the County, on Hardwick Hill, Chepstow, where nitrogen dioxide levels in recent years have exceeded the annual objective level of 40ug/m³ set by legislation. There were no exceedances in the county in 2020 (calendar year) with concentrations generally at their lowest recorded levels due to the lockdown periods.

2020 was the 6th year that levels in the Usk Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) were below the nitrogen dioxide objective level and the third year below 36 µg/m³ (which is below 10% of the objective level). Welsh Government have suggested that five years below 10% of the objective level is appropriate to consider revocation of the AQMA.

Our continuous air quality sensors are in use at 4 schools - Usk and St Mary's primary schools, Chepstow and Monmouth Comprehensive schools. The sensors continuously monitor nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, air temperature, humidity, and pressure. This data can be viewed live via a website and there is scope for this to be an important education tool and help raise awareness of the need for good air quality.

5.2.8 Total Enquiries

Period 20/21 continued the trend of increasing service requests across the range of functions delivered by the team, but with a substantial hike to 2293 received comparable with 1947 in 19/20 (17.7% increase). The trend is best shown as follows:



5.3 Licensing

5.3.1 General

The Licensing team deals with a variety of licences, dealing with pubs, restaurants, off-licences and takeaways, taxis, street trading (e.g. burger vans), street/house to house collections, (e.g. charity collections in the street or bag drops at homes), gambling (e.g. betting shops, racecourse, one armed bandits in pubs/clubs, raffles etc.), scrap metal collectors and sites. The team are also authorised to deal with sex establishments, boats and hypnotism.

922 requests for service were processed by the Licensing between April 2020 – March 2021, up by 76 from the previous year. A breakdown of the 922 requests as shown:-

The majority of the services requests involved giving Covid advice on enforcement and dealing with queries. Licensing were consulted upon and actively involved in the processing of pavement licences in order for the hospitality sector to open up outside, whilst putting in measures to control the spread of Covid. The team assisted the consultation to award urban grants to this sector who suffered financial hardship as a result of restrictions to opening and lockdowns.

The team continued to deal with Licensing Act queries, 239 requests, where licences changed or applications made to adapt to the evolving changes as a result of the pandemic. Taxi/private hire trade also made 225 requests for service.

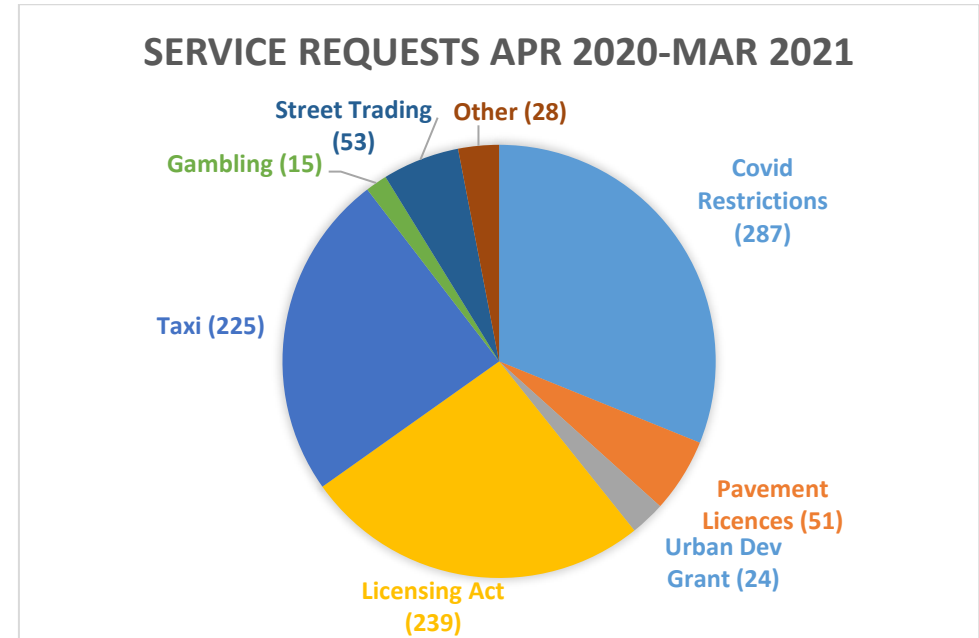
1142 applications were processed in 20/21, (a decrease of 524 for the same period the previous year). This is as a result of events being unable to take place and as such only 2 Temporary Events were made, compared to (on average) Licensing receiving 500+ per year in a normal year.

Some of the work carried out by Licensing during this period included:-

5.3.2 Pubs, Restaurants, Off-licences, Clubs and Takeaways

Night Time Economy and Joint Enforcement

In 2020/21, Covid enforcement measures and advice were at the forefront. 230 (out of a total of 237 inspections for the year) premises received Covid inspections checking compliance. This involved the following:-



Licensing organised two live streaming events for the hospitality sector as a Q&A session due to changes by Welsh Government to deal with the pandemic. These streaming events were to guide them through the opening of their venues which had been in lockdown.

13th July 2020 – Hospitality permitted to open outside only. Licensing actively worked with Highways to process pavement licences to enable the trade to have the footfall whilst still putting in safety measures outside.

3rd August 2020 – Hospitality permitted to re-open inside. Advice and inspections were conducted, focussing on the town centre and busy venues to ensure risk assessment and Covid measures were in place, such as table service, Track and Trace details, no persons permitted at the bar area.

24th September 2020 – Opening times were restricted to alcohol ceasing at 10pm with only off sales permitted. Again advice and enforcement was necessary to ensure compliance.

23rd October 2020 - 9th November 2020 – Lockdown in place with only take out service permitted. Licensing inspected for compliance. There was a short space between 9th November to 20th December where they could open up until 6pm, and then it reverted back to lockdown with only take out permitted up until the end of March 2021.

For every change made by WG Licensing issued a bulletin to every licence holder providing advice.

Licensing was a consultee and assisted the Urban Development Grant team in getting the message to hospitality venues on grants available, and actively took part in the re-opening towns scheme and business forum. The difficulties this sector faced financially was fully recognised.

However, not all complied to such changes imposed by WG and Licensing had to serve 14 improvement notices due to lack of social distancing, not wearing masks indoors, and permitting sales at the bar. All made the necessary changes and the improvement notices were then withdrawn and monitoring of those premises took place. 2 premises received instant fixed penalty notices, where it was witnessed by Licensing Officers, for serving alcohol when not permitted.

5.3.3 Taxis

In 2020/21, the taxi trade were permitted to carry on trading during the pandemic in order to provide a vital service to key workers and other passengers. A policy was introduced regarding the use of screens in vehicles to ensure safety, not only to deal with Covid prevention measures but also to ensure the screens would be safe in the event of accident. Doctors were unable to carry out medicals to assess the fitness of a driver and therefore renewal drivers were permitted to carry out self-certification that no change to health had taken place since their last GP conducted medical. Licensing worked with Torfaen Training to introduce on-line

Safeguarding training and for drivers to carry out their knowledge test as the classroom environment was no longer viable. This on-line training has now continued going forward.

Drivers were unable to get hand sanitation and this was sourced from a brewery and issued out to grateful drivers, noting a national shortage at the time.

All these measures were put in place by Licensing to ensure the continuation of this service and ensure passenger safety was maintained.

5.4 Trading Standards & Animal Health

5.4.1 Feed

The Feed Programme was put on hold with the agreement of the Food Standards Agency for 2020/21 due to the pandemic, with resources reallocated to support Covid advice and enforcement. There was an element of database cleansing that was able to be carried out and feed related advice and complaints were still responded to and dealt with. New members of the animal health team were able to undertake virtual training to build their competence with practical experience now being supported in the current year. The final report following the Feed Audit undertaken in early 2020 is due to be received shortly.

5.4.2 Animal Health

The animal health function continues to be over 90% reactive but has been bolstered by the recruitment of an officer to cover maternity leave who has wide experience. The Trading Standards team leader is strategic lead nationally for animal health matters and continues to be heavily involved in working with WG, to develop and deliver the Partnership Delivery Plan with associated additional funding. This is based on a regional approach and mirrors the footprint of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. Monmouthshire has approximately 50% of the critical control points and animal related premises within this region, but current capacity, at 1.4 FTE's, limits this opportunity. Additional capacity has been as a result of leading regionally the Animal Health and Feed functions through additional income but remains uncertain. The Local Authority Enforcement Project on Dog Breeding was initially delayed due to Covid but is now improving support for all local authorities across Wales.

The Trading Standards Wales Dog Breeding Project, being led by Monmouthshire, underpins the delivery of some of the actions identified in the Animal Welfare Plan for Wales due to be launched this month. It will challenge illegal dog breeding, offer support to local authority animal health services to respond to assertions of animal cruelty and will allow local authorities some capacity to focus on wider animal health and welfare work. This is another example of local authorities turning policy aspirations into action and delivering much needed support and change.

