

# Public Document Pack



County Hall  
Rhadyr  
Usk  
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 19 October 2022

## Notice of meeting

# County Council

**Thursday, 27th October, 2022 at 2.00 pm,  
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA**

## AGENDA

*Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 1.50pm. All members are welcome to join the Chair for prayers should they wish to do.*

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6.1.	COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE PLAN	9 - 34
6.2.	RESPONSE TO URGENT NEED FOR HOUSING ACCOMMODATION	To Follow
6.3.	SOCIAL CARE, SAFEGUARDING & HEALTH ANNUAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2021/22	35 - 182
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6.5.	APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY - ANEURIN BEVAN COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL	221 - 222

7.	<p><b>Motions to Council:</b></p>	
7.1.	<p><b>Submitted by County Councillor Jayne McKenna</b></p> <p>Further to this Council's declaration in September about Non-Domestic Rates, this Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognises the perfect storm of challenges facing town centre businesses in Monmouthshire this winter.</li> <li>• Calls on the administration to consider steps to encourage shopping local in the run up to Christmas 2022, including free parking and free public transport at weekends.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>Members Questions</b></p>	
8.1.	<p><b>From County Councillor Jan Butler to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment</b></p> <p>What representations has the administration made to Welsh Government about road safety on the A4042?</p>	
8.2.	<p><b>From County Councillor Paul Pavia to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment</b></p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member make a statement regarding a county-wide review of Council controlled car parks?</p>	
8.3.	<p><b>From County Councillor Paul Pavia to County Councillor Rachel Garrick, Cabinet Member for Resources</b></p> <p>What assessment has the Cabinet Member made regarding the impact of energy price rises on school budgets this year?</p>	
8.4.	<p><b>From County Councillor Christopher Edwards to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment</b></p> <p>Could the cabinet member inform council of progress with the grant funding bid to Welsh Government in 2022/23 for a safer routes in communities scheme for road safety improvement works for St Lawrence Road (between Kingsmark Lane and Racecourse roundabout), Chepstow.</p>	
8.5.	<p><b>From County Councillor Lisa Dymock to County Councillor Sara Burch, Cabinet Member for Inclusive and Active Communities</b></p> <p>What action is the administration taking to improve facilities for young people in the Caldicot area in the next 12 months?</p>	
9.	<p><b>Next Meeting - 1st December 2022</b></p>	

**Paul Matthews**

**Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr**

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**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY**

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:**

County Councillor Laura Wright	Grofield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tony Kear	Llanbadoc & Usk;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Catrin Maby	Drybridge;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jan Butler	Goetre Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Ian Chandler	Llantilio Crossenny;	Green Party
County Councillor Sara Burch	Cantref;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Alistair Neill	Gobion Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Su McConnel	Croesonen;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby	Llanelly Hill;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Fay Bromfield	Llangybi Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jane Lucas	Osbaston;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Emma Bryn	Wyesham;	Independent Group
County Councillor Peter Strong	Rogiet;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Meirion Howells	Llanbadoc & Usk;	Independent Group
County Councillor Paul Griffiths	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong	Caldicot Cross;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Rachel Catherine Garrick	Caldicot Castle;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Maria Stevens	Severn;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Steven Garratt	Overmonnow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Angela Sandles	Magor East with Undy;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Ben Callard	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor John Crook	Magor East with Undy;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tomos Dafydd Davies	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Dale Rooke	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Catherine Fookes	Town;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Sue Riley	Bulwark and Thornwell;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jayne McKenna	Mitchel Troy and Trellech United;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jill Bond	West End;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Louise Brown	Shirenewton;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Lisa Dymock	Portskewett;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Tony Easson	Dewstow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Christopher Edwards	St. Kingsmark;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt	Lansdown;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Simon Howarth	Llanelly Hill;	Independent Group
County Councillor Richard John	Mitchel Troy and Trellech United;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor David Jones	Crucorney;	Independent Group
County Councillor Penny Jones	Raglan;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Malcolm Lane	Mardy;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Phil Murphy	Caerwent;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Paul Pavia	Mount Pleasant;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell	Pen Y Fal;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Frances Taylor	Magor West;	Independent Group
County Councillor Tudor Thomas	Park;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Armand Watts	Bulwark and Thornwell;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

## Public Information

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### Watch this meeting online

This meeting can be viewed online either live or following the meeting by visiting [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk) or by visiting our Youtube page by searching MonmouthshireCC.

### Welsh Language

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu cyfraniadau gan aelodau'r cyhoedd trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Gofynnwn yn barchus i chi roi rhybudd digonol i ni er mwyn darparu ar gyfer eich anghenion. The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

# 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.

**Kindness:** We will show kindness to all those we work with putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.



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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of County Council held  
at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 2.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor Laura Wright (Chairman)  
County Councillor Ann Webb (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Tony Kear, Catrin Maby, Jan Butler, Ian Chandler, Sara Burch, Alistair Neill, Su McConnel, Mary Ann Brocklesby, Fay Bromfield, Emma Bryn, Peter Strong, Meirion Howells, Paul Griffiths, Jackie Strong, Rachel Garrick, Maria Stevens, Steven Garratt, Angela Sandles, Ben Callard, John Crook, Tomos Davies, Dale Rooke, Catherine Fookes, Sue Riley, Jayne McKenna, Jill Bond, Louise Brown, Lisa Dymock, Tony Easson, Martyn Groucutt, Richard John, David Jones, Penny Jones, Malcolm Lane, Phil Murphy, Paul Pavia, Maureen Powell, Frances Taylor, Tudor Thomas and Armand Watts

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Matt Phillips	Chief Officer People and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Peter Davies	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Resources
Jane Rodgers	Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Will McLean	Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Frances O'Brien	Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Matthew Gatehouse	Head of Policy and Governance
Mark Hand	Head of Place-making, Housing, Highways and Flood

### **APOLOGIES:**

County Councillors Christopher Edwards and Simon Howarth

#### **1. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record.

#### **2. Declarations of interest**

County Councillor Sara Burch declared a non-prejudicial interest in relation to agenda item 7.1 as she had been Manager of the Gateway Credit Union and remains a supporter of the board.

#### **3. Public Questions**

None.

#### **4. Chair's Announcement - Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

Council held a minute silence to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Members also took this time to mark the recent passing of County Councillor Bob Greenland.

# MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 2.00 pm

The Chair welcomed Members to express messages of condolence and fond memories of Councillor Greenland.

### **5. Reports to Council:**

#### **5.1. PROGRESSING MONMOUTHSHIRE'S REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (RLDP)**

The Deputy Leader presented the report to seek Council's endorsement of the proposed way of progressing the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), ensuring that the RLDP delivers on the Council's objectives and addresses key local issues, in particular affordable housing, demographic balance and the climate and nature emergency. In doing so, he expressed appreciation to the relevant officers.

A question was raised to why the planning for housing at Raglan had been rejected by Welsh Government, and it was hoped that WG would grant permission for this development.

There were concerns that if pre-requisites did not materialise the plan could fall through. It was thought that the current financial climate could result in a re-prioritisation of the plans.

Reference was made to the spatial aspects and phosphate emissions in the Wye catchment area, and reassurance was sought that Council will, in the progression of the RLDP, push as hard as it can for a technical solution to dealing with phosphate emissions in the Wye so that developments in the Monmouth area can proceed in due course.

A suggestion was made that Penperlleni be considered as a possible strategic growth area.

Issues raised at a recent scrutiny meeting related to concerns that affordable housing should be across the County and not in specific areas.

To give this planning approach credibility it was suggested that new Administration commit to the WelTag Stage 3 on the Chepstow relief road which would show residents of South East of the County that there is a long term plan to deal with infrastructure challenge.

There were concerns around deliverability and the heavy burden on the revenue budget and consequently frontline services.

The Cabinet Member clarified matters around the phosphate issue, explaining that in relation to the River Usk the phosphate reduction work would be completed by the fiscal year 2025/26. There is also work underway on the River Wye but this is a more complex process.

**Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**That Council endorses the proposal for progressing the RLDP, noting that a report will be brought to Council in December 2022 seeking endorsement to consult on a new Preferred Strategy.**

### **6. MOTION FOR THE RIVERS AND OCEAN**

The Cabinet Member presented the report to outline the challenges facing our marine and river environments and set out how Monmouthshire County Council can play its part in realising clean, healthy and productive rivers and oceans, in order to see all the biodiversity, economic and health and wellbeing benefits that this will bring.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 2.00 pm

A suggestion was made that Council should receive a more robust plan in 6 months, with 6 monthly updates on progress.

The Leader of the Opposition reflected on the importance of education around the unique properties of the Gwent levels, and expressed support on the work on flood defences.

There was suggestion that the levels area of the action plan should be strengthened particularly as this is a complex area of roles and responsibilities. Also, Welsh Government should be lobbied to ensure that NRW is fit for purpose.

The Cabinet Member thanked the Sustainability Policy Officer for her work and noted that an internal working group on climate and nature is hoped to start in the near future.

**Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**To agree to the actions outlined in the Motion for the Rivers and Oceans Action Plan (see Appendix 1)**

#### **7. MONLIFE TACKLING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY SUMMER PROGRAMMES 2022 REPORT**

The Cabinet Member presented the report to provide an update to Council on programmes and interventions delivered by Monlife through the summer, aimed towards tackling poverty, inequality and access to doorstep services.

Council were informed of positive feedback from the summer programme.

The MonLife team are to produce a comprehensive report covering the summer and initiatives contained within this report.

Reference was made to the Food and Fun initiative, which proved to be of huge value in highlighting the importance of good nutrition to children and their families.

**Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**To note the Summer of Fun investment of £140,000 from Welsh Government, a one-off payment that enabled collaboration across partners and contributed to the bespoke opportunities made available through the summer holidays. The service also received funding from Town and Community Councils, the Welsh Museums Federation and annual Welsh Government funding a total of £338,563.**

#### **8. MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SELF-ASSESSMENT 2021/22**

The Leader of the Council presented the report to seek Council approval of the Self-Assessment report 2021/22 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and to ensure that members have a clear and transparent assessment of the Council's performance in 2021/22.

With regards to an increase in staff turnover, the Leader stated that there were a number of factors relating to this and agreed to follow this up following the meeting.

Scrutiny and a Member Workshop had identified that there are no measures prior to school years, and that the first years are important. It was suggested that we need to listen to academic expertise and ensure we help people be the best parents they can be.

# MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 2.00 pm

There were frustrations around the reflective nature of the report, and that there was a need to focus on the business of this Council, its staff and how it is delivering for our communities.

The pressures in Social Services were recognised, and the staff were commended on coping with the pressure and continuing to provide support.

The officers were thanked for their work on the self-assessment.

**Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**That the Monmouthshire County Council Self-Assessment 2021/22 be approved.**

### **9. Motions to Council:**

#### **10. Submitted by County Councillor Ian Chandler**

*This Council notes that:*

*The Declaration of a Climate Emergency passed by Council on 16th May 2019 included the commitments:*

- *That this council will continue to review the Corporate Plan, Well-being plan, Local development plans and other relevant plans and policies to support the above.*
- *Work with partners across the county and other councils and organisations to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5 degrees C.*

*The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act places a requirement on public bodies to embed sustainable development principles in all its practices.*

*This Council further notes that:*

*The Council is required by legislation to hold at least £10 million in cash reserves and, in order to manage its fluctuating cash flow, generally holds between £10 million and £16 million in cash reserves that it invests.*

*The Council is the Investment Custodian of other bodies including the Welsh Church Fund and the Monmouthshire Farm School Endowment Trust, whose combined investment assets exceed £5 million.*

*The Council is part of the Greater Gwent Pension Fund that holds investment assets of over £3.7 billion.*

*This Council resolves to:*

- Investigate how responsibly the Council invests its cash balances*
- Develop a sustainable investment policy that is compatible with the Council's Declaration of a Climate Emergency and the Well Being of Future Generations Act*
- Work with the Greater Gwent Pension Fund to adopt a similar sustainable investment policy*

Seconded by County Councillor France Taylor.

**Council resolved to accept the motion.**

#### **11. Submitted by County Councillor Frances Taylor**

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 2.00 pm

*That this Council calls on Welsh Government to review their policy and approach to Non-Domestic Rates for small businesses. From the 1st April 2022, the Non-Domestic Rate Business Relief Scheme has been amended reducing the level of relief that small businesses can now receive, to a maximum of 50%. It means that businesses previously paying nothing under the small business rate relief scheme, will now have to pay 50% of their rates bill after all other reliefs have been awarded. In recognition of the perfect storm facing small businesses in terms of costs, energy and supply issues and with many continuing to recover from the Covid19 pandemic, this Council will write to the Minister for Finance and Local Government requesting a review of the current policy.*

Seconded by County Councillor Fay Bromfield, in doing, so she stated that WG had committed to a review of business rates and is currently consulting with partners. She continued that it was unlikely that there would be any tangible outcomes for businesses before next April, and as such the Minister should rule out any rises in business rates in the forthcoming budget. She added that MCC should lead in a response that without change this will continue to get worse, business rates are already at a 23 year high and if we don't act now to safeguard businesses and communities there won't be any left to contribute to our economy. She asked that the Cabinet Member write to the minister to encourage a freeze on business rates for eligible businesses in her forthcoming budget.

The Cabinet Member for Resources proposed the following amendment.

*From the 1st April 2022, the Retail, Leisure, and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme has been amended reducing the level of relief that small businesses can now receive, to a maximum of 50%, after all other reliefs have been awarded. In recognition of the perfect storm facing small businesses in terms of costs, energy and supply issues and with many continuing to recover from the Covid19 pandemic, this Council will write to the Minister for Finance and Local Government requesting a review of the current policy.*

Suggestion was made that in addition to writing to Welsh Government, we write to all other 21 local authorities with the template, to urge that a debate be held in WG.

The Cabinet Member stated that she would consider the suggestions put forward by the opposition.

The Leader stated that the review taken by WG will take into account the opinions of the business sector and will be based on evidence, and until we see the outcomes of the review we do not know what WG will take forward.

**Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the motion.**

#### **12. Date of next meeting - 27th October 2022**

Noted.

**The meeting ended at 5.55 pm**

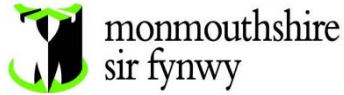
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## Chair's Report 18<sup>th</sup> July – 15<sup>th</sup> October

Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Opening Ceremony for Therapy Garden Mandiff Court Hospital
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2 – 4 p.m.	BEM Awards Caldicot Castle, Caldicot
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> September	Usk Show Usk Showground
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> September 11.45 a.m.	Service of Prayer and Reflection for the Life of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> September 4 p.m.	Service of Commemoration for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Newport Cathedral
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> September 6 p.m.	Memorial Service War Memorial, Frogmore Street, Abergavenny
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 4.30 p.m.	Reception to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Caldicot library building. Caldicot Hub
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	High Sheriff Presentation to Pauline Batty and Roger Hoggins County Hall, Usk
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 3 p.m.	Merthyr Civic Fundraising Service St All Saints Church, Garden Street, St Dowlais. Merthyr

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**SUBJECT: Community and Corporate Plan**

**MEETING: County Council**

**DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To seek approval of a new Community and Corporate Plan that sets the direction for the council and county of Monmouthshire, articulating the authority's purpose, principles and priorities alongside some of the steps we will take to deliver these.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Council approve the Community and Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 That Cabinet endorse the adoption of the six goals in the plan as the Council's Well-being Objectives in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 Following the elections in May 2022, the new Cabinet began to articulate the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the county. Starting with a series of collaborative workshops, high-level political ambition has been converted into a whole authority strategic plan that sets the direction for the organisation for the coming years.
- 3.2 The plan has been produced against the backdrop of economic uncertainty with the council facing rising energy prices, inflation and escalating borrowing costs alongside increased demands in areas such as children's services, adult social care, homelessness, additional learning needs and home to school transport. These challenges are on a scale we have not seen before.
- 3.3 The ambition outlined in the document looks to the long-term and is focused on the well-being of current and future generations. The actions cover the first steps of the journey and will be reviewed alongside the development of the council's new medium-term financial plan to make sure that our spending follows clear priorities. A full community and corporate plan, containing measures and targets, will be published in early 2023 alongside the first budget to be set by the new Council.

- 3.4 The document establishes a clear purpose to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life and sets the goals for Monmouthshire to be a:
- **Fair place** to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced;
  - **Green place** to live and work with reduced carbon emissions, making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency;
  - **Thriving and ambitious place**, full of hope and enterprise;
  - **Safe place** to live where people have a home where they feel secure in;
  - **Connected place** where people feel part of a community, are valued and connected to others;
  - **Learning place** where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.
- 3.5 These are underpinned by a series of actions that will ensure that the organisation is able to deliver on its ambition. The Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee will receive reports to ensure decision-makers are accountability for delivery.
- 3.6 The plan is scheduled for discussion and endorsement at Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> October. However approval of the organisations Corporate Plan is a decision that sits with full Council as it is part of the organisation’s policy framework as set out in the constitutions.

#### **4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

- 4.1 The plan contains commitments to action relating to equalities, social justice, corporate parenting and safeguarding.
- 4.2 An integrated impact assessment has been completed and accompanies this report. The Community and Corporate Plan applies the ways of working outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This includes taking a long-term view and developing preventative approaches. The Plan details some activities that require further work which will be subject to individual decisions in accordance with the council’s constitution including completing equality and future generations evaluations where appropriate.

#### **5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

- 5.1 Every choice we make carries an opportunity cost. Some of these commitments – such as the building of new schools – have already been approved by council as part of an agreed policy position while others are in the early stages of development. Each new proposal brought forward to deliver against these goals will be subject to an individual decision in accordance with the council constitution.

## **6. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- 6.1 The Community and Corporate Plan sets out clearly the council's purpose. It contains specific objectives which can be measured over time. A full measurement framework will be developed in the coming months and will feature in the next iteration of the plan in early March 2023
- 6.2 The actions to deliver the plan will be embedded in the service business plans of individual teams. Headline quantitative measures and progress updates will be made available to the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. A full evaluation of progress will be produced annually.

## **7. REASONS:**

- 7.1 To ensure that high-level political ambition is converted into a clearly articulated strategic plan that sets the direction for the organisation and gives clarity to council staff and partners.
- 7.2 To ensure that resources can be aligned with the organisations priorities and provide a basis for the organisation's work to be evaluated as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- 7.3 To ensure that the Council has clear Well-being Objectives as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 8.1 Rising costs will mean that we will not be able to keep doing everything that we have done in the past in exactly the same way. Each of the activities in the community and corporate plan carries some resource implications. This initial plan will be delivered within the budget set by the previous council for the 2022-23 financial year.

## **9. CONSULTEES:**

Cabinet  
Strategic Leadership Team

This document was developed through a series of workshops involving councillors from all political parties alongside experts and people from different organisations.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

## **11. AUTHOR:**

Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny

**12. CONTACT DETAILS:**

Tel: (01633) 644397

e-mail: [matthewgatehouse@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthewgatehouse@monmouthshire.gov.uk)



## Introduction

This Community and Corporate Plan sets out our ambition for the council and county of Monmouthshire. It has been written against a backdrop of national and global uncertainty, but we remain hopeful for the future of our place. We are confident in the compassion, creativity and commitment of the people who make this county so special.

This is the first plan produced by the council following the elections in May 2022. It has been developed with councillors from all political parties alongside experts and people from different organisations who came together in the months preceding its publication. Together we identified the challenges and opportunities facing the county and sought to reach consensus on the things we will do to address these.

Our ambition will look to the long-term and be focused on the well-being of current and future generations. The actions in this plan cover the first steps of the journey. We will continue to review our thinking as we develop a new medium-term financial plan to make sure that our spending follows our priorities. We will publish a full community and corporate plan, containing measures and targets, in early 2023 alongside our first budget.

## Our Purpose, Principles and Priorities

**Purpose:** We want to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

**Principles:** Our ambition is backed by the principles which will always drive us. Tackling inequality, protecting our environment and adapting to a world being reshaped by climate change will be specific programmes of work and also principles that anchor everything we do.

**Priorities:** With these principles as our starting point the goals we set ourselves are for Monmouthshire to be a:

- **Fair place to live** where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced;
- **Green place to live** and work with reduced carbon emissions, making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency;
- **Thriving and ambitious place**, full of hope and enterprise;
- **Safe place to live** where people have a home where they feel secure in;
- **Connected place** where people feel part of a community, are valued and connected to others;
- **Learning place** where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

## Values

Values matter to us. They set out our expectations of ourselves, each other, as well as the people and the organisations that we work with on your behalf.

- **Teamwork – Collaboration** is at the heart of everything we do. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved. We will make the best of the ideas,

and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

- Openness - We are open and honest. People have the chance to be involved and tell us what matters.
- Flexibility - We are flexible, enabling delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.
- Fairness - We provide opportunities for all people and communities to thrive. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently recognising that we will sometimes need to take positive action to overcome some of the innate challenges faced by people with different protected characteristics.
- Kindness – We will show kindness to all those we work with, putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.

**A Fair Place to live**

Nobody should be left behind in Monmouthshire or feel their voice does not count. We will work with our partners and you to improve the ways we tackle poverty and inequality, always seeking to include people with lived experience.

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
Improved life chances for people regardless of income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement universal free school meals to all primary school children with support in the school holidays for those who need it</li> <li>• Increase the outreach work we do to ensure people are getting the maximum benefit support they are entitled to</li> </ul>
All residents have access to the services and support they need to live a healthy life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide mental health support and well-being services</li> <li>• Improved access to advice and benefits for people on low incomes</li> </ul>
A diverse and inclusive workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become an accredited Disability Confident Employer</li> <li>• Work with local employers across the county to encourage take up of the Disability Confident pledge</li> <li>• Ensure that we play our part of delivering the Race Equality Action Plan for Wales</li> </ul>
Citizens should be able to participate in all aspects of life including culture, sport and democracy and have the ability to determine their own futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a participatory budgeting programme to enable all citizens to have greater influence on how we spend money</li> <li>• Launch and establish a citizens panel</li> <li>• Be a county of sanctuary for those fleeing war and persecution</li> <li>• Provide more opportunities for people to speak and learn Welsh</li> </ul>

**A green place to live and work**

We will work with others in Monmouthshire and beyond to protect nature and the environment, reduce our carbon emissions, promote recycling and waste reduction and maximise the opportunities of a more circular economy.

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
Improved environmental and river health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem resilience is embedded within decision making at all levels</li> <li>• Work with other local councils, partners and landowners to achieve catchment wide improvements to river quality</li> <li>• Work with partners to promote natural flood alleviation</li> </ul>
Sustainable local agriculture and farming practices with public services and residents consuming more local and seasonal produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote community access to land</li> <li>• Work with farmers to increase carbon sequestration,</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of local produce that is used in council services such as school meals and social care</li> </ul>
Council operations are net zero by 2030 and local communities are supported to reduce their own carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the carbon emissions generated from the Council's activities</li> <li>• Increase renewable energy generation.</li> <li>• Improve walking and cycle routes and car charging so that people choose to walk, cycle or use public transport, and switch to low emissions vehicles</li> <li>• Support residents and businesses to reduce waste and maximise use of low carbon energy sources</li> </ul>

## A thriving and ambitious place

We will work with national, regional and local partners to bring investment, improve connectivity and enable an economy which is thriving, ambitious, enterprising.

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
Attractive town centres that people are proud of where businesses want to invest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reshape and redevelop town centres so that they balance appropriate retail use with opportunities for business start-up and diversification</li> <li>• Facilitate investment in the amenities, events and experiences that attract people to our towns</li> <li>• Work proactively with property owners and landlords to minimise town centre vacancies</li> </ul>
People of all ages and backgrounds have the skills to do well in work or start their own business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop better links with further and higher education.</li> <li>• Provide more support for people who wish to start their own businesses in the county</li> <li>• Have a specific focus on innovation in sectors which include food, care and construction</li> </ul>
A modern sustainable infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to ensure that all homes have good connectivity digitally, and to the surrounding services and amenities</li> <li>• Continue our investment in active travel</li> <li>• Use digital applications to match those who need transport with those who can provide it to reduce the number of car journeys</li> <li>• Promote the circular economy by growing our network of re-use shops, repair cafes and libraries of things</li> </ul>

## A safe place to live

We will work with partners to prevent homelessness, increase the availability of good quality affordable housing and promote approaches to help homeowners to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
Increased supply of good quality affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a new Local Development Plan with affordable housing at its heart</li> <li>• Work with partners to develop homes for social rent on public sector land and bring empty properties back into use</li> <li>• Produce an approach to property acquisition enabling the council to buy accommodation to rent out</li> <li>• Explore new ways of constructing homes, such as modular builds</li> </ul>
Reduce the number of people who become homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a rapid rehousing approach to prevent homelessness recurrence and the need for temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Reduce the use of B&amp;B accommodation by acquiring more properties through private leasing, purchase or other methods</li> </ul>
A more energy efficient housing stock with a lower carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to sources of advice and support for homeowners and landlords to retrofit homes to alleviate fuel poverty, increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions</li> </ul>



**A connected place where people care**

We want Monmouthshire to be a place where people feel safe, their contributions are valued, they feel part of a community and are connected to others.

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
High quality social care which enables people to live their lives on their terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to enable people to stay in their own homes and communities wherever possible</li> <li>• Ensure that social care services are able to prevent crisis</li> <li>• Reduce avoidable hospital admissions</li> <li>• Continue to support effective discharge from hospital</li> <li>• Review all existing placements of children looked after to assess effectiveness and value for money working with partners to ensure that care will be provided without profit</li> <li>• Continue to ensure that information, advice and assistance is available to provide timely access to social care</li> </ul>
A healthy and active Monmouthshire where loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with public sector partners across Gwent to improve the social determinants of health inequality such as; income; health and access to green space</li> <li>• Provide direct care which is flexible and supports people to achieve their personal outcomes</li> <li>• Maintain and develop early help and preventative services for children and families</li> <li>• Promote whole school approaches to support the mental well-being of children and young people</li> </ul>
A professional and passionate social care workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote social care as a career of choice and find innovative ways of growing recruitment of the best people</li> <li>• Encourage diversity and inclusion within the workforce</li> </ul>
Communities in which everyone feels safe and respects each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with police, partners and communities to tackle anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Continue to develop our CCTV network and maintain street lighting</li> <li>• Ensure that schools, police, youth and social services work together and focus on prevention</li> </ul>
A council that is responsive to your needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our customer service channels (online, phone and in person) to ensure that all enquiries get a prompt response and are dealt with by the most appropriate person</li> </ul>

## A learning place

Monmouthshire will be a place where everybody experiences the best possible start in life and has the opportunity to learn; developing the skills and knowledge they will need throughout life to reach their potential.

What we want to achieve	Some of the actions we will take
Improved school attendance and reduced levels of exclusion which remove barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an approach to inclusion that recognises the challenges brought about by the pandemic</li> <li>• Develop holistic approaches to attendance management focusing on early identification of need to address all barriers to school attendance'</li> </ul>
The benefits of the new curriculum in Wales are maximised through excellent teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a consistent and uniform approach to ensure that excellent teaching and learning is the bedrock of all classroom interactions</li> <li>• Develop a broader 14-19 offer including more collaboration between comprehensive schools and tertiary partners</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities to hear the voice of the learner</li> </ul>
A truly inclusive educational system that recognises learners starting points, strengths and education needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that our provision meets the needs of a wide range of learners including vulnerable groups and those with additional learning needs.</li> <li>• Universal and mainstream provision effectively supports all learners to achieve their potential</li> <li>• Develop a broader educational offer to include both academic and vocational pathways and engage partners from public and private sectors</li> <li>• Develop more support, such as coaching and mentoring</li> <li>• Ensure those at financial disadvantage have access to IT equipment</li> </ul>
A county where people can develop their well-being; be it emotional, mental or physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the affordability and accessibility of adult education courses</li> <li>• Continue to provide a wide range of outdoor experiences and cultural attractions for residents and visitors</li> <li>• Promote healthier lives and increased physical activity through the provision of sports and leisure facilities and open spaces under the MonLife brand</li> </ul>
Continue our programme of school modernisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a new, carbon neutral, 3 – 19 school in Abergavenny</li> <li>• Increase Welsh medium primary school provision including a newly refurbished school on the site of Deri View and the opening of a seedling provision in Monmouth.</li> <li>• Develop a strategic review of all schools and their catchments.</li> </ul>

## A council that works effectively for you and gives the best value for money

Monmouthshire County Council receives the lowest level of central government grant funding of any local authority in Wales. We have always delivered services within budget while maintaining a

prudent level of financial reserves. We've done this by being as efficient as possible, pursuing innovative approaches and acting with a commercial mindset.

This plan has been produced against the backdrop of economic uncertainty. We face rising energy costs, inflation and escalating borrowing costs alongside increased demand pressures in areas such as children's services, adult social care, homelessness, additional learning needs and home to school transport.

Demands on us have grown which means we will need to adjust our practice and do things differently. We will enact our plan with a financially responsible approach so that we deliver the best services within our means as a county.

We have a good track record of innovation but these challenges are on a scale we have not seen before. We are fortunate to have a passionate and dedicated workforce who deliver a wide range of services and are always open to new ways of working. The things we want to do also require collaboration. Alongside partners, such as the Welsh Government, Cardiff Capital Region, Gwent Public Services Board and community and town councils we will continue to lean into the expertise and enthusiasm of the many volunteers and community groups that make this county so special.

We will strive to maintain quality and promote equality across our services and will begin to use gender responsive budgeting to ensure an equitable use of our resources. Our new procurement strategy will be vital in making sure our budgets are used effectively to deliver our priorities, reduce our carbon while delivering community benefits and social value.


Our approach will continue to be people focused and in line with our purpose, principles and priorities to ensure that Monmouthshire continues to be a place that you are proud to call home.

#### **Feedback**

If you want to comment on the council's objectives give your thoughts on issues that you feel should be considered as part of the council's approach to well-being, please get in touch. We welcome all views however you wish to supply them.

 [improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

 [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/improvement](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/improvement)

 Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

 @MonmouthshireCC

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## Integrated Impact Assessment document (incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation Hannah Carter</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:HannahCarter@monmouthshire.gov.uk">HannahCarter@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>To seek endorsement of a new Community and Corporate Plan that sets the direction for the council and county of Monmouthshire, articulating the authority's purpose, principles and priorities alongside some of the steps we will take to deliver these.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>All Services</p>	<p><b>Date:</b> 7/10/22</p>

4 **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the  
evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>Many of our services are focused around improving the well-being of both the younger and older generation. The strategic goal 'Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential' ensures that children and young people have access to an excellent standard of education; 'Connected place where people feel part of a community, are valued and connected to others' focuses on the well-being of older residents, ensuring a high quality of care and that the issues that they face, such as loneliness, are reduced.</p>	<p>No negative impact identified at this stage. It will be important to ensure that the impacts of any future changes are disaggregated to consider their effects on different groups</p>	<p>This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.</p>
Disability	<p>The goal 'a fair place to live' ensures that the Council is taking steps to become a Disability Confident employer, whilst 'a learning place' will strive to create an inclusive educational system, ensuring that the additional needs of learners with disabilities are being met.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service. Our goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Marriage or civil partnership	Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service, and our goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone.	As above.	As above.
Pregnancy or maternity	Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service. Our goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone.	As above.	As above.
Race	Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service and is committed to delivering the Race Equality Action Plan for Wales.	As above.	As above.
Religion or Belief	Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service. Our goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone.	As above.	As above.
Sex	Monmouthshire County Council strive to ensure equality and fairness across the service. We will begin to use gender-responsive budget to ensure an equitable use of resources.	As above.	As above.
Sexual Orientation	Monmouthshire County Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the service. Our goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone.	As above.	As above.

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b></p>	<p>Addressing and tackling rising economic and social inequality is incredibly important to Monmouthshire County Council. This determination is embedded within many of the goals in the community and corporate plan, namely, ‘a fair place to live’, which ensures improved life changes regardless of income and an inclusive and diverse workforce; ‘safe place to live’ which sets out to reduce homelessness and increase affordable housing; and ‘a connected place where people care’ which ensures everyone feels safe and respected.</p>	<p>No negative impact identified at this stage. However we need to be mindful that the current economic climate is likely to see more people struggling financially. All new policies, when assessing potential impacts will need to take the volatility of the current climate into account.</p>	<p>Moving forward, the council will remain vigilant of the wider economic context and should be prepared and able to make changes quickly and effectively in the current fast-paced and ever-changing economy.</p>



### 3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>The use and promotion of the Welsh language within Monmouthshire and the council itself is crucial. The Council continues to abide by the legal framework set out by the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards, part of which requires the Council to set out a 5-year Welsh Language Strategy, the most recent of which was published in 2022. This strategy sets out how the Council aim to promote, facilitate and grow the Welsh language over the following five years. An objective from this strategy has been incorporated here within 'everybody has the opportunity to learn and grow' which aims to increase the number of students who receive their education in the medium of Welsh.</p>	<p>No negative impact identified at this stage.</p>	<p>This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</p>	<p>Monmouthshire County Council is dedicated to recruiting and retaining a strong, resilient and adaptable workforce. Training is offered consistently to ensure that all staff are able to expand and grow their learning.</p>	<p>There are no specific negative impacts as a result of the plan. However, recruiting fluent Welsh speaking staff has proved challenging</p>	<p>Ensure that more customer facing roles are designated as 'Welsh essential' and target recruitment campaigns accordingly</p>
<p><b>Service delivery</b></p>	<p>The Welsh Language standards are applied as allocated to Monmouthshire</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>

Use of Welsh language in service delivery	County Council. The language is promoted through the application of the Welsh Language Standards, the website, correspondence and celebration of Welsh language events throughout the year. The plan contains a specific commitment to increase the number of people speaking and learning Welsh in line with our 5 year Welsh language strategy.		
Promoting use of the language			


**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!




Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	The goal which will have the biggest impact here is 'a thriving and ambitious place' that aims to redevelop town centres and facilitate investment to attract more people to the towns. This goal also aims to support people who are looking to start their own business and additionally to create better links with higher education.	This plan is the first-step in setting long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.
<b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	The greatest impact on this well-being goal will be from 'a green place to live and work', which has a particular focus on river health which has been a prominent issue in Monmouthshire. The goal also focuses on sustainable agriculture and reducing the carbon footprint of the county. The 'thriving and ambitious place' goals commits to promote the	As above.


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	circular economy by growing our network of re-use shops, repair cafes and libraries of things.	
<b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	The learning place goal aims to promote healthy lifestyles and increased physical activity through MonLife. 'A fair place to live' also ensures that residents have access to the services and support needed to live a healthy lifestyle, including mental health support.	As above.
<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	The goal, 'connected place' ensures that loneliness and isolation is reduced, which is especially important in an ageing and rural county like Monmouthshire. 'Safe place to live' looks to increase the sustainability of communities through energy efficient housing. The 'thriving and ambitious place' goal aims to reshape and redevelop town centres to attract more people to Monmouthshire's towns.	As above.
<b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	'A thriving and ambitious place' looks to increase the local generation of renewable energy, promoting both active travel and the circular economy, all of which reduce the negative impact on the environment. The goal, 'a safe place to live' also ensures that new houses that are build will be more energy efficient, thus reducing carbon emissions.	As above.
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People	Monmouthshire aims to increase Welsh medium primary school provision including a newly refurbished school on the site of Deri View and also the opening of a seedling provision in Monmouth. 'A fair place to live' aims to provide more opportunities	As above.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	for people to both learn and speak Welsh. Healthy lifestyles and increased physical activity is promoted through MonLife.	
<b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Addressing rising inequality is one of the two biggest priorities facing the council and the emphasis placed on addressing this issue is seen throughout the plan. 'A fair place to live' aims to improve the life chances of people, regardless of income. 'Safe place to live' aims to increase the number of affordable homes and to also improve the efficiency of homes, thus alleviating fuel poverty for some.	Moving forward, the council should remain vigilant of the wider economic context and should be prepared and able to make changes quickly and effectively in the current fast-paced and ever-changing economy.

