

Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 29 January 2025

Notice of meeting:

Place Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 6th February, 2025 at 2.00 pm,
The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with remote attendance

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
2.	Declarations of Interest.	
3.	Public Open Forum. Scrutiny Committee Public Open Forum ~ Guidance Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to share your thoughts on any proposals being discussed by Scrutiny Committees, you can submit your representation in advance via this form <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please share your views by uploading a video or audio file (maximum of 4 minutes) or;• Please submit a written representation (via Microsoft Word, maximum of 500 words) You will need to register for a My Monmouthshire account in order to submit the representation or use your log in, if you have registered previously. The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting. If representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the Scrutiny Committee meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting. If you would like to attend one of our meetings to speak under the Public Open Forum at the meeting, you will need to give three working days' notice by	

contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk .

The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers, we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes.

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

4.	Petition: 'Design over Health and Safety?' petition, relating to the safety of the zebra crossing on Sandy Lane adjacent to The Cross public house, Caldicot - To agree whether to refer to the Executive or full Council for action.	1 - 2
5.	Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals - To scrutinise the 2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals.	3 - 24
6.	Place Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List.	25 - 32
7.	Council and Cabinet Work Planner.	33 - 34
8.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.	35 - 44
9.	Next Meeting: Thursday 27th March 2025 at 2.00pm.	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Louise Brown	Shirenewton;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Emma Bryn	Wyesham;	Independent Group
County Councillor Tomos Dafydd Davies	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Lisa Dymock	Portskewett;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jane Lucas	Osbaston;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jackie Strong	Caldicot Cross;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Laura Wright	Grofield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tudor Thomas	Park;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor John Crook	Magor East with Undy;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Welsh Language

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

To become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

Objectives we are working towards

- Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced.
- Green place to live and work with reduced carbon emissions and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency.
- Thriving and ambitious place, where there are vibrant town centres and where businesses can grow and develop.
- Safe place to live where people have a home where they feel secure in.
- Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued.
- Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

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.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve?
3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?

- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
- Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

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

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? What consultation has been undertaken? Did the consultation process comply with the Gunning Principles? Do stakeholders believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence?
6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
7. Does this policy align to our corporate

	<p>objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?</p> <p>8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications</p> <p>9. been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?</p> <p>10.</p> <p>11. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?</p> <p>12.</p> <p>13. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated</p>
--	--

General Questions:

- Empowering Communities
- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
 - Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?
 - Is the service working with citizens to explain the role of different partners in delivering the service, and managing expectations?
 - Is there a framework and proportionate process in place for collective performance assessment, including from a citizen’s perspective, and do you have accountability arrangements to support this?
 - Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? If so, can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers provide members with copies and a detailed explanation of the EQIA conducted in respect of these proposals?
 - Can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers assure members that these proposals comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation? Do the proposals comply with the Local Authority’s Strategic Equality Plan?
- Service Demands
- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
 - Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?
 - Have you identified and considered the long-term trends that might affect your service area, what impact these trends could have on your service/your service could have on these trends, and what is being done in response?
- Financial Planning
- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
 - Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income?
- Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

- Were the intended outcomes of the proposal achieved or were there other results?
- Were the impacts confined to the group you initially thought would be affected i.e. older people, or were others affected e.g. people with disabilities, parents with young children?
- Is the decision still the right decision or do adjustments need to be made?

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

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

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

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

Agenda Item 4

We the undersigned residents of Caldicot and surrounding areas wish to express our deep concern over the safety of the zebra crossing on Sandy Lane adjacent to The Cross public house.

In particular:

- **The colouring of the strips makes them less visible than traditional crossings with black and white stripes.**
- **The orientation of the crossing makes difficult for drivers to see that it is there until they are very close to it, particularly in the dark and wet weather.**
- **One of the beacons has been missing for several months.**
- **The use of a no parking zone is less effective than double yellow lines in deterring drivers parking close to the crossing.**
- **There is little or no enforcement when drivers park on the zig-zags at the crossing.**

We call on Monmouthshire County Council:

- **To publish the results of any safety reviews that have been carried out on the crossing or to carry out an urgent review and publish the results.**
- **To urgently repair the missing beacons.**

This page is intentionally left blank



SUBJECT:	2025/26 DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS
MEETING:	PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	6th February 2025
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To allow Committee scrutiny of Cabinet's draft revenue and capital budget proposals for the financial year 2025/26.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 2.1 That the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2025/26 are considered as part of the Committee's role to scrutinise policy and services delivered to residents that promotes community safety and well-being and supports sustainable, resilient communities.
- 2.2 That Committee relay any resultant observations and recommendations back to the executive (Cabinet), to inform the wider ongoing budget consultation process.

3 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Cabinet's draft budget proposals are available for formal public consultation and member scrutiny, including the requirement to consult businesses. The formal consultation period will run for a period of four weeks ending on 22nd February 2025.
- 3.2 Cabinet are interested in consultation views on the draft proposals and the underlying budget strategy adopted. This is the opportunity for Members, the public, community groups, and other key stakeholders (e.g. town and community councils) to consider the budget proposals and make comments on them. Cabinet will not, however, be prepared to recommend anything to Council that has not been subject to a Future Generations Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment, and therefore a deadline to receive alternative proposals has been set as 22nd February 2025.

- 3.3 Given the broad range of the budget proposals, it is important that the Council reaches out, engages and listens to feedback. This will in turn inform the final budget proposals that are to be considered in March.
- 3.4 Final budget proposals following consultation and receipt of the final settlement will go to the Cabinet meeting on 5th March 2025 and approval of Council Tax and final budget proposals will take place at full Council on 6th March 2025.

