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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 11 November 2024

Notice of meeting

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 19th November, 2024 at 10.00 am,
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK, NP15 1GA and Remote
Attendance

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

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence	
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 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.	School Exclusions	1 - 8
	To scrutinise the latest figures and the Council's performance.	
5.	Planning Annual Performance Report	To Follow
	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	
6.	Community & Corporate Plan progress update	9 - 52
	To inform members of the plan's progress at the six-month stage.	
7.	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2024 and Action List	53 - 60
8.	Cabinet and Council Planner	61 - 74
9.	To confirm the minutes of previous meetings:	75 - 92
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7th October 2024 (Special)• 8th October 2024 (Special)• 15th October 2024	
10.	Next Meeting: 3rd December 2024	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Jill Bond, West End;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Rachel Buckler, Devauden;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor John Crook, Magor East with Undy;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Steven Garratt, Overmonnow;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Meirion Howells, Llanbadoc & Usk;, Independent
County Councillor Alistair Neill, Gobion Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Paul Pavia, Mount Pleasant;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Peter Strong, Rogiet;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Ann Webb, St Arvans;, Welsh Conservative Party

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.

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 objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?

8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications
9. been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
- 10.
11. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
- 12.
13. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated

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...

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SUBJECT: The Use of Exclusions in Monmouthshire Schools in the Academic Year 2023/24

MEETING: Performance and Overview Select Committee

DATE: 19th November 2024

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on the use of exclusions, both permanent (PEX) and fixed term (FTE), in Monmouthshire Schools during the last academic year, 2023/24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the committee note the rates of exclusions that have taken place in Monmouthshire's schools, and;
- consider the factors that are driving the use of exclusions by schools;
 - consider the wider interventions that are used by schools to promote inclusive practice in schools, and to reduce the need for exclusions;
 - consider the adequacy of actions undertaken by the Children's and Young People's Directorate to support schools and reduce the number of exclusions.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Data shows that both FTE (see table 1 below) and PEX (see table 2) have risen significantly. This is part of a longer three-year trend, but the past academic year has seen a marked rise which is a significant concern. These incidents and issues linked to exclusions, and increasing presentation of behaviour that challenges in schools and settings are also being noted regionally and across Wales. It is believed that it is partly due to the impact of the pandemic.
- 3.2 It is a core ambition of Monmouthshire¹²³ to reduce the number of 'days lost' by learners to exclusions, especially for those from vulnerable groups including those who are eligible to free school meals (eFSM), those who are Children Looked after (CLA) and those who have an additional learning need (ALN). Data shows that despite a range of efforts to support inclusion of these learners, the use of exclusions on learners with an ALN and those who are eFSM is too high.
- 3.3 Monmouthshire's exclusion rates were higher than the regional average rate both for FTE and PEX. There are a range of factors that have contributed to this, a key focus will be to ensure that Monmouthshire returns to being below the regional average in the future.

¹ [Monmouthshire's Community and Corporate Plan \(2022-28\)](#)

² [Inspection report Monmouthshire County Council \(Estyn, 2020\)](#)

³ [Equality Act 2010: Guidance \(Gov UK\)](#)

4. BACKGROUND:

- 4.1 The way Monmouthshire schools recorded and reported exclusion data was improved in Spring 2023. Prior to this it was unclear how accurate the data was due to several factors including, in some instances, schools' practice and systems.
- 4.2 Following the introduction of more robust processes for collecting and analysing exclusion data the accuracy of exclusion data across the LA has improved significantly.
- 4.3 There is a conflation of efforts to reestablish pre covid school behavioural norms with a cohort of learners, some of whom are finding it hard to readjust to school expectations, alongside concerns of some school-based staff about their exposure to aggression or risk of injury from pupils. Consequently, there is a greater tendency for school leaders to consider formal exclusion as necessary.
- 4.4 Analysis of reasons for exclusion over the past three academic years suggests that the return to formal school routines following the covid pandemic has contributed to a rise in exclusion for persistent, disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The data suggests that among younger learners, the negative impact of the pandemic at such critical stages of child development may have been significant.
- 4.5 Instances of aggression and violence, out of school, but between learners, are now regularly evidenced by mobile phone images and video footage. Once shared to school staff this provides evidence of matters that school must have regard to. This information often triggers a safeguarding referral⁴ as well as consideration of formal sanctions, including the use of exclusion.
- 4.6 The use of exclusion frequently overlaps with the use of reduced timetables through Pastoral Support Plans (PSPs) and risk management processes for pupils involved in such incidents. Monmouthshire has developed and delivered training to enhance understanding of how to safely support learners where they present behaviours of concern that potentially put others at risk of harm, to seek to reduce exclusion.
- 4.7 The broader educational policy landscape has also altered in a way that impacts exclusion. The ALNET⁵, for instance, gives enhanced clarity that learners presenting with behaviours that challenge may often need to be identified and supported as learners who require have ALN relating to their social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- 4.8 Welsh Government, and Estyn's⁶, recent focus on ensuring that unlawful soft exclusions and long running reduced timetable agreements under PSPs are not used for learners at risk of exclusion, means that the LA has also enhanced its focus on these aspects but with the likely outcome that there is more formally recorded exclusion. Whilst more compliant for legal, health and safety and safeguarding reasons, and it means parents/ carers and governors are more able to ensure review and challenge to any exclusion, it does increase the prevalence of formal exclusion.
- 4.9 Financial pressures within our schools have in some cases impacted on the availability of support staff, which can impact the school's ability to meet the needs of pupils, including those who present with behaviours that place them at risk of exclusion.