**How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?**

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>Though this plan will soon be updated, the priorities and actions are forward looking and aim to have a positive long-term impact. The focus on reducing carbon emissions and the health of biodiversity and the environment is vital to combatting the effects of climate change which will be around for many years to come. Increasing the energy efficiency of homes is also important to alleviating fuel poverty in the short-term, while also having a positive long-term contribution in the form of reduced carbon emissions.</p>	<p>This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Collaboration is embedded in the values of Monmouthshire County Council and across every goal. The council looks to work with public service partners across the region to address inequalities and decarbonization. It is recognised that we can not deliver on our well-being goals without working in partnership with public services, the third sector and citizens within Monmouthshire.</p>	<p>This plan is subject to further scrutiny. Collaboration with committees to improve the plan is essential and will help inform any future changes.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>Monmouthshire aims to involve community members, including those whose voice is often not heard. The well being goal: a fairer place to live sets out how will work to progress this aim. 'A thriving, connected and fair local economy' goal sets out an aim to work with landlords and property owners to minimise town centre vacancies. 'a learning place and grow' sets out plans to maximise opportunities to hear the voices of learners in schools to ensure that the new curriculum is working for them.</p>	<p>This plan is subject to further scrutiny. Involvement is key to improving this plan; any future changes will be informed by involvement with committee and cabinet members.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<p>The goal, 'connected place where people feel part of a community is focused on ensuring that social care services are able to prevent crisis and that avoidable hospital admissions are reduced. This goal also sets out to maintain and develop early and preventative services for children and families.</p>	<p>This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The Council works closely with business, communities and other partners to deliver its goals and to ensure that the potential negative impact on other bodies is mitigated. The Council's goals will impact on multiple national well-being goals. A fuller analysis for this will be conducted alongside the full Community and Corporate Plan published in 2023.</p>	<p>This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.</p>

**6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?**

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	Early intervention and prevention approaches will reduce the number of young people at risk of harm. Safeguarding is central to the authority's work and this is highlighted within the corporate plan.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	This plan is the first-step in setting the long-term goals and actions of the Council. A full Community and Corporate Plan will be published in early 2023. Any changes around positive or negative impacts will be updated accordingly.
Corporate Parenting	Reviewing all existing placements of children looked after will ensure that those children are receiving high quality and effective care. This is also important in assessing value for money.	As above.	As above.

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**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

The Council has undertaken a range of assessments and research including the well-being assessment, population needs assessment, research for the Replacement Local Development Plan and self-assessment of its performance. These utilised a range of evidence and data on a variety of areas including, but not limited to, the environment, inequality, well-being, economy, culture, education and social care.

The commitments in the Community and Corporate Plan have used the latest evidence and thinking on issues of importance to our communities to make sure that the aspirations and commitments are relevant to the significant issues for well-being in Monmouthshire.

**8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

The plan contributes positively to all seven wellbeing goals, whilst also considering the five ways of working in all aspects of the actions set out. The plan also takes into account the wider economic and social context, recognising the inequalities across Monmouthshire, the need to be inclusive especially in terms of supporting people who embody protected characteristics and, striving to help those in need as a result.. The Council strives to ensure equality and fairness across the council, and the goals and associated activity will promote diversity and inclusion and aim to bring benefit to everyone. The plan is forward looking, and the actions set out aim to have a positive impact in the longer-term.

The plan takes into account the wider economic and social context,. It is clear that there will be a need for the plan to adjust and evolve given the turbulence and volatility of the current economic climate. Though this plan sets out short-term goals, it is forward looking and the actions set out here will have a positive impact in the longer term.

**9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
A full Community and Corporate Plan, including measures and targets, will be published in early 2023, setting out longer-term goals and actions.	Feb 2023	Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny.

**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
0.1	Plan Development	11/10/22	The impact assessment went through a number of iterations during the drafting of the plan



1.0	Cabinet	19/10/22	

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**SUBJECT: SOCIAL CARE, SAFEGUARDING & HEALTH ANNUAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2021/22**

**MEETING: Council**

**DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## **1. PURPOSE:**

To present the Annual Report 2021 / 2022 of the Chief Officer of Social Care, Safeguarding and Health.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Council endorses the report.

That Council tasks the Chief Officer of Social Care, Safeguarding and Health to maintain focus on the priority actions as set out in the concluding section of the report .

## **3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Preparing and publishing an annual report of the Statutory Director of Social Services is a requirement under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014). The purpose of the report is to show how effectively we are meeting the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016.
- 3.2 There is currently no prescribed format for the report.
- 3.3 This is the first Director's Report I have written since taking up the role of Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health in October 2021. I have opted to use the SWAY format, as did my predecessor, so that a wide range of information can be shared from a variety of sources. I have taken an inclusive approach in developing the report. Evidence of performance and analysis of service data is combined with evidence from the lived experience of both the people we support and the workforce. The report aims to be accessible to a range of audiences, including our workforce and the people we support. The link to the report is <https://sway.office.com/FOky4X8gOv1QkDUE?ref=Link>  
A PDF version is also available.

3.4 Of note, the Welsh Government have currently commissioned a review of the Annual Director's Report format and intends to issue guidelines in readiness for the 2022 – 2023 report.

3.5 My aims within the report are:

- To evaluate progress against our social care priorities
- To inform Members and residents about the effectiveness of social care and health in Monmouthshire and identify key risks and challenges.
- To inform Members and residents about the progress made towards meeting the standards set out in SSWBA
- To set out actions and priorities for 2022 – 2023

#### **4. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)**

4.1 Supporting the rights, voice and inclusion of people, some of whom are the most vulnerable citizens within the county by virtue of age, disability, socio-economic status, gender or ethnic / cultural background, runs through our approach to social care and health in Monmouthshire.

4.2 Working primarily within the legal framework of the SSWBA, this in turn supports the promotion of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. By promoting an environment that maximises people's physical and mental well-being and by supporting children, young people, adults and their carers and families to fulfil their potential no matter what their circumstances, the well-being goals of a Healthier and More Equal Wales are supported.

4.3 It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. OPTION APPRAISAL**

There were no alternative options considered.

#### **6. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

6.1 The annual report contains a raft of data both qualitative and quantitative which reflects the revised performance and improvement framework for social services within the Code of Practice. This contains three component parts; measuring activity and performance, understanding experience and outcomes and using evidence to inform improvement.

6.2 There are over a hundred metrics as part of the framework, the most relevant metrics collated in 2021/22 have been included to support this analysis within the report.

#### **7. REASONS:**

It is a statutory requirement to prepare and publish a Director's Annual Report.

**8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Whilst there are no direct financial implications from this report, the sustainability of social services, well-being and prevention represents a significant pressure to Council budgets.

It is important to note that the Directorate has identified significant in-year budget pressures as well as pressures within the 2023/24 budget setting process.

**9. CONSULTEES:**

Directorate Leadership Team  
SLT

The report was presented to a Joint Scrutiny Committee for People and Performance on 11th October 2022.

**10. Background Papers**

**11. AUTHOR:**

Jane Rodgers Chief Officer Social Care, Safeguarding and Health.

**12. CONTACT DETAILS:**

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# Social Care & Health: Director's Report 2021/22

## Foreword

This report reflects the activity within Social Care and Health between the period April 2021 – March 2022.

It is my first annual report as a new Chief Officer having come into post in October 2021 following Julie Boothroyd's retirement. I have chosen to continue with Julie's now established tradition of using 'Sway' to present the material, primarily because it offers such an accessible and flexible platform for the reader. I have collated the report with the assistance of many contributors and I am extremely grateful for input from the various teams and services within the Social Care and Health directorate.

The overall purpose of the report is:

- To evaluate progress against our social care priorities during the year
- To inform Members and residents about the effectiveness of social care and health in Monmouthshire and identify key risks and challenges.
- To inform Members and residents about the progress made towards meeting the standards set out in Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- To set out actions and priorities for 2022 – 2023

The annual evaluation report forms an integral part of the continual development of social care and health practice. It is an opportunity to take stock, reflect and re-calibrate; to celebrate achievements, as well as being honest about some of our very real areas of challenge and concern.

The value-base of the service aligns to Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (referred to as the SSWBA) where putting individual people at the centre of what we do and practising with care and compassion is what really counts. Supporting citizens to live their own best lives has been the mantra for Monmouthshire Social Care & Health over many years, and is still at the heart of what we do. Without a doubt, we don't always get it right; we work in constrained circumstances, often with the odds against us and where, more than ever before, 'firefighting' seems to best characterise day to day team life.



There is no denying that this has been a particularly challenging year for social care and health. The Covid pandemic took an immense toll on the residents of Monmouthshire and on the workforce who worked tirelessly to support those who were the most vulnerable. As COVID restrictions gradually lifted across the nation the consequences of the pandemic on people and on services became clearer. With deep-rooted challenges well before the pandemic hit, the health and social care system is now described by many as 'in crisis' and 'broken'. Together with the impact of global instability, this affects us all at a very local and real level. With fragility across the workforce, increased demand, and significant budgetary pressures, the spotlight on social care is inevitable and justified. We are working in uncertain times, where policy frameworks and expectations on services are shifting and where change is one of the only constants.

However; it is times such as these where the importance of holding our values close is critical. We need to understand where and how our social care and health system can be re-balanced and strengthened;



listen, and stay focused on people and outcomes and look to strengths within partnerships. My intention is that this report speaks to all these elements.

At the centre of this, though, is the social care and health workforce. Essentially, the workforce is the service and beyond doubt is our greatest asset.

In many ways, this report, in and of itself, is a celebration of the workforce and an expression of my heartfelt gratitude for everything they do.



## Basis for the report

Social Care and Health operates within the legal framework set out within the SSWBA. Preparing and publishing an annual report that charts our progress in delivering against the principles and quality standards of the SSWBA is one of the statutory requirements.

The four key principles of the Act are woven into every section of the report:

- Voice and control
- Prevention
- Well-being
- Partnership

The six quality standards inform our operational activity and set out the ways in which we should be providing services and orientating social care practice. I have illustrated the standards through a range of case examples throughout the report and specifically within section 5. For reference the standards are provided in this stack.



We will work with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes

We will work with people and partners to protect and promote physical and mental health and emotional well-being

We will support people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

We will encourage and support people to learn, develop and participate in society

We will work with and support people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

We will take steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm



Supporting people to define and achieve personal outcomes with regard to wellbeing is a key concept running through the Act, and similarly features highly in the case material within the report.

Although the SSWBA is the primary legislative framework, the report is written within a wider statutory and policy context including:

- Programme for Government
- The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA)
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- A Healthier Wales June 2018
- Strategic Programme for Primary Care Nov 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- “More than Words (Welsh language) Strategy” (Mwynna Geiriau),

At a more local level, social care is delivered in the context of the Council's corporate plan (2018 - 2022) particularly Goal A *Best Start in Life* and Goad D *Lifelong Wellbeing*.

I have deliberately provided information and description within the report, as I am aware that in Social Care we are not often provided with opportunities to share *good news stories* or show-case what we do. I have attempted to balance descriptive passages with honest self-evaluation using a range of methods drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data, triangulated where possible through external sources including direct feedback from people.

Information sources include:

- Illustrative information directly from teams and services
- Self-assessment and challenge processes within the social care and health leadership team including self-assessment material under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
- Internal documents such as corporate plan, strategic risk assessment, and service business plans
- Internal Quality Assurance reports

- Complaints and compliments and direct feedback from people using social care and health services
- Performance framework data and analysis
- Regulation 73 reports and Quality of Care reports under RISCA
- Contract monitoring and performance reports (commissioned services)
- Regional documents and performance information associated with the Regional Partnership Board and Gwent Safeguarding Board
- Regulatory reports from Care Inspectorate Wales specifically Assurance Check [February 2021](#) and Performance Evaluation Inspection [July 2022](#). See powerpoint for a summary.



Performance Evaluation Inspection of  
Monmouthshire County Council

### The Inspection

- Care Inspectorate Wales undertook a Performance Evaluation Inspection of Monmouthshire Adults Services
- 5 CIW inspectors undertook the inspection and they were 'with' us for 4 days (virtually) in early July 2022
- Many of the cases they inspected related to work that had taken place within the evaluation period of this Director's report.

### Purpose

- To review the local authority's performance in exercising its social services duties and functions in line with legislation
- Alignment under the principles of the Social Service (Wales) Well-being 2014 Act: People (voice and control), Prevention, Wellbeing, Partnerships
- Particular focus on **adult safeguarding** and whether people and their carers are able to access **appropriate and timely care and support**

## Lines of Inquiry

- Evaluation of the experience of adults using services
- Evaluation of the experience and outcomes people achieve through their contact with services
- Evidence of the local authority and partners having learnt lessons from their recent experiences and plans for service developments and improvement
- Consideration of how the local authority manages opportunity and risk in its planning and delivery of social care at individual, operational and strategic levels

## Methodology

- 30 Cases were inspected
- Interviews and focus groups were held with stakeholders including service users, members of the workforce, partner organisations and commissioned services
- Surveys were sent out to carers, service users, partners and the workforce
- Practice was observed in action
- Key documents were inspected including policies, practice guidance and internal reports.

## Our view

Overall, we felt that the report was fair and balanced, took good account of the challenging context we are working in and identified areas for improvement that we agree with.

*"In common with many other local authorities in Wales, MCC is experiencing a challenging time in relation to the provision of social care. Many of the pressures currently experienced by the local authority's adult services reflect the national pandemic recovery context including high levels of demand and increased complexity of people's needs."*

## Strengths

- People's voices are heard and people are supported to achieve their personal outcomes
- Strong strategic focus on prevention aligned to place-based working
- Effective partnership working
- Working in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Flexible integrated teams, where different professionals work together, to provide tailored support
- Proactive monitoring and managing of waiting lists
- Effective and timely adult safeguarding

*"We heard how staff morale was generally positive, managers were well regarded by staff, and managers in turn commented they have a committed and dedicated workforce. Workers valued the accessibility of managers and peer support from team members."*

## Areas for Improvement

- Shortages of Domiciliary Care
- Pressure on partnership work at critical points, e.g. hospital discharge
- Maintaining a sufficient and suitably qualified workforce to meet increasing demand
- Gaps and inconsistencies in practice particularly around the identification of risk, contingency planning and timeliness of reviews
- Quality of assessments, and consideration of eligibility criteria
- Quality assurance process and management oversight
- Consistency of the Welsh active offer and the offer of advocacy
- Recognising and responding to needs of carers
- Role of commissioning in brokerage

## Overall Outcome

*"During this inspection we found progress has been made in several areas. This has resulted in developments to practice and better outcomes for people. This progress has been achieved against a backdrop of the additional pressures and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic."*

*"CIW expect MCC to consider the areas identified for improvement and take appropriate action to address and improve these areas. CIW will monitor progress through its ongoing performance review activity with the local authority."*

The report relates to the period April 2021 – March 2022; however, I have not stuck rigidly to this and where it feels relevant and pertinent I have referred to the current position or used more recent information. This felt sensible and natural to me, as 6 months is a long time in social care, especially given the current climate.

There are 9 sections within the report:

Section 1 - Overview against the priorities from 2020 - 2021

Section 2 - Overview of Children's Services

Section 3 - Overview of Adult's Services

Section 4 - How People Shape our Services

Section 5 - Promoting and improving the Well being of those we help (the quality standards)

Section 6 - How We Performed

Section 7 - Finance

Section 8 - Workforce

Section 9 - Priorities 2022 - 2023

## 1. Priorities

In her final director's report this time last year, Julie set out some key opportunities for the year ahead. I have provided below some headline comments regarding our progress against these, with reference to where further details can be found within the body of the report.

Priority	Progress	Section
Building early help and preventative approaches to supporting children and families, developing placement sufficiency when required.	The emphasis on building coherent early help services has continued. There has been an additional focus on services and practice aimed at preventing family breakdown.  Ensuring that there are sufficient, appropriate placements for children who are looked after remains a very real challenge for the Service. We continue to turn our energy and resources into recruiting carers and developing placements. We are working in partnership to develop bespoke placements for Monmouthshire young people, but overall progress is limited.	See Section 2
Continue the reduction in Looked after Children population in line with Welsh Government guidelines.	The year end figure for the number of children looked after by the Local Authority showed the second consecutive slight decrease from 213 at year end 2021 to 208 at year end 2022.	See Section 2
Paying attention to support required for the whole sector workforce to deliver and adapt to the pandemic conditions.	The workforce showed true resilience and flexibility in responding to the conditions created by the pandemic. This was recognised and applauded within our CIW assurance check in Feb 2021. There continues to be a genuine emphasis on looking for ways in which we can support the workforce through what continue to be very challenging times.	See Section 8
Enabling a Place based approach across health social care and community to continue managing demand.	This has remained at the forefront of strategic development work within MCC with on-going conversations with health and our third sector partners specifically around early help and prevention within communities. We are now at an early stage in setting out some steps in terms of how we might be able to expand and develop the provision of direct care by adopting a more place-based approaches.	See Section 3
Extending further the ideas of 'front doors' in the community	The concept of creating visible and accessible 'front doors' into social care remain strong. We continue to have a social care workers embedded into the council's community partnership teams. We have opened our social care hub in Abergavenny and 'The Cabin' in Chepstow community hospital opened in May. Our third sector partners contribute to providing accessible advice and support around social care too, for example MIND MONMOUTHSHIRE is commissioned to provide vital 'front-door' services to people with mental health problems.	See Section 3
A developing workforce strategy to account and plan for changes ahead.	The toll the pandemic has had on our workforce, together with other factors such as the rising cost of living and fuel costs, is having a significantly negative impact on recruitment and retention. It is an extremely competitive place. We have worked hard to develop recruitment strategy and to review roles - but this priority remains as a central focus moving forward.	See Section 8
With building commencing on the new care home for people with Dementia on the Crick Road site, opportunity to profile care work as a positive career choice.	Building plans and partnership working in the development of Crick Road continue as planned. By way of update a 'spade in the ground ceremony' was held on 6 <sup>th</sup> July	See Section 3

## 2. CHILDRENS SERVICES: Overview

Over recent years Monmouthshire Children's Services has built a strong identity underpinned by a consolidated set of values aligned to the principles of the SSWBA. These include:

- Keeping children at the centre of everything we do, and striving towards a single service ethos so that the child's experience is coherent and seamless
- Practice that is values driven, family focussed, strengths-based and relational
- Ensuring services are appropriately aligned so they add value to each other
- Harnessing the power of early intervention
- Recognising the importance of preventative family support at every tier of need
- Maintaining a strong focus on workforce as our most valuable asset and proactively supporting a positive learning culture and practice development

- Embracing integrated and multi-disciplinary approaches
- Proactively seeking opportunities for participation and engagement within a culture of learning
- Seeking ways of releasing resources and money from the system to get better outcomes and reduce need

These values drive our activity and help us ensure that our service development themes and priorities remain as coherent as possible.

<b>Child Centred</b>	Focus on the child's experience of services & using participation to shape & improve services & inform practice
<b>Workforce</b>	Develop practice & support confident & competent practitioners across the service who are passionate about Children's Services
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	Facilitate a culture within Children's Services which promotes transparency, reflection, learning and review to drive continuous improvement towards achieving the best outcomes for children, young people & their families
<b>Services</b>	Ensure that family support services are in place & sufficient at all tiers including services for children who are looked after & care experienced young people  Ensure that all services focus on prevention & de-escalation & build on individual, family & community strengths
<b>Integrated Working</b>	Harness and embrace the power of integrated / partnership working to maximize access to resources and improve outcomes for children, young people and families

It would be fair to say that this year has been a challenging one for Children's Services. Supporting the wellbeing of our workforce and difficulties in recruitment, particularly into child protection services, is a constant factor requiring considerable investment of time and resource. The pandemic has taken its toll too, with the service seeing increased demand pressures, complexity, and concerns around the emotional and psychological wellbeing of children and young people.

One of the most significant and impactful challenges for the service this year, however, has been the lack of suitable placements for children with complex needs. Good placement options are a crucial component of how we keep children safe and help them recover from any trauma or abuse they may have experienced. Not having placements available is potentially harmful for children, puts additional pressure on resources and is incredibly demoralising for our workforce. I fully anticipate that sufficiency of placements will remain a feature of children's services over the coming years and one of our key strategic risks.

Never-the-less, despite the challenges the service continues to develop. Looking back at our priorities from last year, whilst there remains plenty to do and as new challenges emerge, key achievements are discernible.

Follow this stack to see some of our highlights.





Learning from the pandemic we continue to ensure that flexible working arrangements are in place for individuals, balancing this with creating opportunities to come together as teams to maintain a positive culture of learning and support. We ran 3 whole service events over the year; a summer picnic, a virtual Christmas party with special guest appearances and a conference to launch our participation strategy.

Our participation programme continues to develop at a team level. We have run activity days for children who are looked after and listened to how important it is for children to share experiences with their social workers to help develop trusting relationships.

We were really proud to launch our Participation Strategy via a virtual conference on 30th September. The conference was attended by the then Children's Commissioner, Sally Holland, who commended the strategy and included it on the national website.

Follow this link to see read the strategy. [Participation-Strategy-v5-003.pdf \(childcomwales.org.uk\)](#) The strategy ensures that everyone who works in Children's Services has a common understanding of, and is confident in their approach to, children and young people's participation and that our work is rights-based, inclusive, respectful and safe. The strategy underpins our approach to children's participation across the service.

We continue to run a comprehensive training and development programme based on core skills including working with risk and using strengths-based approaches.

Working with our housing association partners, Pobl, we have re-designed a supported accommodation option for care leavers and homeless young people that supports progression planning and a pathway to independence.

With the involvement of children and their families, we have undertaken a review of respite services for children with disabilities and will be taking the outcomes forward over the next period.

Following our successful partnership with Blaenau Gwent, we have now developed our own therapeutic fostering service (MyST) so that the team can focus specifically on Monmouthshire's needs. MyST continues to work with our most complex children to reduce and prevent residential placements.

Along with the rest of Wales MCC launched FOSTER MONMOUTHSHIRE in July 2021. We will continue to build on the Foster Wales brand in our on-going endeavours to recruit local foster carers.

We have continued to develop our family support offer through maximising our partnership working through Regional Partnership Board and Children and Families Partnership.

We are developing a framework for Children's Services to promote a shared understanding and coherent approach to all quality assurance activity.



*1 - Our lovely summer picnic as restrictions lifted*



Can you spot the special guest appearance at the Children's Services virtual Christmas Party?

And in case you were wondering.... he didn't tell jokes; he just thanked the children's services workforce for everything that we do. It was off the cuff and heart felt. What a lovely man!

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*In this next section, I have provided commentary on various aspects of the service, show-casing where positive outcomes are being achieved; where key developments are in progress; and where there are specific challenges and opportunities.*

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The focus and emphasis on **early help and prevention** for children and families has continued through out the year. Our ethos is to use a partnership approach via our Early Help Panel in ensuring that families get the help and support they need at an early stage when vulnerabilities first start to emerge. People are experiencing delays in accessing family support services including from partnership organisations, and waiting lists are in operation in several parts of the service. We continue to seek opportunities of addressing these.

Our offer of family support underpins the entire services and at every stage is focused on prevention, de-escalation of complex or risky situations, and on increasing family and individual resilience. Our services run from school-based counselling, to providing parenting support, through to services aimed at long-term sustainable change for families with complex challenges, therapeutic support for children, as well as services aimed at re-uniting and strengthening families in situations where children are looked after. Our suite of early help and family support services share a common theory base resting on attachment, relational, strengths based, trauma informed and developmental approaches so that they provide a coherent approach.

Please follow our slide deck to learn more about our early help, therapeutic and wellbeing services.



### SPACE Well-being & Family Support Panel

Referrals to Early Help Panel

- Weekly, multi-agency single point of entry for referrals for non-emergency support which enables families to access family support, preventive & early intervention support services including Primary Care, Mental Health, non-urgent Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) & a wide range of other services so that families get the right support more quickly.
- Works to a 'no bounce' principle, so referrals are not 'bounced' between services reducing duplication & multiple referrals.
- In 21/22 MOC saw the highest increase in referrals in Owent, an increase of 37%. Majority of referrals are from GPs (45%) & schools (20%) for children aged 11-15 (56%) and 5-10 (28%).

### Family Advice Service

- A telephone advice service has been operating since 2020 offering a first point of contact for very early support often offering light-touch support and reassurance with the intention of meeting needs as early as possible in order to reduce the need for escalation at a later stage.
- This will be a major development in 2022/23 with additional funding to develop a place-based model of working taking early support & advice in relation to family support & children's emotional well-being into communities.

### Building Strong Families Team (TAF)

BSFT is a small team who provide short-term support for families who want support with the most difficult job in the world, parenting. It may include help with routines & boundaries or managing children's emotions or behaviour. Referrals have increased since the pandemic & there was a lot of sickness in the team in 21/22 so there are waiting lists but we are working to reduce these.

Referrals to BSFT

Year	Family Advice Line	Young Carers Team	Building Strong Families Team
2019	~15	~15	~15
2020	~25	~25	~25
2021	~45	~45	~45
2022	~55	~55	~55

% of families reporting a positive outcome

Year	Family Advice Line	Young Carers Team	Building Strong Families Team
18/19	78%	78%	78%
20/21	75%	75%	75%
21/22	84%	84%	84%
22/23	84%	84%	84%

Testimonials:

- "BSFT has assisted my son on the road to recovery in dealing with separation & anxiety" - Parent
- "BSFT has really helped us to work together as mother & daughter over the last few months. Although we (TA) have some way to go we have now built a good foundation & can build on this. Thank you" - Parent
- "The worker so lovely, I felt so comfortable with her straight away. My confidence has gone up a lot & my anxiety is a lot easier to manage & happens less often. I'm able to look on the bright side of things much more now & get rid of negative thoughts." - young person
- "I hope you never lose your smile, enthusiasm & genuine care you show for the children" - Child

**Monmouthshire Young Carers**

The Young Carers Service has been delivered by MCC since April 2021. It is a small team who work alongside the Carers Team with young carers.

There are 254 young carers known to MCC & who are receiving information & access to activities, information & support including support with grants & ID cards

95 young carers came on trips & activities in the year ranging from bowling & paddleboarding to farm visits and pantomime.

21 young carers received one-to-one support, 18 of whom evidenced successful outcomes.

13 group sessions were run in two schools. This was run as a successful pilot & will be developed into a full programme next year.

Awareness raising sessions were run in 5 schools.

*"The techniques given to me with controlling my anger helped a lot, such as breathing exercises and doing certain stuff to maintain my anger really helped control it Young Carer"*

*"Thank you, I have learned techniques to help my anger & the sessions for my CV was really helpful as I can now apply for part time work. Young Carer"*

*"I'm very pleased how much my child has changed & improved. & I am very thankful for that. He is a lot calmer & more open about his feelings, he could not have said what he said to me yesterday without your support." Parent*

**Face to Face - Creative Therapies Team**

Small team of play & family therapists who deliver one-to-one & group based support to families & children.

Average length of play therapy is 20 sessions, average length of family therapy can be much longer

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Referrals received	46	71	36
Referrals accepted	50	71	36
Referrals declined (waitlist)	0	0	0
Number of children engaged in play therapy	44	19	9
Number of family therapy sessions	1	3	1
Number of play therapy sessions	414	39	1
Family therapy sessions	26	10	21
Family therapy sessions with children	4	26	28
Family therapy sessions completed	8/18	8/10	8/8

*"Thank you so much for the work you have done. We have noticed a huge improvement in her self-esteem and confidence." Parent*

*"There have been tears & laughter & I would recommend any parent to give it a chance." Parent*

*"A lot has changed since we started this... & it has taught me to think about how I speak to my daughter & how to deal with her anger." Parent*

*"The sessions were an environment which was safe... Taking together has brought us closer together. Once coming to see you, it has forced us to be more open... We were keeping big secrets from each other... We are in a much better place as a family because of the intervention." Parent*

**Face to Face (School Based Counselling)**

Referrals & waiting times are increasing. Work has been ongoing with schools on Emotionally Based School Avoidance & a Wellbeing practitioners team has been introduced as well as volunteers who can work with young people to promote wellbeing as part of Whole School Approaches.

During the 21/22 school year the service delivered the following:

- 428 referrals, 231 children offered appointments, 167 children seen (at DNA)
- 1888 counselling sessions delivered
- Waiting times - 18 weeks (an increase of 2 weeks from last year)
- YP Case indicates a 4.5 point positive change
- 16 young people supported through critical incidents
- 200+ young people supported through the Wellbeing Practitioner team
- Increasing opportunities to connect on-line, via phone & in group work
- Training opportunities for schools - Trauma Informed, Mindfulness, Emotional Literacy

*"I get closer for certain situations that I have talked about. I get support from people I trust & I can talk to the worry of rumours etc. I can get professional help from people that understand how I'm feeling."*

*"It is a safe space where I can be myself without judgement. I can have the right support for all situations I encounter."*

*"When I did get a counsel for it was great. I cannot fault them."*

*"Because of the huge demands on your service found it initially quite frustrating that it would take a while to access the service." Parent*

*"My child found it easy to talk & share their feelings with you. They were worried that adults would either not believe them (past experience) or go against their wishes & make things worse... My child never shows the extent of their anxiety at school... It's a great relief to have my child's true feelings shared." Parent*

**Achieving Change Together Team**

Psychologically & systemically informed team working intensively with families who have children on the edge of coming into care. Intensive intervention (up to 12-18 months) based on families setting their own goals, relationships, self-efficacy, trauma/attachment informed

47 families with 144 children have been engaged, 33 families have completed intervention, 4 disengaged, 10 are on-going

- 79% children remain at home at closure, of these 80% remain at home 6 months post closure
- 91% have been supported to improve school attendance
- Average increase in resilience of 30%
- 50 children have come off the Child Protection Register
- 22 children closed to Children's Services at case closure with a further 6 closed at 6 months

Approximate annual cost avoidance of £460,876

*"You don't know how much you have helped us, you really have" Parent*

*"We don't fight a dog as much" Child*

*"I have overcome so much working with the ACT team. Thank"*

*"My biggest fear was I was never thought I was able to turn my life around & my much bigger now & I see a future for myself." Parent*

*"When we are apart, she [Jesse] knows what to do" Child*

## Family Group Conference & Mediation Service

### Referrals to FGC

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Referrals	69	112	140
FGCs	52	42	21
Private FGCs	18	32	40
Family meetings	Not recorded	62	49
FGCs resulting in a positive family plan	58	78	69

- ▶ Referrals to the FGC service continue to rise - received 110 referrals & held 107 family group conferences and family meetings, 63% result in a successful outcome
- ▶ Mediation has taken 35 new referrals in 21/22 with 8 cases carrying over from the previous year. 6 families did not engage. All identified positive outcomes with 40% reporting significant improvement in relationships.

'I felt supported, I felt safe to talk, to be 'real'. No condemnation, no judgement or feeling like there's something wrong with me.' - Parent

'Thanks also for our chat yesterday, I felt like a cloud lifted after talking to you ... Really don't know what we'd have done without you over the last 18 months.' Parent

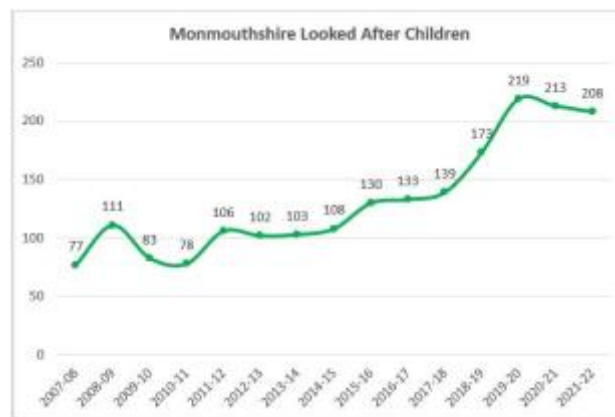
'It's been beneficial for us to have someone who was willing to listen and help with such an awful situation for the children to be in.' - Parent

How we helped me and my family so much. Thank you - Parent

## Challenges and Opportunities

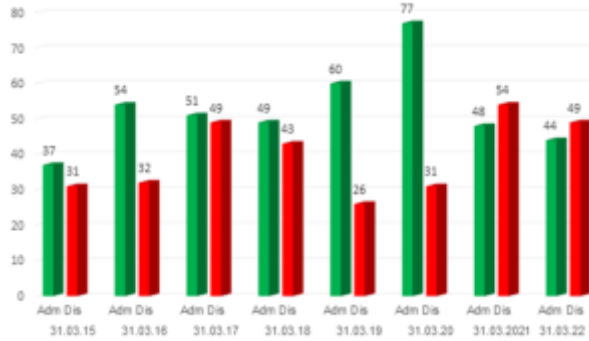
- ▶ Increased demand & complexity across all services - using volunteers & students to build up capacity & resilience looking for opportunities to grow teams & reduce waiting times
- ▶ All teams are working on their Participation Action Plans & we are working on improving systems for collecting children's feedback, use data to refine & improve services
- ▶ Group work approaches for children & families
- ▶ Development of the Advice Service to become embedded within community hubs to provide support at the earliest stage
- ▶ Work with schools to explore how young people might be better supported around particularly stressful times & work with partners to reduce the number of children whose school attendance is impacted by emotional based school avoidance (EBSA Project)
- ▶ Work with partners to develop integrated approaches to young people's wellbeing

*Work on safe reduction of the numbers of children who are looked after*



This year we showed a further slight decline in the number of children who are looked after from 213 to 208. The figure of 208 includes 2 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UA SC) and last year's figure

included 3 UASC. It is anticipated that responding to UASC, as well as the needs of unaccompanied children from Ukraine, is going to be a feature of the year ahead.



During the year 44 children entered care and 49 ceased being looked after.

The following table shows the number of children and young people ceasing to be looked after between 1st April - 31st March each year during the period 2013 to 2022 and reasons for ceasing using Stats Wales categorizations.

Leave Reason	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
When On Ready	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	3	2
Adopted	2	0	1	3	0	3	1	1	0
Case taken over by another LA in the UK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Returned home to live with parents	17	13	12	18	24	7	16	17	13
GGO	21	3	6	7	1	2	0	11	11
Moved into independent living	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transferred to adult social services	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	0
Ceased for other reasons	4	7	7	13	9	9	4	13	13
Sentenced to custody	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>49</b>

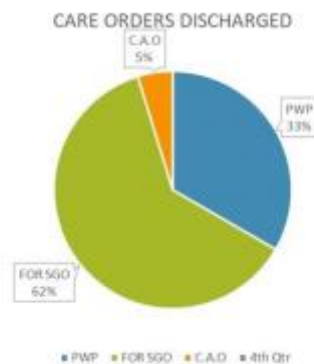
Our reduction strategy is supported by the work of the **Monmouthshire Families Together Team (MFT)** to progress discharges of care orders. This year is the 2nd year of the team's implementation and has

seen the team really bed-in and become an integral part of the service. Monmouthshire Families Together team work in an integrated way with the statutory social work teams and get directly involved in care planning for children. This has helped to maintain our reduction of children on care orders placed at home with their parents (PWP) and increased children in permanency arrangements through Special Guardianships.

Where Care Orders are in place for children living with their parents (PWP) or with wider family members (kinship care), the Families Together Service provides intensive, targeted, interventions in an effort to develop parenting capacity to a level that ensures risks are managed and the child's needs can be safely met independent of statutory services. The success of this model can be measured by the number of Care Orders that are discharged or varied/replaced for a Special Guardianship Order.

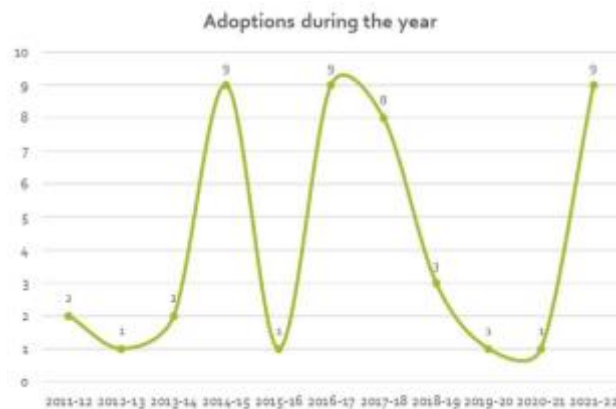
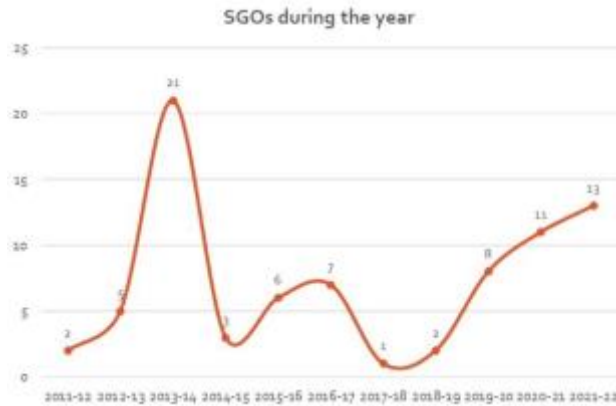
From the 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022, 21 children's Care Orders have been discharged. This data can be summarised as follows; 13 of those Care Orders were replaced for Special Guardianship Orders for children who were placed with kinship carers (11 placements). 7 Care Orders were for children who were placed with parents (PWP) (6 placements). 1 Care Order was varied for a Child Arrangements Order following a positive intervention via the Families Together Team. Of the 7 PWP Care Orders that were discharged, 5 were via a direct application to the Court, the other 2 were agreed as the outcome of the ongoing care proceedings (Interim Care Order not felt needed to be extended).