5.4.3 Fair Trading

We were successful in being selected to work on a funded project by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – second year pilot testing an enforcement strategy and toolkit for the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015. This attracted funding of £100k and commenced in July 2020 after being similarly delayed by the pandemic and rolled over into the new financial year. Work continues to identify non-compliant premises with advice and enforcement where necessary, to bring Landlords of non-complying properties up to the minimum standards required.

The Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act 2018 was implemented on 2 March 2020 just before the first lockdown commenced and minimum unit pricing visits had to be put on hold. It had been requested by WG that all off-licences were visited in the first 3 months to support the implementation of the new 50p per unit minimum requirement. These recommenced recently and will be completed before the end of 2021.

5.4.4 Consumer Protection

A priority for the service has been dealing with a variety of scams and bringing them to the attention of both the public and businesses whenever possible. We are all potential victims and, by reaching out and working alongside adult safeguarding, vulnerable victims can be kept out of overburdened local care systems.

The key focus continues to be working with vulnerable victims through priority referrals and ensuring they are given the advice and assistance required and/or referred as appropriate. During the pandemic though this work has had to be put on hold as visiting often the more vulnerable in society would not have been appropriate.

5.4.5 Weights & Measures

There was a significant increase in the number of new business enquiries during the pandemic from individuals that were looking to new areas of work that required advice.

5.4.6 Product Safety

Following the outbreak of the pandemic we quickly saw a number of problems arise especially in relation to PPE, that suddenly became an area of high demand and in doing so attracted the interest of organised criminality as well as businesses trying to survive. We instigated and managed a recall of non-compliant hand sanitiser that had been distributed to many businesses and organisations, including our own departments.

5.4.7 Income Generation

In 2020/21 saw a drop in feed funding to approximately £11,000 due to the inability to be able to undertake inspection work. Animal Health PDP regional co-ordination and additional project work, Primary Authority and other regional initiatives brought in around £12,000.

5.5 Event Safety Advisory Group

A number of Public Protection staff are involved in Monmouthshire's Event Safety Advisory Group, (ESAG). This is a partnership designed to help organisers run safe and successful events. It is recognised a proactive advisory stance is preferable to reacting to problems after events have occurred. Events held in 20/21 were significantly reduced due to the WG ban on mass gatherings. Only 9 events occurred in the entire 12 months, but advice was sought and provided from all our typical organisers.

6 PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2020/21 year

- 6.1 Public Protection teams rallied to provide a robust response to the pandemic, both by providing a Track and Trace service and assisting members of the public, other MCC Departments and local businesses in responding to WG restrictions in a safe and responsible manner. A supplementary report highlights specific activities the Division engaged in to seek to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus.
- 6.2 Inevitably our traditional Public Protection services – food safety inspections, proactive trading standards and animal health visits, housing inspections, etc. – suffered as a consequence of dealing with this public health priority. Proactive inspections remain some way off being achieved, as a direct consequence of dealing with Covid related matters. These include continual advice and support to our care homes, schools, local businesses and events.
- 6.3 Service request levels across all teams remained high throughout 2020/21 so reactive work was prioritised over our proactive activities.
- 6.4 Figure One illustrates the general increase in requests for service across the teams. The teams all responded well and prioritised higher risk issues, which involved visits to premises when deemed appropriate.
- 6.5 The joint working with Public Health Wales and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, in response to the pandemic, was excellent and provides opportunities for further collaborative working when services return to more normality.
- 6.6 Members can gain some assurance that performance is in line with other Authorities, including the drop in proactive work, via regular monitoring by the external governing bodies.

7 2021/22 AND BEYOND

- 7.1 It will be some time yet until Public Protection can fully recover from the still current pandemic. There is a significant backlog of proactive inspections needed, eg. 5.1.1. refers to a backlog of 1,370 food safety visits that requires attention. Our interventions to help reduce the spread of Covid-19 will remain our first priority for the remainder of 2021/22. Indeed WG funding, now secured to 30th June 2022, reflects that we will continue with Track and Trace well into 22/23. This inevitably pulls Environmental Health and other staff away from their more routine work.
- 7.2 A budget pressure mandate has been submitted to seek further new recurring funding for Public Protection services for 2022/23 and beyond. More capacity to deal areas of work that have slipped, such as private housing interventions and consumer protection issues, is warranted, also noting the general increase in service demand. Our 2020/23 Business Plans seek to better reflect our longer term vision and future planning. This tallies with the Well Being of Future Generations expectations, with Public Protection services contributing directly to a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. Digital solutions are being pursued to help capacity issues.
- 7.3 Collaborative opportunities are being pursued at regional and national level, and this Authority will play a part in developing future service models. Further income generation opportunities will continue to be explored, albeit most new income streams had to be paused in 20/21. The 3 year Dog Breeding Project led by the TS Manager and Animal Health Regional coordinator shows our desire to seek more effective ways of working. The collaborative working with PHW and ABUHB, in response to the pandemic, will be built on in 22/23 to tackle public health priorities together. Protecting vulnerable people engaging in the night-time economy will be a key priority for MCC Licensing working with Gwent Police.
- 7.4 Our services, together with delivering statutory responsibilities, acts on local intelligence and welcomes input from local Councillors, other stakeholders, etc. to improve outcomes for our citizens and local businesses. The services enjoy an excellent reputation, due to the commitment of the Officers, and will continue to contribute to the wider agendas and our core purposes, as provided in 2.1. The profile of our Public Protection services, both locally and nationally, has never been so buoyant, so Officers would like to capitalise on this momentum with future investment across the Division.

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SUBJECT: Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020- 2021

MEETING: Strong Communities Select Committee

DATE: 18th November 2021

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an opportunity to examine progress against the commitments made in the Strategic Equality Plan during the period April 2020 to March 2021

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members scrutinise the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report covering the period 2020– 2021.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Equality Act 2010 was introduced in April 2011 and within its specific duties is the requirement to publish an annual report on the Council's performance against its commitments made in its Strategic Equality Plan.
- 3.2 The third Strategic Equality Plan covers the period 2020 – 2024 has been in operation for a year setting out objectives for the key areas that the authority has committed to addressing and accompanying actions. The monitoring report assesses progress made during the first of the four years against the objectives:
- 3.3 The objectives are:
- Give children the best possible start in life overcoming barriers to attainment and opportunity
 - Overcome inequalities in access to economic prosperity
 - Create cohesive communities
 - Provide services that are accessible to our public and support our workforce.
 - Create a diverse and inclusive workforce
 - Reduce the gender pay gap

3.4 It is worth taking into consideration that the Covid Pandemic may have had an adverse impact on the levels of achievement on some of the outcomes that were originally anticipated. There are some examples of good practice that have been noted in relation to the response to the pandemic from the council to people with protected characteristics.

3.5 The monitoring report has been attached as an appendix to this covering report.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and that the residents of Monmouthshire with protected characteristics are protected from discrimination and their needs are fully considered in the services that we as a council provide.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There are no resource implications within the monitoring report

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The Equality Objectives and the accompanying action plan and the Strategic Equality Plan within which they sit will have positive implications for all the protected characteristics.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications within this plan.

8. CONSULTEES:

This is a monitoring report and has not been subject to consultation. The scrutiny undertaken by the committee will help shape the final version of this report prior to publication

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

MCC Strategic Equality Plan 2020 - 2021.

10. AUTHOR:

Alan Burkitt, Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language.

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644010

e-mail: alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Cydraddoldeb ac
Amrwyiaeth
Equality and Diversity



Strategic Equality Plan
Annual Monitoring Report
2020 – 2021



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Version Control

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Alternative Formats

This document is available on the Council's website at

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity>

If you require a hard copy of this document or a copy in a different format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio version, word format for screen readers etc. please contact:

Policy Officer Equality and Welsh Language
Monmouthshire County Council
County Hall
Y Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1XJ

Phone: 01633 644010

Email: alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Introduction and Policy Context

This annual monitoring report covers progress during the year ending March 2021. It is the first for the council's third Strategic Equality Plan which was approved by Council on the 5th of March 2020 and this plan builds upon the work carried out in the previous two.

You can access the latest Strategic Equality Plan on the council's website at:
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Links to strategies

The Council's third Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 was approved by Council on the 5th of March 2020. It is important to note that it is not a standalone plan and has close links to a number of other key council, partnership and national strategies, plans and policies. Some of these are specifically focussed on equality and others have included equality as one of the key themes. Examples being:

- Social Justice Strategy 2017 - 2022
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Cymraeg 2050 (1 million Welsh speakers by 2050)
- Strategaeth Mwy na geiriau/More than words strategy 2011 and 2016
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011-21
- Strategy for Older People Wales Phase 3
- Monmouthshire County Council Well-being Plan 2018
- Well Being of Future Generations Act 1st April 2016
- Social Care and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Equality Act 2010 not only requires the Council to comply with its general and specific duties highlighted below, but also provides an opportunity for it to demonstrate its commitment to the principles of equality which have been a feature of its functions prior to the implementation of the Act.