3.5

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1	2025/26 Budget consultation presentation
Appendix 2	Cabinet meeting 22nd January 2024 – 2025/26 Draft Budget papers

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[List of full Future Generations Evaluations](#)

AUTHORS:

Jonathan Davies
Head of Finance (Acting S151 Officer)

Tel: 01633 644114

E-mail: jonathandavies2@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Y GYLLIDEB BUDGET 25/26

Page 5



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Welsh Government's provisional funding settlement represents a very different approach to the funding of local services by both UK and Welsh Government and is an important first step in recognising the increased demands on Council services

- Monmouthshire will receive an increase of 2.6% in core revenue grant in 2025/26. In cash terms, after allowing for transfers of specific grants in/out of core funding and for tax base adjustments, this equates to an additional £5.1m in funding
- Whilst this is a significantly better position than was anticipated following the previous UK Government budget, there remain difficult local budget choices. The increase in grant funding does not cover the cost and demand for all the services we provide in their current form. Total cost pressures being accommodated in this draft budget total £23.7m
- Constructive discussions will continue with Welsh Government about the necessity for a minimum funding floor to be added to the final settlement. It is not expected that any such floor will cover in full the remaining budget gap of £2.86m

Key frontline services will see increases in funding with Social care & health increasing by 10.6% and for Education by 10.7%

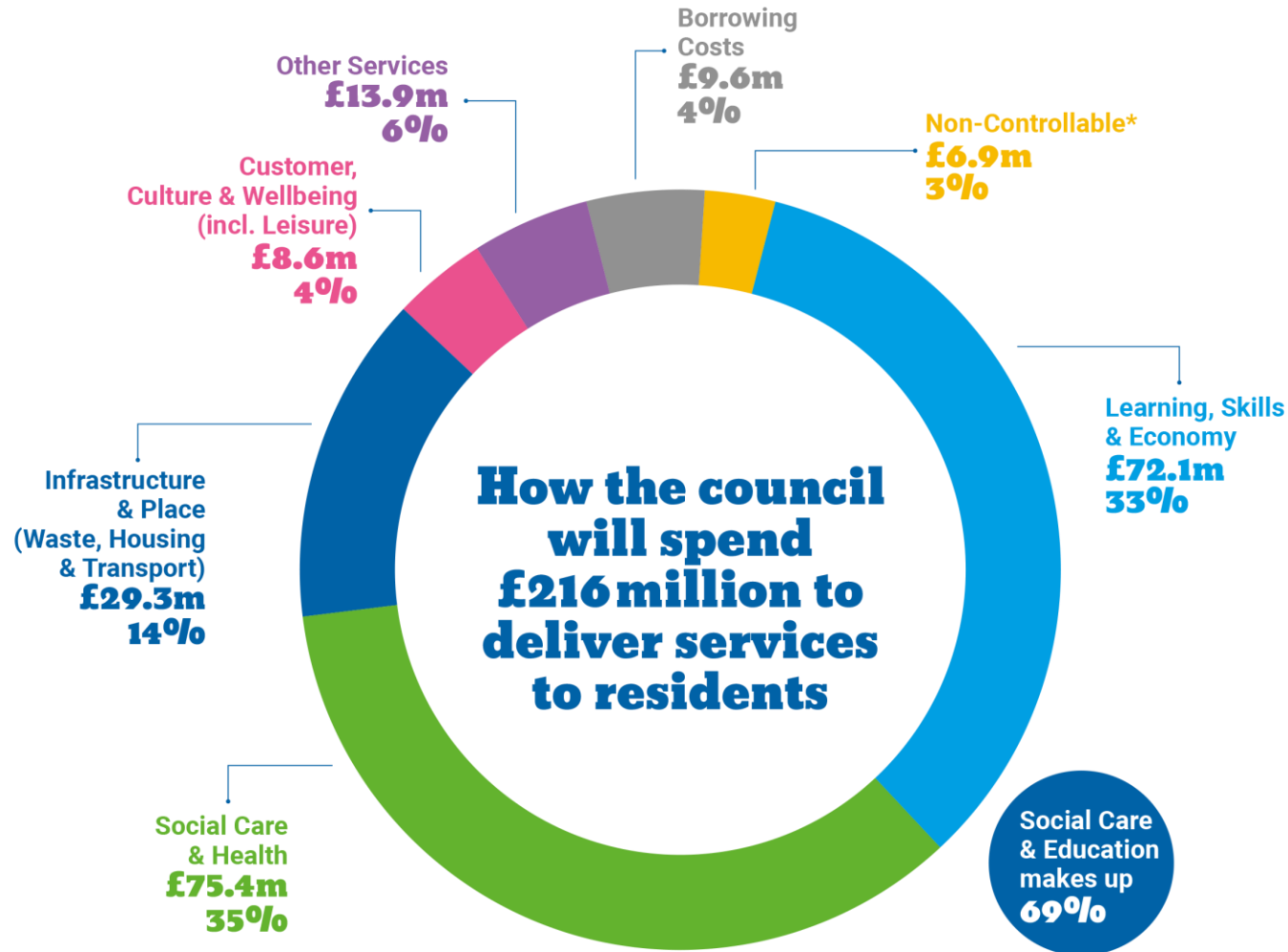
- *An additional £1m investment in school budgets to restore attendance levels and standards. This investment is above meeting in full all pay and pension related pressures in schools*
- There will continue to be a focus on tackling inequalities and to protect the most vulnerable in our society:
 - Support for additional learning needs provision will increase
 - Investment in specialist resource bases for children and young people helping them stay in their local schools
- Investing in our Foster carer service to retain and recruit valued carers and to recognise their essential skills, patience, time, and the resources that it takes to support some of the most vulnerable children in our County
- The services that are available to residents this year will be available in 2025/26. Waste collections will remain the same. Leisure centres, recycling centres, libraries and community hubs are all remaining open
- Total additional capital investment of £2.3m will be made within some of our key infrastructure, predominantly around Highways structures, carriageways, footpaths, public rights of way, and our property estate
- Protecting our local environment and nature with increased investment in Flood alleviation measures, and continuing to review our property estate and energy usage to reduce our carbon footprint

To partly fund the increased investment in key services noted above, we are intending to change the way some things operate and increase our income

- The draft budget includes £5.1m of service savings and efficiencies. Our residents will rightly expect us to reduce our costs wherever possible and to ensure we are operating as efficiently and effectively as we can
- We plan to increase income through an indicative increase in council tax of 7.8% and through specific charging for on-demand services to cope with the increased demand and cost of our services
- A cumulative impact assessment has been produced for the draft proposals which enables us to assess the overall potential impact of the budget on residents within our communities, and where any negative impact can possibly be mitigated