Of the 21 Care Order discharges within this timeframe, Families Together delivered interventions with all of these cases.



Converting Care Orders to Special Guardianship arrangements is part of our strategy to ensure that children are in the right permanent placement for them, and where possible to reduce the numbers of children in care. We support carers through undertaking special guardianship assessments, and where required develop a special guardianship support plan, sometimes including life-story work for the child. We review all our special guardianship arrangements on an annual basis, and keep in touch with carers through training, newsletters, and support groups.



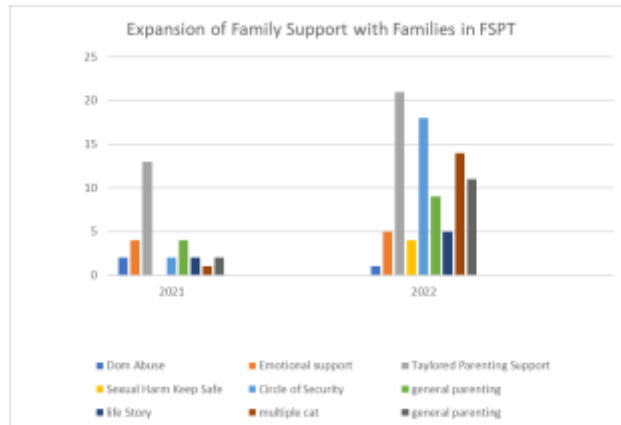


As expected this year, we have been pleased that the children whose permanency plan was adoption have been progressed. It can often be challenging to find the right adoptive placement for a child. We work with the South East Wales Adoption Service (SEWAS) and in partnership with Voluntary Adoption Agencies to secure suitable placements and provide support to new parents.

This year has seen a focussed drive on developing the right culture and practice to prevent and divert children away from court proceedings through a **re-focus on child protection planning and pre-proceedings work**.

By analysing reasons for previous increases we are beginning to tackle some of the underlying causes, where these are in our control, specifically around our approach to risk management; child protection planning and our use of the pre-proceedings framework.

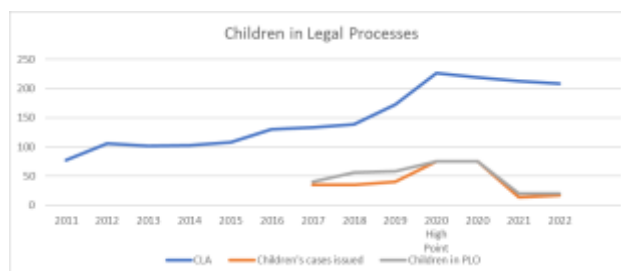
As part of ongoing improvement planning, we re-prioritised our “Practice and Culture Change” programme. A primary aim of the programme is to ensure that assessments, care planning and family support were robust at an earlier stage within the Child Protection process thereby ensuring children and families case work was managed within the “appropriate” arena, away from a legal process wherever possible.



The Family Support and Protection team were the central point for change within the service. Some of our work to date has included:

- Development of the Family Support Worker role within teams to support assessment of parental capacity to change, aligned with the concept of “prevention” within all tiers of the service
- Established of Practice Lead for ‘in-team’ Family Support Work
- Developed Family Support Work programmes with an average intervention of 12-26 weeks to compliment established family support services.
- Strengthened the leadership structure within the Family Support and Protection Team
- Developed a network approach to working with children pre-child protection to help manage demand

These changes in practice and culture within the teams has led to a reduction in the use of legal processes. This often supports better outcomes for children and families and represents a small reduction in spend for the Local Authority particularly in the legal costs of public law care proceedings.

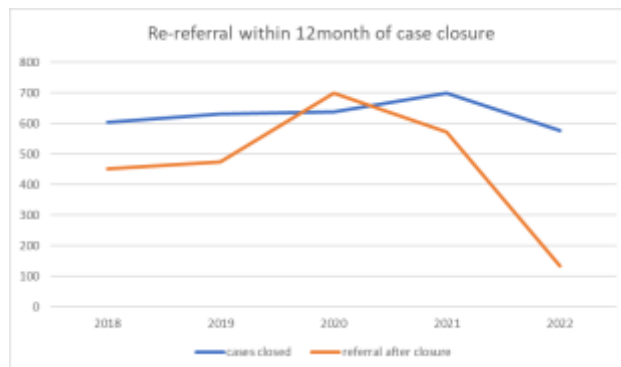




Correspondingly we have seen a rise in child protection registration figures. This is in line with our current practice objectives around retaining children within child protection planning and holding ‘risk’ differently.

The Quality Assurance report completed by the Child Protection Co-ordinator in April 2022 comments,

*“The statistics would suggest that the children are remaining on the Child Protection Register to ensure the Child Protection Plan is completed in its entirety and the risks to children have significantly reduced. Most de-registrations in the last 6 months have resulted in a Care and Support Plan (24) opposed to Legal Orders being in place (9). Supporting the view that de-registration is based on work being completed and improvements being made rather than cases entering the Court Arena”*



Data in regard to re-referral of families/children back into the Statutory Service supports the Child Protection Co-ordinator's position that families supported for longer via a child protection approach are less likely to be re-referred into the service, hence slowing the "revolving door" for families.

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### *Placement Sufficiency*

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The Local Authority has a duty to provide sufficient suitable placements for children who are looked after. Placements should provide a warm and nurturing environment for children and ensure that the child's holistic emotional and physical needs are fully met. Placements should be available close to home and community to allow essential links and support networks to be maintained.

The lack of placement sufficiency has been an issue of growing national concern. Put simply, there are not enough placements for children who need to be looked after. The causes of this are twofold: i) Challenges in recruiting and retaining foster carers; some of these challenges are shared with other Local Authorities and some are specific to the demography of the County. ii) Increased instability in the provider market following the Welsh Government commitment to eliminate profit from children's social care.

The reality of this is that for some children, particularly those with the most complex needs, it can be extremely difficult to find any placement at all. There have been 4 occasions this year when the Local Authority has been required to look after a child without the benefit of a registered placement. This is of extreme concern to the service and presents legal and financial risks to the Council.

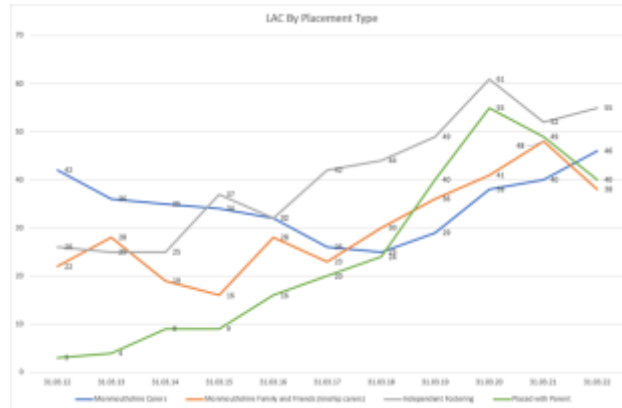
We are taking steps to address the issue of placement sufficiency by:

- Working in partnership with local providers to expand local residential provision
- Maintaining our focus on the recruitment and retention of foster carers in partnership with Foster Wales
- Working with our regional partners within Gwent to implement a regional sufficiency strategy including the expansion of Local Authority residential options.

### *Placement Activity*

When a child comes into care we always explore family options first. If a family option is not found, children are placed with Monmouthshire in-house Foster Carers unless it is identified that the assessed needs of the child cannot be met from this provision. This will be either because there are no vacancies or because there are no in-house foster placements that can match the child's needs. In these situations

we look to Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA), or residential provision, again depending on the needs of the child.



2 - The distribution of placements at year end.



3 - Numbers of children in residential placements at year end.

This year end data tells us that:

- Although the ratio of independent foster carers to in-house carers is closing we are still a long way from where we would like to be i.e. the majority of children placed with in-house carers.
- The decrease in numbers of kinship Foster Carers and children on care orders placed at home corresponds to our work on ‘safe reduction’.
- The use of residential placements for children is still too high.

With regards to the use of residential provision, this is partly attributable to the overall shortage of foster placements. Some children who could be better looked after within a fostering environment are in residential care because there are no suitably skilled foster carers available. Normally speaking it is children with the most complex needs who enter residential care. Sometimes the only placement option available for a child will be out of area, making it harder to support good outcomes. The cost of residential placements is extremely high, and represents the most significant pressure on the Children’s Services budget.

Where we can we continue to reduce or prevent residential placements through our MyST service. We ensure that each child in a residential placement has an appropriate progression plan to return to family

based or supported living whenever possible and continue to tailor our support and development offer for carers to increase options for more specialist foster care.

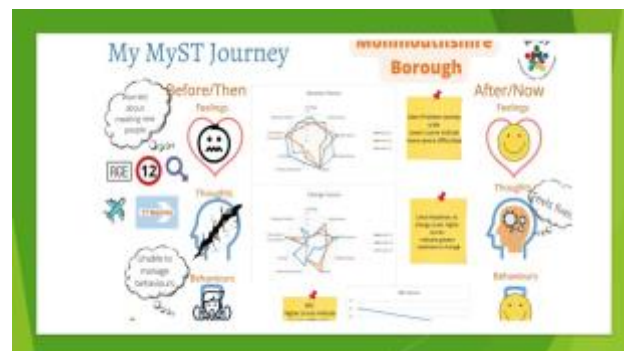
MyST is a multi-disciplinary team that provides 24 hour attachment and trauma based support to young people and carers in a way that allows a child to learn and develop through a dynamic approach to risk. This is long-term work with some of our most vulnerable and complex children. It is a well-established service regionally, and has been externally evaluated to show that it releases both cost savings and cost avoidance to the Council. Frustratingly, for Monmouthshire however; MyST is currently hampered by the overall lack of specialist foster carers.

MyST provides individual consultations to help carers and teams understand children and care for children who have disrupted attachment and have experienced trauma through adversity, abuse or neglect. This helps to reduce the risk of placement breakdown and builds knowledge and skills across the service.



### MyST - what we do

- ▶ Intensive - 24 hour support to a small number (15) children/young people & their caregivers
- ▶ Consultation to foster carers, parents, kinship carers, social workers & direct workers to help them understand & meet children's often very complex needs
- ▶ Long term direct work with children/young people & their caregivers





- ▶ 55 consultations were undertaken with 77 individuals, 63% attendees said consultations were extremely valuable
- ▶ 100% of those using the service said they would recommend the service
- ▶ Out of hours on-call was used 113 times with calls taking between 10 minutes to over 4 hours
- ▶ 13 individual children/young people were worked with over the course of a year



Monmouthshire Foster Carers are a highly dedicated and skilled group of people, who are the very heart of our services for children who are looked after. Foster carers provide stability, nurture, care and support to some of our most vulnerable children and deserve the highest praise.

The Placement and Support Team work incredibly hard to recruit, assess and support foster carers. They work closely with carers to support applicants through a challenging assessment process; understand

their development and training needs and provide carers with personalised supervision and support. Overall, the number of in-house foster carers has increased over the last 4 years from 24 to 40.

Follow this stack to read some of the compliments that have been received over the year.

### **Compliments**

*"the assessment process has been lengthy but thorough. At times it has been uncomfortable thinking about things that have happened in the past, but overall, it has been a positive experience."*

*We have always been a 'talk a lot' family but this whole experience has made us think deeper and made us realise that we are really strong as a family with a lot to offer. We are really pleased that we are going to be recommended by K who has made us feel comfortable and supported and has made our journey to becoming Foster Carers as smooth as possible.*

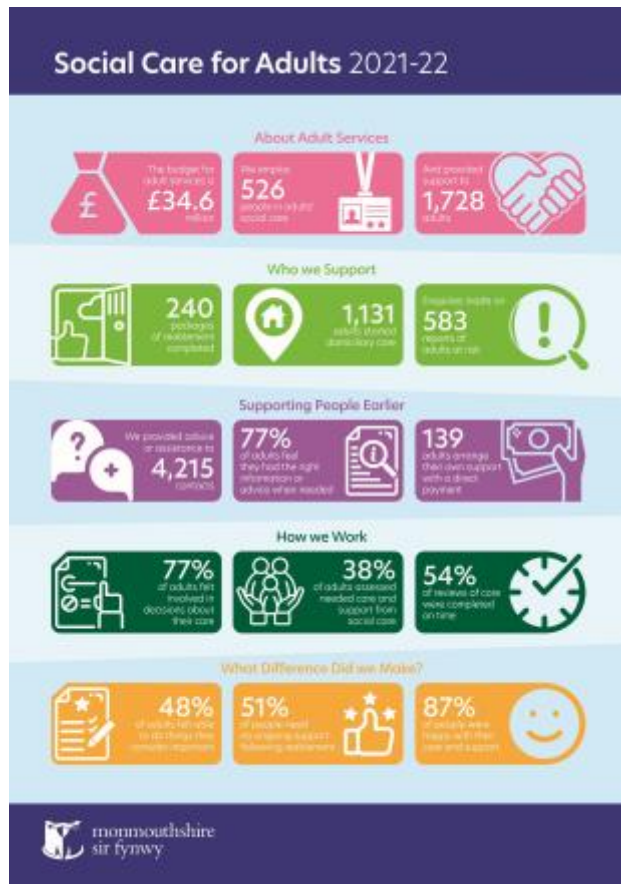
*In the initial skills to foster sessions we thought 'what are we doing' as everything seemed so alien. But with every session getting to know the other potential Foster Carers things started to fall into place and gave us a deeper insight into what fostering is all about. We know now that it is not about giving a child a roof over their heads and caring for their needs, but it is also about looking at things from a child's perspective, the individual child's perspective. It has seemed to take an age to get to the review panel but it has brought us closer together in the Agreement that it is the right way forward for us whether it be long term, short term or respite fostering. Our assessing Social Worker Kathryn O'Keefe has a gift of mixing formal with the informal making us and our family at ease and we are pleased that she has recommended our approval as Foster Carers".*

*"I have just spoken to B and just wanted to thank you for your support at this time. Much appreciated!"*

The team has numerous emails from Foster Carers thanking us for their gift boxes for various events. For example, Christmas and 'Fostering Fortnight gift boxes' *"Could you please pass this thank you on to Llinos and the Fostering Team? What a lovely surprise to come home to today, a lovely afternoon tea for two! Thank you so much! Wishing you all a peaceful and Happy Christmas!"*



### 3. Adult Services: Overview



Monmouthshire Adult Services comprise of a wide range of social care and health services for individuals aged over 18 who have care and support needs.

During 2021 / 22 Adult Services dealt with 6,633 contacts into the service regarding Monmouthshire residents and provided advice or assistance to 4,215 adults who were not already in receipt of care or support, and undertook 2,177 assessments.

The purpose of Adult Social Care and Health in Monmouthshire is to **help people live their own lives**. Key to this is the ability to understand what matters to people and to identify the support and or services required to find solutions to the issues they face.

Adult Social Care and Health is available to people aged 18+ for both short or long term interventions.

We know that at times of need, health and social care systems often seem complex, confusing and hard to navigate and we have worked over many years to establish an integrated and seamless approach to make this easier.

Across the county we have 3 integrated “hubs” – Abergavenny, Monmouth (which includes Raglan and Usk) and Chepstow (which includes Caldicot). Each hub has a single management structure and brings together a variety of resources e.g., Social Workers, district nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, support staff, facilities, day services (some hubs also have in-patient community wards, and some have rehabilitation beds).

This integrated approach helps both the people and families supported by the service as well as the people working within it. We are developing this further by designing more local teams using a place-based approach.

Anyone can access Adult Social Care and Health – there is no specific criteria, and we receive referrals from many places, such as hospitals, GP’s, families and of course the person themselves.

Our mental health and learning disability services also work in teams with their health colleagues across the North and South of the County.

Adult services also includes:

- Commissioning – working with the independent sector (domiciliary, residential, third sector)
- Commissioning also manages our My Mates and My Day My Life services which are mentioned within the report.
- Severn View – residential home for people with dementia
- Monmouthshire Meals
- Carers Team – supporting people who have caring responsibilities
- Changing Practice, changing Lives – working closely with the third sector and community teams to support people to be part of their community



Monowvale  
Health and Social Care Centre



## Mardy Park Resource Centre

Although the services are wide ranging and varied, they have in common a set of values that are rooted in social care practice and epitomise the principles of the SSWBA such as *choice, voice and control*. We believe that services should be designed around 'what matters' to an individual, supporting people to live their own best lives, as defined by them.



4 - Click play to see how we work



We understand that defining personal outcomes and helping people to reach their own wellbeing goals will look differently for everybody.

To help us express this idea we have developed our 'Wellbeing Tree' in partnership with Swansea University and community groups.

Our practice is strengths-based and seeks to build on the personal resources and assets that the person has, alongside what is available within families and communities. This is because we understand that individual, family and community resilience is more valuable and certainly more sustainable than statutory support.

## BASIC FLOW

- Multiple-front-doors
- Community Conversations
- FISH
- Assessment
- Care and Support
- Review



## : Strengths Based Practice

- Outcome focused public services
- Collaborative communication
- Exploring personal outcomes
- Supporting a skilled workforce

## Skills: engagement to outcomes

- A shift from a process supported by conversations...
- To a series of empowering conversations supported by a process.

- The key elements of good communication.?

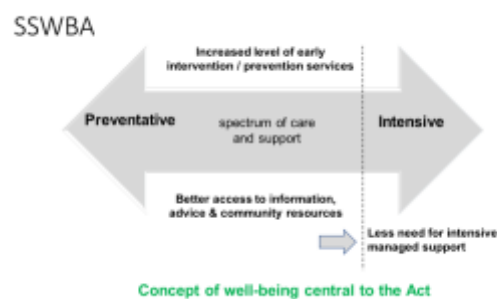
- Empathy
- Warmth
- Clarity about concerns
- Recognition of strengths

## What is the transformation we are trying to achieve ?

Challenges	Solutions
Difficulty engaging some individuals/families	Skills and approaches that lower initial defensiveness
Increased dependency on services by some individuals/families	Clarification of goals and realistic outcomes, recognition of strengths, knowing when and how to leave
Levels of 'red alert', meaning people avoid the system	Confidence in skills skills to deal with a range of issues effectively
Profile specialist assessment and advice needs resulting in families moved about in the system, visiting resources	Confident skills listening ability and understanding key underlying issues, getting to the heart of the matter more quickly, saving resources
Service users who have lost confidence in the system	Listening ability, Empowering service users to be central to their care plans

To support our workforce to practice according to our values we continue to embed Collaborative Communication training across the service.

## Prevention and Place-Based Working Through a Partnership Approach



Over recent years we have remained constant in our belief that providing support as early as possible and working preventatively helps people stay independent for longer and can delay or prevent the need for more complex care and services.

We also know that we can't provide early help services alone and work closely with our partners both within and outside of the council including many third sector and voluntary organisations. Together with our Gwent partners, particularly ABuHB, we are refining our concept of 'well-being networks' and developing what this means for Monmouthshire. A good example of this is our wellbeing link workers, employed through GAVO, and embedded within community health settings. Similarly, responding as we did to the COVID pandemic helped us cement our collaborative relationship with the Council's Partnership Teams and volunteer networks giving us even more experience of working together within communities and creating opportunities to increase involvement and social connection for people.

To help us understand and facilitate community networks we have invested in a system developed by Hitachi during the pandemic called Community Links. This will, in time, enable various teams supporting people and community groups to use the same platform and should provide invaluable information around provision and gaps within a community. It is already allowing our wellbeing link workers to support people by linking them with appropriate community resources.

We recognise the importance of place and community and have continued to develop our concept of '*place based working*'. In essence this means a way of working that builds a network of community support to help people remain connected to things that matter to them supporting their health and wellbeing. By bringing a range of agencies together across social services, primary and community health services, and the third sector, with a shared purpose of supporting people's wellbeing, we are





**Outcomes**

- As a result of the community conversation the volunteer coordinator put Mr Thomas in touch with Dawn, a newly trained volunteer who enjoyed gardening and wanted to find voluntary opportunities in the community.
- Dawn and Mr Thomas began working together on their gardens. A few months later, Dawn told Mr Thomas about the coffee morning at the community centre, and asked if he would like to go with her, which he did.
- Dawn and Mr Thomas are still growing runner beans together and attending various coffee mornings around town.

**Outcomes**

- Community Conversation is a place where, instead of talking about care packages and sitting services, we speak about community connection, purpose, contribution and shared experiences as a route to wellbeing. Mr Thomas' personal outcomes were to feel connected, busy, purposeful and get back the garden his and his wife looked after for decades. Community conversation provided the unique opportunity for social services to work alongside volunteer coordinators to be able to support Mr Thomas to achieve his goals.
- Several years later, and Mr Thomas has been able to stay away from Social Services, he no longer drinks, and attends several groups and clubs in the community and remains connected to his volunteer Dawn. Mr Thomas now volunteers himself and supports others to achieve their personal outcomes.

We are currently using a practice model called 'Community Conversations' to facilitate living well through community and connection. Mr Thomas's story is a great example of this.

We are embracing developments and advances in digital technology to support people with their independence and reduce isolation. Some case examples of how we use digital technology to support people can be seen in section 5.

In the year ahead our aim is to develop integrated approaches based within communities even further, working together to understand local needs and priorities, coordinating services and using local resources to promote the wellbeing of individuals. We will be supported in this endeavour through the national approach to Neighbourhood Care Network (NCN) development and locally under the auspices of the now well-established Monmouthshire Integrated Partnership Board.

We continue to develop our social care hubs to maximise opportunities to provide advice and support to people *where they are* and to make services visible and accessible within the community.

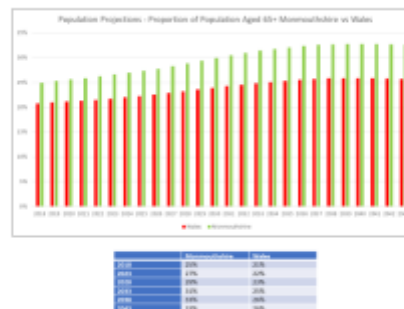


## Statutory Care and Support

Although we have remained steadfast in our commitment to developing our early help offer in Monmouthshire, the demand for statutory care and support continues to rise within our Integrated Teams. In every aspect of our Integrated Teams over the last year, *DEMAND* has outstripped *SUPPLY*.

Broadly speaking this can be explained in three words: demographics, COVID, workforce.

Census data tells us that the age demographic in Monmouthshire is increasing i.e. overall the population within the County is ageing, as illustrated by the graphs.



In headline terms the 2021 census data shows that:

- The largest age group in Monmouthshire (and Wales) was those aged 55 to 59 years

- 25.8% of Monmouthshire's population was aged 65+ (24,000), higher than Welsh average (21.3%)
- In Monmouthshire, the total number of people aged 65 years and over increased by 26% between 2011 and 2021, the highest increase of all the Welsh local authorities. This compares with a 17.7% rise across Wales.

The older people are, the more likely they are to need care and support due to frailty, illness, dementia, disability and isolation.

In the context of this demographic, the impact of the COVID pandemic, particularly on our most vulnerable residents and carers, has been considerable and the effects continue to generate powerful demand pressures across the system.

Over the last two years, many people have not been able to access the medical attention or care and support they require resulting in delayed and more complex presentations. Added to this is the increased care and support needs of people whose health has been compromised by COVID.

The third element impacting the supply - demand equation is the workforce. Growth in demand is not aligned to a similar growth in the workforce with significant recruitment and retention challenges across all posts. Occupational Therapy is particularly affected as well as all direct care posts both within Local Authority services and those of our third sector partners, such as domiciliary and residential care. The social care and health workforce, whilst showing such incredible fortitude and resilience, has been under sustained pressure for over two years now without let up. The workforce as a whole could best be described as fragile. Given also the indications that decreasing numbers of people are choosing careers in care, sustaining an adequate, skilled and resilient workforce remains one of the top priorities for the service.

These demographic, demand and workforce pressures were clearly in evidence and of significant concern pre-2020. It is understandable, therefore, that COVID is viewed by many as a *crisis within a crisis*.

### Impact on our service

In the context of increasing demand and a depleted workforce we are experiencing delays in provision. In many instances this has created situations where we have struggled to meet the care and support needs of our residents and where 'voice, choice and control' for some of our most vulnerable individuals and their families has been compromised. These issues challenge us at the very heart of our practice and value base.

We have completed fewer number of packages of reablement, started less domiciliary care services and our weekly unmet need within home care has reached 2000 hours. There are waiting lists being operated for both social work and occupational therapy. All of this clearly impacts on our ability to respond preventatively to people's needs and over time both exacerbates demand and has a demoralising effect on the workforce.

Reflective of the challenges we are experiencing, whilst our Adult Social Care service user questionnaire shows a high proportion, 86.9%, of services users who are happy with their care and support, this represents a decrease and is below levels seen in previous years. Feedback from services users also shows a slight decrease in other areas including communication and involvement in their care and whether care and support is meeting their needs.

Delays across the health and social care system is creating challenges and tensions within partnership and integrated working, particularly in the area of hospital discharge arrangements. The impact on individuals remaining in hospital longer than they should, are, at best, not conducive to achieving positive outcomes and at worst, can be devastating.

Notwithstanding the scale of the problems, it is incumbent on us to work strategically and operationally with our partners to seek solutions. Aligned to the 6 goals programme at a national level, this work includes:

- Working closely with our partners to better understand and manage demand at a preventative level.
- Working with partners to develop services, practice models and multi-disciplinary working to reduce unnecessary admissions;
- Working with partners to manage the flow through health care settings using a social care perspective, that puts individual rights and choice, including positive risk taking, at the centre of effective discharge planning
- Continue to take steps to address the fragility of the social care provider market,
- Continue to work with others around the recruitment and retention of the social care workforce.

Our award winning **Community Nights Service** is a great example of how we are beginning to address the second bullet point.

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### *Community Night Service*

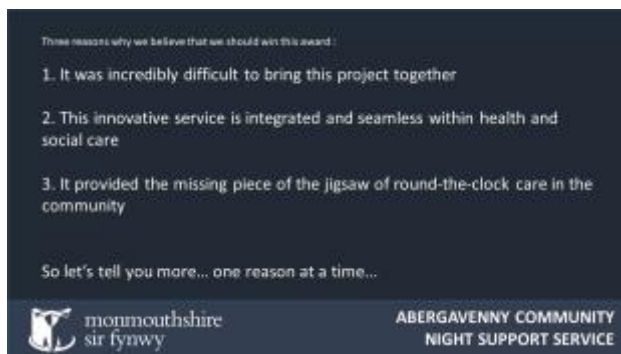
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The team originally started in August 2020, generated from the idea of one of our Occupational Therapists who had a 'vision' about domiciliary night care. It started with a team of three members and 1 bank staff who covered 7 nights a week and covered the North of Monmouthshire. It has since grown to cover the whole of Monmouthshire with 4 teams out each night. The team is currently supported through partnership grant funding (the Regional Integration Fund).

The LGI (Local Government Innovation) award ceremony was held in London on November 4th 2021 where the service was given a 'Highly Commended' in the Health and Social Care category.

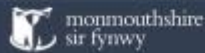
Here is the slide show that was presented for the award.

The Community Night Service currently supports around 50 people a night throughout Monmouthshire including scheduled home visits, adhoc visits, phone calls, and careline responses.



## 2. This innovative service is integrated and seamless within health & social care ...

- Now established as part of the Abergavenny Integrated Services Team
- Existing staff seconded to night-time roles
- Worked with what was there and adapted existing systems
- Now an integral part of the wider integrated team's assessment and support planning
- Working to the principles of Abergavenny Integrated Services Team



ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY  
NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE

Feedback from a Paula Holborn, Social Care Assessor:  
*"With the night support team it is definitely NOT one size fits all. They are tuned to the individual's needs."*



ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY  
NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE

## 3. It provided the missing piece of the jigsaw of round-the-clock care in the community ....



ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY  
NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE

This small piece of the jigsaw has a huge effect on people's lives

Feedback from Angela Jones, Occupational Therapist:

*"People can sleep in their own beds and not have to go into care - that is worth everything. We can thrive so much at the day-time but overnight the gaps appeared people risk having to leave their homes if we can't make sure they feel safe and cared for. Not everyone can afford live-in care and so this service provides equity and everyone gets a chance to stay at home."*



ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY  
NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE

**One call can make all the difference**

It's not difficult or complicated, usually just basic care as shown in these examples...



Feedback from M, an 18-year-old man with cerebral palsy who is currently receiving our service:

*"The night team gave me the confidence to move into my own flat when I had always lived with my mum and had never been on my own at night. Knowing they are there to call on keeps me living independently as I cannot get out of bed on my own, and washing is too much trouble including picking up my remote control when I dropped it and making me a cheese sandwich at 3am!"*

**ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**

Feedback from daughter of C, an 85-year-old lady living alone:

*"Mum is grateful for help in the middle of the night and she feels more secure having someone around to help with spending a penny and any other issues that arise".*



Feedback from daughter of G, an 96-year-old lady with advancing dementia and at high risk of falls, living alone:

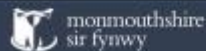
*"By the night team visiting to check Mum was safe and in bed we were able to dispense with the bed alarm which kept going off for no reason and to return back to living in our own home, and even have a night away to visit our daughter."*

**ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**



There are 24 hours in a day...

- A 24-hour approach to assessment is now possible
- Viable and realistic night support is now available
- These options are now embedded into the integrated service team's "toolkit" and provide them with choice to offer the people they are supporting



**ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**



**COMMUNITY NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**

What a difference a year makes:  
 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 – Pilot team started in Abergavenny  
 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 – Further funding application made to ICF  
 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – Further recruitment  
 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 – **FULL ROLL OUT ACROSS MONMOUTHSHIRE**  
 (4 teams)

monmouthshire sir fynwy

In summary...

With this innovative project we have shown a light on the need for 24-hour services to such an extent that they are quickly becoming an indispensable part of our support to keep people at home.



It's made a massive difference to people being able to have their own homes at the end of a day.



I would like to thank them very much for easing my life...

The stories we have shared have been made possible by the dedication and commitment of a few people despite the challenges of setting up a unique night time service with limited funding whilst navigating the pandemic.

monmouthshire sir fynwy

**ABERGAVENNY COMMUNITY NIGHT SUPPORT SERVICE**

By working together...  
 By listening to the needs of the most vulnerable in our community...  
 By finding new, innovative ways of working...



... We've overcome the challenges and achieved more than we thought possible. We now hope other local authorities will follow the model of service we've created. We'll continue to innovate and meet changing needs. Monmouthshire's residents can now receive the support they need and deserve.

monmouthshire sir fynwy

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### Focus on Domiciliary Care

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Domiciliary Care is the cornerstone of Adult Social Care and Health, and is provided through a mixture of in-house and third sector providers. The demand for care at home is currently extremely high and has been on an upward trend for several years. We work hard to support our partner provider agencies, and have expanded our in-house provision to try and meet the demand. However, the ability to procure home care remains very challenging. The provider market is currently extremely fragile, with the risks of packages of care being 'handed back' to the Local Authority presenting a constant worry.

All other services in adults are reliant on domiciliary care and the impact of the crisis affects all elements of the service.

At the moment, we are seeking to re-design the way that we provide care at home. We want to work in a more integrated way with providers including changing the way that we commission care and



introducing increased flexibility in the way that people's individual outcomes are achieved. Our aim is to expand care at home options in a way that is dovetailed to the needs of individual communities with ideas including supporting 'mirco-carer' enterprises; walking 'runs' to help with recruiting non-drivers as well as patch-based commissioning. These interventions go hand in hand with ensuring that our practice is sharpened around quality of care, assessing and defining personal outcomes and undertaking reviews.

These slides show in more detail where we have unmet need. Notably this tells us that there is more unmet need within communities than within hospitals, and that there is less of an acute problem in the North of the county than in the South and Central areas.



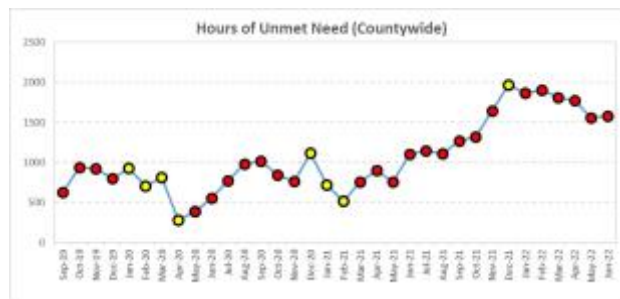
### Domiciliary Care is the cornerstone of Adult Social Care and Health.

#### What constitutes domiciliary care?

- Enablement
- Long term care/ dementia
- End of life care
- Night service

#### What do home carers do?

- Carers support people according to their individual needs and desired outcomes, and deliver care in line with the person's care and support plan
- It could be four double handed calls per day
- It could be walking to the paper shop
- Carers get to know people on a day to day basis so are critical in monitoring their wellbeing



#### Demand – Unmet Need by Place Based Areas

Res.	4600
Abergavenny Rural	23.25
North Abergavenny	100
South Abergavenny	1
West Abergavenny (New OGLL)	82.5
<b>North Monmouthshire</b>	<b>298.75</b>
Central Monmouthshire (Now Raglan)	124
Uk & District	582.5
Monmouth Rural	81.25
Monmouth Town	203
<b>Central Monmouthshire</b>	<b>395.75</b>
Caldicot Town	557.5
Chepstow Rural	158.5
Chepstow Town	329.5
The Levels	138.5
Caldicot Rural (New)	41.25
<b>South Monmouthshire</b>	<b>795.25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1581.75</b>
Number of People waiting for POC	142



Type	Hours	People	%
a) In Reablement waiting for LTC	88	12	8%
b) No Care at Home waiting for LTC	657	74	52%
c) In Hospital ready for Discharge	469	31	22%
d) Change of Care and/or Agency	186	16	11%
g) In Care Home waiting to go home	68	4	3%
h) In Hospital not fit for discharge	32	1	1%
f) Step Closer to Home (ABUHB)	81	4	3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1581</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>

Notes: Normal position of between 600 – 800 Hours

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## Carers

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Carers Co-ordinator  
Tel: 01291 675474



April 2022

### Monmouthshire Carers

A Partnership Between GAVO & Monmouthshire County Council

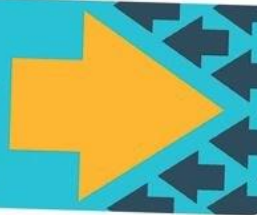


#### *Goodbye and Good Luck Tracey!*

Can you believe it, after 17 years Tracey Davies, Carers Co-ordinator is leaving us, and moving onto pastures new. During those 17 years Tracey has built up a carers database that is now providing newsletters, activities, events, training and information to over 1200 Monmouthshire carers. Whilst Tracey works for GAVO she has been an integral part of the Monmouthshire Carers Team and most importantly someone whom carers know they can rely upon for being friendly, helpful and knowledgeable. We are going to miss Tracey, yet it's an exciting new chapter Tracey starts and we want to say thank you to Tracey for her dedication in supporting Monmouthshire Carers, and that she enjoys all the good things ahead of her.

#### Changes are Afoot

There is going to be a transition of change after February, when Tracey Davies leaves her role as Carers Co-ordinator, GAVO and when a new person steps into the vacant role. The Carers Co-ordinator role is pivotal in maintaining the carers database, producing and disseminating the carers newsletter, co-ordinating and organising carers events and training and managing the leisure card scheme. The Carers Team, Monmouthshire County Council are working with GAVO to ensure there is minimal disruption during the interim period. So please bear with us in the meantime.



#### Carers Week 2022

8th June 2022 Well-being Day – Mind Monmouthshire;  
9th June 2022 Carers Walk – Cefn Isla, Usk;

#### ...INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Carers Co-ordinator;	Carers Hub;	Carers UK;
Carers Week 2022;	Men's Shed;	Monmouthshire Carers Network;
Young Carers;	Carers Handbook;	WhatsApp;
Carers Carers Rights Day;	Royal British Legion;	EPPCymru.

## Welcome to Monmouthshire Young Carers Service



The Young Carers Service is working with a caseload of young carers and families that are receiving the 12-week Intervention support depending on their level of need. This programme focusses on their goals which includes emotional and/or practical support.

During February half term the Young Carers team organised some activities one of them being a Pottery session in Lollypops and Ladybirds as an opportunity for the young carers to take part in a fun creative therapeutic activity.

We had a great time and parents were invited to get involved to provide the family with some much-needed time out.

The young carers were able to socialise with people who understand their situation and to make new friends.

A great day was had by all.

Feedback from a Mum \*  
Thankyou for today we had a great time and it was lovely to spend some much-needed time with others who are in our situation\*

**If you are a young carer/young adult carer aged 25 years and would like any support, please contact the young carers service on:  
Email: [YoungCarers@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:YoungCarers@monmouthshire.gov.uk) / Tel: 01633 644621**



### Carers Rights Day Luncheons

Over 40 carers in Monmouthshire enjoyed a three course Christmas luncheon at Llanfoist Golf Club to promote Carers Rights Day.