⁴ [Wales Safeguarding Procedures / Keeping Learners Safe \(Welsh Gov, 2022\)](#)

⁵ [Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Act 2018](#)

⁶ [Equity of curriculum experiences for pupils who are educated other than at school \(EOTAS\), \(Estyn, 2023\)](#)

5. CURRENT SITUATION:

5.1 Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE):

5.2 School FTE were higher than in the previous two years.

Instance of FTE & days lost						
	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Instances	Days	Instances	Days	Instances	Days
Primary	82	162.5	109	163.25	161	307.5
Secondary	567	750	930	1154.5	1649	2483
Total	649	912.5	1039	1317.25	1810	2790.5

Table 1 Instance of Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) and Days Lost

5.3 520 learners were excluded from Monmouthshire schools during the last academic year. Of these 59 were primary learners and 461 were secondary learners.

5.4 There were 289 (55%) learners who received repeat exclusions (253 Secondary, 36 Primary).

5.5 Nearly all exclusions (98%) were for 5 days or fewer, with an average length of 1.5 days.

5.6 Whilst 56% of schools issued more exclusions in 2023/24 than the previous academic year, of our 30 primary schools, 17 (57%) issued no exclusions.

5.7 The rise in use of FTE at secondary is linked to the rise in persistent disruptive behaviour. This may be linked to post covid reintegration and reacclimatising to formal school routines and boundaries.

5.8 In primary schools a significant rise in the number of FTEs for damage to property and causing injury to pupils and staff accounted for much of the increased level of exclusion. These younger learners may have missed vital behaviour, communication and self-regulation development opportunities due to the pandemic, leading to more disruptive behaviour that challenges within school.

5.9 Permanent Exclusions (PEX):

5.10 PEX data also indicates significant increases in Monmouthshire schools.

Instance of PEX			
	2021-22	2022 -23	2023-24
Primary	1	1	2
Secondary	5	9	20
Total	6	10	22

Table 2 Instances of Permanent Exclusions (PEX)

5.11 Of the 22 PEX upheld at Pupil Disciplinary Committee (PDC), six were for cumulative reasons. Three were for joint participation in a one-off criminal event which is unlikely to be repeated. On this basis there is a reasonable expectation that a significantly lower figure of upheld PEX should be a realistic goal for this academic year.

5.12 This belief is further borne out by the fact that by Autumn half term 2023 we already had seven upheld PEX, six of which were issued by the same school. As at Autumn half term 2024 we had no PEX upheld or due to be heard at PDC.

5.13 To ensure that MCC consistently applied the correct threshold to incidents of PEX, a peer audit was conducted with an external, regional LA in July 2024. This scrutinised randomly selected permanent exclusions and found that the legal threshold was met in all cases. MCC received feedback that in the case of a cumulative PEX an alternative provision should have been sourced.