Our Social Justice Strategy

The Council's Social Justice Strategy demonstrates our commitment to address inequalities and improve outcomes for the county's people and communities. It has been driven by the council's desire to tackle the inequality highlighted in the well-being and population needs assessments carried out by local authorities and health boards following the passing of The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The strategic equality plan dovetails with this strategy, providing greater detail on some of the activities we will deliver to address inequality in the county

Monmouthshire's strategic equality objectives 2020-2024

The strategic objectives that have been agreed in the new Strategic Equality Plan are:

- Give children the best possible start in life overcoming barriers to attainment and opportunity
- Overcome inequalities in access to economic prosperity
- Create cohesive communities
- Provide services that are accessible to our public and support our workforce.
- Create a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Reduce the gender pay gap

Legislative Context

The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010

In exercising its functions the Council must have due regard to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Specific Duties in Wales

The broad purpose of the specific duties is to help public bodies, such as this Council, in their performance of the general duty, and to aid transparency. In Wales the specific duties are set by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

The following are the specific duties:

- Setting equality objectives and publishing strategic equality plans
- Engagement
- Assessment of impact
- Equality information
- Employment information, pay differences and staff training
- Procurement
- Reporting and publishing

Strategic Equality Objectives: Progress 2020-21

This section describes some of the specific things we have done which are aligned with the objectives set in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and we have also included some examples of good practice that fall under the broad umbrella of the objectives.

Strategic objective 1: Give children the best possible start in life overcoming barriers to attainment and opportunity

Desired Outcome: Children, young people and families are supported to improve their well-being

Action: Develop an integrated early intervention and prevention pathway to support children and families at the earliest opportunity and reduce the need for statutory intervention to keep people safe those with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Progress: completed

Desired Outcome: Children attain their full potential.

Action: Map the current provision to support pupils eligible for Free School Meal (eFSM) through the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and Monmouthshire; identify any gaps and work with the EAS and wider partners to develop a cohesive strategy to raise the attainment of FSM pupils and close the gap between FSM and non FSM pupils.

Progress: This is an ongoing piece of work that will continue through the lifetime of this plan and beyond – 2020 – 2024.

Desired Outcome: Children, young people and families are supported to improve their well-being (narrowing the gap outcome)

Action 1: Develop an effective 0 - 25 Partnership for Children and Young People.

Action 2: Develop the Community Focussed School Programme.

Progress 1: The Integrated Youth Offer (IYO) group is continuing to develop a county wide Youth Support Services (YSS) Network, which draws together all the providers of services and activities for children & young people. This network will enable us to better understand the 'offer' for our children & young people and ensure that we are offering parity of services across all areas, and that we understand what support and assistance we can offer to the providers in our YSS network to help them continue to deliver activities in our communities.

Progress 2: The Community Focussed Schools Programme is an ongoing programme and will continue to develop as time goes on.

Desired Outcome: Children & young people have sufficient opportunity to participate in play and physical activity

Action: Carry out a Play sufficiency assessment. (PSA)

Progress: The previous play sufficiency action plan gained approval in May 2019 and progress has been good (a full report is now available). A new plan is in place for 2021/22 with the next full 3-year review scheduled for 2022. A new target has been identified which relates to increasing the number of fixed play opportunities for wheelchair users.

Outcome: Children & young people have sufficient opportunity to participate in play and physical activity

Action: Deliver the playmaker leadership programme to year 5 and 6 pupils to support confidence, motivation, well-being and promote active citizenship

Progress: Delivered to every year 5 cohort on an annual basis.

Desired Outcome: Children with disabilities are able to access sporting activities.

Action: Put an action plan in place to achieve the Disability Sports Gold Award.

Progress: MonLife's Health, Communities & Inclusion Development Officer is establishing the starting point for the pathway to Gold through reflections and review of feedback from Silver accreditation and developing a consultation process and Monmouthshire's Vision for Gold. Four sector partners identified as being key areas for progress are, Education, Health, Social Services and Mon Life's wider service area. The action plan is in place and the target is to achieve the Phase 1 Vision for InSport Development Gold by the 31st

Desired Outcome: Children & young people have sufficient opportunity to participate in play and physical activity

Action: Reduce the inequalities in physical activity rates between males and females with the Girls Can and Ladies Stronger Together programmes

Progress: Delivered to every year 5 cohort on an annual basis.

Desired Outcome: People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness have improved access to accommodation and support

Action 1: Implement the Homeless Transition Plan under the wider Social Justice Strategy

Action 2: Review services through Housing Support Grant

Progress 1: The Transition Plan will be carried out between 2021 – December 2023.

Progress 2: Following a review and needs analysis, Housing Support working in collaboration with Children's Services are upgrading the current hostels and moving to High, Medium, and Low provision. Work is currently ongoing with an expectation to go live in October 2021

Good practice: To provide information and raise awareness amongst children of more taboo subjects (anxiety, grief, bullying etc) and the wide range of diagnosed conditions that exist and how they manifest themselves in terms of behaviours etc.

Action: Reading Well Books on Prescription for children was launched in Wales on World Mental Health Day 2020 (7th April).

Progress: The books deal with topics from anxiety and grief, to bullying and internet safety, to how to cope with events in the news. The booklist also explores living well with a range of diagnosed conditions including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyslexia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and physical disabilities.

The booklist is targeted at children in Key Stage 2 and includes titles suitable for a wide range of reading levels to support less confident readers, and to encourage children to read together with their siblings and carers. The books are available from any of our libraries

Good practice: supporting young people who are struggling with their sexuality, exploring or are an ally to those who are LGBTQ+.

Action: The Youth Service run LGBTQ+ support groups across the county.

Progress: Each session held is person centred where the agenda is directed by the young people, with qualified Youth Support Workers supporting them. In addition the SHIFT project is seeing an increase of referrals with young people who require support for LGBTQ+ issues – most of which involve advocacy and representation to parents who are struggling to come to terms with their child sexuality, changing gender and not conforming to a gender (non-binary).

Good practice: Giving young people a voice.

Action: Young people meeting with Monmouthshire County Council Cabinet

Progress: Within the Wales wide Make Your Mark Young People Survey, young people voted transport to be the top priority for young people. They challenged why is the cost of public

transport the same for a young person as it is for an adult. Engage to Change Youth Forum has discussed this with cabinet members and have challenged them to lower the price to make Monmouthshire Greener for young people. Comparably, the over 65's in Wales have free public transport, and the Forum have asked for there to be a reduction and for it not to be free of charge.

Good practice: Giving young people a voice.

Action: Running the Leadership Scheme

Progress: The main objective of the Leadership Scheme is to provide children with the opportunity to grow their confidence. By inspiring children at a young age, it will hopefully encourage them to present their ideas and share those of their peers to create impact. Through the pandemic there were monthly meetings held with year 6 ambassadors to share their good practice and create new ideas with others.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	
Race			

Strategic objective 2: Overcome inequalities in access to economic prosperity

Desired Outcome: More people have access to high speed broadband

Action: Increase the availability and take up of broadband across the county to address digital exclusion.

Progress: An updated Digital Infrastructure Action Plan went to Cabinet July 2020

Desired Outcome: People have the opportunity to raise their household income

Action: Work as part of the Cardiff Capital Region to attract high skill, high wage jobs

Progress: There are regular monthly update meetings held with the Director of the Cardiff Capital Region. These meetings attended by our Leader, Chief Executive, Chief Officers for Resource and Enterprise and Head of Enterprise and Community Animation discuss further opportunities for inward investment and job growth in the County

Desired Outcome: People have the opportunity to raise their household income

Action: Deliver the communities for work programme to reduce the number of people in, or at risk of, poverty

Progress: This programme will be in place by March 2022

Desired Outcome: Households are able to maximise their incomes and minimise their outgoings.

Action: Continue to develop a tackling poverty plan for the county aligned to the aspirations of the Social Justice Strategy.

Progress: The Tackling Poverty and Inequality Action Plan was presented to Cabinet for approval on 3rd March 2021 as part of the third revision of the Social Justice Strategy. The action plan is initially for one year 2021 – 2022 but will roll forward into subsequent years.

Desired Outcome: A reduction in the number of people not in education, training, or employment

Action: Provide learning, training and employability opportunities for 11 to 24-year olds

Progress: Inspire2achieve and Inspire2work funded until December 2022

Desired Outcome: More people with disabilities and care leavers in employment

Action: Provide access to the labour market for people with disabilities and care leavers

Progress: People with disabilities and care leavers are part of the Guaranteed interview process (this was implemented on the 3rd of March 2020)

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	
Gender reassignment		Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	
Race	x		

Strategic objective 3: Create cohesive communities

Desired Outcome: Better data is available about hate-based bullying

Action: Improve recording of incidents of hate-based bullying and piloting appropriate interventions.