The luncheons took place on Wednesday 24th November and 1st December, 2021. Carers relaxed and chatted over a scrumptious Christmas feast...

A great day was had by all!



## TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY CYBER SAFE



### Top Tip

Always install anti-virus software on your devices.

For help and advice about staying safe online visit:  
[www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

#### Social Media

- Be wary of the data you post on line. Social media sites do sell your data onto third parties so posts you share can also be shared with a wider audience. Don't put countdowns to holidays on there. Limit the data you post about yourself in your profile. Always keep your on-line presence small.

#### Shopping safety

- Fake emails offering a refund will ask for bank details IGNORE IT
- Received an email from a friend asking to buy a gift card for them? IGNORE IT
- Look out for look-a-like websites, safe sites start 'HTTPS'
- Protect your cards by using RFID card protector sleeves.
- Stay vigilant for counterfeit goods. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. IGNORE IT.

#### Passwords

- Never use the same password for different accounts, if one is hacked the others can be too. Use UPPER, lower case characters, numbers and special characters e.g. !Y0u3 Simply Th3 B3stX. Check if your account has been hacked at:  
[www.haveibeenpwnd.com](http://www.haveibeenpwnd.com)

#### Phishing emails

- Check the spelling of the senders name and the email address. Hover over links to check where the link is pointing to. If in doubt, get the email checked out.
- Report Phishing to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

## Men's Shed Sied Dynion



Mae'r grŵp yma i ddynion y gymuned MS allu trafod y pynciau sydd bwysicaf iddynt. Ymunwch a ni i gael paned neu peint drwy Zoom. Mae'r sesiynau ar gael i unrhyw un sydd gyda MS neu sy'n rhoi cymorth i rywun sydd yn dioddef.

Mae'r grŵp yn cwrd ddiwrnod **Mawrth cyntaf y mis am 7 o'r gloch y nôs**. Cysylltwch a'r Hwb Lies am fanylion.

(Yn gyffwrddol byddi y sesiynau yn cael eu rhedeg drwy gyfrang y Saesneg)

email/e-bost:  
[wellbeingwales@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:wellbeingwales@mssociety.org.uk)

# MS Society



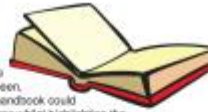
We are the group for the men of the MS community to get together and catch up on the topics that matter most. Whether you live with MS or support someone close to you, join us on Zoom for a moment to unwind!

We meet every month on the **First Tuesday at 7pm**. Contact the Hub for details.

## Are You A Carer?

Please let us know if you have changed your contact details so we can update the carers register.

## COMING SOON ...the New Carers Handbook



The Monmouthshire Carers Handbook has had a makeover! Whilst we have had many positive comments on how useful the handbook has been, carers have also given us some excellent suggestions as to how the handbook could be improved. The new handbook offers guidance and support for a carer whilst highlighting the need for them to think about their own needs beyond their caring role. The handbook also includes a directory of organisations that may be able to offer additional support to carers. In the meantime, the 2018 handbook is still available online at [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/social-care/carers-project/](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/social-care/carers-project/). Watch this space. We will keep you updated and let you know when the handbook is ready for circulation.

### SOUTH WALES ADMIRAL NURSE SERVICE



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Legion works with Dementia UK to provide Admiral Nurse support - a service that supports their beneficiaries, which can be the carer or the person living with dementia, who have served in the UK Armed Forces. The focus of the service is to maintain independence and improve the quality of life for carers and families and to provide the practical advice they need. Admiral Nurses have the experience to facilitate the service every step of the way, offering: skilled assessments to determine the needs of family carers and the needs of the person living with dementia; information and practical advice for carers and their families on supporting those with dementia; to work with carers and families to provide emotional and psychological support throughout the caring journey; advice on how to care for someone with dementia and help to develop skills to encourage positive approaches to living with dementia.

#### Regional South Wales Areas Covered:

Bridgend, Cwmphyl, Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent.

In terms of postcodes, we cover all CF and NP postcodes and SA10 – SA13.  
Telephone: 0333 011 4427 • Email: [admiral@southwales@britishlegion](mailto:admiral@southwales@britishlegion)



### Carers UK have launched new resources for carers about Disability-Related Expenditure

Carers UK have launched new resources for carers about Disability-Related Expenditure.

If you care for someone with a disability or a medical condition, there may be extra costs involved in helping them manage this. These are called disability-related expenses (DRE). Carers can claim help from their Local Authority regarding their DRE, but this is not always known about or widely shared, and it can be complex to submit a claim.

That's why, to help carers better understand what disability-related benefits are, including whether they are entitled to support, and how to make a claim, Carers UK have recently launched some new resources.

Please visit: [carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/disability-related-expenses](http://carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/disability-related-expenses)

# SUPPORT

**When you turn 18 there is still support out there for you**

#### **If you want to talk to someone**

You can talk to Ali Page who works within the Carers Team to see what support you might need. You may just want to talk about how turning 18 might change your caring role and the choices you want to make.

If you do want to have a chat then contact Ali Page, Young Carers & Young Adult Carers Assessment Worker, Monmouthshire County Council

Tel: 07956 188090  
Email: [AliPage@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:AliPage@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

#### **If you want to keep in touch & know what's going on**

You will receive regular updates through the Carers Newsletter which contains information that could help you, gives you access to free events, updates on any new carers grants, access to leisure & wellbeing discounts whilst letting you know there is still support for you in Monmouthshire.

If you want to sign up to the newsletter then please contact Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)

Tel: 01291 475474  
Email: [carers.co-ordinator@gavo.org.uk](mailto:carers.co-ordinator@gavo.org.uk)



**We hope you want to keep in touch so we can all connect together**

**WhatsApp  
Messaging Service**

We are expanding the way we communicate to our residents by developing a WhatsApp messaging service.

If you would like to subscribe to these messages, please contact [ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk)




**Gwasanaeth Negeseuon  
WhatsApp**

Rydym yn ehangu ein dull o gyfathrebu gyda'n trigolion drwy ddatblygu gwasanaeth negeseuon Whatsapp.

Os hoffech gael y negeseuon hyn, cyysylltwch ag [ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk)




The Health Board will be launching a **WhatsApp Messaging service** to engage with residents across Gwent.

By subscribing to this service, you will receive frequent updates from the Health Board on a variety of topics including COVID-19 messaging, our vaccination programmes and other information about our healthcare services.

If you or someone you know would like to receive these messages, please contact [ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ASS.Engagement@wales.nhs.uk) and file the email 'WhatsApp-Subscriber'.

**In the email, please provide the following details:**

- Your full name
- Postcode/Barrogriff
- The mobile number you would like the messages to be sent to
- If you would like to receive messages in the medium of Welsh

For the avoidance of doubt, messages will be received from the following mobile number: **07973695798.**

**Welsh Ambulance Service  
Non-Emergency Patient Transport**

Transport is available for patients in Wales needing to get to Non-Emergency appointments who have a specific medical need and require Ambulatory Care. You can visit our website to enquire if you are eligible, to search for transport options in your local area and find FAQ's about what to expect if you travel with us.

**Temporary Changes to Booking:** Under normal circumstance we ask patients who are eligible for transport to call and book as soon as they receive their appointment. However, due to the increased risk surrounding Covid cases, we will only be able to take transport bookings within 4-days of our patients' appointments. By limiting advance journeys allows us to obtain the most up to date Covid information from our patients and therefore helping towards ensuring the safety of our staff and patients.






**Free NHS Health & Well Being Course,  
Working with MCC Digital Lending Library**

**Gain Digital skills using an ipad & improve  
your well-being at the same time!**

**You will need to register** with the Digital Library to take part, contact Helena from the MCC Library Service on [helenawilliams@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:helenawilliams@monmouthshire.gov.uk) or phone 07970 380358

This is part of a pilot scheme taking place in **Monmouthshire** libraries for people who want to get online or may benefit from learning digital skills. There will be volunteers to support you.

**For info** on our other courses contact the **EPP Team** by [epp@gavo.org.uk](mailto:epp@gavo.org.uk) or use the **QR Code link**



The challenges within the social care and health system, particularly the domiciliary care crisis, not only affects individuals but have a massive impact on carers too. The isolating impact of the pandemic on carers is well documented, with a significant reduction on people's desire or ability to access respite options including direct care packages, residential and day services. Our data shows that we undertook considerably more carers assessments this year and that there were more carer's support plans in place.

Never-the-less the need to reinvigorate our approach to providing carers' assessments and focusing on the needs of carers was identified within the CIW inspection report as an area for improvement.

The entire health and social care sector relies massively on our unpaid carers. Providing carers with a responsive service, which recognises the pressure that they experience is a critical part of our business.

Throughout the pandemic and beyond our Carer's Team has continued to find ways to support carers and ensure that they feel supported and valued, as illustrated in this newsletter.

The team also took time to consider the needs of *bereaved carers through offering a garden voucher many personally delivered by the team*. The feedback from the carers was extremely poignant and highlighted the importance of keeping in touch, and saying thank you.

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### *Our Registered Services - Mardy Park, Severn View and Care At Home*

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Mardy Park, Severn View and our Care at Home Service are registered under The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA).

Mardy Park is situated in Abergaveny provides a rehabilitation, re - settlement and respite service for up to 8 adults.

Severn View is situated in Chepstow and is a residential care home for up to 32 people.

In accordance with the legislation all 3 services are routinely monitored in relation to the quality of care provided and compliance with the regulatory framework.

The Responsible Individual (RI) visits quarterly - spending time within the services, reviewing records, discussing issues with managers and meeting with staff, residents and people who use home care. The findings of the RI are recorded in quarterly reports which are then reviewed at the next visit. This creates an on-going improvement dialogue which is collaborative and inclusive.

Within his quarterly monitoring report for Care at Home the RI commented:

*"In talking to people who are supported by the service I am particularly looking at the quality, reliability, responsiveness and consistency of the service; whether we provide sufficient time and flexibility and also whether we communicate well and that people find it easy to get hold of someone to talk to about any issues. When a carer is involved, I am also asking that they feel supported by the team and what else we could be doing. The objective is to see whether we can be any better and how we need to change and develop to do this."*

Alongside of the quarterly reports, Quality of Care reports are produced bi - annually to provide an overview of service performance against 5 key priorities:-

- Keeping people safe and well
- Providing relationship based care and support
- Working together (partnership working)
- Building a stronger workforce
- Smarter uses of resources



All together these quality assurance processes provide a rich data source on information and a real insight into the experience of staff and service users.

Whilst all the services are very different there are some key improvement themes that have arisen during the year:-

- The huge impact that the pandemic has had on all direct services both in terms of the ability to maintain service levels, the wellbeing of teams and the impact on people in receipt of services.
- Laterly there has been a sense of reset across services as we emerge from the pandemic and restrictions have lifted. Although everyone worked extremely hard to minimise service disruption, there is now much work to done to rebuild resilience, capacity, and get back on track.
- Recruitment of team members remains the biggest challenge with high employment generally and all providers experiencing the same shortages.
- Aligned to this is the work to retain our current workforce. The challenge being that many have thought to retire as a result of the pandemic and also the cost of living crisis is forcing people to make difficult decisions about working closer to home. Some work is required to review terms and conditions for services that operate 365 days a year.
- With the emphasis on keeping the service running, some aspects of training lapsed during the pandemic.
- The quality and consistency of recording and paperwork, including how care plans are review, is an area for improvement.
- More analysis and exploration of medication errors is required.

**Overall though, despite everything, what is reported on most consistently is the warmth, compassion and kindness of staff together with a genuine commitment to provide high quality person centred care.**

*People's individual circumstances are considered. We saw people are listened to and they have the opportunity to give their views and opinions. People told us they are happy, staff are kind and treat them well. We observed the dining room experience and saw people are valued and given choices.*

*We observed staff being caring and attentive to peoples' needs.*

*The review and analysis of falls within the service needs attention in order to learn lessons and to support the timely review of personal plans as necessary.*

*Multi-disciplinary meetings are held on a regular basis and healthcare support is sought in a proactive and preventative way.*

*Personal plans lack consistency and the revision of plans requires improvement.*

*People are cared for in a spacious, clean and welcoming environment. The décor in communal areas is homely. Some areas have been freshly painted and we were told people are involved in how the home is decorated.*

There was an inspection of Severn View by Care Inspectorate Wales in March 2022. Strengths were recognised in the quality of care, leadership and quality assurance oversight. Areas for improvement within the report included tightening up of some recruitment and personnel records; storage of medication; timeliness of supervision and appraisals for all staff; health and safety process; and consistency in reviewing personal plans. Here is a selection of feedback from the CIW report.

As part of his quarterly reports the RI gathers feedback from people who use direct care services.

Here are some of the comments and views.

I spoke with the daughter of M. She was generally satisfied but did relay some issues regarding laundry when some soiled towels hadn't been washed. She did say though, that if there are any issues, these are always resolved by a single phone call. Overall, she felt that there was nothing we could do to improve the service and 'quite satisfied'

I met with Mr & Mrs S. Mrs S was unwaveringly positive about the support she receives from the team. There is clearly a very close bond between the team and this couple.

Had a phone conversation with K from Raglan. Described consistent approach from the team but did state that the rotas appear chaotic at times. Happy with the reliability and consistency and only very occasionally did she receive support from someone outside the normal team. Very complimentary about the Senior. Only real comment was that she would like an earlier call. K gave some lovely examples of when the team have gone above and beyond.

Met with J who has been having rehab following a number of falls at home. Her reflection overall was that I 'should be very proud of what I have here and the staff'. She couldn't fault the level of care and support. In discussing the rehab she felt that the team have the right balance between supportive and making you work. She says they do monitor her to make sure she is working hard enough and they do give a gently nudge. Very complimentary of the food.

Met with D&J [husband and wife]. D has been staying with us for about a month following a succession of falls in his garden at home. During a recent home visit supported by X, she was concerned to see how poorly J was. She was able to arrange an urgent admission as J was clearly not safe to remain at home. In talking to J she said she was reluctant to come in but was now so glad she had. They were both extremely complimentary of the team, the food, the support and everyone working on the wing. The team have managed to move things around so they can have adjacent rooms with a shared kitchen so that they can be together all the time.

Specifically in relation to his experience of Severn View, Mrs W had tried two homes prior to settling on Severn View; neither of which were satisfactory. Mr W views Severn View as adequate but he has highlighted a number of areas for improvement. He raised concerns about the external spaces at and felt that these were terrible.



### **Severn View Parc (Crick Rd Development)**

Building work continues on the replacement for Severn View Residential Home. This is a joint project with Melin Housing who are building a residential development in the same area. Lovell are responsible for both the care home and the residential build which has created local employment opportunities and apprenticeships.

The staff at Severn View have been involved in the naming of the home as a whole as well as the naming of the four individual households which it is made up of. These will be called Oak, Ash, Hazel, and

Willow. Each household will have a 'household support team' who will promote the involvement of the residents in all aspects of daily living.

A meeting took place in November with families of current residents to discuss and share information about the new build. Seven family members attended on behalf of six residents. The purpose of the meeting was to share the philosophy and ambition of the new Crick Care Home. The general feedback from families about the new care home has been very positive. There is a good understanding of the ethos and what the home is trying to achieve.

The new build will take advantage of modern assistive technologies to keep people safe whilst encouraging as much independence as possible.



*5 - An aerial view of Severn View Parc*



*6 - The kitchen diner in one of the households*



7 - The village hall and village square will be key to the promotion of social connectivity

#### **4. How are people shaping our services? Engagement, participation, partnership and collaboration**

Social Care is all about connecting with and listening to people. Right across the service the expectation is clear that people using care and support services have a voice, and should be treated equally with respect, attention and care. This means that understanding what matters to people and responding to need or vulnerability is a shared, collaborative endeavour. The fact that the response to our adult survey question '*I have been actively involved in decisions about how my care and support was provided dropped this year to 77.4% from 83.0%.*' and is reflective of our challenging circumstances.

Positively, our Care Inspectorate Wales inspection found that,

*"For many people, their voices are heard, and people's personal outcomes are captured. We saw some detailed and comprehensive biographies and personal circumstances, evidencing 'what matters' to the person. Many people said social services were helpful and they were treated with dignity and respect by practitioners."*

*However, they commented that the quality of assessments and care plans varied and that,*

*"The local authority must improve the way it reflects people's strengths and barriers to achieving their personal outcomes, and the risks of them not achieving them."*

Re-focusing on the quality of our engagement and partnership practice at an individual level remains a priority for the coming year.

There are countless examples of how services engage people to participate in their care and support in an enabling and empowering way. Here is a brief overview of some participation activity within Children's Services.

## Participation and Engagement Activity within Children's Services

- People from My Day My Life or Care Experienced Young People have been involved in every leadership appointment from Chief Officers, Heads of Service and Team Managers
- We are delivering young carer led group work in all secondary schools, which has also been piloted in some primary schools, where young carers are able to decide what they want the group to cover. Work is on-going to re-launch the young carers forum
- Children who are having supervised time with people who are important to them have been involved in ideas about what they like about the service and how we can make it better.

Children with Disabilities use lots of different ways to communicate with children and ensure that their wishes and feelings are understood, and that they are involved in decisions about their lives. Consultation is currently in progress around the re-design of Children with Disability respite services.



### Children with Disabilities – My Time Project with Action for Children

- Children with disabilities and their families were fully consulted in the design of their support services.
- The support services are now fully embedded, providing a vital support to many families and plenty of fun for children, reducing social isolation and reinforcing the long-term resilience of families.
- During lockdown the CWD team and Action for Children worked closely together to ensure that services remained flexible and supported those families under the most pressure.
- Providing flexible support with passion, ambition, inclusion and collaboration is a core aim of the service.





With the fantastic support of our partners and colleagues in MonLife, Children Looked After activity days have continued.

This is a great opportunity for children to engage with social workers, members of Corporate Parenting Panel and each other to talk about their experiences in a more informal, fun and relaxed setting.



Are you confident in sharing your wishes and feelings with your social worker?  
*I feel that every bit of my heart trusts my social worker.*

Are you confident in sharing your wishes and feelings with your social worker?  
*No, I don't know her well enough.*  
Who would you like to help you?  
*My teacher Mr P.*

Do you have any ideas that will support better communication between children / young people and their social workers?  
*To see her more and out at the park or cafe.*

Is there anything else that you would like to tell us?  
*I just want to say thank you for asking.*

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### *More Than Just Words - mwy na geiriau yn unig*

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As a directorate we work very closely with our Welsh Language officer to ensure we support the workforce with the current **More and Words** strategy. Within our workforce intranet we have a 'More than words' tile, this includes information about various resources to encourage, assist and support colleagues to use their Welsh language skills, to include links and resources to promote the Welsh language within social care and information about the **Active Offer** and **More than Just Words**. We have Welsh language courses for social care with learning available for both internal and external care providers who work across both Adults and Children's services including online Welsh taster course as well as courses suitable for the workforce who understand spoken Welsh with ease but lack confidence in speaking Welsh. **More Than Just Words** and the **Active Offer** is part of our induction.



When making a referral or seeking advice or assistance over the phone, we offer our callers the invitation to speak to someone in Welsh. We keep an up to date list of people within both the whole organization and our directorate, both Adult’s and Children's Service with Welsh language skills. This list can be accessed by colleagues who may need to identify Welsh speakers to communicate with people we provide care and support for, carers, parents and / or other professionals. The question of preferred language is part of all initial conversations and assessments, this information is included in our social care recording system. The active offer was accepted by **17 people** in our community at the point of assessment across both adult’s and children’s services. Our Welsh Language Officer regularly reminds us of the requirements of the Welsh language Standards and visits team and leadership meetings to discuss how he can support them. All our Social Care social media posts are bilingual and feedback forms seeking views are bilingual. We offer the whole end to end attraction and selection process as bilingual if required and all our advertised vacancies as well as our applicant app. We are looking forward to working with the new More than Words 5 year plan 2022 to 2027.

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### *What Matters Conversations with Children*

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Children are encouraged to set their own goal and are invite d and encouraged to attend **Achieving Change Together Team** reviews and other meetings, where appropriate although they often don’t want to. If they don’t we try and get feedback from them about what they want to achieve and change for example one child wanted his mother to ‘keep up the good work on her drinking’ and ‘less shouting, talk to us’. Another child fed back that their mum was ‘stronger’ and his sibling said that when they were upset their mother now knew what to do to help them.

### **Building Strong Families Team**

Children are involved in setting their own goals. For example “I would like some help and tools to reduce my frustration. I would like feel more comfortable about my parents divorce. I would like home to be more peaceful and fun again.”

Activities undertaken with families involve children and children are engaged in reviewing the work. Children are encouraged and supported to find their own voice and to identify what it is they can do to help themselves.

At the end of support, children are asked for feedback about what worked and what could have been better.

**“Exploring control”**

**MY CIRCLE OF CONTROL**  
I WILL FOCUS ON WHAT I CAN CONTROL

**THINGS THAT ARE IN MY CONTROL**

- The amount of effort I put in
- How I take care of myself
- My decisions
- How I handle my feelings
- Whether or not I follow rules
- My words
- My actions
- How I treat others

**THINGS THAT ARE OUT OF MY CONTROL**

- What other people do
- What other people say
- Things from the past
- How other people feel
- Other people's choices
- The weather

“I want to control everything, so I don't get hurt again”

**“Coping Strategies”**

**First Aid**

- 101 Read a book
- 102 Call a cat
- 104 Listen to music
- 101 Talk to people and looking them know how I feel.
- 102 Use puppy
- 103 Callie belly

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*The directorate employs a number of organisations and methods to support people more formally in their interactions with services.*

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The Children's Services Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is critical in terms of helping children and young people participate in their Children Looked After Reviews. The small size of the authority enables our IRO service to develop individual relationships with children which is helpful in encouraging them to express their wishes and feelings.

It is an expectation that *proper consideration* is given to all children over the age of 8 attending their child looked after review, or at least part of it. Above the age of 11, it is an expectation that children will always be invited.

There were 126 children aged above 8 years old who had reviews.

Of the 126 children 97 were invited to their reviews.

Of the 97 who were invited, 86 attended.

Some analysis of this data shows:

- Children are less likely to attend their reviews whilst the matter is going through court
- Children placed with their parents and relatives are generally less likely to attend
- There is an increase in children taking up the offer of having conversations with the IRO outside of the review through remote methods
- The number of children being supported by an advocate for their review is 5. This seems to be reducing.

Overall, the number of children who attend when they are invited is consistently positive, and is something we need to maintain. Moving forward the intention is to encourage children to feed their views, wishes and feelings into their reviews beforehand via digital technology, as this appears to be something that they would embrace.

The IRO also encourages parents to attend children looked after reviews. Attendance of parents at reviews is important in order to ensure that all parties have the opportunity to contribute to the review process. Attendance of parents is consistently high at between 80% - 90%.

If required, the IRO facilitates separate meetings for parents to enable their views to be heard. In some respects virtual meetings via TEAMS have helped parental attendance, with less need for separate meetings as family members are all able to safely attend one meeting. For example, some parents have indicated that they are able to attend meetings via TEAMS when, if they were face to face, they would struggle to be in the same room.



8 - NYAS is commissioned on a Gwent wide basis to provide advocacy for children and young people.

### National Youth Advocacy Service

Between April 2021 - March 2022 the impact of the pandemic saw advocates using lots of flexible working practices in a virtual world of video calls, texting and Teams. Positively, much of this has continued with advocates now offering young people different options regarding engagement including face to face since the lifting of national restrictions.

Over the year there were a total of **242** referrals into service. The average number per quarter was 61, with a high of 80 and a low of 49. This comprised of 137 Issue Based Advocacy (IBA) and 105 Active Offer (AO) referrals.

The number of Active Offer referrals has increased 30% since 2020-2021, and the Issue Based Advocacy figure represents an increase of 25% year on year. Overall the numbers of referrals are higher than predicted, which is a positive thing. Overall, there have been **838** hours of issue based advocacy delivered and **184** hours delivered related to Active Offer referrals.

During the year there were 51 self referrals for Issue Based Advocacy, all following Active Offer meetings. 45% of IBA referrals related to requests for advocacy involvement in children on care and support plans; 39% for Child Protection services and 16% for Children who are Looked After.

The most popular reason why young people requested advocacy support this year continues to be presenting their views and feelings at formal meetings. 67% of the issues identified fall into this category. 10% of issues were around helping young people express their views regarding Family Time arrangements (Contact) such as issues around frequency and location, and 7% were related to issues regarding a young persons placement.

Advocacy for Adults Services is also commissioned on a regional basis with the lead commissioning authority being Blaenau Gwent.

The service is called GATA – Gwent Access to Advocacy, and there is a website which provides citizens and professionals with more information : [Gwent Advocacy Service – Home Page \(gata.cymru\)](http://gata.cymru). This service is a single point of access for information and advice regarding advocacy for adults. Citizens or professionals can ring the phone line and can be assessed and referred to the two main providers, Dewis and Age Cymru, if required. Social Workers can also ring Dewis or Age Cymru directly under the scheme.

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## Complaints and Compliments

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Representation and complaints procedures in Social Services departments are a statutory requirement. Everyone who makes a complaint about social services has a right to be listened to properly and have their concerns resolved quickly and effectively. We always take complaints seriously and use them as an opportunity to critically appraise our actions and reflect on any improvements that need to be made.

General advice about the procedure is published in our complaints leaflet “How to be heard”. Alternatively, people can contact the Customer Relations team for help and advice about how to make a complaint.

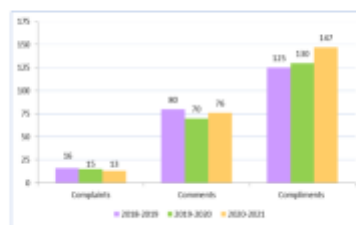
There are 3 stages to the complaints process. Local resolution (stage 1); formal investigation (stage 2) and referral to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (stage 3).

During the year covered by this report we received 12 complaints (6 of which progressed to stage 2), 93 compliments, and 57 comments in Adults Services. In Children's Services there were 21 complaints (3 of which progressed to stage 2), 10 compliments, and 10 comments received.

General themes that within complaints include communication issues; not being listened to or involved in decisions; and dissatisfaction with the provisions of services.

We always take complaints seriously and use them as part of continued professional development and to help us shape policy, operational practice and the design of services.

Period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021



9 - In 2020 - 2021 13 complaints were registered at Stage 1, 10 of which were resolved and 3 of which went to Stage 2

The SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH CUSTOMER RELATIONS officer compiles an annual report including complaints, comments and compliments.



*To the staff of St Anne's, There are no words that can adequately express our thanks to all the staff of St Anne's, who looked after our mother, \*\*\*, in her final years, with such dedication, love and care. We know mum will have appreciated that she was cared for in such a way that she could maintain her dignity and feel safe and secure in a new environment. Special thanks are sent to those staff who showed such kindness and empathy in her end of life care when we ourselves were not able to be there. We are so very grateful to you all...*

*The service is reliable but timings are not regular and do not suit my schedule. I do things, I would ask for help with if someone was there at the right time. Lots of different staff.*

*Thanks \*\*\* The DP thing is going well. We are so lucky to be able to provide this level of care for our parents. So glad they live in Wales where the support from you and other people in the system is SO much better and much more caring. The thing you and \*\*\* do so well is making it personal. I always feel I can reach out and you will help us out. And you talk to each other. It makes it all work so well and means we all feel very supported. So between us all we are making a real difference to the lives of two elderly people Thank you ☺ \*\*\**

*I am currently staying with my Daughter as there is currently no care available for me, and no care home available*

*Today will be \*\*\* and \*\*\* last call with us, the private carer will be taking over, the daughter is extremely grateful for all the hard work and commitment that the team have provided for years and will miss the team.*

*MCC supply a good meals on wheels service. I have a private arrangement for cleaning and a local manager on site. I feel able to live in my own flat with these support services.*

*While I am a Direct Payment Service User which suits me well. I sometimes have to have a care agency in, which never send the same carer, never tell me of changes and I feel I am being ignored.*

*During COVID Lockdown the staff assisted me in choosing colour schemes and redecorating my bungalow and making a portfolio. The hub staff visited daily and assisted with craft work and painting. District Nurses came twice a day and my social worker zoomed. Now able to go out and about. Thank you to all. During Covid Lockdown excellent service and assistance from the same staff. Hub staff and district nurses and my social worker all enhance a very happy life for me. Thank you to all who care and support me in leading a happy, busy life.*

*A complaint was received around the way in which their father's respite care was handled.*

*She was extremely complimentary of the work that has gone into this case. She especially commented upon the amount of work that \*\*\* has done to ensure that everything has been covered and that court has every single piece of information that they could need to inform the decision making. Her words “\*\*\* has left no stone unturned” and “I can’t think of anything else that could possibly be requested, \*\*\* has provided it all”. She said that from the evidence submitted, it was very easy to see the journey that this family has been on and the exceptional support that the LA have provided throughout. She did comment that she thought it most beneficial that the family have not experienced any changes of social worker from the beginning and felt this was a big positive as \*\*\* knew the case “ inside and out.*

*To the OT gang, Just a quick note and a little something to say thank-you for all you have done. Thanks for putting up with my mood swings, I do appreciate how hard you have worked. Many thanks.*

**We are committed to ensuring that people's involvement and participation in services have a direct impact on how policy is shaped and services develop.**

There is an active corporate parenting panel in Monmouthshire with representatives from directorates across the Council, care leavers and foster carers, as well as cross-party elected members. The panel is chaired by Cllr Tudor Thomas, lead member for social care and health. The panel offers members opportunities to hear directly about the experiences of children who are looked after, care experienced young people and foster carers. Although face to face events have been curtailed over the pandemic, the panel was happily able to host an evening with care experienced young people in September 2021. Issues discussed included loneliness and isolation; the impact of COVID; the difficult experiences some young people have in care; challenges around move on accommodation and securing employment opportunities. Meeting with and listening to young people has helped the panel champion many of the issues that were raised by the group as being important to them.

Some of these have included:

- changing some of the terms and language used within the council
- developing activity days for children looked after so that they can
- ensuring priority interviews for care leavers
- arranging leisure passes

Moving forward, we are looking at ways that care experienced people can get more involved in recruiting and training carers.

On 17th March 2022 children's services arranged an on-line event for in-house foster carers to meet with senior managers and the Chair of corporate parenting, so that their views and feelings about the service could be heard directly. Much positive feedback was shared particularly regarding the support provided by the supervising Social Workers and the Placement and Support Team. However, we also heard concerns around a lack of routine communication between children's social work teams. Another




issue of concern was that carers felt they were not always included as an equal partners in key decision making and care planning for the children, even though they are the ones who know their day to day needs the best. Issues regarding fees and allowances were also raised particularly in light of the rising cost of living and energy costs.


This event was part of our developing participation plan with Foster Carers, including ensuring that carers become an integral part of the wider team of professionals around a child. Together with our Gwent partners we have started some joint training to promote this. We are ensuring that foster carers views are feedback directly to the teams to consider ways we can improve particularly regarding frustrations around communication, information sharing and professional respect. The financial situation for Foster Carers will be monitored and reviewed as part of Foster Wales alongside of the wider foster care support offer.

## Face to Face School Based Counselling Wellbeing Practitioners IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

- ▶ The Emotional and Mental Wellbeing Practitioner Team launched a project in March 2022 and have been working to support students in Monmouthshire secondary schools and school colleagues.
- ▶ The team works as part of the umbrella of existing school interventions but also are embedded directly in school life.
- ▶ They bring training and skills into the school that can be developed with a strong therapeutic focus alongside the relative independence that comes with sitting in the independent broader counselling service offer

- ▶ The practitioners take time to build relationships with the students they support, both in the unstructured manner during every day school life, as well as through more structured counselling interventions.
- ▶ This supports their emotional regulation and active listening themes), to the more structured intervention
- ▶ This variation in support has enabled them to be **in the middle of student life and influencing school culture**
- ▶ It has enabled the team to **hear directly from students and incorporate their ideas and suggestions for what would promote their wellbeing.**

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- ▶ The Wellbeing Practitioners work alongside education colleagues to create practical plans to implement students' ideas.
  - ▶ These have included ideas such as a girls' football group, sensory areas and group sensory programmes for students who find great value in this experiential way of regulating; and wellbeing spaces that create areas of welcoming, warmth and support.
  - ▶ Schools have identified that this has led to better use of resources, better informed support staff and greater awareness of young people's needs as well as a contribution to the whole-school culture of wellbeing.

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- ▶ These outcomes have been a blend of adult-initiated and child-initiated decisions but have seen empowered choice and a sense of self-created reward as outcomes, as well as embedding participatory principles.
  - ▶ The supportive and welcoming way in which schools have embraced the emotional and wellbeing practitioner role has been pivotal to enabling those staff members to understand the nuances of young people's needs in educational settings.
  - ▶ The team continue to work alongside school colleagues to build the whole school culture and ethos.
  - ▶ As always relationships are key and the collegial way in which young people have been supported to have their voice and choice really bodes well for the future.

**In terms of using participation to influence whole systems see this great example from the Schools Based Counselling service.**

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*There are many examples of how we strive to keep in contact with and communicate with people who use our services.*

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In this issue: Jubilee; Community Care; Dementia Awareness week; Boys in Blue; Helpful Information; Wellbeing; Good news stories.

Issue No: 12  
July 2022



Chepstow Hospital Platinum Jubilee Celebrations were enjoyed by the inpatients and staff on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

Working with our partners CCS everyone was delighted to have a dining with a Royal inspired breakfast and afternoon tea. Our catering staff went to great lengths to perfect the Lemon and Amoretti Trifle which was crowned the official Platinum Jubilee pudding and feedback from our patients was one of pleasure and enjoyment.





Re-opening of the Community Cabin

The grand re-opening of the Community Cabin which took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 was a huge success and we would like to thank everyone who took part.

The Community Cabin is a building just off the main entrance in Chepstow Community Hospital, the non-clinical space is perfectly situated and invites curiosity from people using the hospital. If you would like to book a place in the cabin please contact **Stacey White**, South Monmouthshire Integrated Services on either Tel: 07814061610 or Email: [staceywhite@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:staceywhite@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Our Community Cabin hosts a variety of wellbeing related organisations and charities that are able to provide advice, guidance and support on a wide range of issues from mental health, dementia to volunteering. It is aimed at supporting people maintain their independence and remain in their own homes.

Using the Community Cabin as a place to see community members face to face not only helps reduce their isolation, it gives an opportunity to network and work collaboratively with other organisations who also use the cabin space.

**We are really looking forward to welcoming people back into our Community Cabin.**





**Dementia Awareness Week 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**

The Older Adult Mental Health Team based at Chepstow held a Dementia Awareness Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The team spent time during the day talking to members of the public and staff from different departments based in the hospital.

The Occupational Therapists had a stand with technology that could be offered out to the public to support families within the home environment. The memory clinic had a stand with a registered nurse and a Health Care Support Worker promoting awareness to members of the public and staff.

Positives from the day included a lovely gentleman who had concerns about his memory and did not know where/ who to discuss this with, after speaking to the team he said that he now has no fears about approaching the GP for a referral to the memory clinic.

Another lovely couple came in and had a chat. The lady had a diagnosis and had moved to the area to be with their family. They were looking forward to their referral to the team and impressed with the support from all services since they had moved here. Staff from the physio department came and took leaflets, along with the Occupational Therapists and their students who were looking over all the technology that was on display. There was also a man who has anxiety and a history of Alzheimer's in the family. He felt more comfortable in approaching his GP to have this looked into.

All of the team have been extremely enthusiastic about today and it was very informative and well received.





Mount Pleasant Hospital "Boys in Blue"

Mount Pleasant Hospital had been built by the Admiralty in 1917 for the workers at the National Shipyard in Chepstow.

In 1919 Mount Pleasant Hospital was transferred to the Ministry of Pensions, and became a centre for accommodating permanently disabled war pensioners. Particularly poison gas victims, known as the "boys in blue" for their serge uniforms.

The photos of the "Boys in Blue" were stored in the old Library at Chepstow Community Hospital. The photographs are now on display in the concourse for staff, patients and visitors to view.





**CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR FUTURE**  
Please take a look at our short animations about helping us help you

The animations include:

- The full extended animation - choosing the right healthcare service first time
- Pharmacy Services
- Primary Care
- Minor Injury Units
- ED Triage System

Click on the attached link to the animation download page [Animations - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](#) (The files are available in a variety of formats for full screen and social media use)

#### Work With Us Roadshow



We are still out and about on a tour around the Health Board area to recruit new members of staff and to ensure local residents know where they should go when they need health care.

The Roadshow schedule is available on our website: <http://abuhb.nhs.wales/aboutus/public-engagement-consultation/work-with-us-roadshows/> and publicised on our social media channels. Please note that times and dates can be subject to change. Please visit the Roadshow schedule on our website which is updated daily with the latest information.