6. THE INCLUSION SERVICE APPROACH TO MANAGING EXCLUSIONS:

- 6.1 The threshold for formal exclusion is set by Welsh Government in the statutory guidance⁷ and is the same for primary and secondary schools. A decision to exclude a learner either for a fixed term or permanently should be taken only: in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy *and* if allowing the learner to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others in the school.
- 6.2 Monmouthshire has a role in ensuring that there is a parity of approach and that the process for, and threshold of exclusions is as set out in Welsh Government guidance.
- 6.3 It is important to note that whilst the LA has a role in the monitoring of the use of exclusion, the decision to exclude rests solely with the Headteacher. There are often competing legal interests and obligations at play in such considerations including those relating to safeguarding and health and safety. The LA can, and should, seek to influence practice but it is not something they can exercise control over.
- 6.4 A significant development to respond to this area of need is the Education Support Team (EST) established in March 2023. The EST support schools to meet the needs of primary aged learners who present with behaviours of challenges/ concern and are often at risk of exclusion. The EST work in a relational manner and have an enhanced understanding of trauma informed approaches and practice which they can utilise to help support the understanding of individual needs through addressing the impact of any Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and to raise awareness of the needs and strategies required to support vulnerable learners to reduce levels of dysregulation, and risk.
- 6.5 Within the Inclusion Service there is an ongoing focus on preventative work through the continued broad professional learning and training offers which focus largely on the ongoing development of trauma informed practice which utilises the evidence and methodology of the impact of ACEs as well as the focus on improving the reasonable adjustments and enhancing learning environments to enable learners with barriers to learning and ALN. This is illustrated through the commitment to the Autism in Schools and Settings programme⁸ recently launched.
- 6.6 Despite an enhanced and broad training offer, the level of exclusion continues to be of concern.
- 6.7 The appointment of the CYP Data Officer has enabled improvements in the capture and use of data around exclusions. The analysis of data regarding the reasons given for exclusions, both FTE and PEX feeds into formal and informal dialogue with schools as well as feeding into the Inclusion Service team planning, development and priorities.
- 6.8 Rising instances of high-risk behaviours mean that due to the exclusion threshold set in Welsh Government guidance, safeguarding requirements and health and safety obligations, there is likely to be a continued pressure on the Pupil Referral Service (PRS).
- 6.9 The move into more suitable accommodation for the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) North from November 2024 and PRU South in Spring 2025 will further enhance Monmouthshire's capacity to meet the needs of learners, with an enhanced focus on early intervention and 'turnaround' provision within the PRS with the aim of returning learners, where appropriate, to mainstream schools.
- 6.10 Concerns about the use of exclusion during the last academic year, led to an increase in focus from the LA with a meeting focused specifically on exclusions being held with all four secondary schools and senior directorate officers.
- 6.11 The monitoring of the high rate of exclusion in one of our schools has led to an increase in the LA support into the monthly multi-agency meetings (MAMS) held by the school. These meetings seek to provide early intervention and preventative, multi-agency

⁷ [Exclusion from schools and pupil referral units \(PRU\) \(Welsh Gov, 2024\)](#)

⁸ [Monmouthshire Autism in Schools and Settings](#)

responses to learners at rising risk of exclusion, or disengagement, from education. The input of health and Children's services as well as other partners such as the Youth Offending Service, the police and community partnership team are also key to seek to address such issues and to soften the impact of them in our schools.

- 6.12 In responding to the increased levels of violence within schools and the community, MCC successfully bid for a Home Office Grant to reduce serious violence in schools. This additional short-term funding was used by all four secondary schools during the spring term of 2024 to enhance delivery of targeted support to learners who had already received formal exclusions for incidents of aggression or violence. The impact of this grant was evidenced through reduced levels of exclusions for the learners who engaged with the programme, and reduced risk of aggression and therefore injury to pupils and staff.

7. KEY CONCERNS:

- 7.1 Reducing the level of exclusion and reducing barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils are key ambitions of MCC, as is articulated in the Community and Corporate Plan, to ensure the delivery of a truly inclusive education system.
- 7.2 The use of exclusion is a legitimate and sometimes needed mechanism by which the Headteacher of a school can ensure the safety of learners and staff, if learner behaviours pose such a risk that they cannot be suitably managed by the school.
- 7.3 Learners who are permanently excluded create a greater pressure upon the LA to make education other than at school (EOTAS) provision via the PRS.
- 7.4 School is seen as a protective factor in terms of safeguarding concerns and so vulnerable learners who are excluded from school are potentially at greater risk of harm, and exclusion can place additional pressures on their home circumstances, this can be particularly true for learners who are CLA.
- 7.5 Learners' educational outcomes are impacted by exclusion but there is also a correlation between attendance and prior exclusion in many cases. Improving school attendance is another key priority of the current administration in MCC.
- 7.6 Learners who are excluded are more likely to be at risk of becoming Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET) at the end of compulsory schooling.
- 7.7 The LA must ensure a suitable balance between supporting schools where learners needs cannot be met by the mainstream school and ensuring that schools are inclusive. Monmouthshire has a commitment to inclusive practice and will continue to work with schools to ensure they meet the wide range of individual pupil needs, including those vulnerable pupils who present with barriers to learning and ALN.
- 7.8 The LA seeks to ensure there is parity of threshold of approach to the use of exclusion across all schools in MCC to ensure equity for both schools and learners.
- 7.9 The Inclusion Service will continue to monitor and analyse the data to understand changes in presentation of need/ behaviour to ensure, support and provision is sufficient, and that preventative and proactive work is completed with schools, agencies and partners to mitigate the impact.
- 7.10 Maintaining the correct balance between the management of learner behaviours in school and the use of formal exclusion is a key aspect of the broad safeguarding obligations towards its staff, as well as the pupils, in schools. This balance interconnects to supporting the recruitment, retention and wellbeing of school staff.