Progress: The Bullying Inclusion Group has decided to introduce the Welsh Government recording process across the county. This process will be discussed with Headteachers with the aim of trying to ensure a level of consistency in the data collected. Once the process is finalised and agreed it will be rolled out to all schools.

Desired Outcome: Increased awareness of the effect of hate-based bullying amongst young children in school

Action: Hold awareness sessions in the Chepstow cluster initially then arrange for the sessions across the county.

Progress: Awareness sessions in the form of a puppet group took place in the Chepstow cluster and was largely well received. Covid has delayed the roll out of further sessions although it is anticipated that further sessions will be arranged for 2021-2022.

Desired Outcome: Increased awareness of the consequences of hate and discrimination in society

Action: Hold annual Holocaust Memorial Commemorative event in one of the Community Hubs

Progress: The council held an online Holocaust events this year on the 27th of January in partnership with the Holocaust Memorial Trust. This event is to remember the millions killed in the Holocaust, under Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur.

Desired Outcome: Increased awareness amongst children of the dangers of bullying in all its forms

Action: Promote Anti-Bullying Week on an annual basis

Progress: This is promoted annually by the Corporate Communications Team.

Desired Outcome: A reduction in the effects of loneliness and isolation

Action: To deliver the outcomes under the Connected Monmouthshire Plan.

Progress: Engagement with Town and Community Councils were key in understanding local approaches to supporting those affected by this agenda – what exists and where does it take place, who attends and conversely, what does not exist, why not and who needs it. Engagement with our older population has been straightforward and pre- Covid, there were many opportunities for this cohort to stay engaged and take part in community activities of interest to them. Similarly, engagement with our younger people has taken place via our Monmouthshire Youth Forum and other youth groups. This has been an easy process to undertake.

It has been widely acknowledged that we need to better understand those that sit in the middle of these two cohorts; our working-age population. Steps have been taken to try and understand the ‘measures of loneliness,’ and a survey was developed with two themes on loneliness and isolation (L & I):

1. within the work environment,
2. within the community where individuals live

The demographics have been analysed to measure whether there is any correlation between the two.

Council employees were utilised as the ‘pilot’ for the survey and there was approval given by all relevant Trade Unions for this approach. There have been several attempts made to push the survey out across all teams and departments, recognising that not all staff have access to digital communications. The current situation is that the survey is still open, and all colleagues are welcome to participate, anonymously, to help inform possible actions the council may need to implement.

Desired Outcome: Overcoming the barriers to accessing transport in rural areas

Action: Develop digital solutions to increase access to rural transport solutions using the GovTech challenge fund scheme funded by the Cabinet Office.

Progress: The appointed supplier, Box Clever Digital, has developed a digital platform called thrive which combines a journey planner, secure lift sharing scheme and booking for demand responsive transport schemes. Testing has been delayed by the pandemic.

Good practice: Supporting young people going through gender re-assignment

Action: Support from the SHIFT Project

Progress: The Shift Project is supporting more young people through gender-reassignment. In addition to this the young people who are going through their transition have been accessing the open access provisions across the county. This has been possible as the Shift Team have been able to help boost self-esteem where young people who are living in their chosen gender feel confident to 'come out' in a social setting.

Good practice: The Girl and Boy Project

Action: The Youth Team to providing support to groups of young people on specific areas of well-being.

Progress: The Youth Service offer a GIRL and BOY project is a targeted group that offers support for groups of young people to discuss topics such as sexual health, social anxiety, school issues and other issues that are effecting their well-being. The purpose of offering support to specific genders is to enable young people to openly discuss experiences and issues in an environment where they feel comforted, supported, and reassured.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	
Race	x		

Strategic objective 4: To provide services that are accessible to our public and support our workforce.

Desired Outcome: Ensure that we consider our diverse audience when we communicate as a council.

Action: Continually adhere to the National Principles of Public Engagement

Progress: Ongoing engagement utilising all available engagement platforms

Desired Outcome: A fully accessible website providing information about council services.

Action: Refresh the council's website to ensure it meets the latest web content accessibility guidelines.

Progress: The council website has been subject to a website accessibility project called WCAG 2.1. The results show a measurable increase in its accessibility rating according to the scoring criteria. Funding has been made available to enable this excellent project to continue for 2021 – 2022.

Desired Outcome: More services are available digitally thereby improving accessibility

Action: Continue to make more services available digitally through the council's app and the Chatbot

Progress: More forms have been made available increasing people's ability to self-serve, increasing accessibility of services. This should free-up staff capacity enabling greater capacity in face-to-face and telephone services although the pandemic has disrupted this and led to significant increases in phone calls.

Desired Outcome: New and improved face-to-face access to council services

Action: Open a new Community Hub in Abergavenny with significantly improved access

Progress: A new Hub based in the Abergavenny Town Hall opened on the 14th September 2020. We continued to run the UKs only local authority Post Office to maintain this vital service for the residents of Usk

Desired Outcome: Residents of Monmouthshire have access to independent advice

Action 1: Continue to fund Monmouthshire Citizens Advice Bureau

Action 2: Work closely with the Disability Advice Project to access advice from the Big Lottery funded project

Progress 1: Grant funding is provided by the council on an annual basis

Progress 2: The Access for All Forum which is chaired by a member of the Disability Advice Project has not met since the Covid outbreak. It is hoped that this group will meet again soon, and the project can then be rolled out to Monmouthshire residents.

Desired Outcome: Improved services for dealing with mental health in Monmouthshire

Action 1: Continue to work with MIND on delivering the Rural mental health project.

Action 2: Improve the support for workforce mental health.

Progress 1: The PSB has agreed mental health will continue to be a priority area of focus moving forward. We are continuing to work with our colleagues in PHW to promote the Melo website which provides foundation tier universal, evidence based mental health & well-being self-directed support tools and information and, signposting to services where necessary.

Progress 2: There is a range of support that is accessible to all colleagues e.g. – counselling/ the GO TO group/ informal peer- to - peer conversation / coaching/ mentoring/ counselling/ Occupational Health.

Desired Outcome: Improve services available to families during the first 1001 days of their child's life

Action: Develop universally accessible support for post-natal mothers and children in the very early years including infant feeding and child development intervention.

Progress: The target date for achieving this target is March 2022.

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Strategic objective 5: Create a diverse and inclusive workforce

Desired Outcome: Those working in key sectors such as home care are less likely to experience in-work poverty.

Action: Continue to pay the living wage to all council employees.

Progress: MCC's Pay Policy for 2021/22 states the council's commitment to the Living Wage. This was ratified by the 11th of March 2021.

Desired Outcome: More people with disabilities are applying to work for the county council.

Action: Deliver the action plan to attain Disability Confident Committed status

Progress: After discussions with colleagues from DWP, we have achieved Level 1 Committed and can begin work towards progressing to Level 2 Employer status. DWP have agreed to act as a critical friend in this process and to assist us in attaining level 2.

Desired Outcome: People can access more services fully using the Welsh language.

Action: Proactively target new job opportunities at Welsh speakers.

Progress: There has been a recent review taken of the council recruitment process and the ability to speak Welsh is now included in the standard person specification section thus enabling those skills to be counted towards the scoring process for the shortlisting stage. Welsh language training will also be available for staff who are lacking confidence or need to enhance existing skills in order to increase the number of Welsh speakers that can provide a service to Welsh speaking members of the public.

The Equality and Welsh Language Officer is currently in the process of discussing with managers of front line services about arranging a pilot for 10 members of staff to take part in a fast track Welsh Language course thus further adding to the existing members of staff who speak Welsh.

Desired Outcome: A more diverse workforce

Action: Introduce more graduate and intern and cadetship opportunities to increase workforce diversity

Progress: The Apprentice Graduate Intern (AGI) Strategy is being implemented over the period 2021 – 2024

Action: Guaranteed Interview Scheme for reservists, veterans, and spouses.

Progress: This has been agreed by Council and is now in place to assist the above people in beginning a career with the council

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Strategic objective 6: Reduce the gender pay gap

Desired Outcome: Contribution towards breaking the cycle of Gender Stereo-typing that exists in society and has a negative impact on gender pay equality.

Action 1: Publish an annual Gender Pay Report

Action 2: Look at alternative ways of recruiting staff to break down the barriers of gender stereotyping.