#### Keep an eye out for our Roadshow bus and get on board with us!

Help us help you to understand the changes to your healthcare services by coming to speak with us at one of the events below...

Date	Time	Area	Location
Monday 25th July 2022	10.00 - 14.00	Tofwen	AGDA Cwmbran
Wednesday 27th July 2022	10.00 - 14.00	Newport	Newport Centre, Kingsway
Wednesday 3rd August 2022	11.00 - 15.00	Tofwen	Zinn on the Park Family Fun Day, Pontypool Park
Tuesday 9th August 2022	14.00 - 16.00	Tofwen	Pontypool 50+ Forum





**Slimming World on Referral from your Health Professional**

**Slimming World on Referral gives GPs, nurses and other health professionals the opportunity to offer free membership of a local Slimming World group to those patients who they feel would benefit. Referred patients attend at no cost to themselves for an initial agreed period.**

Patients are provided with a referral form by a health professional (typically, a GP, nurse, midwife or Health Trainer) and these are redeemed at a local Slimming World group (choose the most convenient). The group Consultants contact details are also available should the patient wish to talk to them before attending - no booking is required

**Cost of Living: Wellbeing Support and Advice for Staff**

The Health Board is aware that the current cost of living crisis will cause stress and anxiety for many of our staff.

A dedicated hub of advice and information has been created on the AB Pulse Employee Wellbeing support pages. This was put together by the Workforce & OD, Comms and Employee Wellbeing teams. We hope that this can help staff in these difficult times

**Free Home Fire Safety Check**  
**Monmouthshire Community Teams working in Collaboration with South Wales Fire Service.**

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service are working in partnership with our Community Teams to access high risk / vulnerable clients who may otherwise be unreachable. The main focus has been to engage with organisations who work with groups on a regular basis. Our Community Teams can refer for a home safety check by a Fire Service Home Safety Practitioner.

**The practitioner will contact you and will go through advice asking you a few questions about your home. If alarms are required the Home Safety Practitioner will chat through a few options to get these to you. They will offer you the opportunity to have a FREE Home Safety visit in your home. If you or a family member wish to book a Home Safety visit please here to [Request a visit - South Wales Fire and Rescue Service](#)**



**Cost of Living: Advice and Support**

**Anyone can fall behind with bills and get into debt, but it's NEVER too late to seek help and advice.**

**Please [click here to discover what support is available to you in Monmouthshire.](#)** It includes details of national organisations as well as local links and connections within Monmouthshire.

The good news is that this is because there is lots of help available. If you're struggling it is always better to seek help and advice sooner rather than later - but it is also never too late to ask for help, you may be surprised at how much can be done to help you get back on your feet!



**If you want to talk to someone you can call our Monmouthshire Local Authority Contact Centre on 01633 644644 or walk into one of the community hubs they can advise what help may be most relevant for your circumstances.**

You can also contact Citizens Advice on 0800 702 2020.







**GRAND OPENING – Usk and Raglan Integrated District Nursing Team  
Community Clinic Launch**



The Usk and Raglan Community Clinic is a new initiative lead by District Nurses. The clinic provides high quality, evidence based, person focused health and social care. The clinic will fulfil the Welsh Governments Agenda to achieve a proactive, flexible and sustainable primary care service.

Renee Cotson, Usk and Raglan District Nurse Team Manager, said "The Integrated District Nursing Team are exceptionally passionate and proud of the Community Clinic and look forward to developing further initiatives in the future"



District Nurses provide a broad range of nursing expertise that can be delivered within your home or the community clinic setting. Care delivered is person centered with the aim of promoting independence and quality of life. The District Nursing Team will always aim to visit at home or maintain clinic appointments as arranged. However, due to the varied and unpredictable nature of their work, they must prioritise urgent calls received throughout the day. Therefore, routine calls may need to be rearranged on occasion.

There are many benefits to the introduction of the Community Clinic such as its location in the Roger Edwards Trust Building which is central in Usk and Monmouthshire. This will improve efficiency and quality of care due to ease of access to treatment and resources. It will also provide patients with a choice regarding where they would like to receive care and treatment.

Renee said, "We couldn't have achieved it without the support of Leanne Watkins, (Director of operations), and the Trustees of the building. They have been so supportive and believed in our project".





# MIST

Monmouthshire Integrated Services

## WELLBEING INFORMATION

We hope some of this information is of interest.

### What is Active Monitoring?

Active Monitoring is an early intervention service which uses guided self-help tools to support your mental wellbeing as soon as you need it. It involves 5 short sessions with a trained practitioner to hear what support you need and develop a wellbeing toolkit of self-help tools.

Active Monitoring has been developed with people who have lived experience of mental health problems and professionals.

### How does it work?

Trained mental health practitioners deliver Active Monitoring in community settings and remotely via telephone. The first session is a 40-minute introduction to discuss what support you need. If both you and your practitioner feel Active Monitoring is appropriate, you will have five 20-minute sessions using evidence-based tools and resources to develop a wellbeing toolkit.

### What does support look like?

You and your practitioner can select one of seven pathways to support your mental wellbeing. These include anxiety and panic attacks, low mood, low self-esteem, stress, grief and loss, feeling alone and managing anger. From these pathways, you can try a range of self-help tools to help you stay well and put together a toolkit of resources that work best for you. Your practitioner will support you to do this in your weekly sessions.

### What can it do for me?

Our Active Monitoring programme offers one-to-one support to help you make positive choices in your life and improve your mental health. We will work with you to help you understand your symptoms and offer some handy hints and tips so that you can help yourself feel better.

For further information on your mental health symptoms go to: [mind.org.uk/information-support/](http://mind.org.uk/information-support/)  
To join a community of people with similar mental health experience go to: [sidebyside.mind.org.uk](http://sidebyside.mind.org.uk)  
If you need someone to talk to urgently call Samaritans on 116 123

### Melo Website Refresh and Relaunch

The Health Board's website: Melo, which was developed and designed to help the workforce and population of Gwent look after their emotional and mental wellbeing has been refreshed and is being relaunched **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August**. It is now easier to navigate and has an increased range of materials, including topics such as menopause, sleep, financial worries and self-harm and suicide prevention.





**A well-deserved CONGRATULATIONS to Dawn James, Community Nurse in Abergavenny**

Dawn won the award for "Kindness in the Community" under the category "Triumph over Adversity".

A mother of a patient with Learning Disabilities and Complex Needs nominated Dawn for this Award from the support they had been shown.

All the Monmouthshire Community Teams are very proud of Dawn – Fran Cunningham the Team Leader for Abergavenny said:

"Basically, Dawn is extremely kind and generous of her time to patients, carers and team members, or to anyone who needs it. She goes the extra hundreds of miles. Always wanting the best outcomes for patients, she can see through problems, and how to improve patients' lives in a way that others can't. Dawn has the ability to work around obstacles, seeing them as something to overcome rather than a difficulty. As the team "go to" trouble shooter, Dawn shines through difficult and challenging situations, demonstrating high levels of tenacity.

The nomination for this award represented the hours, very often on top of her normal working hours that Dawn spent listening, supporting, building up confidence and breaking down barriers with the patient and family.

*And this was on top of doing her degree!!*



**GOODBYE and GOOD LUCK - Dr Shyam Pankhanja**

For the past year, we had the pleasure of having Dr Shyam Pankhanja with us as Specialty Doctor for the Monmouthshire CRT.

Shyam helped establish the rapid medical service and played a huge part in the development and roll out of pathways to facilitate the rapid assessment of patients and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.

Shyam completed his year with us and has left to commence specialty training in East England. He wishes to be a Consultant in Emergency Medicine. We wish him all the best in his training post and his future career.





**PANCAKE DAY AT MONNOW VALE**



**What do they say?  
"Laughter is the best medicine"**

It proves how important fun and stimulating activities are for people with dementia - the laughter that was had by all who attended day services on pancake day at Monnow Vale Health & Social Care Facility, could be heard right down the corridor! So rewarding for staff to see the smiles and watching people leave to go back home with such a feel good factor.

One husband when meeting his wife to go home said "I can tell the difference in my wife after being with you every Wednesday, she is so happy and I can't thank you all enough"

**Fund Razor**

John Hindener shared his shavings and raised £250 by cutting his hair and beard. He kindly donated this to Chepstow Community Hospital staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the Covid Pandemic.

John said "I was working in Canada and it was very cold just before covid restrictions happened. As it was cold I started to let my hair and beard grow.

My mum was on Cas-Gwent ward two years ago and I thought let's do something to raise money for NHS workers. My mum hated me growing my hair and beard but as this was for a good cause, she let it go this time".

Thank you from all of us John for your Beardless Support



We would like to say a big thank you to year 1 children at the Dell Primary school

Their wonderful "Thank you Letters" to the staff at Chepstow Community Hospital for their work throughout the covid-19 Pandemic was very gratefully received by all our staff.





monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

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### SGO Newsletter May 2022

Hello everyone!

We've made it through the Easter holidays and now, finally, it's looking like we're getting into summer. We hope you've managed to get out and enjoy some sunshine.

#### **Updates**

As most of you may already know, Gabby and Sara have both moved on to new pastures and we all wish them the best in their new ventures.

Joining the team is Mike, who some of you have already met at annual reviews, or at our last support group in April, and Bethan who will be starting with the team towards the end of June.

Whilst there have been no new Special Guardianship Orders made since February, we have been joined by two Special Guardians, who have moved over from other local authorities, and we wish them a warm welcome.

#### **Support Groups & Training**

Since the last newsletter, we have been able to hold three face-to-face meetings at various locations around the county, and it has been fantastic to meet some of you in person for the first time and to talk, share stories, drink tea and eat biscuits.

We now are able to access four venues around Monmouthshire; Chepstow Library Hub, Monmouth Library Hub, County Hall Usk, and as of the first time earlier this week, The Cabin in Abergavenny, to meet, deliver training and offer advice or information to all SGO carers who wish to join us.

Upcoming SGO Training and Support Groups are as follows.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 - SGO Support Group - 10:00 – 11:30 Monmouth Library Hub

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 – SGO Training Session 10:00 – 12:00 Chepstow Library Hub

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022 – SGO Support Group 10:00 – 11:30 Abergavenny (The Cabin) TBC

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – SGO Training Session 10:00 – 12:00 Monmouth Library Hub

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – SGO Support Group 10:00 – 11:30 Chepstow Library Hub TBC

Email invites to the sessions will be sent out around 3 weeks prior to the date, confirming the venue and the topic of training or information sharing. At this time, if you require a TEAMS invite to the session, let us know and we shall email one to you.

With the training / information sharing sessions, if anyone has any issues or topics that they would like to have covered, please let us know and we will be able to offer information and advice based around these subjects.

Also, just a reminder that [www.kinship.org.uk](http://www.kinship.org.uk) have lots of great information and resources on subjects such as dealing with emotional stress and tips and assistance in regard to rising living costs.

#### Summer in Monmouthshire

With the Queens diamond jubilee approaching fast, here are a few ideas for you for the bank holiday weekend:

There's a packed programme of events to look forward to over the May half-term and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend. These include ten days of spectacular happenings at the [Wye Valley River Festival](#) (27 May – 5 June), the [Welsh Perry & Cider Festival](#) (2 – 5 June) at Caldicot Castle & Country Park, the [Abergavenny Steam, Veteran & Vintage Rally](#) (3 – 4 June), and a [Jubilee Party Race night](#) (4 June) at Chepstow Racecourse.

[See the full programme for May half-term and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday](#)

[See all forthcoming Monmouthshire events](#)

With the summer fast approaching, we have been discussing amongst the team the idea of hosting an activity day for you, the Special Guardians, and the children you care for. Is this something you may be interested in? Fairground games, scavenger hunt, etc? If this appeals to you, then please let us know!

**Interesting Fact.**

In the UK.....

Number of SGOs granted in 2006 – 70

Number of SGOs granted in 2015 – 3520

Thanks everyone and take care!

Mike & Giovanna

Families Together Team

[mikeyates@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:mikeyates@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

[giovannastancia@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:giovannastancia@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Mike – 07773657139

Giovanna - 07929017107

ISSUE 3

February 2022

# foster wales news

working together to build better futures for local children

## what's happening in wales

There are currently over 7000 looked after children in Wales, under the legal responsibility of your local authorities. Three quarters of those children live with wonderful foster carers like you. There are 2700 local authority foster carers in Wales, but we need 500 more.

Thank you to the foster carers and fostering teams from all around Wales who travelled to the Senedd in Cardiff for our campaign launch to stand proudly beside our doors as 22 local authorities working together.

In September we launched our first TV advert on ITV and 54C with over 4 million views.



A simple fix or share could help us to find new foster carers.  
[www.fosterwales.com](https://www.fosterwales.com)  
@Foster\_wales



## message from Llinos

Hi everyone and welcome to our February newsletter. I hope you have all been keeping warm and dry and surviving all the storms unscathed! Lots of information in our newsletter this week. Please take special note of Ros' message this month which will benefit you all. We have an important communications event coming up on the evening of March 17th at 7pm. The event will be via 'teams' on this occasion as we are making every effort to ensure that our team members remain in work! We want to ensure we are able to maintain our service and have learned by experience, with many staff having contracted covid at the same time! The event is not to identify specific issues but to raise awareness of current themes that may affect you all and influence your role as foster carers. The invitation explains how you are able to convey your thoughts and views about what is working well – and what isn't, or what you have that you don't need and what you need and don't have! Please take some time to share your thoughts with FC4FC (foster carers for foster carers). I have met with FC4FC recently and we are planning to have regular information sharing meetings – including how we can improve an induction to new carers to ensure you are all supported and 'included'! We really want to make a success of this event so please would you make every effort to share your feedback to FC4FC (details in the invitation). We are all in this together! See you all soon.....

Llinos



fc4fc

Next meeting is  
Wednesday 2nd March  
12.30-14.30

[Click here to join  
the meeting](#)

## recommend a friend

and you will receive

**£250**

when they are approved.

Money is paid when they start their first  
placement.

(Includes Supported Lodgings)



## message from Ros



### Changes to allowances and expenses.

We want to keep you updated of some changes to fostering and expense payments. If you have any comments or queries, please feel free to discuss with your supervising social worker.

### Late payments.

Expense claims that are later than 3 months will no longer be processed and paid unless there are mitigating circumstances. This is due to budgeting and accountancy issues. The additional payments we make need to be forwarded on a regular and routine basis, so the people who do the maths and forecast what budgets we need (the accountants) are able to review and gather an understanding of how much money the service needs.

### Mileage claims to and from school.

In line with Mornouthshire's Policy, we will not automatically pay all the mileage to and from school. Primary schools, if the school the child attends is less than 3.5 miles from home then mileage expenses to and from school is not covered.

Secondary schools, if the school the child attends is less than 2 miles from home then mileage expenses to and from school is not covered.

The above is in line with Mornouthshire policy, and links in with the number of miles the local authority will offer school transport.

### Retainer fees.

As you have all probably experienced, there can sometimes be a delay between the time a childcare social worker agrees a child has been matched with you and the actual placement. If this is the case, we will pay a retainer fee, that is half a fostering allowance per child until that child is placed. Paying a retainer fee recognises your commitment to that child and the fact you are unable to consider any other placements during this period.

### Emergency Placements.

It is likely you have all taken that call from one of our team, asking are you available tonight/this weekend as childcare social workers are out assessing a crisis and have asked us to identify an immediate placement. You cancel plans, move bedrooms around and put-up equipment in readiness, then we call you to say 'stand down' children are remaining home.

In these circumstances, we will now pay you the fostering allowance per child for that day to recognise your commitment to changing plans and reorganising your home to accommodate children who may be in need of a fostering placement.

As mentioned above, if you need any more information, please contact your social worker to discuss.

Kind regards

Ros McAtee



## learning & development

Hi Everyone

I have sent you a number of emails recently regarding some upcoming learning and development. Here's a reminder in case you missed any and if you need any more information or help booking a place please let me know. Links to book all courses are in the emails I send. Don't forget to let me know if you are booked on any sessions so that I can update your records.

Based on running a number of sessions in March on the following:

Talking to Young People Around Substance Use  
Alcohol  
Families  
Substances & Wellbeing  
Social Media & Drugs  
NPS - New Psychoactive Substances

I have organised some drop in sessions in March for you to come and use a laptop and start/complete any outstanding core e-learning on:

Thursday, 3rd March 10am until 1pm  
Wednesday, 16th March 10am until 1pm  
Tuesday, 22nd March 10am until 1pm  
Tuesday, 29th March 10am until 1pm

The Fostering Network are offering a number of Digital Skills Sessions on the following dates in March:

Wednesday 2 March  
Thursday 3 March  
Wednesday 9 March  
Thursday 10 March  
Wednesday 16 March  
Thursday 17 March  
Wednesday 23 March  
Thursday 24 March  
Wednesday 30 March  
Thursday 31 March

Fostering Hope, the parent-and-child fostering forum, are hosting a webinar on 24th February 11-11.30 called Circle of Security and other tools to help parents meet their babies needs.

Brook Sexual Behaviour Traffic Light Training is taking place on the following dates (you only need to attend one session):

Monday 28th February 2022 - 13:00 - 16:30  
Tuesday 5th April 2022 - 09:30 - 13:00  
Thursday 26th May 2022 - 13:00 - 16:30  
Wednesday 29th June 2022 - 09:30 - 13:00  
Monday 5th September 2022 - 13:00 - 16:30  
Monday 7th November 2022 - 13:00 - 16:30

HyET are running Child Development 0-8 training on 10th March 10am - 2pm at Victoria Village School in Abersychan. Let me know if you wish to attend and I will book your place.

Finally there is Autism training on 2nd March at 10am on Microsoft Teams and here is the link for that one [MCC - Man Workforce Development Team \(office365.com\)](#) You will need to scroll down until you see the course title Autism Awareness Training Children & Young People.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes  
Rachel



## recipe

Wrth i Ddiwrnod Crempog ddisgyn ar Ddydd Gŵyl Dewi eleri dyma 2 rysât:  
efallai yr haffech chi rai cynnig arnyn nhw - Bara-Brith a chrempogau  
Americanoidd. Rhowch wybod i ni sut hwyl gawsoch chi, byddem wrth ein  
bodd yn gweld eich lluniau!

### Sugar-crusted Bara Brith

#### Ingredients

- 400g/14oz luxury mixed fruit
- 75g pack dried cranberries
- mug hot strong black tea
- 100g butter, plus extra for greasing
- 2 heaped tbsp orange marmalade
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 450g self-raising flour - try a mix of wholemeal and white
- 175g light soft brown sugar
- 1 tsp each ground cinnamon and ground ginger
- 4 tbsp milk
- 50g crushed sugar cubes or granulated sugar, to decorate

#### Method

- STEP 1  
Mix together the dried fruit and cranberries in a large bowl, then pour the hot tea over. Cover with cling film and leave to soak overnight.
- STEP 2  
Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Butter and line the bottom of a 900g/2lb loaf tin with baking parchment. Melt butter and marmalade together in a pan. Leave to cool for 5 mins, then beat in the eggs. Drain any excess tea from the fruit. Mix the flour, sugar and spices together, then stir in the fruit, butter mix and milk until evenly combined. The batter should softly drop from the spoon - add more milk if needed.
- STEP 3  
Spoon into the tin and level the top. Sprinkle with the crushed sugar and bake for 1-1½ hrs until dark golden and a skewer inserted comes out clean. Cover loosely with foil if it starts to over-colour before the middle is cooked. Leave to cool completely in the tin and serve sliced.



# recipe

## American Pancakes



### Ingredients

200g self-raising flour  
1 ½ tsp baking powder  
1 tbsp golden caster sugar  
3 large eggs  
25g melted butter, plus extra for cooking  
200ml milk  
vegetable oil, for cooking  
To serve  
maple syrup  
toppings of your choice, such as cooked bacon, chocolate chips, blueberries or peanut butter and jam

### Method

- **STEP 1**  
Mix 200g self-raising flour, 1 ½ tsp baking powder, 1 tbsp golden caster sugar and a pinch of salt together in a large bowl.
- **STEP 2**  
Create a well in the centre with the back of your spoon then add 3 large eggs, 25g melted butter and 200ml milk.
- **STEP 3**  
Whisk together either with a balloon whisk or electric hand beaters until smooth then pour into a jug.
- **STEP 4**  
Heat a small knob of butter and 1 tsp of oil in a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. When the butter looks frothy, pour in rounds of the batter, approximately 8cm wide. Make sure you don't put the pancakes too close together as they will spread during cooking. Cook the pancakes on one side for about 1-2 mins or until lots of tiny bubbles start to appear and pop on the surface. Flip the pancakes over and cook for a further minute on the other side. Repeat until all the batter is used up.
- **STEP 5**  
Serve your pancakes stacked up on a plate with a drizzle of maple syrup and any of your favourite toppings.



[www.mysupportteam.org.uk](http://www.mysupportteam.org.uk)

**MyST** is a Therapeutic Mental Health Service working with children looked after aiming to help children remain in their local communities. We are based at Victoria Village School. Exciting developments of the existing Blaenau Gwent - Monmouthshire MyST service. We are very pleased to let you know that our existing joint service will become 2 separate services from the 1st April 2023. This will mean one whole MyST service for Blaenau Gwent Local Authority and one for Monmouthshire. This is in recognition of the success of the initial joint service and will enable us to increase our capacity to support more children, young people, their families, and carers to remain and live in their local communities. It will also enable the service to work fully in partnership with our Local Authority colleagues in each area. We hope that these changes will have minimal impact on the day-to-day delivery of our services and arrangements are in place to continue with business as usual until we move to two separate services. Please be in touch with us if you have any further questions about these changes.

### Foster Carer Clinic

We offer three one-hour slots monthly at present on teams but hopefully back in person soon. The clinic provides a reflective space to explore a particular theme.

- A behaviour, explore the meaning behind
- Look at how history has impacted on a child's emotional or physical development
- Consider strategies to manage a difficult behaviour or emotional distress
- Talk about what is going well, strengths and what you might want to change
- Look at transitions from primary to secondary school
- Look at ideas around family time and the impact on the child/young person
- Reflect on the impact of caring on you and your self-care

We don't ask for any preparation beforehand and we go with what you would like from the session. If you are interested, please speak to your supervising social worker who will arrange to book you in. The team look forward to meeting you.

### MyST are recruiting Therapeutic Foster Carers

- Gives you the opportunity to provide a young person with positive influences and promote wellbeing with a team who will support you with training and supervision
- We need people who are willing to reflect on the level of care they provide and accept at times they may not always get it right but learn
- You need to have an element of playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy
- A great remuneration package as well as allowances paid for the child and young person
- You will be offered 24 hours on call service available 365 days a year
- Extensive training package including MyST carers support group, 1:1 clinical supervision, part of case meetings and other training delivered by the team
- Your own dedicated Lead Therapeutic Practitioner (they have small caseloads to enable them to intensively support their placements)

If you would like to find out more information: Lir Trigg, Foster Carer Recruitment Officer  
[lirtrigg@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:lirtrigg@monmouthshire.gov.uk)  
Hadi James, Therapeutic Practice Manager [hadijames@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:hadijames@monmouthshire.gov.uk) (01495 784880) (07970 192 099)



# children's corner



Have a go at making your own and send in some photos.  
Please send in drawings or paintings, we would love to include them in the newsletter and there will be a prize for everyone who sends something in to:  
[liztrigg@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:liztrigg@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

## 5. Promoting and improving the wellbeing of those we help

We will work with people to define and co-produce personal well-being outcomes

Achieving Change  
Together Team

## Background

A family who have been working with children's services for over ten years felt that the child's increasingly complex and aggressive behaviour was placing the family under a lot of pressure which could potentially lead to family breakdown.

## ACT's work focused on

- Building a trusting relationship with the family as Mum was very anxious about different professionals being in her home and involved with her family.
- Overcoming negativity from both professionals, who were sceptical about the family's ability to change, and family members who weren't positive about previous involvement from professionals.
- Reflecting on the family's current situation – the parents were supported to identify their own solutions using a range of therapeutically-informed techniques. This allowed them to build trust in the process and to encourage a more positive and future-focused approach to the family's life.
- Taking time to understand the roles and functions within the family, looking at systemic approaches and values around genders, parenting, and discipline.

## Strategies and outcomes

- ▶ Strategies for working positively with aggressive behaviour were introduced, to help parents manage aggressive outbursts and rebuild relationships afterwards. This helped reduce Mum's anxieties and increased her confidence in her parenting.
- ▶ The success of these strategies also increased the family's confidence in professionals.

## Strategies and outcomes

- ▶ Initially, Dad left managing the children's behaviour to Mum, he was anxious and sad that his relationship with the children was not good. Mum and Dad didn't understand each other's emotional responses.
- ▶ Workers provided the opportunity to be a 'safe space' for parents to explore their own feelings and this enabled them to explore some more sensitive and difficult issues within the family dynamics.
- ▶ Towards the end of this work, both parents were able to talk with each other about their feelings and worries and felt comfortable enough to express different opinions to me and to each other.

## Overall outcomes

The work enabled them to become closer as a couple and stronger as parents. By the end of the work Dad could see the progress they had made as a family and was keen to learn more about autism and techniques and strategies to de-escalate their child's outbursts. Having initially been on the edge of coming into care, the children are now closed to Children's Services.

We will work with people and partners to protect and promote physical and mental health and emotional well-being



Dave's story

## Background

Dave is very isolated and most weeks the mental health support worker is the only person he sees other than his wife.

## Actions

The support worker will take Dave's wife out and on other occasions will spend time with both of them in the house.

## Outcomes

- Dave has said that for the times when his wife is out with the support worker he has time to recharge. For that time he's not a carer, he's not a cleaner, he's Dave.
- Dave has also taught the support worker how to knit, something that he really enjoyed. He said it's passing on a life skill to someone.
- He said he doesn't know what he would have done without the support worker's support and friendship and looks forward to their visits every week.

**BASE**  
Building Attachments, Security and Emotional well-being  
Using attachment principles to improve outcomes for children & young  
people in care.  
Base@Monmouthshire.gov.uk



## Background

Casey (not real name) is a 12-year-old who had been taken into foster care following concerns for Mum's mental health and disclosure regarding sexual abuse by family members. Casey was displaying extremely traumatised behaviour, becoming very dysregulated and the foster carer was struggling to keep all the children in the home safe. A new foster carer was found for Casey and support from BASE was required to promote these new relationships and to address some of her early trauma.

## Assessment

The assessment showed that Casey struggled to share control of the sessions with her carers and was extremely sensitive to / frightened of physical touch. When carers would try to feed her, she would snap at their fingers and said even light touch 'hurt her bones'. This made sense given her earlier experiences of sexual abuse.

## Outcomes

By the end of our work, Casey was fully engaged in the sessions and could tolerate nurture and physical touch and would even seek it out. By session 6, Casey was happy to sit on her carers lap, be fed a snack and cuddle in for a song. We could see mutual joy, laughter and delight between them.

## Review

Her carer reported finding all the sessions helpful and could see from the videos how many changes there had been and just how close Casey now lets her get. The carer would have liked to continue with the sessions but Casey felt as though she did not need any more and that she had grown out of the approach. This felt appropriate given that she was about to transition to secondary school, and we wanted to respect her views. We therefore agreed to close with the proviso that she could return whenever she wanted.

We will support people to safely develop and maintain healthy domestic, family and personal relationships

## Jack's story

### Background

- ▶ Jack, 83, lives alone since his wife died. He has 2 sons and a daughter who live locally. All work and therefore too busy to visit him often. He likes to be as independent as possible and fears loss of his mobility. He is a very sociable person and enjoys telling people stories about his childhood and his extended family.
- ▶ Jack has no previous experience of any tech and only uses a basic mobile phone.

### Ethel Care Tablet trial

- ▶ This is a communication device but sensors can also be incorporated. It is customised for the user.
- ▶ It can be used by the person, loved ones, and health & social care professionals.
- ▶ It can aid with health monitoring e.g. vital signs
- ▶ It has a 15 – 18 inch touch screen.
- ▶ It allows for video calls, uploading photos, live streaming, exercise videos
- ▶ Reminders & prompts, wellbeing surveys and check ins can be created
- ▶ Alerts can be created
- ▶ Email, text & web browsing is possible for the user
- ▶ Analytics & dashboard can be sent to a web browser or Phone app for family and care agencies to use.



## Outcomes

- ▶ The Ethel has given him the opportunity to video call his family and therefore 'see' his great grandchildren more often.
- ▶ Grandson, Sam, lives in London and is a plasterer. Sam would video call Jack to show him what he was working on, especially if it was a tricky bit of plastering. Jack would love this because he is a retired builder.
- ▶ The family found it simple to call from the app, to send the photos and videos which Jack enjoyed. Jack found it easy to make the video calls himself. He also loved showing off his 'fancy device'.

### My Mates



My Mates is a group of 345 members who are self-directing and shaping the way people with a learning disability live their best life.

The focus is on non-paid friendships and the creation of close personal relationships; we value and promote choice, well-being, education, and independence.



Throughout 2021/22 we have held educational workshops on topics including: social media safety, sexual health & well-being, what a good relationship looks like, personal hygiene, using your voice. We have held daily get togethers & events including: Celtic Manor Christmas ball, Bowling, Nightclubbing, Pubs, Coffee Shops, & Restaurants, after all life isn't Monday-Friday 9-5pm.

We have promoted venues throughout our local communities that are free to access including castles, libraries, museums & marketplaces which is encouraging community presence, supporting our local communities & strengthening community bonds, giving a sense of belonging.

Over 12,000 wellbeing calls & advice/contacts recorded have taken place during April 2021 – April 2022. 272 face-to-face events took place during April 2021-2022 in addition to 54 online events via Microsoft Teams.











We will encourage and support people to learn, develop and participate in society

DM's story

## What was the challenge?

- ▶ DM had a period of rehab on Deri wing following a fall and struggling to cope at home. DM has been unable to use his right arm since a child.
- ▶ It was important for DM to be able to walk outside without needing someone with him. DM had a wheeled zimmer frame that could be used using only one hand, however it required two hands to steer and control.
- ▶ DM had not returned to accessing the community following his stay in Mardy Park. He was unsure of what key exercises to carry out to help improve his mobility.
- ▶ We worked with DM to identify what he wanted to get out of attending the Amblers group. He had felt quite isolated and had missed interaction with people.
- ▶ We discussed working with ReMAP to alter a four wheeled walker to make it suitable for DM to use single-handedly.

## What impact did you make?

- ▶ DM is delighted to be getting out and having the opportunity to see other people.
- ▶ He knows it is important to maintain active and work on his exercises; he now has a detailed exercise plan.
- ▶ The session provides him an opportunity to do so much more than he would on his own and varies what he does. It has provided a chance to chat and discuss issues with other members of the group.
- ▶ Using ReMap he now has an aid that he can use on his own and access the community. In his own words 'this has opened up a whole new world.' The walker can now be controlled by DM alone as his walking has improved. It also has a seat to enable him to rest when needed.
- ▶ He reports 'I never thought I would be able to get back to this.'



We will work with and support people to achieve greater economic well-being, have a social life and live in suitable accommodation that meets their needs

## New housing in Caldicot

### Background

The Community Learning Disabilities Team in collaboration with Melin Homes have been lucky enough to be involved in a project that has seen an office facility turned into a supported living home for three gentlemen.

Melin Homes purchased the property and were instrumental in the conversion. They will continue to be the landlords for the property and have been very supportive every step of the journey with the project completed in August 2022.

### Outcomes

The 3 gents are moving on from their family homes and need a supportive, enabling staff team around them to live their lives to their full potential. The company supporting them is Consensus who have been working closely with the team to ensure that the transition for each person is as smooth as it possibly can be.

The conversion has been carried out to the highest standard with all the adaptations necessary, including a specialist bath and rise and fall worktops in the kitchen.





## Supporting a refugee with dementia

### Background

A 79 year old gentleman from Ukraine, with a diagnosis of dementia, was referred to the Community Mental Health Team. He and his wife were in a hotel and there were concerns about the level of support he may require and the impact of this on his and his wife's well-being, particularly due to the trauma they had experienced losing their home and having to flee their country.

### Actions

The team has been regularly visiting the couple to offer support and carry out assessments.

The role of the dementia support worker has been invaluable, because this gentleman is often restless and wanders. This, in addition to the language barrier, has made things challenging with regards to assessing need and identifying outcomes and risks.

### Outcome

With the assistance of Google translate (not always ideal, but at times necessary) and interpreters situated at the hotel, we have been able to carry out the processes required and find this individual a care placement that can appropriately meet his needs.

## Impact

I feel the impact this will have on both individuals will be very positive. The individual's wife is very relieved, especially after months of being confined to a small hotel room at times and many sleepless nights.

Although there will be challenges for him and those supporting him during this transition, we will continue to use a multi-disciplinary approach, involving other professionals e.g. Occupational therapy, to ensure that communication is as effective as possible.

The verbal feedback from the individual's wife has been immense gratitude and relief. At times, she has displayed frustration at the length of time this has taken, driven by how exhausted she has been feeling. The gentleman is of some understanding that he will be going somewhere that he can be supported and has conveyed happiness about this.

We will take steps to protect and safeguard people from abuse, neglect or harm

## Family Group Conferencing

### Background

Mum was referred to us at 15 weeks pregnant in her third pregnancy. Mum has mild learning difficulties and was unable to care for her first child due to a lack of appropriate family support. Sadly her second child had a life limiting condition and died.

Mum and Dad are living together however because Mum has learning difficulties and only a limited support network, it was felt that she would need support to care for the baby and keep the child safe after birth.

Dad's family care a great deal for Mum. They know about her earlier experiences and are understanding and supportive. The request was for a Family Group Conference to be held with paternal family members to explore what support family members could offer Mum which could help keep the baby safe.

### Actions

A child protection plan was put in place and the Family Group Conference was intended to identify how wider family could support this.

The Family Group Conference brought together various family members who live locally and were excited at the prospect of the new baby.

The baby will be the first grandchild and the family were very keen to be involved in creating a network of support around the couple and their baby. Their kindness and compassion helped Mum to be honest and open about her difficulties.

## Outcomes

This honesty has enabled the family to be aware of any significant changes in Mum's presentation so they can act upon it to support her. Together the family created a safety plan as part of the Family Group Conference. Plan and the family members were confident in their ability to implement this, which they have done.

Following a review of the Family Group Conference plan the baby's name was able to be removed from the Child Protection Register and the family is being supported by social services.

## Agnes' Story

### Background

Sam moved back to live with his mum, Agnes who has dementia. She was disorientated to time and was wandering. Once she had been brought back home by strangers, Sam was concerned that she might get on the bus and get lost miles away; he needed a device that would alert him as soon as she left the house.

### Actions

Cascade 3D fitted a front door sensor & if his mum left the house, an alert would be sent to his phone. He could then contact a neighbour who would go check on his mum. Over the year he received at least 6 or 7 alerts and his neighbours kindly went out and brought his mum back.

Sam then also set some sensors elsewhere in the house, so he was able to track on where his mother was in the house - this information was useful to see if she had been wandering in the night.



## 6. How we performed in Social Services

An integral part of our delivery in Monmouthshire Social Services is understanding how we are performing and how we know we are making a difference. The use of data and metrics is an integral part of building knowledge and insight into our performance.

The code of practice sets a revised performance and improvement framework for social services which contains three component parts; measuring activity and performance, understanding experience and outcomes and using evidence to inform improvement.

2021/22 is the second year of reporting these metrics as part of the measuring activity and performance element of the framework. There are over a hundred metrics as part of the framework, the most relevant metrics collated in 2021/22 have been included to support this analysis.

As is illustrated with this report, metrics alone do not tell story of the performance of social services. To supplement these, we have combined some of them to create performance measures to further understand how well services are performing and included some of our own locally derived performance data used by our services. How we measure and evidence our performance will continue to be developed in 2022/23, including further development of the remaining two parts of the performance and improvement framework.

### *How we Performed in Adult Services*

During 2021/22 we have seen increased demand for services and complexity of support in Adults' Services. Some of this is attributable to the effect of lockdown as people experiencing reduced confidence and physical frailty. The number of contacts to social care has increased over the last year, as has the number of assessments completed.

While this demand has increased, we are experiencing delays in provision. We have completed fewer number of packages of reablement, started less domiciliary care services and our weekly unmet need

within home care has reached 2000 hours. We are working hard to address a range of issues, a number of which are wider issues prevalent in the sector. These include the fragility of the social care market, a number of providers leaving the market, and a lack of care staff, as well as on-going challenges at the interface of health and social care where there are delays in provision.

Our Adult Social Care service user questionnaire shows a high proportion, 86.9%, of services users are happy with their care and support, although this has decreased and is below levels seen in recent years. The feedback from services users shows a slight decrease in many areas including communication and involvement in their care and care and support meeting their needs, which we have attributed to the overall challenges in the provision of adult social care.