8. MOVING FORWARD:

- 8.1 The Inclusion Service will continue to cascade the full professional learning and training offer around core inclusive practices including trauma informed approaches, autism in schools, reasonable adjustments for barriers to learning and ALN, supporting CLA and care experienced learners, managing emotions and de-escalation.

- 8.2 The increased capacity within the Inclusion Service will allow staff to have more focus on managing exclusions. This will include an increased focus on the role of critical friend to schools where the use of exclusion is of concern.
- 8.3 This could involve a meeting with the headteacher and chairs of governors, to analyse the use of exclusion alongside other elements such as the take up of professional learning, the use of internal sanctions, reduced timetables and Pastoral Support Plans, and the analysis of behaviour logs to scrutinise the approaches and look to support improvements.
- 8.4 The use of formal Team Around the School approaches where concerns are identified, and improvements are not evident within a reasonable period.
- 8.5 The updated processes around the Inclusion Panel including the closer monitoring of the EOTAS offer to schools for learners where SEMH needs, and exclusion is a factor, will help to ensure that there is sufficient provision as we move forward.
- 8.6 The continued promotion of the use of Managed Moves as a potential alternative to permanent exclusion where appropriate. This will include the support of, and monitoring by, the Inclusion Panel which, if appropriate, can provide some financial support through contingency funding.
- 8.7 The increased capacity of the PRS due to the move into more suitable accommodation will enhance Monmouthshire's capability to meet the needs of learners where a graduated response is evidenced, and a multi-agency risk assessment indicates that EOTAS provision is needed. This increased capacity will allow for an enhanced focus on early intervention, clearer assessment of need and appropriate 'turnaround' provision within the PRS with the aim of returning learners, where appropriate, to mainstream schools.
- 8.8 There will be continued liaison with multi-agency colleagues around all areas relating to the prevention and management of exclusions in schools and settings. This will include continued representation, support and challenge at school based multi-agency meeting, involvement in any potential grant applications which schools could benefit from to enhance the continued focus of support for early intervention and preventative approaches.

9 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 9.1 This report is for scrutiny only and does not make any requests for additional resource. It is worth noting that working in a responsive manner to support schools to manage the increased levels of behaviours of challenge/ concern impacts across the Inclusion Service, and in particular on the PRS, in terms of the statutory requirement to provide appropriate EOTAS provision for learners who have been PEX.

10 WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 10.1 The work of the Inclusion Service is geared towards supporting the obligations within this act, with a particular focus on the needs of learners from vulnerable groups. The focus is to work preventatively, proactively and responsively, with others, to ensure inclusive, safe education for all learners as well as ensuring suitable EOTAS for those learners who have been permanently excluded.

11 CONSULTEES:

CYP Directorate DMT

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

See links in document.

13 AUTHOR:

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SUBJECT:	Community and Corporate Plan Performance Update
MEETING:	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	19th November 2024
DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an update on the progress that has been made to deliver the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee use this report to scrutinise the council's performance during the first six months of 2024/25, agrees any areas they would like to examine in greater depth as part of their forward work programme and identifies any feedback for Cabinet to consider when they receive the report at their December meeting.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In April 2023, Council approved the Community & Corporate Plan 2022-2028. It establishes a clear purpose to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. The plan sets six objectives, also the Council's well-being objectives, 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 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 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.
- 3.2 These objectives are underpinned by a series of commitments and more detailed actions that will ensure that the organisation is able to deliver on its ambition. Appendix 1 provides an update on progress made during the first six months of 2024/25. These are focused on the commitments set out under 'what we want to achieve' section of the plan.
- 3.3 The ambition outlined in the Community and Corporate Plan looks to the long term, aims to address many complex challenges and is focused on the well-being of current and future generations. The foundations to deliver the objectives have been developed through new strategies. This report provides an update on delivery of the commitments, many are in their initial stages. This should be considered when assessing progress as improved outcomes are unlikely to be seen in the short term. In

many instances the report is capturing progress against milestones. These will show whether progress is being made towards the longer-term objectives.