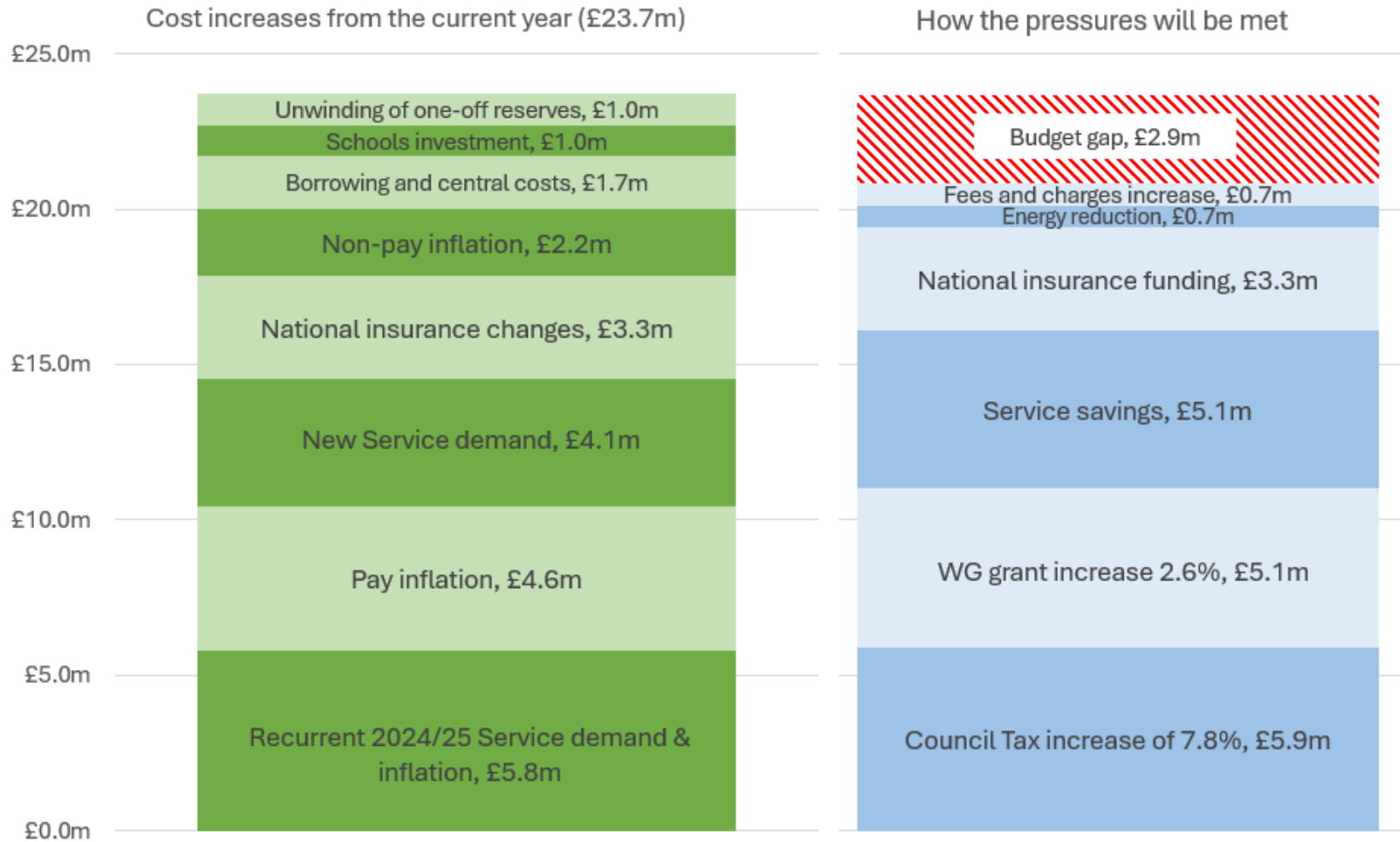


What we will spend to deliver services



*Levies paid to other organisations such as the Fire Service, National Parks, and Drainage Boards.

What it costs to deliver services



£10.9m of additional service cost pressures and targeted investment

- Social care demand and inflation (£6.8m)
- Foster carer allowances (£0.3m)
- Investment in schools (£1m)
- Children with additional learning needs (£0.7m)
- Specialist education resource bases (£0.3m)
- School transport (£0.6m)
- Transport and fleet (£0.2m)
- MonLife income shortfalls (£0.2m)

The balance therefore to be struck...

- The cost of delivering our existing services increases next year by £23.7m
- Income increases of £15.0m (Government Grants, National insurance funding, Council Tax, and Charges)
- Energy costs will reduce by £0.7m
- Revenue reserves not available to support budget
- The balance £8.0m will be partially met by service savings proposals of £5.1m
- This leaves a budget gap of £2.86m which will need to be resolved in full by the time that the final budget is set by Council in March 2025.



£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our learning, skills & economy budget by 10.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Monmouthshire Specialist Teachers team	£40,000	A 0.6FTE specialist teaching post that has become vacant due to a retirement in the service will not be replaced within the structure.
Education Welfare grant	£51,000	An increase in grant funding will allow core staffing costs to be funded
Additional learning needs	£100,000	To bring MCC pupils with ALN currently educated outside of Monmouthshire in maintained and independent specialist placements back into MCC provision at key points of transition.
Capitalisation direction	£350,000	To fund the transformational costs of integrating changes to the Specialist resource bases, and to the Digital roll out in Schools from capital receipts.
School maintenance costs	£40,000	A reduction in maintenance costs at the new King Henry school as warranties remain in place during the initial phases of opening.

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Social Care budget by 10.6% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Adult social care	£375,000	<p>£250,000 - Continuation of the practice change agenda</p> <p>£125,000 - A staffing review to consolidate existing vacancies within our home care teams.</p>
Children's services	£1,887,000	Continuation of the placement and practice change - reviewing children's care plans in high-cost placements and developing appropriate services and placements to support their long-term needs.
Community meals	£15,000	A part time staff vacancy that the service will release.
Social care Health – Fees and charges	£366,000	A range of increases across Adult social care, Public health, Trading standards, and registrars.
Public protection	£100,000	Removal of Head of Public Protection post with review of longer-term arrangements for ensuring leadership of this key area of the Council's services. Interim arrangements in place allow for the saving to be made in 2025/26.