Progress 1: This report is published annually as a requirement of the Equality Act 2010 through the annual monitoring report. The council's pay and grading system is based on 'equal pay for equal value work' and via our job evaluation process male and females are paid (the same) for the job role they perform. We as an employer want our staff to perform the work that is best suited to their abilities and receive the same respect & consideration, regardless of gender. If we can support both male and females who work in gender atypical roles, as a society perhaps we can become less likely to de-value some workers based on arbitrary and old-fashioned gender stereotypes

Progress 2: The council are careful to ensure that we do not reinforce gender stereo typing and our recruitment campaigns consider such issues. For example, we understand that language and word choice in an advert and visuals in a campaign are crucial to avoid unintentional gender bias. As a consequence, we are seeing changes across previously male – and female – dominated fields ... we are seeing an impact in the make-up of the workforce in some areas and we are working towards becoming more balanced. Although demographic workforce shifts are occurring, entrenched social roles and stereo types are slower to evolve. Awareness is key & we recognise that training for managers can help so on a wider note, in addition to our safer recruitment training, we are introducing unconscious bias training in 2021 as part of our Training Plan to support people leaders.

Outcome: Understand Gender pay differences in our organisation.

Action: Gather and analyse gender data.

Progress: There is a statutory requirement within the Equality Act 2010 to report annually on the Gender Pay Gap. This report aims to address any areas of concern as a part of the Strategic annual monitoring report and is published on the council website.

Outcome: Equal pay for work of equal value.

Action: Revise the People Strategy ensuring that data on the gender pay gap is utilised to inform the strategy.

Progress: The Single Status Agreement and Job Evaluation process ensures equal pay for equal value work. The People Strategy is due for review in September 2022 and our gender pay gap data will be utilised to inform this.

Desired Outcome: Reduced gender pay difference in the County

Action: Measures added to the Corporate Plan

Progress: This is an ongoing issue, using our status as the largest employer in the county to influence other employers in the gender pay arena

Protected Characteristics

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Discharging the Specific Duties

The broad purpose of the specific duties is to help public bodies, such as this Council, in their performance of the general duty, and to aid transparency. In Wales the specific duties are set by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. This section describes how we have discharged these duties.

Setting equality objectives and publishing strategic equality plans

The strategic Equality Plan is part of the Council's Policy Framework within the constitution and must be approved by full council. The Strong Communities Select (Scrutiny) Committee annually reviews the annual monitoring report. A Social Justice Advisory Group has also been established, chaired by the Cabinet member, this group gives direction to the agenda and ensures that the council is progressing in its agreed aims.

Engagement

A detailed overview of the engagement undertaken with groups with protected characteristics, is contained as appendix 2 of this report. Specific groups (both external and internal with external partnership representation) that we engage with include:

Access for All Forum, Action 50+ Abergavenny, Monmouth Visually Impaired Group, Monmouthshire Autism Stakeholder Group, Monmouthshire Action Group (Tackling the effects of inequality)

The Access for All Forum has over the past 7 to 8 years acted as a valued critical friend to the council and allowed disabled groups and individuals to discuss issues that affect them and ask questions of the council.

The 50+ Forum is externally organised and affords the members the opportunity to be a 'voice' for older people in Monmouthshire through consultations, questionnaires, surveys, dissemination of information, interaction between service users and service supplier, relating to the development and delivery of service.

Assessment of impact

Since the Equality Act introduced the requirement for organisations to conduct impact assessments of its decisions the council has regularly updated its guidance, templates and challenge processes to ensure that assessments are robust, up to date and cognisant of any new developments. The current version includes the following legislative requirements to become an integrated assessment document:

- Equality Act 2010 and the consideration of the needs of those with Protected characteristics,
- Well Being of Future Generations Act April 2016,
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Corporate Parenting

- Safeguarding
- Poverty (updated to reflect Socio-Economic Duty during 2020-21)

To ensure that the Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) are sufficiently robust to allow elected members to make properly informed decisions a sub group consisting of the Equality and Welsh Language Officer, the Sustainability Policy Officer, the Performance Manager and the Scrutiny Manager are consultees on all reports sent to Cabinet, Council or Single Member decisions. They review and advise on the quality and robustness of all EQIA's accompanying reports requiring a decision. The group meet monthly to conduct further quality assurance checks and communicate with the authors if the assessments require additional information

This small group plays a key role in scrutinising the proposals for savings in the annual budget setting process advising senior officers and managers on the quality of their reports, EQIA assessments and also the potential negative cumulative impact brought about by increases in fees and charges upon those least able to pay. This important piece of work was introduced due to the new Socio-economic Duty.

Equality information

For the Council the collection of relevant equality information is essential when it comes to knowing our service users, their needs and shaping the services that we need to provide. There remain significant challenges when it comes to collecting accurate information in relation to equality and diversity, particularly for some of the more "sensitive" of the protected characteristics such as sexual orientation and gender reassignment. We have developed a database on our intranet site to improve the availability of information on groups with the protected characteristics to improve the quality of our integrated impact assessments. The Council has remained firm in its support of the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

Employment information, pay differences and staff training

We have an on-line data collection system which provides all the information the council needs to understand the makeup of its staff in respect of the protected characteristics. Information on new starters is automatically entered on the system which in itself is sufficiently robust; however the historic records are missing some key information where staff have not completed monitoring forms fully resulting in an incomplete understanding of the number of staff who have protected characteristics. All the information that we are required to publish can be found on the council's website in the Equality and Diversity section at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Discipline and Grievance information 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021: -	
Number of employees who raised grievances	3
Number of employees had grievances raised against them	12
Number of employees subject to discipline procedures	16

Appendix 1 at the end of this document is the Council's Gender Pay Report for 2020 – 2021.

The Council's staff induction programme and Managers Training sessions which are both run several times a year have a specific timeslot which deals with the Equality Act 2010, equalities in general and the Welsh Language Standards. During the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face training was replaced by online training through the Microsoft Teams platform.

Procurement

The Council's Procurement process uses the documentation of the Welsh Purchasing Consortium which has been developed to be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. Also, the council are signed up to the Code of Practice Ethical Employment in Supply Chains

Reporting and publishing

This report is being published as per the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will be available in alternative formats upon request.

Covid 19

The Coronavirus pandemic which began taking a hold in early to mid-March 2020 continues to pose unprecedented challenges to well-being and people's way of life. Planned activity was paused as staff were redeployed and spending targeted towards the council's coronavirus response.

It has been vital that every person or family in crisis were aware that they could access support.

In the last year our purpose has continued to evolve to reflect the new challenges presented by the pandemic, strategic aims developed to address the challenge, and the organisation were tasked with delivering these. These have included the following key services:

- providing hub schools for the children of key workers during lockdown,
- telephoning all 3000 + of the shielded households in the county,
- delivering in the Track Trace and Protect service operated in partnership between local government and the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board utilising the expertise of the Monmouthshire and Torfaen Public Protection Teams.
- paying millions of pounds in grants to support local jobs businesses
- the deployment of the extensive community volunteering network.
- Hundreds of members of staff were also re-deployed so that the council could continue to safely deliver core services like waste collection and home care.

Appendix 1

People Services

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2021

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Introduction

The Gender Pay Gap Information Regulations require all employers with 250 or more employees to report their Gender Pay Gap annually, publishing on a national Government website as well as the organisations website. The Gender Pay Gap Information Regulations apply to employers in the public and private sector.

In addition to these new regulations, employers in the public sector are subject to a specific public sector equality duty in respect of their functions - The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

The regulations apply to all employers with 250 or more employees on the "snapshot" date. The "snapshot" date for the public sector is 31 March each year. Therefore, the Council is required to publish its gender pay gap for each year on the Monmouthshire County Council website and on the Government website (GOV.UK), no later than 31 March of the following year. Therefore, for the "snapshot" date of 31 March 2021, the findings must be published no later than 31 March 2022.

The purpose of Gender Pay Gap reporting is to achieve greater gender equality across the UK and increase pay transparency. The gender pay gap is an analysis of gender distribution across the workforce.

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to the principle of equal pay for all employees by ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Equality Act. To achieve this the Council introduced Single Status and uses the Greater London Provincial Council (GLPC) job evaluation scheme to assess the value of all National Joint Council (NJC) jobs across the organisation, which provides evidence in support of the banding of each job within our grading structure. Salaries are paid according to band and incremental annual progression within the band occurs irrespective of an employee's gender.

What do we have to report?

The regulations require employers to publish the following information:

- The mean gender pay gap;
- The median gender pay gap;
- The mean bonus pay gap;
- The median bonus pay gap;
- The relative proportions of male and female employees in each quartile pay band.

Workforce Profile

As of the 'snapshot date' of 31 March 2021 the Councils workforce profile for the purposes of this report was as follows:



Male 32.9% Female 67.1%

The Full Time and Part Time gender ratios was:



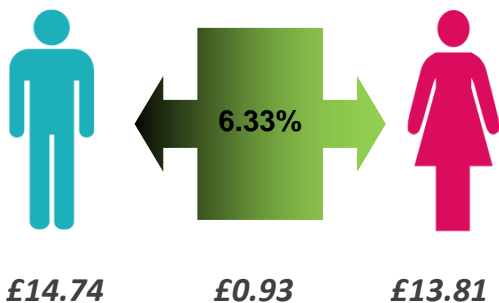
Part Time 4.31:0.23



Full Time 1.01:0.98

Mean Gender Pay Gap

UK mean (average) Gender Pay Gap is **18.2%** which is a 7.9% increase since April 2020.