- 3.4 When the plan was approved by Council, Cabinet were tasked with keeping the measures and targets under review and to update these where necessary. In September 2024 cabinet agreed an update of the measurement framework and associated targets used to track and manage the delivery of the objectives within the plan up to 2026/27. This revised framework focuses on improved measurement of outcomes rather than outputs wherever possible.
- 3.5 The update includes the latest available data for the performance measures identified in the updated framework. The 'latest period' column in the data tables includes figures for quarter 2 of 2024/25. The 'previous' column includes data for 2023/24. Not all data is produced quarterly and where figures refer to different periods this is highlighted in the comments section of the table.
- 3.6 Each objective has been scored based on the council's self-evaluation framework using a scale of 1-6, where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 excellent, as show in Appendix 1. This provides an in-year assessment based on the progress made so far in 2024/25. It also identifies learning from this interim evaluation that has highlighted where a further focus on certain outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation at the end of the year. A more detailed evaluation of outcomes and impact of this work will be undertaken at the end of the year, the scores will also be re-assessed based on the latest evidence. This will be available to the committee prior to being presented to Council for approval. The annual report also covers factors such as finance, workforce and procurement which are covered in our enabling strategies, whereas the interim report is focused on the six more outward objectives.
- 3.7 The scores for each of the objectives are unchanged from those reported for 2023/24:
- A fair place to live: Level 4 (Good).
 - A green place to live: Level 3 (Adequate).
 - A thriving and ambitious place: Level 4 (Good).
 - A safe place to live: Level 4 (Good).
 - A connected place where people care: Level 4 (Good).
 - A learning place: Level 4 (Good).
- 3.8 This mid-year report highlights progress against the objectives up to October 2024. Key areas to highlight include:
- We have developed a number of critical strategies that set out clearly how we will deliver on our priorities and will enable us to accelerate delivery in the years ahead.
 - Tackling the climate and nature emergency is one of our biggest priorities. Council has approved a new climate and nature emergency strategy. Partnership working has led to significant progress towards improving the health of our rivers with Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water now installing phosphate stripping plants at two areas in the county. These will be operational from 2025.

- We need to maintain a range of services that support people in periods of vulnerability, from childhood to old age. We have taken action to significantly reduce the number of unmet care hours and have increased capacity across home care. 98.2% of hours of long-term domiciliary care are now being fulfilled.
- We want to foster a thriving place where business can grow and thrive and where people have a safe place they can call home. The Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan has been developed and approved by Council ahead of public consultation. This sets out how land could be developed for employment and affordable housing in future including committing to targets for affordable housing and ensuring that future housing development will be net-zero.
- Our economy needs people with the skills required by employers or who have access to the support they need to start their own businesses. We have continued to provide employment support, with a specific focus on addressing skills in shortage areas.
- We are continuing our programme of school modernisation. Construction of the new, net-zero, King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny continues at pace. Phase 1 of the school scheduled to be completed by April 2025. Council has also approved a capital investment of £1.2m to improve and remodel the accommodation for the south Monmouthshire pupil referral service
- We have obtained Disability Confident Employer – Level 2 status and we strive to reduce the barriers experienced by disabled people and other groups who are under-represented in the workforce.

3.9 Of course there are also challenges:

- Delivering public services comes at a cost. Rising demand and more complex care needs are placing the council's finances under pressure with a significant overspend in adult social care.
- A shortage of affordable accommodation continues to place more households at risk of homelessness and while we have made good progress through our rapid rehousing and preventative work, there is still high demand for temporary accommodation.
- Pupil attendance in secondary schools has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels and there remains a persistent gap in attainment between those pupils eligible for free school meals and those not.

3.10 Appendix 2 shows the latest data on measures that are being tracked to inform the work in the plan. We want to see positive movement in these measures, but we recognise that our work is only part of a much bigger picture with my partners and other agencies playing a role. As a result, it is not appropriate to set targets against them.

3.11 A dashboard providing further detail on the quantitative measures in the Community and Corporate Plan is updated quarterly on the council's intranet page the Hub. Further information on the activity being undertaken is contained in relevant service business plans. These are updated quarterly and are also available for members to view on the council's intranet.

3.12 An annual self-assessment of performance in 2024/25 will be produced at the end of the year in line with the performance requirements under the Local Government and

Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to produce a self-assessment report and requirements under the Well-being of Future Generations Act to produce an annual report showing progress against the Council's well-being objectives.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To provide the committee with an update on progress being made so far in 2024/25 to deliver the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28](#)
[Community & Corporate Plan Measurement Framework](#)
[Self-Assessment Report 2023/24](#)

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Appendix 1 – Six-month 2024/25 Community & Corporate Plan performance report


The Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28 contains six objectives which focus on the longer-term future of the county and aim to address complex challenges, in line with the Future Generations Act.