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Infrastructure & Place budget by 9.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Fees and charges	£321,000	Planning application fees (£100k), Car parking fee increase by 10% (£180k), Building Control Application fees (32k), Home to school discretionary (£6k), Introduce an annual membership fee of £10 for Grass routes users (£3k)
Home to School transport	£447,000	Reversion to statutory distances of 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for secondary
Management costs	£170,000	Savings in senior management costs from a restructure exercise
Homelessness	£557,000	Savings driven from the reduction of B&B usage and utilising Severn View
Grants & Recoupment	£117,000	An increase in income from grant or recoupment in Building cleaning, Youth Enterprise, and Highways external works.
Fleet	£20,000	Reduce gritter fleet by extending the working hours of each vehicle.
Energy audit	£20,000	Undertake energy audit to identify discrepancies and potential savings

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Customer, Culture and Wellbeing (MonLife) budget by 3.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Borough Theatre	£50,000	Service Redesign and optimisation of space
Community Hubs	£110,000	Realigning opening hours at our four hubs to ensure consistency and availability throughout the county
Youth service	£40,000	A more sustainable operating model by making changes to our youth clubs in the rural parts of Monmouthshire and retaining the youth centre provision in the four main towns
Leisure income	£150,000	Increase income across the four Leisure Centres
Old station Tintern	£30,000	Review Operating Model for Old Station Tintern. Including consideration of in house delivery model, lease or sale. Normal delivery will take place during the 2025 season.
Markets	£20,000	A review of existing contracts for Waste collection
Management structure	£38,000	Further development of the area management structure down to operational teams
Rights of way & Section 106	£44,000	Appropriate recharge of officer time into capital schemes

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our People, Performance & Partnerships budget by 4.3% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Page 18

Welsh Translation	£82,000	To amend Welsh language translations to reduce costs in the face of rising demand, by capitalising on the potential of AI driven translation tools.
Systems & Payroll Automation	£22,000	To deliver increased automation in the way in which staff are onboarded, following recruitment, and paid throughout their career at MCC.
Workforce	£8,000	Implement Apprentice First approach
Subscriptions	£15,000	A reduction in subscription fees following review

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Resources budget by 1.9% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Insurance	£98,000	Cease our Cyber Security Insurance provision
ICT - Digital, Design & Innovation	£64,000	Management restructure which removes a head of service post
Administration support	£23,000	Reduction in Chief officer admin Support (0.6 FTE)

A planned increase in Council Tax of 7.8%

Page 20

Band s	Current 2024/25	7.8% increase	Proposed 2025/26 Charge	Increase per month	Increase per week
A	£ 1,124.47	£ 87.71	£ 1,212.18	£ 7.31	£ 1.69
B	£ 1,311.88	£ 102.33	£ 1,414.21	£ 8.53	£ 1.97
C	£ 1,499.29	£ 116.94	£ 1,616.23	£ 9.75	£ 2.25
D	£ 1,686.70	£ 131.56	£ 1,818.26	£ 10.96	£ 2.53
E	£ 2,061.52	£ 160.80	£ 2,222.32	£ 13.40	£ 3.09
F	£ 2,436.34	£ 190.03	£ 2,626.37	£ 15.84	£ 3.65
G	£ 2,811.17	£ 219.27	£ 3,030.44	£ 18.27	£ 4.22
H	£ 3,373.40	£ 263.13	£ 3,636.53	£ 21.93	£ 5.06
I	£ 3,935.63	£ 306.98	£ 4,242.61	£ 25.58	£ 5.90

- Striking the balance between council tax rises and the reduction of services that support the most vulnerable is not easy
- Provides £5.9m of much needed funds to sustain service delivery
- Vigorous help and support for low-income households

All Local Authority budgets carry risks every year

- **Service budget savings delivery** - the level of savings will require significant service change and commitment of resources to be successfully delivered
- **Pay awards** - Actual pay awards will not be confirmed nationally by independent pay bodies until later in 2025
- **Employer's national insurance contributions** – level of cost vs allocated funding
- **Funding** – Specific grant levels

Capital programme oversees maintenance and enhancement of our roads, schools, leisure centres, farms and much more.

- Continued support for Council priorities in line with the community and corporate plan
- Tackling the longer-term challenges communities are facing
- Further investment of £2.3m to be made in our key infrastructure, predominantly around Highways structures, carriageways, flood alleviation, footpaths, public rights of way, and our property estate

“Let’s Talk Monmouthshire”

- 4-week period consultation and engagement
- Face to face and virtual engagement events – Countywide and targeted
- Online survey and social media campaign

- **Council Scrutiny meetings – Jan-Feb 2025**
- **Final Budget Cabinet – 5th March 2025**
- **Council tax setting and budget – 6th March 2025**



**ANY
QUESTIONS?**

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Place Scrutiny Committee – Meetings at 2pm unless otherwise stated				
6th February 2025	Petition	‘Design over Health and Safety?’ petition, relating to the safety of the zebra crossing on Sandy Lane adjacent to The Cross public house, Caldicot.	To agree whether to refer to the Executive or full Council for action.	Petition
	Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	To scrutinise the 2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard <i>Cllr Griffiths</i> <i>Cllr Maby</i>	Budget Monitoring
27th March 2025	Nedern Maintenance	To discuss the maintenance of the Nedern, particularly throughout the Castle grounds, Caldicot.	James Galsworthy (NRW)	External Scrutiny
	<i>Bats and Habitats Regulations Appraisals - TBC</i>	To discuss the protection of horseshoe bats and related HRA, particularly regarding proposed new housing.	<i>NRW?</i> Andy Karran (Gwent Wildlife Trust)	<i>External Scrutiny</i>
22nd May 2025	Active Travel (<u>single item agenda</u>)	To scrutinise various aspects of Active Travel, including Bridges, Engagement, Disabled Access, Castle Meadows, Llanfoist and Abergavenny Railway Station links	Paul Sullivan Graham Kinsella Nicholas Tulp Ian Saunders Cllr Maby	
SPECIAL JUNE (before Council on 26th – 5th?)	RLDP			