The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women.



Median Gender Pay Gap

UK 2020 median gender pay gap was 15.9%. In 2021 it has risen slightly to 16.2%.



The median pay gap is the difference between the mid points in the ranges of hourly earnings of men

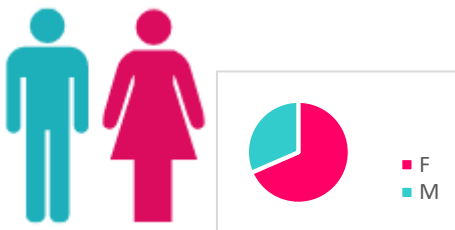
Bonus Pay

Monmouthshire County Council has not operated any bonus schemes since 2009 - upon the introduction of Single Status.

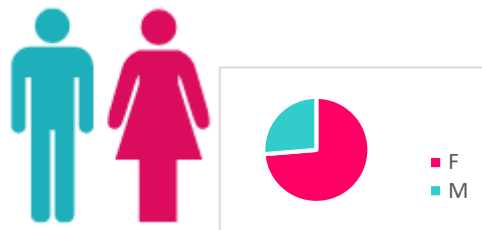
Bonus Pay Gap 0%

Quartile Pay Bands

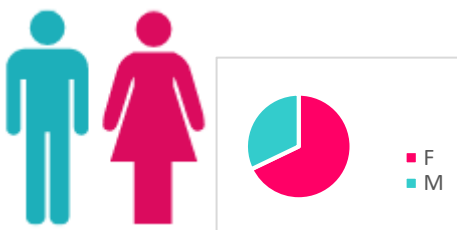
Lower Pay Quartile
£8,026.00 - £21,322.00



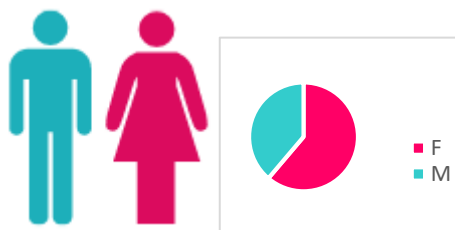
Lower Middle Pay Quartile
£21,322.00 - £23,541.00



Upper Middle Pay Quartile
£23,541.00 - £31,346.00



Upper Quartile
£31,346.00 - £119,955.00



Conclusions

The Mean Gender Pay Gap for all workers at **31 March 2021** was **6.33%**, a difference of **£0.93** per hour between the sexes.

UK 2021 mean (average) Gender Pay Gap is 18.2% which is a 7.9% increase since April 2020.

The Median Pay Gap for all workers at **31 March 2021** was **7.64%** some way below the 2021 ONS survey, which was **16.2%**. An actual difference in hourly rates of **£0.99**.

UK 2020 median gender pay gap was 15.9%. In 2021 it has risen slightly to 16.2%.

Quartile Analysis shows, that in the Lower Middle there has been an decrease in the percentage of males from 33.21% to 27.39%, however there is a relatively stable proportion of female to male as you would expect based on the overall proportion of workers being 32.86% male to 67.14% female. The proportion of males to females increases in the Upper quartiles.

Factors affecting the Gender Pay Gap

The pay gap is strongly affected by the makeup of the Council's workforce and its distribution.

The majority of the Council's staff are in the lower grades, this means that the overall pay gap is distorted, reflecting workforce composition rather than pay inequalities. This is particularly evident in Cleaning, Catering and Social Care, which has a large female workforce who in general terms work more part time hours, as opposed to roles dominated by males in areas such as Highways, Waste and Landscape who tend to work full time hours. Therefore, the Gender Pay Gap is as much a societal gap as a pure pay gap.

The Council has a very stable workforce and for **2020/2021** had a low turnover rate at **7.69%**, meaning there are only a few vacancies that give an opportunity for changes in the makeup of the workforce.

What we have done

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to equality in the workplace having already taken several measures to ensure that it is a fair and equitable employer by:

- Ensuring equal pay for work of equal value using job evaluation.
- Monmouthshire County Council's grading structure has 13 grades with 5 increments in ten of the grades, 3 increments in two of the grades and 4 increments in one of the grades. Grades span across SCP 1- 51 with associated salaries from £17,842 (SCP 1) to £55,195 (SCP 51). More information about the GLPC and the grades can be found in the Council's Single Status Collective Agreement.
The implementation of the new pay spine in 1 April 2019 introduced a minimum spinal column point of £9.00 per hour, which was in line with the rate set by the Living Wage Foundation. The minimum spinal column point with effect from 1 April 2020 is £9.25 per hour.
- Promoting and supporting a number of flexible working practices for employees within the organisation, irrespective of gender. These include job share, part time working and term time working. HR policies such as Family Leave represent opportunity for all employees to access a range of family friendly arrangements. Across many business areas there is scope for employees, irrespective of gender, to be able to work in a flexible agile way, to work from different locations.

The Council is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which male and females work within the Council and the salaries that these roles attract.

Appendix 2

Communications to Monmouthshire residents with protected characteristics 2020-21

May 2020

- Social media campaign encouraging members of the community invited to part take in volunteering to support the vulnerable and elderly during the lockdowns. People from all backgrounds encouraged to help with shopping, picking up prescriptions and offering friendly calls to check in on neighbours.
- VE day celebrations including a video featuring residents of all ages singing We'll Meet Again.

June 2020

- EU settlement livestream webinar to engage people impacted by the changes brought on by Brexit
- Publicity through social media aimed at highlighting funding opportunities available for places of worship to help safeguard against hate crime
- Support for parents and young people about the return back to school after lockdown
- Content to keep young people engaged while at home
- Campaign for Armed Forces Week acknowledging the excellent contributions of Armed Forces colleagues including women who have served/are serving.
- Social media alongside Race Equality First promoting a competition to create an anti-racism poster
- Carers week campaign centred on support for all unpaid carers. Campaign featured a young carer who helps look after her young brother who has Down Syndrome and requires high level support. Campaign also included a livestream talk about unpaid caring and what support was available to people who care for a loved one, and a thank you video for all the work unpaid carers do.
- Ongoing COVID-19 advice and support for residents and businesses

July 2020

- Fostering campaign highlighting a number of activities young people can do over the summer holidays while promoting foster caring.
- Livestream event thanking volunteers who have supported elderly and vulnerable during the pandemic.
- Ongoing promotion of the excellent work carried out by volunteers including a video featuring a young person who was volunteering their time to support foodbanks in Chepstow.
- Promotion of the reopening of services and facilities including shops/play parks for children.
- Ongoing COVID-19 advice and support for residents and businesses

August 2020

- Campaign and publicity around Virtual Pride Week and the celebration of diverse communities in the county.
- Fostering campaign highlighting a number of activities young people can do over the summer holidays while promoting foster caring.
- Video campaign reaching out all age demographics recruiting people to become therapeutic foster carers
- Ongoing COVID-19 advice and support for residents and businesses
- Active travel consultation
- Engagement around the reopening of leisure centres and encouraging people of all ages to access the services once again

September 2020

- Launch of Community Fridge project to help reduce food waste and in turn help those facing poverty in Monmouthshire County Council
- European settlement scheme engagement livestream held.
- Fostering campaign encouraging people to become foster carers and support vulnerable young people. Included, q and a video and livestream
- Video providing support and advice on school counsellors available to support young people in school
- Be Mighty Recycle campaign to encourage recycling and waste reduction
- Opening of new Abergavenny Community Hub

October 2020

- Stay safe messaging around Halloween season.
- Call for volunteers to support vulnerable during winter months, including video demonstrating excellent work of volunteers.
- Engagement around support from businesses to support young people into work with apprenticeships
- Promotion of the return of the MonGames aimed at keeping young people active during the half term break
- Monmouthshire County Council's support of Show Racism The Red Card's Wear red day
- Promotion of "Hate Crime Week" with advice and support for anyone experiencing any sort of hate crime.
- Promotion of Wear Yellow to support mental health awareness
- Ongoing COVID-19 advice and support for residents and businesses

November 2020

- Annual "We Care Week" campaign aimed at recruiting more people into social care jobs
- Launch of Christmas #Shop Local campaign
- Firebreak lockdown support for businesses
- Walking challenge for Children in Need launched to raise money for the charity over £6000 raised by schools and colleagues in Monmouthshire
- Promotion of Caring apprenticeships in Monmouthshire and how it helps support the most vulnerable residents in the county
- Remembrance Day content across social media, including COVID safe ceremony published on social media
- Safety advice around Bonfire night

December 2020

- Budget settlement announcement
- Shop Local livestreams held across the county.
- Support and advice to residents during festive period
- Ongoing COVID advice
- Help Us to Help Your communities – calls to support vulnerable during winter months

January 2020

- Support around mental health during January
- Winter weather updates
- Business advice livestream sessions to support businesses during the challenging period

- Budget engagement – Livestream sessions to answer questions, online consultation, press release
- Revised Local Development Plan engagement
- Video with first resident in Monmouthshire to receive the COVID vaccine, 93-year-old Charlotte Jones was also first woman GP in Monmouth.