The long-term nature of some objectives means that the effects of some activity may not be clearly demonstrable over short timescales, and some activity will have an impact over the longer term. The targets included in this progress report are reflective of where the council aspires to be in 2024/25. Informed by the evidence gathered, each objective has been assessed on a scale of 1-6 based on performance so far in 2024/25 by applying the following principles:

Level	Definition	Description
6	Excellent	Excellent or outstanding – all performance measures have achieved the target set and all actions have been delivered
5	Very Good	Major strengths – a significant majority of actions and measures are on track. No more than one or two falling short
4	Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved
3	Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses – the evidence of success marginally outweighs areas that are not on track. Some actions are behind schedule and some measures are falling short of planned targets
2	Weak	Important weaknesses – the majority of measures and actions have not been achieved
1	Unsatisfactory	Major weakness – in most areas, performance is assessed as moving in the wrong direction and the vast majority of actions have not been delivered

Objective: A Fair Place to Live

<p>Fair place</p> 	<p>Interim Evaluation Score: 4</p>	<p>Level 4 – Good. Important strengths with some areas for improvement. The weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not yet been achieved.</p>
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Why This Matters: Nobody should be left behind in Monmouthshire or feel their voice does not count. Many of our residents are prosperous and very capable of looking after themselves and their loved ones. However, this is not the case for all and in a rural county inequality is often more hidden than in urban places. We will increase the intensity of our work to help those who need support to live the lives they want.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

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- We are implementing universal free school meals for all primary pupils. This ensures that all pupils have access to a freshly cooked meal at lunchtime, irrespective of their background; however, uptake remains varied and is lower in more deprived areas.
- We are ensuring all children have access to play by providing free or subsidised activities during school holidays.
- We are working to ensure everyone has equal opportunity in Monmouthshire through the implementation of our Strategic Equality Plan and Disability Confident action plan.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- The development of a whole authority approach to tackling poverty and inequality to ensure a joined-up, targeted approach across services.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Improved life chances for people regardless of income or background</p>	<p>The inequalities that exist within and between communities have a major bearing on well-being. Healthy, free meals at school help enable all children to have the same opportunities to learn and thrive irrespective of their background or income. We have gone above our statutory duty to provide breakfast and a freshly cooked meal at lunchtime to all primary school pupils. Uptake of meals between areas remains varied, with the lowest rates being seen in the most deprived areas. We are working</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Page 15</p>	<p>with schools, parents and learners to understand and remove any barriers that may face those in less deprived areas from accessing universal free school meals.</p> <p>A Tackling Poverty and Inequality Lead was appointed in April 2024. It has been agreed that a new strategy or formal tackling poverty and inequality action plan is not the preferred option at this time. The Community Development Team, who coordinate delivery of our work in this area, will continue to work to their targeted work plan.</p> <p>From October 24 we are partnering with Citizen’s Advice, Warm Wales, local foodbanks and many others to hold a series of events across the county to give support, ideas and advice to residents to help with the cost of living. Representatives from our Benthylg library of things, employment economy and skills and the food partnership team will also attend to ensure a joined-up approach.</p> <p>We have continued to support circular economy projects, including Benthylg library of things and Repair Cafes, which are diverting waste from landfill and saving residents money. Two circular economy project officers have been appointment to support and grow these projects, including developing an additional library of things in Caldicot. Due to circumstances beyond the council's control, Benthylg Chepstow has closed, and discussions are underway to find an alternative location.</p>
<p>Residents have better access to council services and support needed to live a healthy life</p>	<p>The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age play a major factor in their health. As a Marmot Region we are working with our partners in other public services to take action to reduce unfair and unjust inequalities in health.</p> <p>We are ensuring all children have access to play by providing free or subsidised activities during the school holidays. 1,410 hours of play provision were provided during the summer holidays with 2,039 children benefiting. Since April, we have served 8,950 meals, providing access to food through the summer holidays to some children who need it. We continued to deliver Food and Fun schemes across the county, which provides two healthy meals and activities for children during the summer holidays. During this year, this scheme has saw 4,445 attendances, with 617 children supported.</p> <p>We have continued to host networking events across the county, helping us to map out the needs of the creative community. We have submitted a grant application to Arts Council Wales to support the development of our Cultural Strategy, providing training and support to our creative community and hosting eight events and festivals across the county. This strategy is due to be completed by March 2025.</p> <p>We developed and opened the new £2.9 million Magor and Undy Community Hub in partnership with MUCH group. The development was based on extensive involvement of the community and is designed based on residents’ feedback. The site provides spaces for community use and commercial events, as well as potential for small business growth. The MUCH group now occupies and manages the community hub for the direct promotion of social, cultural, leisure, sporting and other community activities.</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?