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Place Scrutiny Committee – Meetings at 2pm unless otherwise stated				
10th July 2025	Placemaking Plans?	<i>Monmouth, Abergavenny, Magor and Chepstow.</i>	<i>Craig O' Connor Daniel Fordham Cllr Griffiths</i>	<i>Pre-decision Scrutiny</i>
25th September 2025				
6th November 2025				
11th December 2025				
To be confirmed – April/May?	Car Parking Review		<i>Carl Touhig Cllr Griffiths</i>	
To be confirmed – March?	Local Flood Strategy (Joint with Public Services Committee)	<i>Pre-decision scrutiny of adoption of the Local Flood Strategy.</i>	<i>Craig O'Connor Cllr Maby</i>	<i>Pre-decision Scrutiny</i>
To be confirmed	Pavement Café Policy	<i>To scrutinise the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences.</i>	<i>Graham Kinsella? Cllr Griffiths</i>	<i>Policy Development</i>
To be confirmed	Road Safety Strategy	<i>To scrutinise the Road Safety Strategy.</i>	<i>Geraint Roberts Cllr Maby</i>	<i>Pre-decision Scrutiny</i>
To be confirmed	Destination management Plan	<i>To conduct pre-decision scrutiny.</i>	<i>Matthew Lewis Nicola Edwards</i>	<i>Pre-decision Scrutiny</i>
To be confirmed	Tackling Poverty and Inequality Action Plan	<i>To scrutinise performance against the action plan.</i>	<i>Lucinda Boyland Cllr Sandles</i>	<i>Performance Monitoring</i>

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Place Scrutiny Committee – Meetings at 2pm unless otherwise stated				
To be confirmed	Shire Hall Museum Monmouth	<i>To scrutinise progress of the National Lottery Heritage Fund development phase and consider options for the stage 2 delivery bid.</i>	<i>Ian Saunders Tracey Thomas Cllr Sandles</i>	<i>Policy Development</i>
To be confirmed	Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy	<i>To scrutinise progress of the strategy prior to Cabinet decision.</i>	<i>Deb Hill-Howells Ian Hoccom Cllr Maby</i>	<i>Pre-decision Scrutiny</i>
To be confirmed	Monlife Heritage Strategy		<i>Tracey Thomas</i>	
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the Place Scrutiny Forward Plan:				
Inclusive Cultural Strategy				
Increase the use of local produce in schools and care homes and new food strategies and policies approved by Cabinet				
Nature Isn't Neat expansion				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Place Scrutiny Committee – Meetings at 2pm unless otherwise stated				
Development of Active Travel routes				
Development of a new station at Magor and improvements at Severn Tunnel Junction Creating plans for a metro that links Monmouthshire to Bristol, Newport and Cardiff				
RLDP submission for examination				
Develop a county-wide digital solution that matches those who need to travel with those who have car spaces				
RLDP for adoption				
Find new ways to progress				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Place Scrutiny Committee – Meetings at 2pm unless otherwise stated				
refurbishment of Caldicot Leisure Centre				
Deforestation and school meals procurement - Food Strategy - Jointly with P&O				

This page is intentionally left blank

Place Scrutiny Committee

Action List

5th December 2024

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
3	To liaise with Councillor Dymock about addressing water pressure problem in Portskewett	Sharon Evans	Information sent to members 28 th January
3	To provide the committee with information about how much drinking water is lost to leakage, why, and what can be done to prevent it	Sharon Evans	Information sent to members 28 th January
3	To inform the committee how often hay bales are checked and replaced, and provide a report with greater detail about concerns relating to sewerage in the Shirenewton area	Ed Bennett	Information sent to members 28 th January
4	To send a formal letter of thanks to Welsh Water for their attendance	Scrutiny officers and Chair	Letter sent 6 th December.
4	To table an item about horseshoe bats and HRAs to a future meeting	Scrutiny officers	NRW and Gwent Wildlife Trust invited to 27 th March
4	To organise a workshop about potholes and road conditions, in light of the unadopted road in Caldicot Cross ward	Scrutiny officers	Enquiries made with officers about a workshop
4	To table an item about SuDs and drainage on estates	Scrutiny officers	Enquiries made with officers
4	Welsh Water site visits	Scrutiny officers, members, WW staff	24 th April suggested, 12pm

This page is intentionally left blank

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Cabinet member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Council	01-Jul-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the RLDP following receipt of the Inspector's report, making it the County's Development Plan as defined by S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	23-Aug-22
Cabinet	05-May-25	Pavement Café Policy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
ICMD	09-Apr-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4	Ben Callard - Resources			
Council	06-Mar-25	Appointment of Chief Officer - Head of Transport - Exempt info	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Deb Hill Howells	21-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Publication of the Councils Pay Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Matt Gatehouse / Pip Green	17-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Contract Procedure Rules	Ben Callard - Resources		Scott James	9-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Budget sign off including CT resolution	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	Approval of a Discretionary Policy for Council Tax Premiums	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	27-Jan-25
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24

Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 WCF/Mon Farm Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	10-Jul-24
ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	17-Dec-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Diary 2025/26	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
Council	23-Jan-25	GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND RPB ANNUAL REPORT 23/24	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Business case for the purchase of a property in Abergavenny to develop supported accommodation for care experienced young people	Ben Callard - Resources		Jane Rogers	7-Jan-25
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Education Middle Tier	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Will McLean	20-Nov-24

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK on Thursday, 5th December, 2024 at 2.00 pm

Councillors Present

County Councillor Jane Lucas (Chair)

County Councillors: Louise Brown, Emma Bryn, Tomos Davies, Lisa Dymock, Jackie Strong, Laura Wright, Tudor Thomas and John Crook

Also in attendance:

Sharon Evans (Director of Quality Policy and Compliance, Water Services)

Edward Bennett (Head of Wastewater Networks)

Daniel Humphreys (River Water Quality Liaison Manager)

Lauren Kinsey (Public Affairs Advisor)

Annie Smith (Community Liaison Manager)

APOLOGIES: None

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager

Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Public Open Forum

A letter from a resident was read out. During the Full Council meeting on October 24th, 2024, the resident raised a question with Cabinet Member Paul Griffiths regarding the issues with site HA4 and proposed considering site CS0274 as an alternative. Paul Griffiths assured that MCC would seriously consider CS0274; however, he later refused to arrange a public meeting to discuss this option. The resident, on behalf of the Gateway to Wales Action Group, plans to seek a meeting with Jo Draper, Head of Placemaking and Planning Office, to discuss the alternative site. If this request is denied, the resident believes it may require action from the committee. He will inform the committee of any developments.