February 2020

- Encouraging young people to vote in the Senedd election campaign
- Winter weather updates
- Apprenticeship week promoting apprenticeships for young people in Monmouthshire
- Budget engagement

March 2020

- Vaccination advice and support
- “Autism Awareness week” promotions
- Election engagement ensuring residents have all the information they needed for the upcoming elections in May
- Encouragement campaign to get people to fill in the census.
- Support for local businesses

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

Strong Communities Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
18 th November 2021	Public Protection 2020/21 Performance Report & Division's response to the Coronavirus pandemic	To consider the performance report for the service.	David Jones	Performance Monitoring
	Strategic Equality Plan	Scrutiny of the Annual Monitoring Report 2020-2021.	Alan Burkitt	Performance Monitoring
13 th December at 10am	Flooding Workshop	To be confirmed	Ross Price Mark Hand	Scrutiny Workshop
25 th January 2022	Budget Scrutiny	Scrutiny of the Budget Proposals for 2022-2023.	Peter Davies	Budget Scrutiny
	Budget Monitoring Report	To scrutinise the budget report for month 6.	Jonathon Davies	Budget Monitoring
	Burials and Cremations Member Report	To consider a report produced by Councillor Val Smith in relation to burials and cremations.	Councillor Val Smith	Member Report
10 th February 2022	Public Spaces Protection Order on Dog Controls	To consider the findings of a 3 month public consultation on a Public Spaces Protection Order for Dog Controls (dog fouling, dog exemption areas, dogs on leads areas) and make recommendations to Cabinet.	Huw Owen David Jones	Policy Development
	Possibly defer Social Justice Policy	To discuss amendments to the policy and the action plans to deliver the policy.	Jude Langdon	Policy Development
	Welsh Language TBC	To discuss the new 5 year Welsh Language Strategy.	Alan Burkitt	Policy Development
24 th March 2022	Budget Monitoring Report	To scrutinise the budget report for month 9.	Jonathon Davies	Budget Monitoring

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

Strong Communities Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
19 th May 2022				

Future Agreed Work Programme Items: Dates to be determined

- × Annual monitoring of Public Protection in May, a half year exception report, highlighting any gaps in service delivery, to be scheduled in November of each year.
- × Registrars Service ~ annual monitoring in May
- × Digital Solutions to improve access to rural transport
- × Air Pollution Monitoring Report
- × Social Justice Policy
- × Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy ~ learning form Oxfordshire County Council
- × Open Space Review
- × Climate change and decarbonisation
- × County Lines ~ Crime and Disorder Scrutiny
- × Report on the activities of CCTV
- × County Lines

Cabinet, Council and Individual Cabinet Member Decisions (ICMD) Forward Plan

Monmouthshire County Council is required to publish a forward plan of all key decisions to be taken. Council and Cabinet items will only be considered for decision if they have been included on the planner no later than the month preceding the meeting, unless the item is considered urgent.

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Subject	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner	Date item originally scheduled for decision
Council	04/11//2021	Final Statement of Accounts		Peter Davies	07/05/21	
Council	01/12/2022	RLDP Deposit Plan for submission to WG for examination	Approval of Deposit Plan post-consultation for submission to WG for independent examination	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	30/07/21	
Council	01/10/23	RLDP for Adoption		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/02/23	LDP submission for examination		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/07/22	RLDP Deposit Plan endorsement for consultation	Endorsement of Deposit Plan	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	06/04/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 9 held on 10th March 2022		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	

Council	10/03/22	2022/23 Treasury Policy		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Council	10/03/22	2022/23 Final Budget sign off including Council Tax Resolution		Peter Davies	07/05/21	
Cabinet	02/03/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 8 held on 27th January 2022		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	02/03/22	2022/23 WCF/Treasury Fund Investments		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	02/03/22	Final Budget Proposals		Jon Davies	07/10/21	
Cabinet	16/02/22	2022/23 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	16/02/22	2021/2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 9		Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Council	27/01/22	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/05/21	
Special Cabinet	19/01/22	Draft Budget Proposals		Jon Davies		

IMCD	12/01/22	2022/23 Community Council and Police Precepts - final		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Cabinet	05/01/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 7 held on 16th December 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	05/01/22	2021/2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 7		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
ICMD	22/12/21	Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011		Alan Burkitt/Lisa Dymock	22/10/21	
IMCD	18/12/21	2022/23 Community Council and Police Precepts draft		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Council	16/12/21	Capital Strategy		Jon Davies	20/05/21	
Council	16/12/21	RLDP Preferred Strategy endorsement post consultation	Endorsement of preferred strategy to inform deposit plan	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	20/05/20	
Cabinet	15/12/21	Consultation on the proposals to establish an all-through school, Abergavenny.	Cabinet to receive objection report and decide whether to proceed with the proposal.	Debbie Graves	26/05/21	
IMCD	08/12/21	Council Tax Base and associated matters		Ruth Donovan	07/05/21	

Cabinet	01/12/21	Regional approach to employability		Hannah Jones	04/11/21	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Review of Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan 2017-2020	Purpose: to approve the revised Destination Development Plan	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Cabinet approval of the methodology for prioritising highway resurfacing and maintenance projects		Mark Hand	07/10/21	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Welsh Church Fund Working group - meeting 6 held on 4th November 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Abergavenny Velo Park	CM	Mike Moran	14/10/20	
Cabinet	01/12/21	2021/22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 6		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	01/12/21	'Leave Averaging & Holiday Pay		Katherine Cameron		
Cabinet	01/12/21	MTFP Budget Process report		Jonathan S Davies	07/10/21	

ICMD	24/11/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	Adoption of SPG clarifying how S106 contributions are calculated following consultation	Mark Hand / Phillip Thomas	26/04/21	
ICMD	10/11/21	AWPOG Capital Funding for Fixed Play Provision		Mike Moran		
Council	04/11/21	Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy	To endorse an updated climate strategy and action plan which will introduce new programmes of activity to achieve the council's clear policy commitment to reduce carbon emissions.	Matthew Gatehouse / Hazel Clatworthy	19/05/21	
Council	04/11/21	Diversity and Democracy Declaration		John Pearson	12/02/21	
Council	04/11/21	Council Diary		John Pearson	29/09/21	
Council	04/11/21	Safeguarding Evaluative Report		Jane Rodgers	20/07/21	
Council	04/11/21	ISA260 - MCC Accounts		Jon Davies		
Council	04/11/21	Statement of Gambling Policy and Proposals for Casinos.		Linda O'Gorman	21/09/21	

Cabinet	03/11/21	Ombudsman's annual letter		Annette Evans	13/10/21	
Cabinet	03/11/21	ICT Security and Resilience		Sian Hayward	07/10/21	
Cabinet	03/11/21	LA Housing Prospectus		Cath Fallon/ Sally Meyrick	27/09/21	
Cabinet	03/11/21	Active Travel Network Maps		Paul Sullivan	13/11/20	
ICMD	27/10/21	Museum object disposal		Rachael Rogers	09/06/21	
ICMD	27/10/21	LDP Annual Monitoring Report and Development Management Annual Performance Report	Endorsements of reports for submission to WG	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	26/04/21	
Cabinet	06/10/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 5 held on 23rd September 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	06/10/21	Consultation on the proposals to establish an all-through school, Abergavenny.	Cabinet to receive the consultation report and consider recommendations on proposed way forward / whether to publish statutory notices.	Debbie Graves	26/05/21	

Council	23/09/21	Director of Social Services Annual Report		Julie Boothroyd		
Council	23/09/21	Borough Theatre Funding Proposal		cath Fallon		
Council	23/09/21	Corporate Plan Annual Report		Emma Davies	17/08/21	
Council	23/09/21	Audit Committee Annual Report		Phillip White	29/06/21	
ICMD	22/09/21	Leave Averaging & Holiday Pay	Deferred to 13th October	Katherine Cameron		
Cabinet	15/09/21	Placemaking Charter	Council signs up to the Placemaking Charter	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	28/04/21	
Cabinet	15/09/21	Borough Theatre Funding Proposal	Needs to go 15 th Sept as won't be ready for 1 st Sept – Cabinet want to endorse this before it goes to Council for funding to be secured on 23 rd Sept	Cath Fallon		
Cabinet	15/09/21	Code of Corporate Governance		Andrew Wathan	20//07/2021	