What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>What we want to achieve: Citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures</p>	<p>Ensuring volunteers are supported and valued is vital to maintaining the social capital which brings huge benefits to communities.</p> <p>We have the second highest percentage of people who volunteer in Monmouthshire. We have developed a Volunteering Good Practice Guide to ensure a high-quality volunteering experience and have run recruitment campaigns which included promoting the experience of current volunteers. Our annual survey found that 95% of volunteers felt their expectations for volunteering were being met.</p> <p>We want to ensure that everyone in Monmouthshire has equal opportunity. We have made the disability confident pledge and have been accredited with Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) status; we're implementing an action plan alongside this. We committed in our Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 to encourage local firms to become accredited disability confident employers. The number of local employers who have made the pledge has decreased from 39 (April 24) to 35 (November 24). We will continue to encourage employers to take up, and importantly, to renew their disability confident status to ensure we are reducing the inequalities faced by disabled people in accessing employment in the county.</p> <p>Council passed a motion in September 2023 committing us to formally becoming a county of sanctuary. A multi-agency working group has been developed to drive forward progress on achieving official status. It's likely that this will be achieved in early 2025, falling slightly short of our milestone target.</p> <p>Supporting and promoting the use of the Welsh language is vital to ensuring it's growth. We're providing opportunities for our staff to improve their Welsh language skills. We currently have 327 members of staff that have some level of Welsh language skills and can use these to provide a service in Welsh to residents. There has been an increase in the percentage of the Monmouthshire population who can speak Welsh from 19.7% to 20.5%. We are continuing to work with partners to promote the use of the Welsh language in our county.</p>

Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress
A new poverty and inequality action plan is approved by Cabinet	December 2024	It has been agreed that a new strategy or formal tackling poverty and inequality action plan is not the preferred option at this time; further discussion in relation to a whole authority approach to tackling poverty and inequality will be led by the Strategic Leadership Team.
All four library of things are fully operational	March 2025	Due to the closure of Bentyg Chepstow, two of the four are fully operational. Two circular economy officers have been appointed who will support the establishment of Bentyg Caldicot.

Establish two additional cylch meithrin	First established September 2025, second established January 2027	These remain on track.
Establish childcare settings on the sites of Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary school and Trellech Primary schools	To establish the site at Trellech by March 2025 and Archbishop Rowan Williams by January 2027	These remain on track.
Opening of the Magor and Undy Community Hub	August 2023	This has now been completed.
Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) Status attained	June 2024	This has now been completed.
County of Sanctuary Status attained	December 2024	An initial submission was made in April. Discussions with the accrediting body have identified the need for further work. It is unlikely this will be achieved until 2025.

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Percentage of pupils choosing to receive universal free school meals	75	75	77	
i) The financial saving to communities (£) ii) Carbon saving (Kg Co2) from items borrowed through Benthylg Library of Things	i) 44,500 ii) 22,783	i) 15,170 ii) 7,867	i) 20,000 ii) 10,000	Previous is total since opening, latest is combined total for Q1 and Q2 24/25
Percentage of people participating in sporting activities three or more times a week	42	43	45	Latest is 2022/23, previous is 2021/22
Number of children benefitting from MonLife-run free or subsidised play provisions	3,464	2,039	3,525	
Number of local employers who make the disability confident employer pledge	39	35	70	Latest is November 2024, previous is April 2024. April 2024 data has been revised.
Percentage of people who volunteer	32	39	40	Latest is 2022/23, previous is 2019/20
Percentage of the population who can speak Welsh	19.7	20.5	18	Latest is year ending June 2024, previous is 2023/24

Objective: A Green Place to Live

<p>Green place</p> 	<p>Interim Evaluation Score: 3</p>	<p>Level 3 – Strengths just outweigh weaknesses. The evidence of success marginally outweighs areas that are not on track. Some actions are behind schedule and some measures are falling short of planned targets.</p>
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Why This Matters: We recognise the outstanding beauty of Monmouthshire. As custodians of this place, we need to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy it, protect it and conserve it. The natural world in all its guises is the backdrop to our tourism and visitor economy. We will work with others to promote access to our special places whilst protecting the environment, support nature recovery, reduce our carbon emissions, reduce the risk of flooding and promote the circular economy. We also recognise that these are complex issues and it will take decades rather than years to see the full impact of the changes we are making.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