A letter from a resident was read out. The resident, from Shirenewton, objects to the proposed development of 26 houses above Redlands, citing concerns about the

village's conservation area status, inadequate local infrastructure, environmental impact, and potential damage to the village's character and community. He highlights specific issues such as the narrow local roads, capacity of local schools, strain on utilities, disruption to wildlife habitats, impact on scenic views, and increased flooding risk. The resident also mentions that the development may conflict with the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan and requests confirmation that his objection has been registered.

A resident spoke to the committee about his concerns relating to the lack of a bat survey, and drinking water, referring to a slideshow he had prepared. The resident raised concerns about the lack of a comprehensive bat survey for a large housing development project, despite a detailed survey being required for smaller projects. He questioned why the council would weaken bat protection and make it easier for developers. He suggested three actions for the council: 1) Table an immediate amendment to the HRA (*Habitat Regulation Appraisal*) to remove the paragraph about requirements being too prescriptive and mentions of bat surveys. 2) Order a thorough review and proper scrutiny of the HRA. 3) Vote against the current proposal if it lacks adequate bat protection.

The resident highlighted concerns about the impact of the development on drinking water quality, noting that Monmouth's water is susceptible to runoff pollution. He mentioned historical understanding of water extraction upstream to avoid contamination and pointed out that the development could change this. Phosphate Levels and Pollution: the resident discussed the potential increase in phosphate levels due to the development and the inadequacy of sustainable drainage solutions (SUDS) in reducing phosphates. He emphasized the risk of runoff pollution from various sources entering the River Wye and affecting drinking water quality.

3. Water Quality and Sewage Infrastructure

Sharon Evans, Edward Bennett and Daniel Humphreys presented to the committee and answered the members' questions.

Drinking Water Quality – Sharon Evans

- *What happens to the lead pipes that are removed? How much do you predict remains in the system in the county?* The lead pipe is replaced with a drinking water-approved plastic pipe (MDP) and then recycled. The 7,500 lead pipes mentioned are across Wales, not just Monmouthshire. Properties built before the 1970s likely have lead pipes. Welsh Water offers testing for lead in water upon request.
- *Do you test groundwater in towns and villages?* Welsh Water tests groundwater if it is used for drinking water supply. This testing is part of the 365-days-a-year regulatory monitoring.
- *What procedure should a resident follow if they were to notice something unusual with their water?* Residents should contact Welsh Water through their operational call centre, web chat, email, or Facebook. They can speak to a real person who will advise them on what to do based on their problem.
- *What are the figures on Slide 5 e.g. 93.5m? Is water taken from Buckholt?* The figure 93.5m refers to the elevation of the asset. The AOD figure refers to the

pressure at each site. There are two water treatment works servicing the Monmouth area: Mayhill and Ffynon Gaer. Buckholt treatment works is not in regular use but is available as an emergency source.

- *How many samplers go around houses and how are the areas chosen?* There are 60 samplers who work across Wales. They are trained to take samples and can work in any area. The areas are chosen based on operational needs and events.
- *When water is taken from Monmouth and goes down to Usk and Llangibby, how are the pipes cleaned, and how often?* Pipes are flushed and cleaned regularly as part of operational maintenance. Specific projects like the Zonal Study Project focus on replacing old pipes.
- *What is the effect of asbestos cement main pipes?* Asbestos in the pipes is not harmful to health as it is only harmful when inhaled, not ingested. The pipes have a coating that prevents asbestos from getting into the water.
- *How does upstream monitoring work and how often is there a concern?* There are monitors for drinking water quality purposes along every river from which we extract, and there are monitors upstream of every extraction point. There is a process by which it is monitored 24/7, and if any problem is detected, the downstream extraction point will be shut down until the problem has passed. There has been no further event since the one in June 2021 in Monmouth, which was the only time in the last 15 years.
- *What date was cryptosporidium was detected?* Cryptosporidium is a potential risk in rural catchments and is managed daily. The specific date of detection was not provided.
- *How easy is it for lead pipes to be changed to blue polyethylene for homeowners, and how does it get costed out?* The cost of replacing lead pipes depends on whether the pipe is within the property boundary (homeowner's responsibility) or outside (water company's responsibility).
- *Can you explain the term 'icing pipes'?* This refers to a method used to cleanse the inside of a water main by pushing a slush of ice and salt ('ice pigging') through the pipe, removing any tuberculation.
- *Despite DWI reporting high compliance levels, isolated incidents occur – are there any safeguards you can put in place or is it just a case of monitoring?* Safeguards include upstream monitoring in the river to detect issues before they reach the abstraction point, allowing the abstraction to be shut down if necessary.
- *Can you explain more about AMP8 and how it can help future upgrades to water quality?* AMP 8 stands for Asset Management Plan 8, which is the business plan for investment in assets from 2025 to 2030. It aims to improve resilience and future-proof against risks.
- *How can the problem of water pressure in Portskewett be addressed?* – **ACTION (to follow up with the capacity team to reply to Cllr Dymock)**
- *Regarding the isolated incident, were water samples taken and what did they show? If you don't know the source how can you have a risk assessment to combat it in the next few years to ensure it doesn't reoccur?* We were unable to take samples from the river and look in the catchment for the source of the problem, but we know that the compound was a fatty acid used in foodstuffs. We were unable to pinpoint the source definitively, which is why there is now upstream monitoring in the river that would catch a similar problem in the future.