### The Front Door

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
	✓	✓	

Where people need to contact social care, multi-disciplinary professionals are available at the first access point. During 2021/22, the front door of adult services received 6,633 contacts from people not already in receipt of care and support. This is a 15% increase on the previous year and some of this is attributable to the effect of lockdown and people experiencing reduced confidence and physical frailty. Health colleagues remain the main source of contacts received (2,693) as integration continues to be key to our way of working.

Of the total contacts received, 4,215 were provided with advice or assistance, over 250 more than the previous year, again indicating increasing levels of demand. Feedback from our customer questionnaire shows a reduction to 77% of adults receiving care and support who feel they have had the right information or advice when they needed it which is the lowest level record in recent years.

Similarly, we have seen an increase in volume of contacts received relating to carers, with 272 received in total during 2021/22, of which 92 were provided with advice or assistance.

Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Front Door (Adults)</b>			
AD/001	The number of contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year	5787	<b>6633</b>
AD/002	The number of contacts for adults received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided	3961	<b>4215</b>
<b>Front Door (Carers)</b>			
CA/001	The total number of contacts to statutory social services by adult carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year	226	<b>272</b>
CA/002	The number of contacts by adult carers received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided	88	<b>92</b>

Adults Questionnaire	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
I have had the right information or advice when I needed it	84.0%	81.8%	84.3%	82.5%	<b>77.4%</b>

### Assessments and Care & Support Plans

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
✓		✓	

We have completed 142 more assessments, 2177 in total, in the last year with an increased proportion of those assessed with needs that require a care and support plan.

The demand and complexity of support required from Adults' Services has increased over recent years. Due to the fragility of the social care market there are delays in provision. Access to care and support is not always timely, and this has contributed to a reduction in the number of adults with a care and support plan at the end of the year.

Our service user survey responses show a reduction - and the lowest levels in recent years - in people feeling involved in decisions about their care and feeling listened to. There are a number of factors that we feel will have contributed to this including lack of choice around services and providers, for example within residential care; difficulties in sourcing packages of care; the shortages in some key posts such as Occupational Therapy and Social Work together with demand increases causing delays in assessments and formal reviews of care and support plans.

The number of carers receiving assessments has also increased and so too has the number with a plan to support their caring roles. Our view is that this relates to the additional pressures (including not being able to access the same level and range of support services) that carers experienced during the pandemic.

Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Assessments and Plans (Adults)</b>			
AD/004	The number of new assessments completed for adults during the year	2035	2177
AD/005	Of which:		
AD/005a	Needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan	721	826
AD/005b	Needs were able to be met by any other means	630	542
AD/005c	There were no eligible needs to meet	627	506
AD/012	The number of adults with a care and support plans at 31 March	1813	1728
<b>Assessments and Plans (Carers)</b>			
CA/004	The total number of carers needs assessments for adults undertaken during the year	132	196
CA/005	Of which:		
CA/005a	Needs could be met with a carer's support plan or care and support plan	39	48
CA/005b	Needs were able to be met by any other means	32	43
CA/005c	There were no eligible needs to meet	55	25
CA/008a	The number of adult carers with a support plan at 31 March	68	105
CA/008b	The number of adults with a care and support plan who also have carer responsibilities	41	64

Adults Questionnaire:	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
I have been actively involved in decisions about how my care and support was provided	81.4%	81.4%	83.1%	83.0%	77.4%
I feel that I was listened to	82.6%	82.7%	86.5%	85.9%	81.4%

### Preventative Services

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
	✓		✓

While we are seeing an increase in demand for social care, we have completed a fewer number of packages of reablement, in part as a result of a lack of available provision. Reablement provides intensive short-term interventions aiming to restore people to independence, mitigating the need for long-term services in the immediate future. During 2021/22 we saw a reduction in the percentage of people who were independent following reablement. This is likely as a result of the increasing

complexity of people’s needs due to delayed presentations; de-conditioning and loss of confidence during periods of shielding / lockdown and delays in sourcing packages of care.

The number of people arranging their own care through a direct payment has increased during the year, this gives people more choice and control over their own care and support.

Survey responses show that overall satisfaction with care and support remains high, although this has dipped slightly to 87%.



Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Early Intervention and Prevention</b>			
<b>Reablement</b>			
AD/010	The total number of packages of reablement completed during the year	291	240
AD/011	Of which:		
AD/011a	Reduced the need for support	50 (17.2%)	54 (22.5%)
AD/011b	Maintained the need for the same level of support	45 (15.5%)	36 (15.0%)
AD/011c	Mitigated the need for support	171 (58.8%)	122 (50.8%)
AD/011d	Neither reduced, maintained nor mitigated the need for support	25 (8.6%)	28 (11.7%)
<b>Direct Payments</b>			
AD/015	The total number of adults with a care and support plan where needs a met through a Direct Payment at 31 March	123	139
AD/018	The number care and support plans for adults supported with direct payments that were due for review during the year	150	185
AD/019	The number care and support plans for adults supported with direct payments that were due for review during the year that were completed within statutory timescales	94	133
Local	The percentage of care and support plans for adults supported with direct payments that were due for review during the year that were completed within statutory timescales	62.7%	72.1%

Adults Questionnaire	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual
I am happy with the care and support I have had	85.7%	88.5%	89.4%	89.0%	86.9%

### Provision of Services

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
✓		✓	✓

Fragility in the domiciliary care market, combined with the increased demand evidenced through the increase in volume of contacts and assessments for adults social care has meant that access to care and support has not always been timely. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of adults starting a domiciliary care services in the year.

There has, however, been an increase in the number of adults starting a residential service which appears to correlate with the restrictions on care homes easing as well the difficulties in sourcing packages of care to support people living in their own homes. Hospital discharge pathways such as 'Step Closer to Home' have also influenced a rise in residential placements.

Care and support should be reviewed annually and during 2021/22 53.6% of reviews were held within timescales. This runs the risk of people’s changing needs not being identified and addressed at the earliest stage, including opportunities for services to reduce if appropriate. Delays in undertaking formal

reviews are due to the overall pressure across the system, and again correlates with a decrease in satisfaction around care arrangements in responses to the service users to questionnaire.

Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Provision of Services and Reviews</b>			
Local	The total number of adults starting a service during the year where that service is:		
Local	Residential Care	80	92
Local	Domiciliary Care	1324	1333
AQ/036	The number of care and support plans for adults that were due to be reviewed during the year	-	2094
Local	The percentage of care and support plans that were due to be reviewed during the year that were completed within statutory timescales	-	53.6%

Adults Questionnaire	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual
The service I get is reliable and I'm told about any changes in good time	78.3%	80.0%	81.5%	82.1%	75.8%
I usually get assistance from the same staff	69.9%	67.8%	70.3%	70.1%	68.4%
Do you think that the care and support you get still meet your needs?	92.0%	92.4%	92.8%	91.2%	87.9%

## How we Performed in Children's Services

There has been a significant increase in demand for early help, pre- and post-statutory children services intervention with families in the last year.

Children's Services have focused on working with families to support their strengths, manage risks and achieve good outcomes.

The impact of the lockdown has meant that some families may not have received the support they needed to reduce harmful behaviours, abuse and neglect at an early stage. The potential risk that child welfare concerns were not recognised or referred early enough continues to be a contributory factor in the increased complexity of support required from Children Services and is an on-going pressure on the service.

While continuing to manage these pressures we have seen an increase in the timeliness of some of our key processes such as: decision on contacts made by the end of the next working day, 99.9%; new assessments completed within statutory timescales, 91.2%; and maintained performance in child protection, 96.0% and looked after reviews, 98.6%, completed within statutory timescales. Reviews of Children in need of care and support completed within statutory timescales still requires improvement.

Overall, the number of in-house foster carers has increased over the last 4 although there remains a shortfall in carers to meet demand and challenges remain within the provider market, which could result in adverse outcomes and reduced well-being for children requiring support.

### Prevention and early intervention

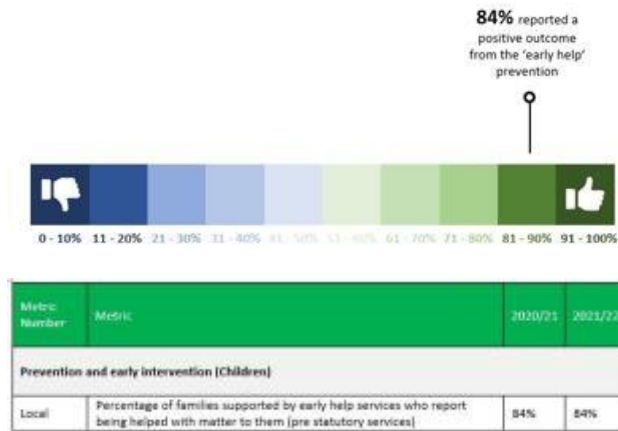
Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
	✓		

Children's Social Services have implemented a co-ordinated approach to early intervention and prevention providing support to children and families who need it as soon as possible, and ensuring that the right help is provided at the right level of intensity. Evaluation and feedback of family support



services indicates clear and positive outcomes for families. For example, during 2021/22, out of 140 families, 84% reported a positive outcome from the 'early help' intervention.

The council has services in place to manage early identification of risk and vulnerability has implemented pre- and post-statutory children services to support families and reduce risk. There has been a significant increase in demand for these services in the last year, particularly due to the impact of the pandemic. Services are under pressure trying meet this demand and providing appropriate and timely support is challenging. There is a need to develop capacity and arrangements to meet increased demands for early help and preventive services.



### The Front Door

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
	✓	✓	

The number of contacts for children not already in receipt of care and support received increased in 2021/22 from 4,329 to 5,776. The majority of these contacts were received from Police and education colleagues. Services are under pressure trying meet this increased demand and providing appropriate and timely support is challenging.

Similarly, there has been an increase of 63% in contacts received for young carers, which we have viewed as a positive measure, and attribute to the on-going awareness raising and presence of young carers projects within schools.

A decision on how to progress a contact is expected with 1 working day, and during 2021/22 this happened in 99.9% of contacts, an improvement from last year.



Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Front Door (Children)</b>			
CH/001	The number of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year	4329	5776
CH/002	The number of contacts for children received by statutory Social Services during the year where advice or assistance was provided	2700	3379
CH/003	The number of contacts received by statutory children's social services during the year where a decision was made by the end of the next working day	3042	5769
Local	The percentage of contacts received by statutory children's social services during the year where a decision was made by the end of the next working day	70.3%	99.9%
<b>Front Door (Young Carers)</b>			
CA/011	The total number of contacts to statutory social serviced by young carers or professionals contacting the service on their behalf received during the year	143	233
CA/012	Of those identified, the number where advice and assistance was provided	61	86

## Assessments

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
✓		✓	

During 2021-22, 884 assessments were completed to better understand the needs of children and families, which is an increase on the previous year. There was a similar increase in the number of children requiring care and support following an assessment. Often needs are met in other ways, such as referring to our Early Help services or where more suitable to an external agency. In some cases a decision on the best course of action needs further investigation, for example, where child protection procedures are to be followed.



Assessments are usually expected to be concluded within 42 working days and during 2021-22 an increasing number (91%) did.

Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Assessments (Children)</b>			
CH/006	The total number of new assessments completed for children during the year	828	884
CH/007	The total number of new assessments completed for children during the year where:		
CH/007a	Needs were only able to be met with a care and support plan	249	264
CH/007b	Needs were able to be met by any other means	448	424
CH/007c	There were no eligible needs to meet	25	17
CH/008	The total number of more comprehensive assessments for children completed during the year for children who were born at the time the assessment concluded	798	861
CH/012	The number of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales	721	806
Local	The percentage of new assessments completed for children during the year that were completed within statutory timescales	87.1%	91.2%
<b>Assessments (Young Carers)</b>			
CA/014	The total number of young carers needs assessments undertaken during the year	36	40
CA/015	The total number of young carers needs assessments undertaken during the year where:		
CA/015a	Needs could be met using a young carer's support plan or care and support plan	16	18
CA/015b	Needs were able to be met by any other means	13	11
CA/015c	There were no eligible needs to meet	0	0

### Care and Support Plans and Reviews

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
✓			✓

Children's Services have focused on working with families to support their strengths, manage risks and achieve good outcomes. There were 74 children in the Achieving Change Together team; during 2021/22, 81% were supported to remain at home, 91.5% have improved school attendance, and 100% reported increased family resilience. Some of the support to families was adapted during the pandemic, although direct care and responding to safeguarding referrals remained in place.

At the end of the year, 518 children had a care and support plan which detailed how their support was to be provided. Of these, 54 children had a direct payment, allowing their families to choose how their care and support should be delivered. An increasing number of young carers have a care and support plan which includes support for their caring role.

Of the children with a care and support plan, 60% are supported to remain at home, and for the second year we have seen a reduction in the number of children looked after. This accords with the work that

the service is doing to promote the safe reduction of children who are looked after, particularly in cases where children can be fully repatriated to parents or into Special Guardianship arrangements with extended family members.

The timeliness of reviews of children on the Child Protection Register and Children Looked After remains high, although the timeliness reviews of children in need of care and support requires improvement.

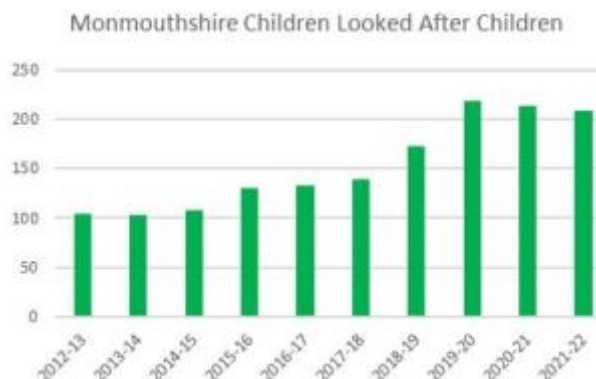
Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Plans (Children)</b>			
CH/015	The number of children with a care and support plan at 31st March	515	518
Local	The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family	58.6%	59.8%
CH/016	The total number of children with a care and support plan where needs are met through a Direct Payment at 31st March	48	54
<b>Plans (Young Carers)</b>			
CA/017b	The number of children or young people with a care and support plan who also have carer responsibilities	22	34
<b>Reviews</b>			
Local	The percentage of reviews due during the year that were completed within statutory timescales, which were:		
Local	Child protection reviews	94.2%	96.0%
Local	Looked after reviews (including pathway plan reviews and pre-adoption reviews)	99.8%	98.6%
Local	Reviews of children in need of care and support (including children supported by a direct payment)	67.3%	66.8%

Measure	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family	63.8%	63.4%	57.5%	58.6%	59.8%

### Children Looked After and Leaving Care

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Protection	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
			✓

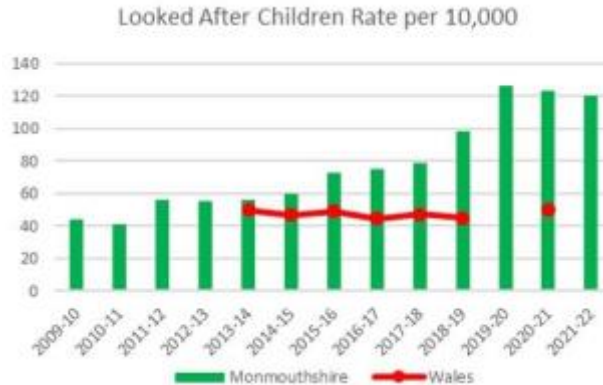
The council is supporting 208 children who are looked after (31st March 2022). The number has risen substantially in recent years but has recently stabilised. It remains higher than the average rate of children who are looked after across Wales.



During 2021/22, the number of children ceasing to be looked after to move to permanent homes, both through adoption and special guardianship orders, has increased. Looked after children benefit from stability and, where possible, placement and school moves are minimised. The number of children

experiencing school moves has decreased this year, although the number of children experiencing three or more placements in the year has increased.

The council is working with Foster Wales to run active campaigns to increase the rates of in-house foster carers to provide accommodation and support to children requiring it, which launched in September 2021. To date, the transition from local to national campaigns has not had the anticipated impact in Monmouthshire and no new foster carers were recruited during 2021/22. Overall, the number of in-house foster carers has increased over the last 4 years from 24 to 40. No new foster carers were recruited during 2021/22 and there remains a shortfall in carers.



There is also a critical shortage of specialist fostering and residential placements, with considerable instability within the provider market, which could result in adverse outcomes and reduced well-being for children requiring support.

Care leavers are supported by personal advisors to transition into adulthood and independence. One year after leaving care 73% of care leavers were in employment, education or training, although this is lower 2 years after leaving care.



Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Children Looked After and Care Leavers</b>			
<b>Children Looked After</b>			
CH/D43	The total number of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced three or more placements during the year	9	14
CH/D44	The total number of children looked after on the 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school during the year (excluding transitional arrangements, moves associated with adoption or moves home)	15	8
<b>Care Leavers</b>			
CH/O52	The total number of care leavers who experience homelessness during the year (As defined by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) within 12 months of leaving care	*	*
CH/O53	The total number of care experienced young people	64	59
Local	The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 12 months since leaving care	-	73.3%
Local	The percentage of care leavers in categories 2, 3 and 4 who have completed at least 3 consecutive months of employment, education or training in the 15-24 months since leaving care	-	25.0%

Measure	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
Number of Looked After Children	139	173	219	213	208
Number of Children Adopted in the Year	8	*	*	*	9
Number of Children Leaving Care with Special Guardianship Orders in the Year	*	*	8	11	13
Percentage of Looked After Children placed with MCC generic/kinship foster carers	35.6%	37.6%	36.1%	41.3%	40.4%
Number of Generic Foster Carers	24	26	34	38	40
The percentage of looked after children who have experienced 1 or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the year to 31 March	9.5%	5.3%	12.7%	10.9%	5.4%
Numerator: The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March who have had one or more changes of school, which were not due to transitional arrangements	9	6	18	15	8
Denominator: The number of children of compulsory school age looked after at 31 March	95	114	142	138	147
The percentage of looked after children on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	5.8%	6.9%	7.3%	4.2%	6.7%
Numerator: The number of children looked after at 31 March who had three or more separate placements during the year	8	12	16	9	14
Denominator: The total number of children who were looked after at 31 March	139	173	219	213	208

Provisional data awaiting final data from Welsh Government

\*Small numbers redacted

## Safeguarding Adults Services

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
			✓



Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Adult safeguarding</b>			
AS/001	Number of adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect reported during the year	483	528
AD/020	The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the year	680	799
AD/022	The total number of reports received during the collection year where it was alleged that there was abuse under the primary category of:		
AD/022a	Neglect	258	344
AD/022b	Physical abuse	260	269
AD/022c	Sexual abuse	35	58
AD/022d	Emotional or psychological abuse	176	214
AD/022e	Financial abuse	106	97
AD/023	The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk where it is necessary for enquiries to be made	906	583
AD/024	The total number of enquiries completed within 7 working days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse	282	382
Local	The percentage of enquiries completed within 7 working days from the receipt of the reported alleged abuse	31.5%	65.5%
AD/026	The total number of enquiries where it was determined that additional action should be taken	356	440

As with other areas of adult social care, adult safeguarding has seen an increase in volume of reports being made during the year. During 2021/22 799 reports were made regarding 528 adults. The majority of reports are from providers and most reports fall under the category of neglect where we have seen a 33% increase in reports in the last year.

The number of reports leading to enquiries has also increased during the year. Enquiries should usually be completed within 7 working days and during 2021/22 65.5% were. While this is an increase on the previous year, it is still lower than we want it to be. Waiting for information to come back from a number of different sources can impact on timeliness of completion and work will continue to influence the timely undertaking of enquiries over the coming year.

The Care Inspectorate Wales inspection reported that there were "good examples of effective and timely adult safeguarding, and this opinion was supported by key partners."

*"Practitioners in adult safeguarding are confident in their ability to respond to safeguarding concerns and act where necessary. We saw the response to safeguarding referrals was timely and that strategy discussions and meetings involved relevant professionals, and most are held in a timely manner"*

78% of adults tell us they feel safe, where they do not, people often comment on mobility concerns and fear of falling.

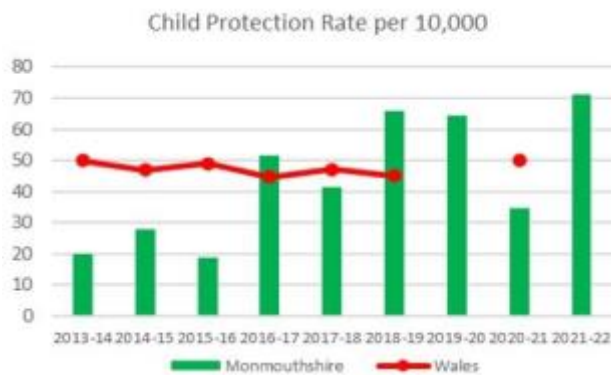
Adults Questionnaire	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
I feel safe	Actual 79.1%	Actual 81.8%	Actual 81.1%	Actual 78.8%	Actual 78.5%

## Children's Services

Main Quality standard core principles:			
People	Prevention	Partnership & Integration	Well-being
			✓

At the end of the year there were 123 children on the child protection register, which has increased significantly from the 60 children on the child protection register at the end of 2020/21. There has been a steady increase of the number of children on the register, particularly during the last six months of the year. This appears to be linked more so to a reduction of the number of children being removed from the register during this period, rather than significant rises in the number being added. More children are remaining on the Child Protection Register to ensure the Child Protection Plan is completed in its entirety, which is supported by a decrease in the percentage of children leaving the register to become children looked after.

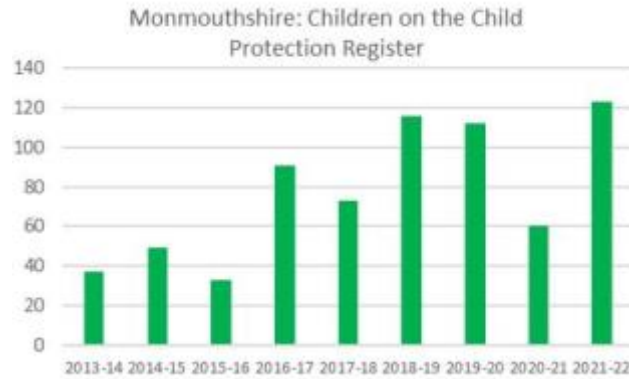
The rate of 71 children on the child protection register per 10,000 child population in Monmouthshire, exceeds the most recently published Welsh rate from 2020/21. While the number of children on child protection plans fluctuates, the critical issue is that the right children are registered and remain subject to child protection core groups and planning for the right length of time.



There has been an increase in volume of required initial conferences, and consequently the number of children registered, followed by the number of initial core groups required. Alongside these increases, there has been a decrease in the number of children removed from the register this year.

The timeliness of some child protection processes, such as initial conferences and child protection statutory visits, has decreased during the year. In Monmouthshire we have continued to count the 15 day timescale to convene an initial conference from the point at which the decision is made to arrange a conference, which explains the low percentage against the official metric.





Metric Number	Metric	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Safeguarding Children</b>			
CH/022	The total number of Section 47 enquiries completed during the year that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference	113	176
Local	The percentage of initial child protection conferences held during the collection year that were held within statutory timescales	40.7%	23.6%
CH/028	The total number of initial core group meetings held during the year that were held within statutory timescales	72	120
Local	The percentage of initial core group meetings held during the year that were held within statutory timescales	66.7%	76.4%
CH/029	The total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year	2115	2161
CH/030	The total number of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year that were completed within approved timescales	1408	1256
Local	The percentage of visits to children placed on the child protection register that were due during the year that were completed within approved timescales	66.6%	58.1%
Local	The percentage of children removed (de-registered) from the child protection register during the year who later became looked after	27.3%	18.7%

Measure	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual
Number of Children on the Child Protection Register	73	116	112	60	123
The percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority Child Protection Registers (CPR)	5.3%	3.5%	2.4%	5.6%	0.6%
Numerator: Number of re-registrations of children on the CPR during the year	6	6	*	6	*
Denominator: Total number of registrations on CPR during the year	114	172	*	108	*
The average length of time for all children who were on the CPR during the year	227	260	270	302	215
Numerator: The total number of days each child had been on the CPR if they were removed from the CPR during the year	9,946	3,794	5,046	49,872	19,537
Denominator: Number of children who were removed from the CPR during the year	132	130	130	165	91

## 7. Finance

Service Area	Annual Budget 2021/22	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Overspend
Adult Services	£8,261,000	£8,431,000	£170,000
Community Care	£24,342,000	£24,070,000	(£272,000)
Commissioning	£1,394,000	£1,163,000	(£231,000)
Resources & Performance	£607,000	£590,000	(£17,000)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£34,604,000</b>	<b>£34,254,000</b>	<b>(£350,000)</b>

## ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The Adult Social Services budget for 2021/22 was set at £34.6 million and is made up of different service areas, these include Adult Services, Resources & Performance, Community Care, and Commissioning. Adult Social Services spent £34.25 million in 2021/22 and therefore there was an underspend of £350,000.

The headline breakdown of each service area within Adult social care is as follows.

The Community Care service area was the highest contributor to the underspend within Adult Services with an underspend of £272,000, although there was an overspend in the south of the County within the Chepstow Integrated team which resulted from the need for increased care packages.

The Adult Services service area produced an overspend of £170,000 due to the recruitment of additional carers, over and above the budget, into the in-house care at home service to facilitate additional packages of care in accordance with increased demand, and in situations where care cannot be sourced from providers.

The Commissioning service area had an underspend of £231,000, this was due to an ongoing vacancy, along with the continued closure of day facilities transport which led to the costs being lower than the set budget.

It is of critical importance to note; however, that **the underspend in Adult Social Care this year was a result of numerous funding's and grants.** These included one-off regional partnership funding grants, The Social Care Sustainability Grant, the new Social Care Recovery fund and a one-off injection from the Welsh Government to help cover the cost of Social Care overspends. Whilst of huge benefit to the Council this year, the grants and one-off payments masked considerable pressures within the adult services moving forward.



## Children Services

The Children Social Services budget for 2021/22 was set at £16.1 million and produced an outturn of £16.6, this created an overspend of £534,000.

While children looked after numbers reduced, new children required higher costing residential placements because of increased complexity. This is opposed to those leaving that have been placed in

lower cost fostering/kinship/family placements, this accounts for £364,000 of the overspend in Children Services.

A recent legal case led to the need for the directorate to pay kinship carers in line with the foster carer rate, along with an increase in payment for foster carers due to increasing skills, training and increased fostering placements, this contributed £329,000 towards the overspend. Legal costs associated with the court proceedings resulted in a £154,000 overspend, with staffing budgets contributing a further £74,000.

There has been compensating savings including from vacancies and a decrease in contracted transport costs as a result of the pandemic. Finally, Children's Services also benefited from one off ICF funding and various Welsh Government grants and funding assistance that help reduced it's in year costs by £1,789,000.

## 8. Workforce



The last 2 years have been, without a doubt, the most challenging, eventful period for our Social Care workforce.

Everyone in the directorate will have felt the negative effects of the pandemic on the health and wellbeing of our communities. Even so, the whole workforce rose to the challenges and continued to respond with compassion, empathy and dedication, in protecting and promoting people's opportunities to have the best possible lives.

COVID-19 has touched all of us in different ways, not only was there our own personal experience, but our workforce witnessed its often devastating effects on others. We all deeply admire the hard work, tenacity, understanding and kindness shown by all our teams day in day out to our residents and each other.

If the pandemic taught us anything, it was the need to forge even closer cooperation and collaboration across our directorate and this was evident across all of our workforce. Everyone in social care and health across our integrated services and beyond, in children's, adults and YOS are the all-seeing eye of integrated social care and health, making vital linkages to make sure people with care and support needs don't fall through the gaps. Each and everyone of our social care staff work tirelessly to support people, their carers and each other.

In short, we have never needed the expertise and insights of our workforce more than we do now. As we emerge from the privations of the pandemic, only to face fresh challenges and anxieties, tragedies borne of war in Eastern Europe, and the economic pressures we will be facing, once again our workforce will be tested and relied upon to support our communities.

It continues to be a very long, hard road with everyone very tired, especially following the Omicron outbreaks which compounded the stress on the whole directorate. Our teams stepped up to ensure our social care response was the best it could be during such an unprecedented period.

As the workforce recover and grapple with the changes and the 'new normal', the challenge for us is to take a big leap forward by redesigning and reimagining how we support our workforce moving forward and how we ensure they are skilled, equipped prepared to work alongside people, their carers and our communities, to be ambitious for the best possible lives and outcomes for all.

Flexible and collaborative approaches to working with health partners and improved approaches to working with the community sector, who have stepped up across the country to respond to people in their communities, have shone a light on strength-based practice and the benefits of community-led, asset-based approaches to supporting people in achieving the changes that matter to them.

The wellbeing of staff has also become much more central. Ensuring our workforce has access to supervision and peer support as well as continuing professional development opportunities is a top priority.

The following is a look back summary of the year in how we have supported our amazing workforce and then how we will set the direction for the year ahead.



Learning & development (L&D), wellbeing, recruitment, onboarding, retention and development of career pathways have been priority workstreams that the WDT have been focussed upon during 21-22. During 21-22 despite the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions **2505** people undertook L&D opportunities.

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### Face to Face Learning

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Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic the return to classroom learning had to be carefully assessed, ensuring a Covid secure environment was created. During 21-22 we commissioned and developed a L&D Hub in Mamhilad Business Park to facilitate the delivery of face-to-face training. Completion of Covid risk assessments for accommodation and course delivery were completed and updated in line with Welsh Government Regulations and Guidance. Since commissioning Mamhilad L&D hub in June 2021, **634** people have received face to face training in these facilities. Delivery of essential H&S training face to face has been prioritised for the services and saw the following numbers of staff trained respectively: **103** manual handling passport, **27** manual handling refresher, **124** care of medicines, **146** emergency first aid at work and **10** first aid at work.

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### Digital Learning

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Despite the return to some face to face L&D, there are certain opportunities that lend themselves to a digital platform. Prior to the pandemic **359** staff undertook L&D on a digital platform in 19-20. This has dramatically increased and in 21-22 saw **737** undertake online training and **848** complete e-learning, a total of **1585**.

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### Onboarding and Registration

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To facilitate the onboarding of staff into direct care monthly week-long inductions have been developed and delivered to all new staff within Monmouthshire. These have been evaluated and developed over the year in response to staff and managers feedback.

This comprehensive induction is aligned to the All Wales Induction Framework (AWIF) and introduces the principles & values qualification that staff are required to complete in order to register with Social Care Wales (SCW). Registration to SCW by domiciliary homecare staff is compulsory within 12 months of starting work in homecare, a stipulation that is coming in for residential staff as of 1st October 2022. Place based workshops to support staff with completion of their principles & values module have been delivered by the WDT to ensure staff have undertaken the necessary learning to register with SCW. Current compliance data for homecare team registration is in a table to the left.

Homecare Registration		
North	Central	South
50/65	40/50	26/47
77%	80%	55%

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### *Placed Based Learning*

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Place Based L&D to upskill care staff and improve continuity of care for people receiving care in Monmouthshire has been delivered as part of a project with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. Opportunities that have been delivered as part of the project included vital signs, rehabilitation, oral care, catheter awareness, skin care, hydration and nutrition. The learning that was delivered as part of this project will become embedded into the WDT, 'business as usual' based upon the learning needs of staff within the direct care team.

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### *In-House Trainers*

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Delivery of training by in—house trainers is well received by staff within MCC as it is aligned and reflects the values and protocols of Monmouthshire. This year has seen us grow the number of in-house trainers by 2.0 WTE providing the WDT an opportunity to develop and deliver greater learning opportunities both centrally and place based. The social care trainers have been working with local services to support locally identified learning and mentoring needs.

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### *Foster Carers*

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Foster Carers are invaluable within our workforce in Monmouthshire, with the critical role of caring for looked after children. In order to support foster carers in their development, the WDT has embedded a workforce development officer into the team that specifically focusses on the L&D needs of foster carers. As well as working extremely closely with the foster carers, they work collaboratively with the supporting social workers in the fostering team, with other workforce development office rs across Gwent and the National Fostering Framework to maximise the support to foster carers and support the embedding of the L&D Framework.

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### *Training Management System*

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In the absence of a corporate -wide training management system the WDT have successfully implemented the use of MS bookings to advertise training to allow staff to quickly and efficiently book onto the training they wish to attend. MS forms have been utilised for staff to request e-learning which once allocated generates an automated response to the staff member confirming their learning is ready and how to complete the e-learning module. Transforming the way in which we facilitate the booking of training through utilisation of these digital platforms has allowed the WDT to produce a comprehensive training data dashboard to interrogate and analyse training data in greater detail. 22-23 will see the implementation of Thinqi across MCC.

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## Wellbeing

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This year saw a number of staff from the social care directorate become Connect 5 trainers. Connect 5 is based upon the 5 ways to wellbeing and supports participants with their own mental wellbeing as well as the mental wellbeing of others by giving them the confidence to engage in open conversations. The course focusses on a number of tools that can be used to support staff and help build resilience not only in their personal lives but also in the workplace. Melo is also a fantastic website resource available to staff to support mental wellbeing.



Programme	Number of programme completions April 21	Number of staff during 2021/22	Number achieving during 2021/22	Number withdrawing	Number carrying forward to 2022/23
Level 2 Approved Qual	34	38	3	1	28
Level 3 Approved Qual	38	4	0	0	38
GCSE - CSE	1	0	0	1	0
Level 4 Approved Qual	0	0	0	0	0
Level 5 Approved Qual	3	3	2	1	0
Social Services Practitioner Programme	3	3	3	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Approved	2	2	2	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Approved	1	1	0	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Approved	1	0	0	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Other	0	1	0	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Other	0	0	0	0	0
Social Work Degree Level 6 - Other	0	0	0	0	0
Master Social Work Degree - Year 1 - Other	2	2	2	0	0
Master Social Work Degree - Year 1 - Other	1	1	1	0	0
MSW in 1st year	0	0	0	0	0
Consultation	0	0	0	0	0
Enabling Practice & 17 (Practice Assessor approval)	0	0	0	0	0
Approved Managerial Practice	2	2	2	0	0
Team Manager Development Programme	1	1	1	0	0
Multi-Manager Development Programme	0	0	0	0	0

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## First 3 Years in Practice

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Post Qualifying	Team
NQSW	Integrated Services, Monmouth and Adults Mental Health
NQSW	Older Adults Mental Health
NQSW	Family Support & Protection Team
NQSW	Family Support & Protection Team
NQSW	Family Support & Protection Team
NQSW	Early Help & Assessment Team
Consolidation	Integrated Services, Abergavenny
Consolidation	Child Protection & Support Team
Consolidation	Child Protection & Support Team
Consolidation	Children with Disabilities team

First 3 years in practice is an important transition from student to qualified social worker. In Monmouthshire we believe it is essential that social workers are supported with a comprehensive induction, a specific NQSW programme to consolidate their university learning and embed their learning into practice before undertaking the CPEL consolidation programme at either Cardiff Metropolitan University or the University of South Wales.

Staff currently within their first 3 years in practice are identified in the table to the left:

**3 social workers in adults services & 7 social workers in children's services**

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*Student Social Workers*

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Level	Programme
1	Cardiff University x 2 University of South Wales x 2 Open University x 2
2	Cardiff University x 2 Open University x 3
3	Cardiff University x 2 University of South Wales x 4



Enabling people to become qualified social workers is an opportunity and privilege that MCC makes considerable investment in to ensure the workforce is fit for the future. As a local authority we host students from both Cardiff University & University of South Wales. We also invest in our own workforce and sponsor staff to become qualified social workers whilst working in their existing role via the Open University.

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## *Recruitment*

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### **Attraction & Selection**

In order to deliver our services across the directorate, we require a stable, experienced, and highly skilled social care workforce with the knowledge, skills, and values to meet our commitment to our communities in Monmouthshire.

Monmouthshire is a great place to build a career in Social Care, and we constantly strive to deliver our attraction, recruitment and retention plans to support existing and new workers to progress their career goals. Recruitment challenges continue to escalate and evidence shows this will only get harder in the coming years.

During the Pandemic we brought various people together to create a virtual recruitment team in order to support all services across the directorate and beyond. This virtual team were creative and proactive in finding attraction and recruitment solutions working alongside managers and staff in order to fill vacancies and support the increase in demand. Here is a flavour of how we supported services with attraction and recruitment:-

- Individualized marketing material for each specific locality
- Creating a Social Care web page within the Monmouthshire website
- Business Cards
- Clothing with advertising
- Banners for buildings and street advertising
- Applicant app
- Digital booking system for interviews.
- Videos and images for marketing on social media
- Multi media platform advertising
- Career Fair attendance
- Joint road show attendance with Health

We will continue to focus on our attraction techniques and methods in order to support services and will continue to evolve and develop our end to end recruitment strategy during the next 12 months.