Cabinet	15/09/21	Welsh Church Fund Working group - meeting 4 held on 22nd July 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	15/09/21	Regeneration projects and Placemaking grant submission	To endorse the indicative Placemaking Grant submission for £791,429 made under the Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding	Mark Hand	29/07/21	
Cabinet	15/09/21	Afghan National Relocation Scheme	To re-state Cabinet's commitment to continued participation in the Home Office Afghan National Relocation scheme in line with the desire for Monmouthshire to be a county of sanctuary for those fleeing persecution.	Lisa Dymock/Matt Gatehouse	8/16/2021 - amended 20/8/21	
ICMD	08/09/21	Abergavenny Town Floodlights		Mike Moran	26/06/21	
ICMD	18/08/21	Consultation on the review of school places in Caldicot town		Matthew Jones	21/07/21	
ICMD	18/08/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance		Mark Hand / Phillip Thomas	01/05/21	23/06/21
ICMD	18/08/21	Procurement of PaybyPhone as an additional payment service for our car parks (Jane Pratt)	Agree to procure PaybyPhone	Mark Hand	29/07/21	

ICMD	04/08/21	Planning Policy discretionary service charges (Bob Greenland)	Agree Candidate Site assessment charges	Rachel Lewis	29/07/21	
Cabinet	28/07/21	Securing resources for ICT resilience	To provide appropriate investment for security resilience in ICT systems	Sian Hayward	30/06/21	
Cabinet	28/07/21	Regional Collaboration: Gwent Public Service Board		Richard Jones	14/07/21	
Cabinet	28/07/21	2021/22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Council	22/07/21	investments in Leisure Centres		Marie Bartlett / Ian Saunders		
ICMD	14/07/21	Museum object Disposal		Rachael Rogers/Lisa Dymock	19/05/21	
Cabinet	07/07/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3 held on 24th June 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	07/07/21	Capital Slippage		Jon Davies	11/06/22	
Cabinet	07/07/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutual Delegation of Strategic Procurement Services 		Cath Fallon		

Council	24/06/21	Chief Officer's Report		Will Mclean	19/05/21	
Council	24/06/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum		Matthew lewis	24/05/21	
Council	24/06/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement for consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	09/06/21	2020/21 Revenue and Capital Monitoring outturn	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1 held on 15th April 2021 and meeting 2 held on 13th May 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Digital and Data	To seek approval for the creation of a new Digital Design and Innovation Team, to strengthen our information governance arrangements and to broaden the remit of the existing performance team to include data analytics'.	Emma Jackson	13/05/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum – to consider the outcome of the feasibility study		Matthew Lewis/Ian Saunders	05/02/21	

Council	13/05/21	Outside Bodies		John Pearson		
Council	13/05/21	Appointment to Committees		John Pearson		
Council	13/05/21	Political Balance		Matt Phillips		
Council	13/05/21	Freedom of the Borough		Joe Skidmore	22/04/21	
Council	13/05/21	Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan		Hazel Clatworthy	14/04/21	
ICMD	12/05/21	A Nation of Sanctuary - Asylum Dispersal Scheme - Moved to Cabinet	To provide Council with an progress update on the Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan which was developed following the passing of a motion to declare a climate emergency.	Matt Gatehouse	19/04/21	
ICMD	12/05/21	Play Action Plan	Cabinet Member Richard John Report originally on Cabinet Agenda	Matthew Lewis/Mike Moran/Ian Saunders	16/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Leisure Centre Investments		Marie Bartlett	22/03/21	

Cabinet	14/04/21	Statutory Consultation to establish 4-19 school in Abergavenny		Cath Saunders	03/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 6 held on 11th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment		Richard Jones	02/03/21	
ICMD	07/04/21	Strategic Procurement		Cath Fallon/P Murphy	09/03/21	
ICMD	24/03/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	To Clarify how S106 contributions are calculated/ deferred from 13/1/21 and 24/02/21 deferred UFN	Phil Thomas/Mark Hand	01/05/19	
Council	11/03/21	Appointments to outside bodies	To appoint a representative to the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee	Matt Gatehouse	08/02/21	
Council	11/03/21	Council Tax Resolution Report		Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Council	11/03/21	Treasury Strategy report		Jon Davies	15/12/20	

Council	11/03/21	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Council	11/03/21	The Annual Pay Policy		Sally Thomas	11/02/21	
ICMD	10/03/21	disposal of land for consideration	Awaiting notification re inclusion DEFERRED UFN	by Cllr Murphy/ Ben Thorpe	09/02/21	
ICMD	10/03/21	Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2021-26		Matthew Lewis/Richard John	10/02/21	
Cabinet	03/03/21	• EAS Business Plan		Sharon Randall Smith	21/09/20	
Cabinet	03/03/21	Final revenue and capital budget proposals		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	03/03/21	Social Justice Strategy Update		Cath Fallon	17/09/20	
Cabinet	16/02/21	Cabinet approval of the evidence based three year highway maintenance forward programme		Mark Hand	07/10/21	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

			Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 5 held on 14th January 2021			
Cabinet	03/02/21	Apprenticeship Pay Rates		Gareth James	08/01/21	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Outdoor Adventure Provision at Gilwern		Marie Bartlett	30/11/20	30/11/20
Cabinet	03/02/21	Proposed Disposal of MCC Cottages		Nicola Howells	15/12/20	
Council	27/01/21	Corporate Parenting Strategy		Jane Rodgers		
ICMD	27/01/21	Approval on Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 - The Local Authorities (Precepts) (Wales) Regulations 1995	Deferred from 13/1 to 27/1	Jon Davies		
Cabinet	20/01/21	• Draft revenue and capital budget proposals for consultation		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	20/01/21	Chippenham Mead Play Area, Monmouth		Mike Moran	15/12/20	

Cabinet	20/01/21	Play Area Assessments and Future Play Area Policy	to advise members of play area assessments carried out last year and suggest a rationalisation of provision	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	20/01/21	BUS EMERGENCY SCHEME (BES) – REQUEST TO ALL COUNCILS TO SIGN UP TO THE BES2 SCHEME		Roger Hoggins	24/12/20	
Council	14/01/21	Council Diary 2021/22		Nicola Perry		
Council	14/01/21	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/04/20	
Council	14/01/21	Annual Safeguarding Report		Jane Rodgers	21/09/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Minerals Regional Technical Statement Second Revision (RTS2)		Rachel Lewis	17/12/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Museum Service Collection Review	To propose the deaccessioning of and disposal actions for the proposed items in line with Section 4 of the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit	Matthew Lewis/Rachael Rogers	22/09/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in the Private Rented Sector		Gareth Walters	15/12/21	

ICMD	13/01/21	Staffing Changes: Business Support	To seek approval for the voluntary redundancy of the Chief Executive's Personal Assistant, reducing the cost of administrative support arrangements for the senior management team and contribute to budget savings during the 2021-22 financial year./Paul Jordan	Matt Gatehouse	15/12/21	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Budget Monitoring Report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year.	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Cabinet	06/01/21	RIPA Policy		Matt Phillips	21/10/20	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
ICMD	23/12/20	Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025	To approve the review of the Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 Deferred awaiting new date	Matthew Lewis	22/09/2020/	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 7 held on 3rd December 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

Cabinet	16/12/20	Proposal to pause work on a proposed Development Company		Deb Hill Howells	21/10/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Local Housing Market Assessment Update		Mark Hand	04/11/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Growth Options to Cabinet for endorsement for non-statutory consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Review of school places in Caldicot town		Matthew Jones	21/10/20	
ICMD	09/12/20	Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum	Paul Jordan	Matthew Lewis	deferred from 11/11	
IMCD	09/12/20	Consultation on Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 - The Local Authorities (Precepts) (Wales) Regulations 1995	To seek Member approval of the proposals for consultation purposes regarding payments to precepting authorities during the 2021/22 financial year as required by statute.	Jon Davies		
IMCD	09/12/20	Council Tax base and associated matters	To agree the Council Tax Base figure for submission to the Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2021/22 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions	Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	

Council	03/12/20	Corporate Joint Committee: Consultation Response'	To discuss and endorse a council response to consultation about draft regulations which will create four regional Corporate Joint Committees. These are a statutory mechanism for regional collaboration by local government.	Matt Gatehouse	16/10/20	
Council	03/12/20	Updated Asset Investment Policy		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Council	03/12/20	Statutory Director of Social Services annual report		Julie Boothroyd	14/08/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	InFuSe		Cath Fallon	10/11/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme Revision/S106 Funding, Cae Meldon		Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
ICMD	25/11/20	Homeseach Allocations Policy and Amendments	INCLUDED ON 11/11 AGENDA	Louise Corbett	22/10/20	
ICMD	11/11/20	WELSH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER'S MONITORING WORK 2019-20		Matt Gatehouse		