- *How often is upstream monitoring done?* Welsh Water does not monitor rivers and brooks on a day-to-day basis; this responsibility lies with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Environment Agency. However, Welsh Water does conduct investigations to prioritise storm overflow assessments and understand the impact of their discharges on the environment.
- *How much drinking water is currently leaking in the county and what are the main reasons? What is done to prevent it?* Sharon did not have the information on leakage to hand and will follow up with the relevant team to provide an answer – **ACTION (Sharon Evans to find out)**

Sewer Capacity – Edward Bennett

- *Should the main pipe at Shirenewton now be replaced, given that the problem of sewage emptying into the field, and the temporary solution of hay bales, has been going on for years?* Repairs have been attempted in a phased approach, currently in Phase 5. Although that approach will continue, these comments will be fed back. Funding is available to try to reduce the frequency of storm overflows. Regarding hay bales and mitigations to safeguard areas, we will visit to check if they need to be replaced more frequently if they are fouling up and deteriorating.
- *As the pipe can't deal with extra sewage – e.g. Mounton House school can't connect to it – is a moratorium on housebuilding not needed until the pipe is fully repaired?* Because one of the main causes of the hydraulic issue in the network is down to our asset it is very difficult for us to say no to new houses at this point. This is why we go for 'no detriment', as we hold the line. We have to continue the approach of repairing what is ours to fix.
- The member from Shirenewton reiterated her concern about new housing, stating that ensuring 'no detriment' is not sufficient – the pipe should be fully repaired or replaced. She stated that the leaking pipe in Shirenewton means that there is a capacity problem, as defined by Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 6.6.9, which she quoted in full, and new building would therefore be contrary to it – **ACTION: to provide a report for members and residents about concerns relating to Shirenewton ward**
- *Regarding housebuilding, how does Welsh Water assess capacity and infrastructure e.g. for the proposed 770 houses in Caldicot East?* It's about harm and detriment based on environmental and customer impact, which is how we would address it from a capacity standpoint. 'No detriment' means we don't want to see a deterioration in any of those factors linked to planning. Further detail will be given in the next presentation.
- *How does Welsh Water mitigate potential storm water overflow issues, given the additional permeable surfaces that will be created by these developments?* A massive part of our focus in the next five-year period is to improve the reduction of spills causing harm to the environment and for us to become one of the leading companies in how we target our capital investment to add the most value to the environment, rather than just having spill reduction. These new developments will need to go through a process that isn't coordinated through Welsh Water, in which they would need to ensure that all of the water generated at that site has been considered. The release of the water is generally held back to whatever the rate of the greenfield site is, so if there is building on a large area

there would need to be enough attenuation to only allow the greenfield site volume off into the environment.

- *Do you work together with Natural Resources Wales, particularly in regard to flooding?* Yes, we liaise with NRW on a number of elements, including resilience in our communities, linked to flooding, whether sewage, fluvial, coastal defence, etc. We will liaise with regulators based on where they feel our storm overflows are causing most harm to the environment: they will agree a list with us on how we deal with them.
- *Does consideration of surface water include the existing risk i.e. the large proportion of green fields that flood at this site?* No surface water is allowed into the public sewer system for these new developments. There has to be significant justification to do that, which will have to be agreed. So if that site is affected by fluvial flooding, the developer will need to take it into consideration during their planning.
- *Is it usual to expect bales of hay to mitigate the problem of sewage overflow?* Using bales of hay around manhole chambers is not a common practice and is only done out of necessity. It is not a long-term solution, and Welsh Water aims to stop such discharges. We don't have the same problem in other areas.
- *How often does the hay bales measure happen and what is done? How often do you expect it to go on for and what is there to prevent flooding removing the hay bales?* Welsh Water checks the bales of hay approximately every six months. The bales are intended purely to slow the velocity so the land isn't scoured. When flooding occurs, we remove any offending materials and assess damage to the land, coordinating with the landowner for cleanup and containment.
- *How is the potential spread of disease mitigated?* This is why the heras fencing is in place to keep people away. The bales are around the chamber itself and the fencing is slightly further away. In this instance there is some leeching into the river and stream because the manhole chambers adjoin part of the chamber, which is why we're in regular communication with NRW about what we're doing.
- *Vegetation by the brook that has grown from being fertilised shows that the containment isn't working. Should Welsh Water standards not be higher than having a sewage system described as 'adequate' when relying on bales of hay?* The use of bales of hay is not considered an adequate or long-term solution. It is a temporary measure to slow down the velocity of sewage. Welsh Water acknowledges that this is not desirable and is working on more permanent solutions.
- *There is a problem in Monmouth of drains backing up. Who pays for HMAs (Hydraulic Model Assessment) for new planning areas?* Developers are asked to provide us with HMAs to show the level of detriment that their proposed development could have on the public sewer system, taking into consideration how the potable water supply might be affected and the treatment works capacity. When there is a problem affecting a catchment we will be aware of it and have a hydraulic model for that catchment which is a detailed model telling us what is happening at various points in the area, used to form part of the HMA that the developer will invest in. The hydraulic models in place will determine whether an HMA is required, or an offsetting scheme as part of the development.
- *Is there any information about the leakage into the river from Priory Street in Monmouth?* We are aware of this and spoke today to MCC about how to approach the problem. We have progressed investigations and know it isn't

linked to a public sewer, and are working with the council on how best to gain a full understanding of the source of the problem and then to resolve it. A resolution won't be possible until we have first understood exactly which properties are affected. A number of odour complaints have been generated and complaints made about a footpath so we have first concentrated on containment and intercepting the flow into the public sewer.