# JOBS FOR CARING PEOPLE

'You have to work in a job you enjoy, and I LOVE my job'



## Join our team and make a real difference

- You'll get to work with a wonderful team, making a difference everyday - knowing what you do really matters to the lovely people in the community you meet.
- We look after our team, everyone is valued and recognised - with enhanced weekend pay, excellent training and lots of support.

 monmouthshire  
sic. fyfwrwy  
@MonmouthshireCC  
monmouthshire.gov.uk

monmouthshire.gov.uk/socialcarejobs  
socialcarejobs@monmouthshire.gov.uk  
07970894429

# **JOBS FOR CARING PEOPLE**

**'It's the people  
you work with  
that make this  
job so special'**



monmouthshire  
sir fynywy

@MonmouthshireCC  
monmouthshire.gov.uk



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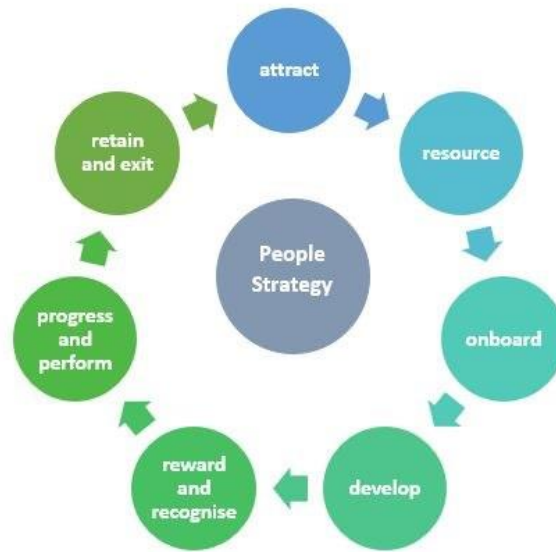
### *The Year Ahead*

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Our future priorities will focus on supporting the whole life cycle of our employees. We will be setting ourselves 7 priorities in line with the life cycle of our workforce and we will do this through the lens of the All Wales Health & Social Care Workforce Strategy [Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#) Additionally, supporting recovery from the impact of the pandemic on staff remains a key priority.

There are lots of challenges ahead, but we are well placed to respond to those challenges and to make a vital contribution to helping people to live happier, healthier lives for longer in their communities.

## Employee Life Cycle



### Our focus for the future

**Attract:** Use all of Monmouthshire Social care attributes in order to be the exclusive employer of choice in our community.

**Resource:** Facilitate all available talent to apply. No stone unturned.

**Onboard:** Welcome and induct everyone who joins us.

**Develop:** Support everyone in all corners services to grow, develop and learn.

**Reward and Recognize:** Everyone's efforts are recognized.

**Progress and Perform:** Hold regular conversations about performance and development.

**Retain and Exit:** Encourage our people to stay and then learn from those who leave.

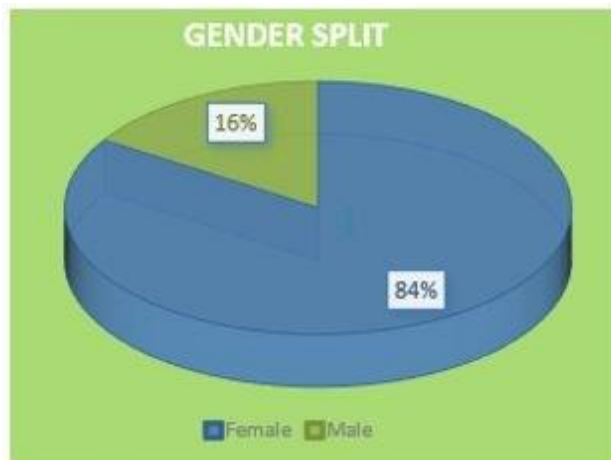
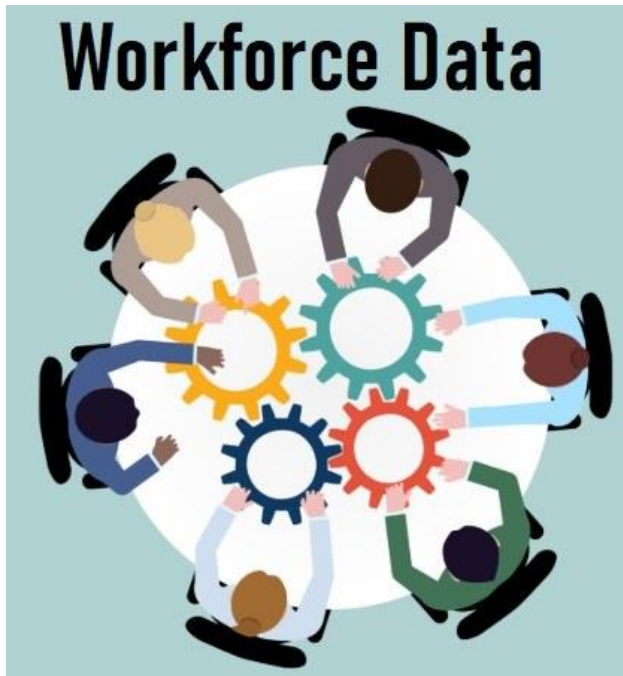
We are extremely proud of everything achieved by our workforce. It is also testament to the leadership and commitment of all the leadership teams who support and guide our frontline workforce. There are challenging times ahead however we have the leaderships teams that believe in our vision and are committed to its delivery.

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*What Does Our Workforce Look Like?*

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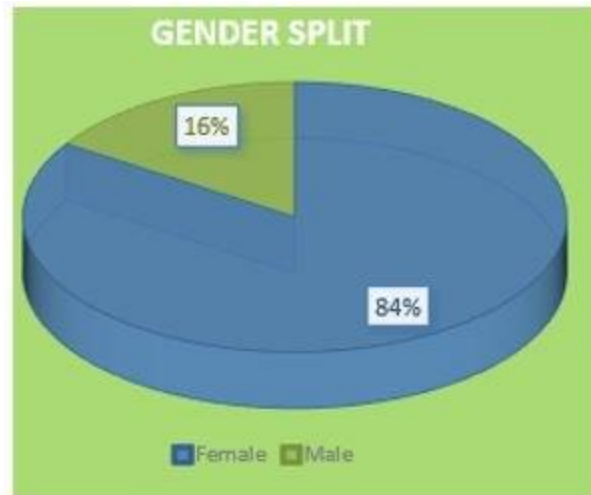
# Workforce Data



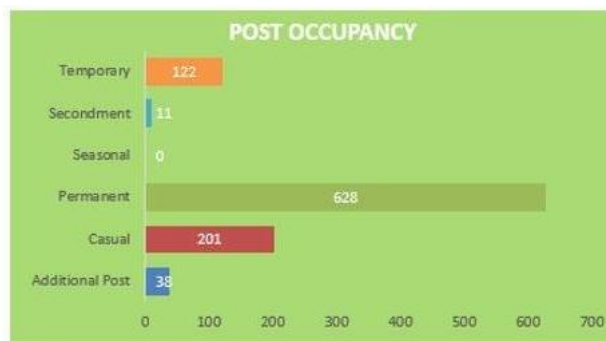
Across the whole of the directorate 84% of the workforce is female.



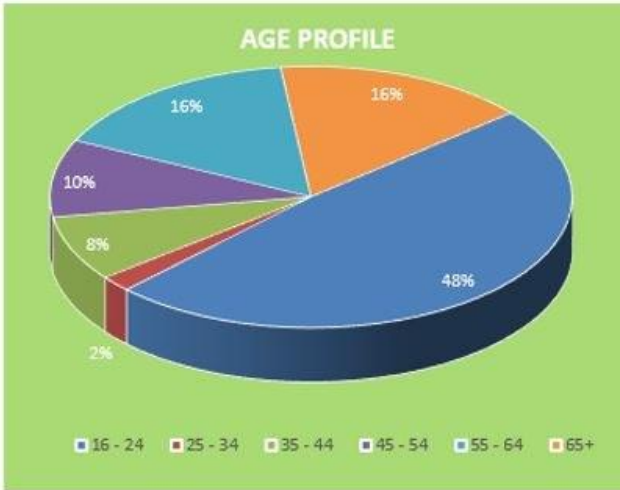
Gender Split Adult Services



Gender Split Children's Services



The majority of our workforce are in permanent contracts, there is a smaller number in temp contracts this will be as a result of the temporary nature of the funding streams.



64% of our workforce of over the age of 55 years of age. This data is essential in order for us to build workforce planning strategies for the future in order to replace experienced and knowledgeable workforce as people retire or work towards retirement.



A large part of our workforce being part time shows how we can offer flexible working patterns to meet the needs of our workforce.



New Starters and Leavers – Social Care April 2021 – March 2022			
Team	New Starters	Leavers	Trend
Care at home	49	63	↓
Integrated Services Adult's	7	11	↓
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	2	2	←
Children's Services	26	20	↑
Business Support – Children's Services	2	2	←
Commissioning	0	1	↓
YOS	5	4	↑
Finance	2	1	↑
Transformation Team	2	0	↑
Leadership	1	1	←
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>↓</b>





## 9. Next Steps, Key Challenges and Priorities

Whilst I have endeavoured to include a balanced and representative selection of service areas, the breadth and depth of Social Care and Health activity within Monmouthshire is nigh on impossible to capture in a single report. Similarly, although I have exposed some of the current challenges we face, I have in no way explored them all or captured the issues in their entirety. I would hope, however, that the report provides a sufficient basis to evidence what I feel are the most pressing strategic and operational challenges for the service moving forward. In summary these are:

### Operational Challenges

- Maintaining a sufficient and stable workforce that is suitably qualified and experienced
- Dealing with the on-going ripple effect of the impact of the pandemic on people, families and on the workforce
- Managing on-going increased demand across all services
- Maintaining sufficient capacity to meet our statutory requirements
- Maintaining sufficient capacity to respond preventatively to risk and need for individuals and families
- The fragility of the provider landscape within the sector specifically direct care and placements for children

- Working in a climate of increased budgetary pressure
- Maintaining partnership working when all key partners and statutory agencies are under significant pressure

### **Risks**

- Inability to meet the care and support needs of vulnerable people resulting in their welfare being compromised or harmed
- Failure to comply with statutory requirements
- The financial consequences of a failing social care and health sector

### **Priority Actions**

- Continue to develop and implement the workforce strategy for recruiting into the social care and health workforce over the immediate and longer term
- Continue to develop and implement the workforce development plan with emphasis on individual wellbeing and increased opportunities for professional support and development
- Maintain a strategic and operational focus on preventative services with emphasis on community resilience and targeting the most vulnerable groups and individuals to help reduce demand
- Further develop innovative responses to the challenges within the provider market, specifically through a 'place-based' approach to home care
- Re-focus on practice particularly within adult's services including quality assurance process and management oversight, support of practice, specifically to address issues raised within the Performance Evaluation Inspection
- Work with partners to develop and implement services that will address the insufficiency of placements for children and young people, particularly those with complex needs
- Continue to maintain a strong partnership presence in key forums particularly within the Gwent Safeguarding Board and the Regional Partnership Board.

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# Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation</p> <p>Jane Rodgers  <b>Phone no:</b>  <b>E-mail:</b> JaneRodgers@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>To provide members with an annual evaluation of safeguarding within the Council</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Social Care and Health Directorate</p>	<p><b>Date</b> Sept 2022</p>

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Page 173

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	Social care and health has a positive impact on older people through the provision of care and support.	None	
Disability	Social care and health has a positive impact on people with disabilities through the provision of services and care and support	None	We are seeking to make health and social care services more accessible and local
Gender reassignment	Assessments and care plans take account of gender reassignment and how that might affect the experiences, wishes and feelings of individuals.	None	

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Marriage or civil partnership	There are examples where care and support plans have been implemented in accordance with people's needs and rights as married couples or couples in civil partnerships	None	Care homes need to have facilities where married couples / partners can have time together
Pregnancy or maternity	The workforce supports maternity and paternity leave	None	
Race	Thought is being given as to how we mitigate any barriers into the service in regards to race and culture. Within assessments and care plans people's individuality is recognized including culture and race, for example in working with Unaccompanied Assylum Seeking Children. The workforce is representative of the population but we would seek to encourage a more ethnically diverse workforce	None	We need to understand more what barriers there might be to accessing services  We are seeking to increase diversity within the workforce
Religion or Belief	<i>Assessments, care and support plans take account of the individual beliefs, values and religion of people and families. Some of these may interface with safeguarding issues such as HBV or radicalization. It is important that practitioners respect individual beliefs whilst still being able to address safeguarding issues.</i>	None	Safeguarding training takes account of working within diverse cultures and beliefs. Safeguarding services are in place to support families and individuals affected by HBV and radicalization.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	None	None	Understanding how men and women experience services differently is important so that we can address any barriers or inequalities. For example men / fathers can often be absent from child protection processes.
Sexual Orientation	.Individual needs regarding sexuality and sexual orientation are addressed within assessments, care and support plans	None	None

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

<b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b>	<i>Social Care and Health supports many families who are economically disadvantaged or living in poverty. We recognized that carers and people with disabilities for example, are often excluded from the workforce, and equally that children can be unfairly disadvantaged by poverty. We recognize that poverty can seriously disadvantage longer term health and wellbeing outcomes. We work with partners to try and tackle these issues on an individual and community basis. We recognize that many people within the social care and health workforce, which is predominantly female, are on low wages and have supported increases to the NMW and RLW</i>	<i>None</i>	Further work to understand local populations and the impact of social inequalities
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### 3. Policy making and the Welsh language.



How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p><i>We implement the Welsh active offer and have a local 'more than just words strategy' in place.</i></p>	<p>None</p>	<p>More attention needs to be paid to ensure that that Welsh active offer is made,</p> <p>More could be done to support Welsh learners</p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</p>	<p>Welsh speaking candidates are encouraged</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>It is desirable to have increased welsh speakers within the service so that people can communicate in their first language</p> <p>Some core training should be offered in Welsh</p>
<p><b>Service delivery</b></p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>We have a good knowledge of who is able to communicate in Welsh within the directorate . council to support the Welsh active offer</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>It is desirable to have increased welsh speakers within the service so that people can communicate in their first language</p>




**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Neutral	
<b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Neutral	
<b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Ensuring that the care and support needs of vulnerable children and adults are met and that people are support to achieve personal wellbeing outcomes supports a healthier Wales.	
<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Good quality and accessible social and health care is is central to cohesive communities, and helps to ensure that there are the right processes in place to promote the rights and welfare of more vulnerable groups and communities.	
<b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Ensuring that people have their voices heard, their needs met and live free from harm, abuse and neglect is recognised regionally and nationally as a key component to wellbeing. These elements are promoted within social care	
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People	Social care supports vulnerable people to live the lives they to lead and part of this is ensuring	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	and promoting access to leisure , cultural, artistic or sporting activities.	
<b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	High quality social care is critical in ensuring that people can fulfil their potential no matter what their background. Equality is at the centre of the services the Authority provide and commission.	

**5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?**

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	Social care and health is arranged so that immediate needs are met alongside of preventative and early help services to help with reducing need over the longer term	
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	The report details how services work in partnership with agencies from different sectors, and supports partnership working with local communities, groups and individuals.	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p><b>Involvement</b></p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The report includes information about how the directorate involves people in making decisions on an individual basis and in a wider service context.</p>	
 <p><b>Prevention</b></p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The report details the importance of prevention within social care and health and some of the mechanisms and services that are in place to support prevention and early intervention.</p>	
 <p><b>Integration</b></p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>The purpose of social care and health services are to support individual's achieve their individual holistic wellbeing goals</p>	

**6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?**

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	The report includes how social care and health addresses immediate safeguarding needs and the the services that are in place to prevent or reduce abuse, neglect of harm of vulnerable pepole		
Corporate Parenting	The report identifies the services that are in place to support the immediate and longer term needs of children who are looked.		

**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

Both qualitative and quantitative date is presented within the report.

The report contains performance metrics, case material, direct feedback from service users, and internal and external quality assurance information.

**8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

*.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template*

Social care and health works with some of the most vulnerable and potentially marginalized indivudals and families within the County. It is important that we continue to review services and orientate practice so that it takes accounts of the needs of indivudals from diverse groups

and to critically examine any barriers there are to accessing services. Encouraging diversity within the workforce is important so that we are able to provide a responsive service to different groups of people, as is encouraging Welsh speakers. We need to ensure that practitioners work from an anti-oppressive value based, using a strengths based and a rights based perspective particularly with the most vulnerable people or in situations where statutory interventions into family life are required.

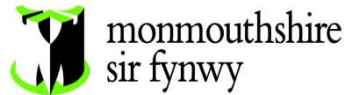
**9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Work in partnership with others to reduce issues that impact on the wellbeing of vulnerable individuals, and work with others to promote community and individual wellbeing.		Chief Officer Social Care and Health

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**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration



**SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING EVALUATION REPORT April 2021 – March 2022**

**MEETING: Council**

**DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

## **1. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is:

- To evaluate the progress of Monmouthshire County Council's key safeguarding priorities during 2021 / 2022, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2022 - 2023.
- To inform Members about the effectiveness of safeguarding in Monmouthshire and the work that is in progress to support the Council's aims in protecting children and adults at risk from harm and abuse.
- To inform Members about the progress made towards meeting the standards in the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy approved by Council in July 2017, amended July 2022.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Council endorses the safeguarding evaluation report for April 2021 – March 2022.
- 2.2 That Council tasks the Chief Officer of Social Care, Safeguarding and Health together with members of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group to implement the safeguarding actions as set out in current activity plan (2022 – 2023) at appendix 3.

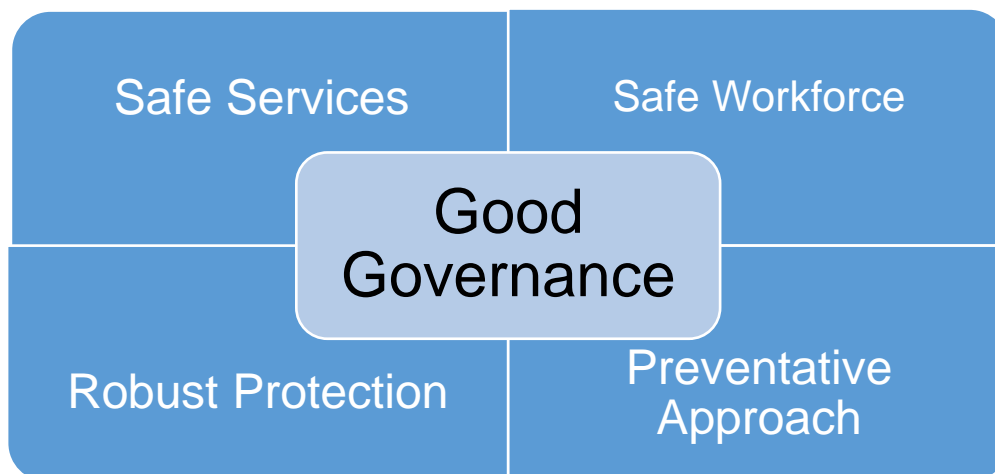
## **3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 Appendix 2 is based on safeguarding activity and information from April 2021 to March 2022. During the majority of this period COVID restrictions have remained in place, which had an impact on operational safeguarding activity and where relevant, this is referenced within the evaluation and informs the safeguarding risk assessment, which remained in place during this period. (Appendix 5)
- 3.2 Monmouthshire County Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy, which covers duties for both children and adults at risk in line with the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014) and Wales Safeguarding Procedures, has helped to inform this evaluation report. The analysis reflects progress against priority areas set out within

the policy and draws on data and information regarding both children and adults at risk.

- 3.3** The 5 cornerstones of Safeguarding within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy are set out below.

### **The Cornerstones of Safeguarding in Monmouthshire**



- 3.4** This evaluation report forms an integral part of the continual development of safeguarding practice across the Council and drives the work of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group. The evaluation report seeks to balance qualitative and quantitative data as well as drawing in other sources of information to support the evaluation. The evaluation report is at Appendix 2.

- 3.5** Relevant sources of external information were used to inform this evaluation including the Internal Audit Report on Safeguarding Training issued March 2021.

- 3.6** The self-assessment score has been agreed by the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG) through critical challenge on the basis of evidence reviewed to date. It uses the corporate scoring framework (Appendix 1) to provide an overall judgement of effectiveness between 1 (major weaknesses) and 6 (excellent / outstanding). The current self-assessment is set out below.



## Self-assessment scores as at March 2022

<u>Cornerstone of Safeguarding</u>	<u>April 17 - Sept 17</u>	<u>Oct 17- March 18</u>	<u>April 2018 – March 2019</u>	<u>April 2019 – March 2020</u>	<u>April 2020 – March 2021</u>	<u>April 2021 – March 2022</u>
Good Governance	4	5	5	5	5	5
Safe Workforce	3	4	3	3	4	4
Preventative Approach	3	4	4	4	5	4
Robust Protection	4	4	4	3	3	4
Safe Services	2	3	3	3	4	4

**3.7** Priority improvement actions arising from the evaluation form the basis of the action plan which is implemented and monitored through the WASG (see Appendix 3). The review of the previous year’s action plan is at Appendix 4.

#### **4 OPTIONS APPRAISAL:**

Not applicable to this report

#### **5 EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

Each ‘cornerstone’ section of the report opens with descriptors of ‘what good looks like’. These descriptors provide the basis of how we measure the standard over time using both qualitative and quantitative sources.

Safeguarding progress is reported on an annual basis to full Council.

#### **6 REASONS:**

**6.1** Safeguarding vulnerable people is central to the Council and requires strong leadership and governance. An evaluation of safeguarding within Monmouthshire County Council is therefore reported to the Council on an annual basis.

#### **7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no resource implications to this report.

#### **8 WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

This report is critically concerned with the effectiveness of safeguarding in Monmouthshire County Council.

**9      CONSULTEES:**

Members of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group  
Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health

The report was presented to a Joint Scrutiny Committee for People and Performance on 11th October 2022.

**10     BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

**11     AUTHORS:**

Head of Children's Services – Diane Corrister  
Safeguarding Service Manger – Kelly Turner

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **THE CORPORATE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK:**

<b>The evaluation score from 1-6</b>	<b>The evaluative context</b>
<b>Level 6 Excellent</b>	<b>Excellent or outstanding</b>
<b>Level 5 Very Good</b>	<b>Good Major strengths</b>
<b>Level 4 Good</b>	<b>Important strengths with some areas for improvement</b>
<b>Level 3 Adequate</b>	<b>Strengths just outweigh weaknesses</b>
<b>Level 2 Weak</b>	<b>Important weaknesses</b>
<b>Level 1 Unsatisfactory</b>	<b>Major weakness</b>

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **THE EVALUATION:**

#### **1. GOOD GOVERNANCE**

**SELF-ASSESSED SCORE = 5**

##### **WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

In Monmouthshire County Council we ensure that safeguarding for children and adults at risk is understood as “everyone’s responsibility”. With strong leadership there is a continuous focus on embedding safeguarding culturally across all parts of the Council at a “hearts and minds” level. Safeguarding is supported by robust policies and operating procedures which are embedded within all settings and services. We work effectively with the Gwent Safeguarding Board to ensure good alignment and maximise our resources.

##### **PROGRESS AND EVIDENCE:**

###### **SAFEGUARDING AND RISK ASSESSMENT DURING COVID:**

April 2021 – March 2022 has been a period predominantly impacted upon by Covid restrictions, based on Government guidelines and in line with Chief Executive direction. There has been continuous risk assessment on Safeguarding practice, with weekly emails from Paul Matthews, Chief Executive and Matthew Phillips, Chief Officer People and Governance providing information to the whole authority which influenced safe practices across the council. Monmouthshire Local Authority was also provided an opportunity to come together through the “cwtch” allowing issues to be discussed on a digital platform.

###### **SAFEGUARDING AUDIT FRAMEWORK EVALUATION [SAFE]:**

SAFE roll out 2021-2023 has commenced with a decision for a staged approach so each Directorate is given dedicated time to ensure effective Quality Assurance for each area with a personal review meeting by a member of the Safeguarding Unit. This approach has utilised the Safeguarding Business Support Manager role to co-ordinate the dissemination of the SAFE and track progress and completion.

The first SAFE roll out was given to People and Governance, which has been fully completed. Policy, Performance and Scrutiny and Health and Social Care are the next cohort, with most of the SAFE’s in progress. The final Directorate for consideration will be Enterprise and Mon Life.

Once a SAFE has been received by the Safeguarding Unit, they are reviewed and returned with suggestions prior to arranging a quality assurance review with the Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] / Owner of the SAFE. All SAFE’s completed, with oversight from the Safeguarding Unit have been completed to a good standard, with appropriate action plans in place to mitigate risk.

101 SAFE requests are sent out across the council per rolling programme, this included 35 schools, 1 PRS, and 26 early learning settings.

###### **SAFEGUARDING CORPORATE POLICY:**

Safeguarding Corporate Policy was reviewed throughout this period, to include recognition of new legislation with the Wales Safeguarding Policy and inclusion of current contact details for the Safeguarding Unit. The formatting of the document was made more user friendly to signpost to guidance / policies via hyperlinks.

###### **DUTY TO REPORT FORMS:**

The new Duty to Report [DTR] form was reviewed by the regional Gwent Safeguarding Board in order for the content to align and be compliant not only with the Social Services and Wellbeing [Wales] Act 2014 [SSWB 2014] but also the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020. It was hoped that the revised

Report would result in stronger multi-agency collaboration and an improved information sharing process between the report maker and Adult and Children's Services to effectively safeguard and support children, vulnerable adults and their families within Monmouthshire. The DTR was launched by in July 2021 and adopted in Monmouthshire across our locality teams and third sector providers. The new DTR is held on the Monmouthshire Hub and Gwent Safeguarding Board website for easy access.

### **GWENT SAFEGUARDING BOARD [GSB]:**

There remains strong links with the Gwent Safeguarding Board (GSB). Jane Rogers, Chief Officer Social Care & Health, is co-chair of the Board and Diane Corriester Head of Childrens Services, and Eve Parkinson, Head of Adults Services represent Monmouthshire. The GSB is supported in their work by a number of sub groups that manage the core business and other more specific pieces of work, which deliver on the strategic priorities set by the Board each year. Members of the Safeguarding Unit continue to be represented on all groups / sub groups to deliver the specified outcomes and in addition maintain good links into the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Board.

The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG) continued to meet on a digital platform through the pandemic. The group continues to ensure that corporate safeguarding has oversight at a senior level, so that risks can be identified and managed throughout the council.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The links between the Safeguarding Unit and other Directorates demonstrates good communication and how Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, which reflects our self-assessment score of **5**.

### **KEY STRENGTHS:**

- Safeguarding and risk assessment during Covid
- Safeguarding Audit Framework Evaluation
- DTR being fully adopted
- Continuous positive relationships between Safeguarding Unit and Gwent Safeguarding Board

### **NEXT STEPS:**

- Completion of SAFEs
- Data set for WASG to be updated
- Corporate Safeguarding Policy to be ratified and disseminated

## **2. SAFE WORKFORCE**

### **SELF-ASSESSED SCORE = 4**

### **WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

We ensure that safe recruitment and human resource practices operate effectively and are embedded across the Council for the whole workforce (paid and unpaid). We ensure that individuals working with children and adults at risk are suitable for the role they are employed to do and are focused on outcomes for people. The whole workforce is clear about their duty to report concerns and to keep children and adults at risk safe.

### **PROGRESS AND EVIDENCE:**

## **TRAINING:**

There remains a high priority within the Council for safe recruitment practices; training is central to this. A system has been devised for this information to be centrally stored within the Corporate Training Unit, however, there remains a commitment to further develop this into a “resource link”. MCC are working on implementing a system “Thinqi” across the organisation, which would automatically record training attendance via TEAMS/Outlook/Booking system and is being overseen by HR and the Data Systems Team.

The Safeguarding Policy shows the levels of current training required; however, this has not been revised as the National Training Standards are being drawn up after a regional multi agency period of consultation. MCC will align to the Safeguarding Training Standards once the consultation period is completed and standards agreed. We were advised in March 2022 that the consultation phase in relation to the draft Standards and Framework is due to begin in April 2022 and members of the Safeguarding Unit have been identified to participate to ensure representation from Monmouthshire.

Mon Life and individual schools undertake their own Level 1 Safeguarding Training. The plan was to build other Directorates into this training pool, however this was disrupted by the pandemic. As Level One has successfully developed on a digital platform there has been less need to expand the training pool. Current SWAY E learning arrangements have provided a robust platform to implement this training council wide, and this is well received, meaning less face to face sessions are needed. In the region of 500 have received Level one training during this period

Safeguarding Level 2 is delivered by a representative from the Safeguarding Unit alongside a co-trainer from other Directorates. This has been delivered on a digital platform, however plans to move this back face to face when possible. 61 people completed Level 2 training in this time period

In November 2020 an internal training audit was undertaken, which concluded that ‘Considerable Assurance’ can be gained from the control environment. There was, nevertheless, some areas for action in particular around the clarification of roles under the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the identification of the relevant officers, which was achieved upon policy review. There were also improvements required in the evidencing of training undertaken, which was assisted by the planned improvements to the People Services’ ResourceLink system and will further be strengthened by the implementation of system “Thinqi”.

## **DISCLOSURE BARRING SERVICE [DBS]:**

The current DBS digital system encourages staff to set up an account that sends an automatic reminder to renew. This provides a more streamline and robust mechanism for regular updates in staff DBS checks.

People Services have reported a fast turnover of DBS checks and there are no longer gaps where a person’s DBS has lapsed, requiring additional risk assessments. This also means that new staff are able to enter their posts more quickly, all of which supports a more efficient workforce ensuring appropriate services are continually offered.

When risk assessments are required due to a lapse in DBS check or concern raised, these are undertaken by Kelly Turner in the safeguarding unit, with further consideration and sign off by the Head of Service.

## **PRACTITIONER CONCERNS ALLEGATIONS:**

The Local Authority has overall responsibility for the management of the Practitioner Concerns / People in a Position of Trust process. When a case relates to a practitioner within the Health Board setting, Corporate Health Safeguarding will take responsibility for enquiries being undertaken and the completion of actions identified. However, the overall accountability for the process remains with the Lead Officer within the Local Authority.

The Safeguarding Unit has developed a tracker to manage both children and adults Practitioner Concerns Allegations; this identifies the status of each case, including what investigation is required, prevents drift and details the outcome of each process. This is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Safeguarding Unit. In the cases linked to Practitioner Concerns with adults at risk, the database enables the monitoring of the allegation when the Lead Co-ordinator is outside the Local Authority, eg Health.

A contact log has also been developed to record when a DTR is received, when threshold decision is made and the date a Strategy discussion is requested and held. This provides a clear chronology for Practitioner Concern cases. All correspondence between the Safeguarding Unit and partner agencies are detailed within the contact log, as well as the conclusion of the process.

There are ongoing regional discussions and Task and Finish groups taking place to explore and review the effectiveness of the Practitioner Concerns meetings, with an attempt to streamline them nationally. Within the Gwent Child Protection Co-ordinator bi-monthly meetings and the regional Safeguarding Board meetings, this is being explored and reviewed regularly.

During 01/04/21 – 31/03/22 the Unit held Professional Strategy Meetings about **63** professionals, relating to **78** children following professional allegations.

During the same period **49** Professional Strategy Meetings were concluded, of which:

**33** x Substantiated

**9** x Unsubstantiated

**6** x Unfounded

1 x case transferred responsibility to another Local Authority

Professional allegation referrals come from a range of referral sources.

Data capture has been developed during this period to evidence the number of professional allegations in relation to adult safeguarding:

During 01/04/21 – 31/03/22 the Unit held Professional Strategy Meetings about 43 professionals

During the same period, 33 Professional Strategy Meetings were concluded, of which:

14 x Substantiated

13 x Unsubstantiated

6 x Unfounded

### **ANALYSIS:**

Safe recruitment under the Corporate Safeguarding Policy continues to be a priority and there are good processes and systems in place, which are continually reviewed and monitored to ensure that safe recruitment practice is followed. As digital approaches continue to develop (as part of the legacy of COVID-19) safe recruitment practice will need to remain at forefront.

The score remains at 4 as we continue to strengthen arrangements around our safe recruitment practice and in line with the ongoing development of “Thingy” to automatically record training attendance.

During this period, the responsibility for managing and chairing both Children and Adult Practitioners Concerns meetings has been under the remit of the Child Protection Co-ordinator; the Child Protection Coordinator has significant experience in adult services, and therefore able to provide some resilience during a period of staff shortage. This has supported consistency in respect of threshold and monitoring

of the process being followed and within appropriate timescales. It has been noted that as a result better dialogue is taking place at an earlier point to ensure the Practitioner Concern element is being identified. There has been an important development in the recognition of the Practitioner Concern element of the policies and procedures; the Safeguarding Unit appear much more confident in identifying if there is a concern around a Practitioner / Person in a Position of Trust and the safeguarding in this arena is now running parallel and in conjunction rather than afterwards.

**KEY STRENGTHS:**

- Continuous priority given to safe recruitment practice within the Council
- The develop of SWAY E-learning has promoted a strong Level 1 training forum across Directorates with continued quality assurance and support from the Safeguarding Unit.
- The Practitioner Concerns guidance has been fully adopted within Monmouthshire and tracking data is now in place to ensure recording and processes are followed in a timely manner.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Ongoing development of “Thingi” to ensure training records are centrally managed
- Training Policy needs to look at mandatory training and consider other areas that need to be recorded, including VAWDSV, Prevent and GDPR
- Undertake an audit of the adapted arrangements for digital recruitment to ensure safeguarding is at the forefront
- To further aid the efficiency and management of Practitioner Concerns, a model is being developed on Flo / Plant to ensure appropriate safeguards are put in place. This will be GDPR compliant
- Regional Safeguarding Leads will continue to meet to review the Practitioner Concerns process and review the effectiveness of the “outcomes” of the process
- Training to be developed around understanding of Practitioner Concerns, for those who are employers and those who are at greater risk of being discussed in the arena, eg Education, Foster Carers and Health professionals

**3. PREVENTATIVE APPROACH**

**SELF-ASSESSED SCORE = 4**

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

We work with partners to identify emerging issues, risks and challenges to our communities. We demonstrate clear multiagency approaches to developing protocols, processes and practice in how we respond to these issues therefore reducing risks through early intervention and preventative approaches.

**PROGRESS AND EVIDENCE:**

**VAWDASV and PREVENT:**

VAWDASV Training continues to be mandatory for all Council employees, with Group 1 now being completed on an external E-Learning platform. During this period a total of 49 people undertook this training. This can be accessed through the Hub via an external link. Staff are regularly reminded to complete this mandatory training and this is also part of the induction process for new starters, to ensure compliance.



The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference [MARAC] has continued throughout this period, being held on a fortnightly basis, via Microsoft Teams with the aim of risk assessing on a multi-agency basis, victims who are at high risk of domestic abuse. There continues to be a good representation from all agencies at these meetings to ensure effective Safeguarding planning. This has included new agencies, such as the Phoenix Project who are supporting perpetrators of domestic violence to recognise their behaviours. Cases discussed at MARAC have risen to 130 [from 120 last year]. This increase mirrors an increase in National demand for MARAC, and regionally there are aims to develop a MARAC Demand Management Plan.

There have been no Domestic Abuse Homicide Reviews for Monmouthshire during this period.

### **MODERN DAY SLAVERY:**

There remains a consistent drive towards developing approaches regarding Modern Day Slavery. The Quality Assurance Officer within the Safeguarding Unit has driven the protocol, which has been rolled out to Children's Services and introduced within Adult Teams. Covid has delayed the full rollout of this protocol, in particular for Adults and Housing, however, external training is being provided by the Police, which covers Exploitation, Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism [NRM] process. This training is promoted by the Workforce development Team in Monmouthshire, and has been well received.

### **NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM [NRM]:**

The National Referral Mechanism is the UK system for officially recognising victims of trafficking and the decisions about whether or not they are a victim made by the Home Office. Due to the national delay for NRM Referrals from the Home Office, Gwent has been part of a pilot scheme around responding to the NRM, which commenced in May 2021. This means that decisions about whether or not a child is a victim will be made by local Safeguarding partners, including Children's Services, Police and Health so that decisions and outcomes can be made on a multi-agency Safeguarding basis in each child's best interest. Alongside the pilot scheme there is an ongoing steering group, which will continue to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot scheme, which has already been extended for a six month period. From June 2021 up until February 2022, 36 NRM referrals had been submitted throughout Gwent, 10 of which were regarding children from Monmouthshire. All referrals have been processed within the 90 day limit.

**There has been 2 types of exploitation identified;**

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

The abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another as well as personal sexual gratification.

Examples: Use of children in sex work, trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation, child pornography, sexual slavery.

#### **Child Criminal Exploitation**

The use of the child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to, child labour. Economic exploitation implies the idea of a certain gain or profit through the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. This material interest has an impact on the economy of a certain unit, be it the State, the community or the family.

Examples: Child domestic work, child soldiers and the recruitment and involvement of children in armed conflict, child bondage, the use of children from criminal activities include the sale and distribution of narcotics, the involvement of children in any harmful or hazardous work.

Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties and they use dedicated mobile 'phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

The Council strives to create an environment where child exploitation is identified and addresses. The Authority is committed to actively working with partners to identify children at risk and prevent this form of abuse.

During **01/04/21 – 31/03/22**, **61** children (up from 47 children last year) were subject to Child Exploitation Meetings, where consideration is given for children to become part of a Gwent Police Operation named Quartz.

Regionally Monmouthshire have the second highest number of children on Operation Quartz. This is due to the high level of training multi agency professionals have, which increases recognition and reporting to the safeguarding arena.

Child Exploitation remains a main focus for Children's Services and partner agencies. Over the latter part of this review period, we are starting to see a noticeable increase in criminal exploitation, however, the figures overall for the year stand at:

**Criminal x 29**

**Sexual x 32**

In addition to this, 2 MCC children were discussed as part of a Complex Strategy Meeting considering 5 children.

Bi-monthly MASE Meetings (Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation meetings) continue between Police, Social Care and partner agencies to identify any patterns, locations and perpetrator identification. MASE is a strategic meeting which looks at disruption, perpetrators, places of interest and themes.

There is good liaison in place between Safeguarding, the Safer Monmouthshire Group and the council's Public Protection Unit including licensing.

In November 2021, the Monmouthshire Exploitation Group [MEG] recommenced following a period of absence as a result of the Covid pandemic. MEG is responsible for identifying and analysing criminal or sexual exploitation across the county, working with partners to explore any emerging themes whereby further investigation, disruption or protection can be addressed through either the Crime & Disorder Group (CAD), Serious Organised Crime group (SOC) or the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation group (MASE). The Monmouthshire Exploitation Group reports directly to the Public Service Board's Safer Monmouthshire Group and Whole Authority Safeguarding Group, meeting on a quarterly basis. MEG is chaired by the Safeguarding Service Manager, and is attended by Head of Public Protection, Community & Partnerships Manager, Crime & Disorder Officer, Community Cohesion Manager, YOS and Saint Giles.

A key area of focus for the MEG partnership will be the 'transitional' period of young people moving into adulthood.

### **SAFEGUARDING IN SCHOOLS:**

Monmouthshire has adopted a proactive approach to responding to issues of sexual harassment in schools and has worked with colleagues from other agencies, coordinated by the VAWDASV team, to promote a Whole School Approach. The Safeguarding Lead in Education, Heather Heaney represented

Monmouthshire on the Welsh Government task group that is developing the **Peer on peer sexual harassment in education settings multi-agency action plan**. Schools continue to support this area of work. We continue to scope what issues are being raised within the school settings and use the information to provide targeted support where this is required.

There is a bullying prevention group established in MCC.

Resources continue to be coordinated in order to respond to pupil wellbeing issues across schools. The increase in wellbeing concerns being raised by pupils may be related to the last couple of years – we work collaboratively with our partner agencies in order to provide the most appropriate support when concerns are identified.

The SHRN (School Health Research Network) report is being evaluated by a task and finish group in the Autumn term to identify areas of concern and to inform how we support learners. The report includes areas such as Emotions and Behaviour, School connectedness, Sleep, Friendship and bullying, Sexting, Body image etc so this will be a valuable exercise.

Multi Agency Meetings [MAMs] are school based that are attended by Building Stronger Families Team [BSFT], Young Carers, School Based Counselling and other partners across the pre statutory system; they operate in three of the four secondary schools in Monmouthshire and are used to consider what support can be offered to pupils identified as vulnerable.

#### **PROVIDING EFFECTIVE EARLY HELP:**

The Early Help Panel (now known as Space Wellbeing) Neuro Development Pathway Panel and Space Wellbeing Steering Group remains in place. SPACE Well-being (Single Point of Access for Children's Emotional Well-being) is a panel that receives referrals from agencies and families for a range of support for children's emotional well-being. PCHMSS (Primary Care Mental Health Support Services) and CAMHS (Children Adolescent Mental Health Services) both take referrals from this panel, as well as FIT, Platform, BSFT, Flying Start, Acorn, SHIFT and others. The Neuro Developmental Panel takes referrals for ASD/ADHD and other ND issues, rather than general wellbeing concerns.

There has been significant increases with referrals being received by these Panels; during January to March 2022, the highest number of referrals have been received to date, standing at 303. During this period the waiting list from referrals have also drastically increased as a result, with a two to three week time to process referrals before getting to Panel stage. Consideration is being given to the processing of referrals and whether or not this is due to a system issue or whether it is attributed to the significant increase of referrals.

Early Help Panel is supported by the advice line, which is staffed every day; calls to the advice line are steady, with an average of 134 calls per quarter over the last 12 months. The advice line supports in enquiries for both Panels; the advice line remains under development with huge potential.

Interface is a weekly meeting between service areas that consider families at a 'step down' level, which includes Family Intervention Team [FIT], Dads Can, Building Stronger Families Team [BFST], Family Group Conference / Mediation. This meeting manages moves between pre and post statutory services.

#### **PREVENTATIVE APPROACHES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:**

We continued to analyse and monitor the impact of Covid-19 on families and communities to ensure that services are in place to respond to increased risk and vulnerability. As a result, there has been the development of the Wellbeing Team that has created a central point of contact to signpost, advise and support members of the public during Covid. The Wellbeing Team has been Covid focussed, adapting to the changing needs as the pandemic was evolving. The future of this team will remain community focussed and need-led.

## **HOUSING:**

Monmouthshire continues to utilise approaches towards Homelessness through strengthened homeless prevention, increasing homeless accommodation and enhancing specialist service provision for young people and offenders.

As part of the homeless prevention approach, Housing and Communities undertook a staff restructure to create additional staffing capacity, with regards to prevention. The staffing restructure also facilitated dedicated staff to acquiring homeless accommodation; as a result there has been an increase in the number of properties provided through Monmouthshire Lettings and in this year there has been more social housing available to let for homeless applicants than the previous year. There has been the introduction of Housing First to support housing. Self-contained emergency family accommodation has now been established, which Monmouthshire are now looking to purchase. In relation to young people, with the highest needs and who are at risk of homelessness, there has been a remodelling of Pobl young person's accommodation, which includes four units of self-contained move-on accommodation. Young people with lower identified needs are being considered as part of a proposal for a dedicated, shared housing in Chepstow being established with MoYo floating support.

## **LOCAL SAFEGUARDING NETWORKS**

The Local Safeguarding Network (LSN) meetings and Safeguarding Practitioner Forums have continued and are a multi-agency mechanism for professional leads to share information regarding safeguarding matters and extend knowledge of safeguarding activity and services across the Council.

LSNs were held in July 21, September 21, January 22, and March 22. Presentations included in these sessions were;

Young People's Gambling Harm Prevention Programme

N-Gage Services

DBS Presentation

Exploitation and Vulnerability Presentation

Horizons Sexual Violence Presentation

Older Persons Awareness Raising Cyfannol Women's Aid

Cyfle Cymru Presentation

Safer Wales Presentation

Phoenix DAS Presentation

In May 2021 a Practitioner Event was held on line, and this included the topics of;

Wellbeing

Moral Distress

Children and Young People's rights

Professional Curiosity

Suicide and Self Harm

Why Language Matters

Assessing child neglect and its social nature

**ANALYSIS:**

As the Covid pandemic has continued the identification and establishment of additional services have been provided across the Council, such as the Wellbeing Team, the NRM pilot, Homeless prevention and the continuation of the Early Help Panel, however, due to the significant increase of referrals, this has meant a delay in services being offered and as a result impacting on services and families. As a result the score has decreased from 5 to 4.

Prevention and partnership working remains a key focus for the Council and there remains a consistent drive for developing these approaches; there continues to be a strong multi agency approach in supporting families and the community to ensure the issues that impact on the vulnerable individuals and communities are addressed.

**KEY STRENGTHS:**

- Prevention and partnership working remains a key focus for the Council
- There remains a consistent drive for developing these approaches
- Continued strong multi-agency approach in supporting families and the community to ensure the issues that impact on the vulnerable individuals and communities are addressed

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Development of VAWDASV refresher course for all staff and to be rolled out across the Council
- There will continue to be promotion of all mandatory training across the Local Authority to be completed by staff members
- Further exploration around the waiting time for the Early Help Panel
- Remainder of Directorates to be included in Modern Day Slavery training
- Wellbeing Team to continue to develop to support the community in ensuring robust support and effective links with services are provided based on the changing needs of the community
- Wellbeing Team to evaluate the effectiveness of their support to inform future decisions about the Team

**4. ROBUST PROTECTION**

**SELF-ASSESSED SCORE = 4**

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

We operate best practice in protecting children and adults at risk and ensure that all concerns about possible abuse or neglect are recognised and responded to appropriately. Multi-agency plans and interventions reduce risks and needs for children and vulnerable adults including those at risk of significant harm.

**PROGRESS AND EVIDENCE:**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK:**

Partnership working has been further strengthened following the launch of the multi-agency Hub [January 2021]. This period has seen the Hub develop, with additional agencies becoming part of the

model to improve communication and make collaborative decisions to safeguard children and adults at risk.

Monthly delivery group meetings are held to discuss progress of the Hub, which then feeds into the Partnership Board attended by Heads of Service.

Gwent Police are commissioning an external review of the Hub which is out for tender in Summer 2022. As part of this evaluation, the Missing Children's Protocol will also be considered; the establishment of the safeguarding Hubs has provided an opportunity to integrate the resources and processes of the Gwent Missing Children Team to make a new resource model for missing children. The protocol has been continually reviewed every six weeks with plans for it to be relaunched in April 2022. This evaluation is being overseen by the Gwent Safeguarding Board.

There have been no adult or child practice reviews held in regards to Monmouthshire cases during this period.

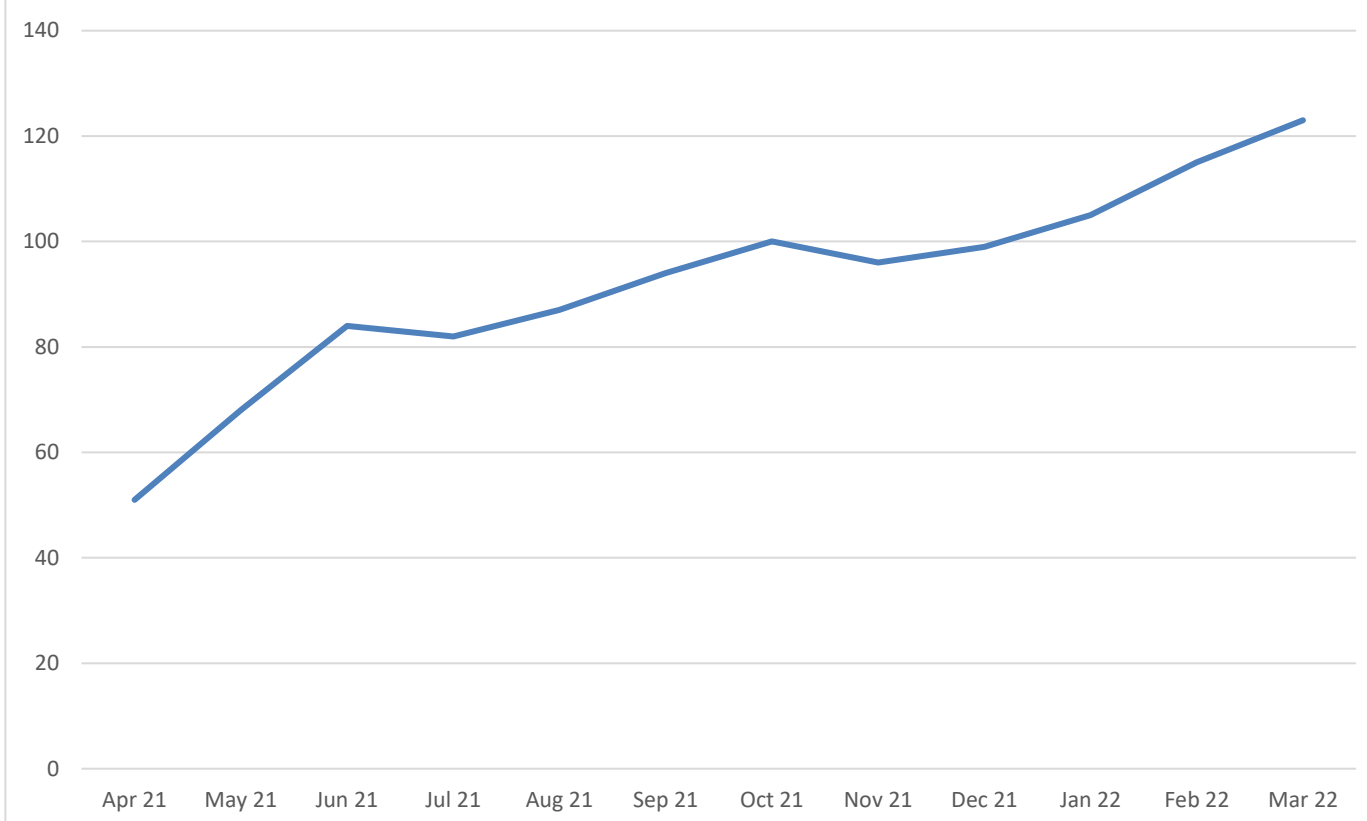
### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES:**

The Care and Support Plan [CASP] agenda is deeply rooted into the Early Help and Assessment Team, with evidence of 300 children and families being supported during this time-period. Though an evaluation of this process there is evidence that these cases receive support in a timely manner and the cases are transferred to the Family Support and Protection Team after a period of three months for continued support and monitoring.

During this period there has been a rise in the number of children on Monmouthshire's Child Protection Register, with data informing us that the children are remaining on the Child Protection Register longer to ensure the Child Protection Plan is completed in its entirety and the risks to the children have significantly reduced. A Quality Assurance Report undertaken by the Child protection Coordinator, every 6 months, showed there has been an increase in meaningful child protection work, which has reduced the need to issue Court proceedings.

At year end the number of children on the child protection register was **123** (a significant increase from previous year end of 60), however, the following graph will demonstrate the movement of the child protection registration:

CP Monthly Figures April 21 to March 22



We continue to strive to improve the performance in Child protection Core groups and statutory visits.

This period has seen the introduction of a new Child Protection Co-ordinator, with the role having been covered by an independent agency for nearly 12 month.

Within the service there was a slight reduction in the numbers of children who are looked after this year, although the overall trend remains upward trend. At 31/03/22 the number of children looked after was **208** (from 213).

**ADULT SAFEGUARDING:**

The introduction of the statutory duty to report under the SSWB Act, as well as the low threshold for reporting concerns (which can be based on reasonable cause to suspect) continues to create an upward trend in the number of safeguarding concerns reported via safeguarding referrals. Over the year, safeguarding reports were made concerning 528 adults.

The service is committed to the improvement of completion of the Section 126 adult protection enquiries within the statutory timeframe of 7 days. Work has been ongoing with all professionals involved in the adult safeguarding process to understand the importance of undertaking these enquiries in a timely manner. This has been evidenced in 65.5% of cases (compared to 51.1% last year). This will continue to be a focus in the forthcoming year.

An Adult Safeguarding dashboard continues to be in development to help monitor and analyse adult safeguarding activity. This will now also include management oversight development to ensure the quality assurance for adult safeguarding cases, in particular for case closures.

Regional adult co-ordinators group is attended on a bi-monthly basis to ensure streamline responses across Gwent.

The Adult Safeguarding Unit has been impacted by staffing issues, in pivotal positions of Team Manager, Adult Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Business Support Office; this has resulted in increased workloads and the need for re-prioritisation with cases. However, the Safeguarding Unit has continued

to maintain the day to day functions of Adult Safeguarding through the overall oversight and support from the Safeguarding Service Manager and the assistance of the Child Protection Co-ordinator. As the Child protection Coordinator has significant experience in Adult Safeguarding, this was utilised with case discussions and supervision in a time of staff shortage.

**ANALYSIS:**

The Council continues to ensure we provide the most robust protection for children and adults at risk of harm.

**KEY STRENGTHS:**

- Continued multi-agency working, which has strengthened communication across partner agencies
- Ongoing commitment to improving the quality of practice with key focus on development and training for practitioners
- Continue to monitor and evaluate all processes and protocols to ensure effective safeguarding that is streamlined regionally
- Continued development and partnership working within the Hub; with commitment to introducing further agencies, including YOS, IDVA and preventative services

The longer term impact of Covid has resulted in a greater volume and complexities of Duty to Reports in both children and adult services, however, there remains ongoing commitment to improving the quality of practice and the development of robust safeguarding plans, through practitioner training, multi-agency working and the continued evaluation of processes / models, such as the Hub and is the reason for the increase of score from 3 to 4.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- The Hub will be evaluated following successful tender at the end of Summer 2022, which is being commissioned by Gwent Police
- Continue to expand the Hub to include further agencies
- Continued improvement of the Section 126 enquiries being held within time-scale through further discussion with other professionals and agencies, such as Health
- Review of chair's checklist to consider timeliness of core group meetings and statutory visits for children on the Child Protection Register; to ensure effective quality assurance
- Bi-annual workshops to be held to review the effectiveness of practice and processes, which will include all Children's Services teams and the Safeguarding Unit

**5. SAFE SERVICES – delivered through commissioning arrangements, grants, partnerships and volunteering**

**SELF-ASSESSED SCORE = 4**

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

We use our influence to ensure that services operating in Monmouthshire, including commissioned and those outside the direct control of the Council, do so in ways which promote the welfare and safety of children and adults at risk.

**PROGRESS AND EVIDENCE:**

Social Care and Health have clear operating processes in place, which ensures a robust approach for all Social Care commission for Children and Adults. This is evidenced by progress with completion of the rolling SAFE programme. The SAFE roll-out 2021-23 is very much in progress and has been co-



ordinated by a Business Support Manager, where we have taken a staged approach offering focussed time to service areas in order to provide robust quality assurance.

There has been strong multi agency working between Safeguarding and Commissioning in the Escalating Concerns process, which has been actioned for one care home during this period. The Escalating Concerns process provides a clear action plan to provide safety for all residents and identifies areas of improvement.

Schools and other parts of the Council working with children / adults at risk indicate there are robust arrangements in place, which includes individual school contracts, transport and leisure services. Service areas within the Council are able to identify their links within the Safeguarding Unit; there is evidence of regular communication, advice and guidance. There is open communication with the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Officer from Corporate service areas, which quickly highlights any issues or concerns to ensure they are addressed immediately and appropriately. Monthly risk assessment meetings are also held between Safeguarding and the Passenger Transport Unit to discuss any Safeguarding issues and ensure there is a collective and prompt approach to DBS risk assessments.

There is evidence of Safeguarding embedded in Licensing services and the Public Protection Unit; Good partnership working is shown within the Responsible Authority meetings, which were re-launched in January 2022 following suspension during Covid. A significant development for licencing within this period has resulted in DBS checks now being required every six months for drivers, rather than every 3 years. This will also include Operators who have access to book records or despatch vehicles; this was implemented on October 2021.

A Service Level Agreement was finalised in March 2022 for MonLife, to look at commissioning services for activities with children and young people. The SLA was put together to ensure consistency across MonLife services whilst ensuring compliancy with audit and MCC financial procedures; H&S processes and of course Safeguarding processes. The SLA is robust and transparent, and the service commissioned must present all paperwork and copies of certificates prior to starting any work or engaging with children/young people. The SLA can be used for a day provision or a regular provision.

The review process enables any concerns to be raised by both parties and to ensure they are worked through and resolved. It also ensures we are compliant with MCC regulations and processes. Service leads assisted in the formulation of the document so co-own and understand its importance.

### **COMMISSIONING:**

During the April 21-March 22 period Commissioning restarted their quality assurance processes following standard monitoring being suspended in the early stages of the pandemic. Outside of the pandemic, Local Authority providers receive an annual monitoring visit, and in the case of larger providers, 1-2 relationship visits are undertaken per year. For children's services much of the monitoring is done at desktop level due to services being individual and out of county, however, in person visits are completed where necessary and where placements are in county.

When visits restarted resources were prioritised based on services of concern, with other providers receiving informal visits initially. Commissioning are now back to normal capacity and working with most providers having received their annual monitoring visits if relevant or visits were scheduled.

During the April 21-March 22 period there was one Older Adult Care Home in Escalating Concerns due to concerns around leadership and management, staffing and quality of care. This provider has, subsequent to this period, improved significantly and is now being supported through Provider Performance. One other nursing home received support via the commissioning Provider Performance process due to concerns around leadership and clinical skills at the home; this provider is now out of this process.

In terms of other adult provision, there were no other services in formal processes, however, there is an ongoing theme across the sector related to staff recruitment and retention which at times has and is

impacting care quality. Providers continue to work with Commissioning and other partners, as well as internally to mitigate this risk as far as possible.

During the early part of the April 21 period there was one children's placement in Provider Performance; this was an out of county bespoke placement. The individual entered adulthood in April 21 and moved to a different placement.

### **VOLUNTEERING:**

The Corporate Safeguarding Policy and Volunteering Policy sets out clear guidelines and expectations for volunteers in commissioned services; this is reflected in the Wellbeing Team. There are two strands to the Wellbeing service; the first is preventative, which was created to provide pandemic support but since the end of March 2022 has moved its focus to Ukraine support

Volunteers working for the Council, including within schools, will be subject to the same recruitment processes as the paid workforce and according to the nature of the activity being undertaken.

Safeguarding will be covered within the initial induction. Volunteers must subsequently attend the level of safeguarding training relevant to the nature of the voluntary activity being undertaken.

In addition, Training records will be held centrally with the Talent Lab. It is the responsibility of the individual employee to inform their Manager, who should update the Talent Lab.

### **ANALYSIS:**

Social Care and Health have clear operating processes in place to ensure a robust approach for all social care commissioning for children and adults.

Schools, and other parts of the Council working with children / adults at risk, indicate there are robust arrangements in place for contracted services (including individual school contracts, transport, leisure services).

There is good evidence of safeguarding being embedded within licensing services and other areas of PPU.

The evaluative score has increased from a 3 to a 4:

- The SAFE process is now fully co-ordinated and has a more robust and effective quality assurance oversight
- Relationships between Safeguarding and Commissioning have strengthened
- Monthly risk assessment meetings with Passenger Transport Unit have proved invaluable
- Responsible Authority meetings have been re-established, following a period of absence due to Covid and are being held on a monthly basis
- Any Licensing issues or themes within the community are being discussed at the Responsible Authority meeting
- Licensing have also changed their process for DBS renewals to every six months and will also include vehicle proprietors and operators

### **KEY NEXT STEPS FOR 2022 – 2023:**

- To further strengthen the working relationship between Safeguarding and Commissioning for both Children and Adults and also include better attendance at meetings.
- Commissioning to review services on provider list and provider feedback.
- Further promotion and understanding of SAFE process across the whole Local Authority.
- Continued support to Directorates to ensure the SAFE process is completed to a high standard and considers Safeguarding aspects until the end of roll out in 2023.

- Continued learning and improvement with Directorates to further embed good Safeguarding practice.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SAFEGUARDING CURRENT ACTIVITY PLAN (2022 – 2023):**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>		
Complete SAFE process (2021 – 2023)	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Development / implementation of core data set for WASG including comparative data	Safeguarding Unit WASG	March 2023
Review Corporate Safeguarding Policy to be ratified and disseminated	Safeguarding Unit	Dec 2022
<b>SAFE WORKFORCE</b>		
Ongoing development of 'Thinqi' to ensure training records are centrally managed	Systems and Data Team	March 2023
Training Policy needs to look at mandatory training and consider other areas that need to be recorded, including VAWDSV, Prevent and GDPR	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Continued development for the delivery of Level 1 training	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Undertake an audit of the adapted arrangements for digital recruitment to ensure safeguarding is at the forefront	Systems and Data Team	March 2023
To further aid the efficiency and management of Practitioner Concerns, a model is being developed on Flo / Plant to ensure appropriate safeguards are put in place. This will be GDPR compliant	Safeguarding Unit Performance Team	December 2022
Regional Safeguarding Leads will continue to meet to review the Practitioner Concerns process and review the effectiveness of the "outcomes" of the process	Safeguarding Unit Gwent Safeguarding Board	March 2023
Training to be developed around understanding of Practitioner Concerns, for those who are employers and those who are at greater risk of being discussed in the arena, eg Education, Foster Carers and Health professionals	Safeguarding Unit Gwent Safeguarding Board	March 2023
<b>PREVENTATIVE APPROACH</b>		
Development of VAWDASV refresher course for all staff and to be rolled out across the Council	Training Unit	March 2023
There will continue to be promotion of all mandatory training across the Local Authority to be completed by staff members	Training Unit Workforce Development Team	March 2023
Further exploration around the waiting time for the Early Help Panel	Service Manager, Wellbeing and Family Support	March 2023
Remainder of Directorates to be included in Modern Day Slavery training	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023

Wellbeing Team to continue to develop to support the community in ensuring robust support and effective links with services are provided based on the changing needs of the community	Wellbeing Team	March 2023
Wellbeing Team to evaluate the effectiveness of their support to inform future decisions about the Team	Wellbeing Team	March 2023
<b>ROBUST PROTECTION</b>		
The Hub will be evaluated following successful tender at the end of Summer 2022, which is being commissioned by Gwent Police	Safeguarding Unit Gwent Police	March 2023
Continue to expand the Hub to include further agencies	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Continued improvement of the Section 126 enquiries being held within time-scale through further discussion with other professionals and agencies, such as Health	Safeguarding Unit [Adult] Health Safeguarding	March 2023
Review of chair's checklist to consider timeliness of core group meetings and statutory visits for children on the Child Protection Register; to ensure effective quality assurance	Safeguarding Unit	December 2022
Bi-annual workshops to be held to review the effectiveness of practice and processes, which will include all Children's Services teams and the Safeguarding Unit	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
<b>SAFE SERVICES</b>		
To further strengthen the working relationship between Safeguarding and Commissioning for both Children and Adults and also include better attendance at meetings.	Safeguarding Unit Commissioning	March 2023
Commissioning to review services on provider list and provider feedback.	Commissioning	March 2023
Further promotion and understanding of SAFE process across the whole Local Authority.	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Continued support to Directorates to ensure the SAFE process is completed to a high standard and considers Safeguarding aspects until the end of roll out in 2023.	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023
Continued learning and improvement with Directorates to further embed good Safeguarding practice.	Safeguarding Unit All Directorates	March 2023

## APPENDIX 4

### REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTION PLAN 2021 - 2022 ACTION PLAN:

GREEN – Completed

AMBER – In Progress, continuing

RED – Delayed, not started,

BLUE no longer required / changed

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<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>	<u>RAG</u>	<u>Comment</u>
<b>GOOD GOVERNANCE</b>				
Implement next SAFE process (2021 – 2023)	Safeguarding Unit	March 2023	AMBER	Ongoing rolling process
Evaluate learning and outcomes process and ensure this informs future planning	Safeguarding Unit and WASG	March 2023	AMBER	Ongoing rolling process
Development / implementation of core data set for WASG including comparative data	Safeguarding Unit WASG	Sept 2021	RED	Priorities and competing demands operationally was the reason for delay
Review Corporate Policy to integrate and update in light of COVID	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022	GREEN	
Ensure new duty to report forms are implemented and embedded across the council	Safeguarding Unit / WASG	Sept 2021	GREEN	
<b>SAFE WORKFORCE</b>				
Continue to monitor progress in how the council centrally records mandatory training data	People's Services	March 2022	AMBER	Ongoing with plans to further develop
Revise the safeguarding training strategy so that it reflects developments in digital training options	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022	RED	Delayed due to National Training Framework being implemented
Further develop directorate sufficiency for the delivery of Level 1 training	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022	AMBER	Ongoing

Undertake an audit of the adapted arrangements for digital recruitment to ensure safeguarding is at the forefront	People's Services	March 2022		?
Develop data to enable reporting on professional concerns relating to adult safeguarding	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022		Successfully achieved
Continue to monitor progress in how the council centrally records mandatory training data	People's Services	March 2022		Ongoing
Revise the safeguarding training strategy so that it reflects developments in digital training options	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022		Ongoing
<b>PREVENTATIVE APPROACH</b>				
Work to resolve the issues around being able to report and monitor VAWDASV training across the council.	Partnership People's Services	March 2022		Ongoing
Ensure full roll-out of the Modern Day Slavery protocol across the council	MEG / Safeguarding Unit	Jan 2022		Ongoing; delays due to Covid
Further analyse and monitor the impact of COVID-19 on families and communities and ensure that services are in place to respond to increased risk and vulnerability	SCH / WASG	March 2022		Ongoing due to implementation of the Wellbeing Team, who will continue to review this
Continue to support the Council's approach to prevention of homelessness through strengthening homeless prevention, increasing homeless accommodation, and enhancing specialist service provision for young people and offenders.	Enterprise	September 2022		This continues to be an ongoing consideration
Continue to develop the Community Support Network approach with communities.	Partnerships	September 2022		Ongoing
<b>ROBUST PROTECTION</b>				
Evaluate the outcomes and impact of the Safeguarding Hub	Safeguarding Unit	Sept 2022		External commissioned service to review
Continue to assess and respond to the risks related to the immediate and longer-term impacts of COVID-19	SCH	March 2022		Ongoing; delayed due to Covid

Develop data so that adult safeguarding can be accurately monitored and reported on	Safeguarding Unit	March 2022		
Improve performance in the completion of adult safeguarding enquiries within 7 days	Adult Services	March 2022		Ongoing; part of Adult Safeguarding action plan
Improve performance in child protection core groups and statutory visits	Children's Services	March 2022		Ongoing
Implement the new safeguarding referral form across the council and partner agencies	Safeguarding Unit	December 2021		
<b>SAFE SERVICES</b>				
Ensure that the next SAFE process supports directorates to review the Minimum Standards Self-Assessment Matrix, and evaluate outcomes	Safeguarding Unit WASG	March 2023		Ongoing; rolling programme



**APPENDIX 5**

**SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT:**



2022SeptSafeguard  
ingRiskAssessment.)

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# Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation</p> <p>Kelly Turner  <b>Phone no:</b>  <b>E-mail:</b> KellyTurner@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>To provide members with an annual evaluation of safeguarding within the Council</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Safeguarding</p>	<p><b>Date</b> Sept 2022</p>

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

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Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	Effective safeguarding arrangements within the council provides protection for children – who by virtue of their age are vulnerable.	None	
Disability	Safeguarding applies to children and to all adults who have care and support needs. It is known that children and adults with disabilities are at increased risk of abuse and neglect	None	Safeguarding training includes responding to safeguarding concerns for people with disability.  Ensure people with disability know their rights and have access to information

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Gender reassignment	None		
Marriage or civil partnership	None		
Pregnancy or maternity	None		
Race	.Safeguarding and protection services should take into the account the impact of race and culture within family situations.		Safeguarding training includes responding to people from a diverse range of racial and cultural backgrounds. Safeguarding arrangements are in place for unaccompanied assylum seeking children
Religion or Belief	<i>Responding to safeguarding concerns should take account of the individual beliefs, values and religion of people and families. Some of these may interface with safeguarding issues such as HBV or radicalization. It is important that practitioners respect individual beliefs whilst still being able to address safeguarding issues.</i>		Safeguarding training takes account of working within diverse cultures and beliefs. Safegaruding services are in place to support families and individuals affected by HBV and radicalization.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	none		
Sexual Orientation	.None		

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b>	<i>Effective safeguarding arrangements and responding to concerns considers family and individual needs on a holistic basis and plans will often include tackling aspects of socio economic disadvantage e.g. within parent / carer populations</i>	None	



### 3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Safeguarding training within the council is not routinely delivered in Welsh</p>	<p>A welsh medium option for safeguarding should be provided</p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>It is desirable to have welsh speakers within the council so that people with safeguarding concerns can communicate their concerns in their first language</p>	<p>Have a better understanding of welsh speakers within the council</p>
<p><b>Service delivery</b></p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>None</p>		



**4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!




<b>Well Being Goal</b>	<b>Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.</b>	<b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Neutral	
<b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	Neutral	
<b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	Ensuring that vulnerable children and adults are safeguarded and protected from harm / abuse / neglect supports people's health and wellbeing.	
<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Good safeguarding is central to cohesive communities, and helps to ensure that there are the right processes in place to safeguard and protect more vulnerable groups and communities.	
<b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Ensuring that people live free from harm, abuse and neglect is recognised regionally and nationally as a key component to wellbeing.	
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Safeguarding is essential to ensure that any vulnerable group or individual using leisure services, or who are engaged in cultural, artistic or sporting activities are protected from potential harm or abuse.	
<b>A more equal Wales</b>	Safeguarding is a key part of ensuring that people can fulfil their potential no matter what their background.	



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Equality is at the centre of the services the Authority provide and commission.	

**5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?**

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	It deals with immediate safeguarding and protection as well has how preventative steps are utilised to ensure safeguarding is sustainable in the future.	
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	The report details how services work in partnership with agencies from different sectors, considers involvement and collaboration with communities and details the progress made in relation to Safeguarding in Monmouthshire.	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="141 480 297 507"><b>Involvement</b></p> <p data-bbox="349 256 517 440">Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p data-bbox="544 256 1328 363">The report includes information from all parts of the council and was a collaborative approach with all the directorates. The SAFEs take account of the needs of individual service areas.</p>	
 <p data-bbox="152 759 293 786"><b>Prevention</b></p> <p data-bbox="349 520 506 818">Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p data-bbox="544 520 1283 675">The report details the importance of prevention within safeguarding and some of the mechanisms and services that are in place to support prevention and early intervention.</p>	
 <p data-bbox="159 1098 300 1125"><b>Integration</b></p> <p data-bbox="349 858 517 1121">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="544 858 1261 930">.Good safeguarding and protection supports the wellbeing of vulnerable citizens, groups and communities within the LA.</p>	

**6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?**

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	This report identifies where we can further improve safeguarding and protection for children and for adults who are at risk.	<i>.Safeguarding is about ensuring that everything is in place to promote the well-being of children and vulnerable adults, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect</i>	
Corporate Parenting	Children who are looked after have been impacted by harm and abuse and have often experienced many adverse experiences. The report identifies how the impact of adverse experiences can be minimised by ensuring good quality placements and care.		

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**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

Both qualitative and quantitative data is presented within the report.

- Equalities dashboard link. [Equality data dashboard for EQIA's 2020.xlsx](#)

**8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

*.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template*

**Having effective safeguarding arrangements in place across the council is critical to meeting the health and wellbeing needs of children, adults at risk and their wider families and communities. It is equally important in ensuring that safeguarding runs through all services that are provided to vulnerable people.**

**9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

<b>What are you going to do</b>	<b>When are you going to do it?</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
Implement the WASG activity plan	September 2022	Chief Officer Social Care and Health

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**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Decision making stage</b>	<b>Date considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consideration</b>
	<i>e.g. budget mandate, DMT, SLT, Scrutiny, Cabinetetc</i>		

**SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY – ANEURIN BEVAN  
COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL**

**MEETING: County Council**

**DATE: 27 October 2022**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: N/A**

**1. PURPOSE:**

To appoint a councillor to represent the authority on the Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council (ABCHC)

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That Council approve the appointment of County Councillor Jan Butler to the position.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

3.1 At its AGM in May 2022, Councillors were appointed by full council to represent the authority on a wide range of outside bodies.

3.2 At that time, County Councillor Alistair Neill was appointed to represent the Council on ABCHC. However due to a change in personal circumstances he is no longer able to continue with the appointment due to a conflict of interests.

3.3 In consultation with the political group leaders of the Council, it has been agreed that a like for like conservative party councillor can be appointed to fill the vacancy.

3.4 The conservative group have nominated County Councillor Jan Butler to fill the vacancy.

**4. Options Appraisal**

**Do not appoint to the vacancy**

The Council does not need to appoint a councillor to fill the vacancy, but it would be in interests to do so and may miss out on key information should an appointment not be made.

**Approve the recommended appointment**

Given the agreement of the political group leaders, it is recommended that County Councillor Jan Butler is appointment by Council to fill the vacancy.

**Alternative member appointment**

Should another councillor wish to put their name forward as a nominee to fill the vacancy they are able to do so. Any other councillors who put their name forward will then be put to the vote to determine who is appointed to fill the vacancy.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

None as a direct result of this report.

**6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no sustainable development or equality impacts arising from this report.

**7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications associated with this report.

**8. CONSULTEES:**

Political Group Leaders

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None.

**10. AUTHOR:**

John Pearson, Local Democracy Manager

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