River Water Quality – Daniel Humphreys

- *What does discharge during storms look like e.g. filtering out litter? How often do you experience discharge outside storm events e.g. when it rains heavily?* Most assets have screens to filter out litter and debris. Discharges typically occur during heavy rainfall or storm events.
- *Are you doing anything to address PFAs (perfluoroalkoxy alkane)?* Welsh Water tests for PFAS and other chemicals through a rolling programme and works with traders to monitor discharges into the sewer system.
- *Are water treatment works in Monmouth close to completion?* The ongoing work at Monmouth is expected to be completed by March 2025.
- *Are you lobbying about urban creep?* Welsh Water is in dialogue with Welsh Government to address urban creep and its effect on the sewer system.
- *Is information about sewage overflow easily available publicly? Are there set levels over which it shouldn't go?* Storm overflow information is available on Welsh Water's website. The best way to find information would be to use the search tool in the top right corner. Information is also there about the annual spills from each asset (type 'EDM' into the search bar), going back to 2021.
- *How is the sewage impact on rivers and brooks monitored?* Welsh Water does not conduct day-to-day river monitoring; this is the responsibility of Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Environment Agency (EA). Welsh Water does conduct investigations to prioritise storm overflow assessments and understand their impact on the environment.
- *What monitoring is there about the effect of runoff of manure from poultry farms?* Welsh Water is aware of the effect of poultry farms on phosphorus levels in rivers. They support initiatives like citizen science projects and work with stakeholders to address these issues. However, the regulation of agricultural pollution, including phosphorus, is managed by NRW and EA.
- *In terms of standards, are licences and permits involved?* Yes, there is a permit in place for the majority of our assets, with a programme in place to get the remainder permitted, for which a timeline is agreed with the regulator. The permits have a standard text of conditions that we have to meet, with each storm overflow designed to that particular permit. Similarly, set values are given at Waste Water treatment works e.g. 20mg per litre of a particular nutrient need to be reached. We will then continue to report on this figure through monitoring and samplers – the samplers work independently and report directly to the regulator.
- *Do the permits regulate the volume of sewage that can be discharged in storm overflow situations?* We are looking now to ensure that we are reaching the maximum amount of flow, and are in discussions with NRW. The majority of our overflows are a pipe; once the maximum capacity of that pipe is reached the chamber will lift and it will discharge. So there is an engineering element –

treatment works used to be built to three times the dry weather flow. There might be a volume limit on some assets but not on others.

- *What about phosphates in Abergavenny?* Welsh Water is aware of the impact of phosphates from agricultural runoff, including poultry farms. They have been working on reducing phosphorus levels in rivers through various initiatives, including the review of permits process and investment in treatment works to improve phosphorus removal. However, the regulation of agricultural pollution, including phosphorus, is managed by NRW and the EA.
- *When consulted on planning are you able to make stipulations on things like driveways?* In terms of permeable areas there is nothing legally that Welsh Water can do nor, presumably, the council, as planning permission isn't required for a paved driveway, for example.
- *Is there a possibility of bills being doubled before Christmas?* Bills are decided by Ofwat, rather than Welsh Water. They are a stringent regulator and try to look after the customer. We use the not-for-profit model and have added tariffs for customers, given that many are struggling financially, including those who work full-time. Residents should reach out to Welsh Water if they have concerns.
- *What happens to the sludge and debris that get removed?* We will now be taking more sludge away from the treatment works. In Monmouthshire, we dry out the sludge as much as possible first then take it down to Cardiff Waste Water treatment works, where there is an advanced digestion process, in which it is burned and the resultant gases are returned to power parts of the plant and excess energy returned to the national grid. At the other end it comes out as 'cake' used as free manure for farmland in the local area following nutrient sampling at those locations to ensure they are suitable to receive it.
- *NRW frequently cuts trees back from riverbanks, which could increase river temperature – will they not do so in the future?* The cutting back of trees on riverbanks by NRW is likely done to prevent flooding and blockages. However, increasing tree cover along riverbanks can help to maintain cooler river temperatures, which is beneficial for preventing algal blooms. This is a balance that NRW would need to manage, considering both flood prevention and river health.
- *How does phosphorus removal from drinking water at Monmouth work?* The treatment works at Pontrilas, Ross, and Monmouth are involved in phosphorus removal processes. The water abstracted for drinking purposes in Monmouth has already gone through these treatment works, which include phosphorus stripping to reduce the levels of phosphorus in the water. The treatment works along the Wye Valley, including those at Pontrilas and Ross, are designed to reduce phosphorus levels before the water reaches the Monmouth area. This helps to mitigate the impact on the River Monnow and the River Lugg, which are known to be affected by high phosphorus levels.
- *How does phosphorus not affect drinking water?* Phosphorus is present in drinking water, but the levels are very low and are not harmful to human health. The drinking water is treated to ensure it meets safety standards, and the phosphorus levels are kept within safe limits.
- *Can you explain what 'Requirement of HMA or surface water removal agreements' means on the Pwllmeryic slide (p15)?* Because we understand that there are impacts on that network of the public sewer, we are asking that we do not have a detriment as a result of the proposed development. There is either a

HMA that defines the detriment and proposes mitigations, or there is offsetting: if we know what the dry weather flows intend to be, we will need to see that removed in storm response from the catchment.

- *Does Welsh Water or the developer do the HMA? Is it to do with hydraulic capacity rather than whether the pipe is in a repaired state or not?* The HMA is undertaken by the developer, using qualified consultants, and shared with us. What we are doing is offsetting existing surface water that connects into the public sewer. The detriment is linked to the manholes discharging and prolonged spills from storm overflows: we need to fix the lengths of sewer that are allowing that ingress into the network.
- *How would a developer mitigate surface water going into the sewage system?* They would help us to look for sources of water that could be removed e.g. highway drainage, land drains, etc.

Chair's Summary:

Councillor Thomas asked about phosphates in rivers, particularly in Abergavenny, and the impact of manure from chicken farms. Councillor Brown raised concerns about the adequacy of the sewerage system, particularly in relation to the use of bales of hay to stop sewage leakage and the need for proper repair before additional housing. Councillor Strong questioned the use of bales of hay to stop sewage leakage and how many other places in Monmouthshire are using this method. Councillor Dymock enquired about low water pressure in her area and how Welsh Water ensures increased demands are met, including stormwater assessments. Councillor Brown expressed concerns about lead pipes, leakages in Monmouthshire, and the use of bales of hay. The Chair raised questions about water drainage in Monmouth, the need for hydraulic model assessments (HMAs) for new planning areas, and the issue of sewage leakage into the river on Priory Street.

4. Place Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List

Members were reminded to submit ideas for areas of scrutiny relating to Active Travel. The committee's letter to Welsh Government following the recent STEAM item was agreed. The matter of bats, as raised in the POF, will be tabled to a future meeting. Future site visits to important Welsh Water sites will be arranged and a formal letter of thanks from the committee to Welsh Water for their attendance today will be drafted and sent. – **ACTIONS**

A member requested that a workshop be held to address the matter of potholes and unadopted roads, such as the one in Caldicot. A member requested that an item is arranged to scrutinise SuDs and drainage on estates. – **ACTIONS**

5. Council and Cabinet Work Planner

6. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed.

7. Next Meeting:

6th February 2025

The meeting ended at **5.30 pm.**

This page is intentionally left blank