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- We have published our climate and nature emergency strategy which sets out four clear action plans on how we will tackle each element of climate change.
- Our carbon emissions have increased due to key construction projects. Though this impacts our emissions target in the short-term, they have been designed to ensure minimal environmental impact in the long-term.
- We have published our Food Strategy which will guide how we increase community access to land for growing and increase the amount of local produce used in our schools.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- Progress on delivering our decarbonisation plan will be key if we are to approach net zero at a suitable pace.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Council operations are net zero by 2030 and local communities are supported to reduce their own carbon footprint</p>	<p>Changes in our climate are linked to man-made greenhouse gas emissions, and in particular carbon dioxide. The impacts affect the natural environment, infrastructure, health, communities, the built environment and business.</p> <p>We recognise that achieving our collective target of net zero by 2030 will be challenging without significant public sector investment. The range of activity we are undertaking is helping us to better understand the scale of the challenge. We have updated our Climate and</p>

	<p>Nature Emergency Strategy. This includes an action plan showing on how we will reduce the council’s carbon emissions. The Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group is monitoring progress and using this to target future activity.</p> <p>The council’s carbon emissions increased between 2022/23 and 2023/24. The main attributors of this increase are the construction of Severn View Park care home and Abergavenny 3-19 school; whilst the construction of these buildings has increased emissions in the short term, they have been designed to ensure minimal environmental impact in the long-term, with Abergavenny school being net-zero and the new care home being far more energy efficient than its predecessor. We are currently undertaking an assessment of the carbon footprint of the council’s purchased good and services; this will ensure we are targeting future carbon reduction activity in areas of spend with the highest emissions.</p> <p>The emissions from the council’s estate have been steadily decreasing in recent years. Despite good progress, the scope and delivery will need to increase if we are to approach net zero at an appropriate pace. We have commissioned decarbonisation surveys to develop a costed decarbonisation plan for the built estate. The findings of these surveys will inform a low carbon heat strategy and action plan.</p> <p>The emissions from our fleet and travel have increased. We are transitioning to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles at the point of renewal and where services need and funding permits. We are developing a fleet transition plan which will be informed by utilisation data; as we look to develop this strategy, the electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) network across the county will need to be reviewed. We have identified potential electric vehicle charging infrastructure requirements and assessed on-street charging options, with internal officer consultation underway. The next step is to draft an overarching EVCI strategy.</p> <p>We have increased the percentage of municipal waste in the county that was sent for recycling, reuse or composting to 71.8% (provisional data). This is above the statutory target of 70%. This is due to continued participation of residents with household recycling. The overall amount of waste generated per person has increased from 198kg in 2022/23 to 202kg in 2023/24 and remains above the Wales average.</p> <p>We are improving and expanding our active travel network to help our communities to reduce the carbon produced from travel. We currently have over 100 active routes in place and an additional 23 in development. So far this year we have created or enhanced three routes. We have live journey counter information to monitor the use of our network; these found a 23.2% increase in usage in Q1 compared to the previous year. We will utilise £6.6m of funding to deliver a range of projects throughout the remainder of this year.</p>
<p>Nature recovery, improved environmental and river health</p>	<p>The natural world in all its guises is the backdrop to life in Monmouthshire. We need to ensure we are doing all we can to protect and conserve it.</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 21</p>	<p>We have reviewed and updated our Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy to include a biodiversity and ecosystems resilience action plan. This sets out how we will maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems resilience through the council’s operations. We have also reviewed our Green Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan, with a public consultation launched in September. This guides how we will improve the health and well-being of our residents through enhancing our green spaces.</p> <p>The health of our rivers has suffered in recent years. Phosphate targets for the Usk are being failed at a rate of 88% and the Wye at 68%. We have worked with partners to address this, and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water is now installing phosphate stripping plants at two areas in the county to improve the health of our rivers. This is enabling appropriate development to be permitted within these areas where it was previously restricted. We have developed an action plan showing how we will work in partnership to improve the health of our rivers and oceans. The Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group will monitor progress against this.</p> <p>With extreme weather events becoming more frequent it is important to support communities at risk of flooding. We have developed and updated emergency flood response plans for sites across the county, and regularly engage with our communities through one-to-one sessions and community meetings. Our work in these areas is helping to inform our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and action plan. This assesses flood risk on a catchment-based approach and will identify Strategic Flood Risk Areas (SFRA).</p>
<p>Sustainable local agriculture and farming practices with public services and residents consuming more local and seasonal produce</p>	<p>We have published our Local Food Strategy; the accompanying action plan sets out how we will facilitate access to council land for growing food, including continuing to work with Allotment Associations to bring empty plots back into use and create new plots through the Allotments Support Grant. We are assessing community access to land in the county, and ensuring this is considered within the Replacement Local Development Plan.</p> <p>We have continued our participation in the Welsh Veg in Schools supply chain investment scheme to increase the amount of local produce used in our schools. We have also ensured an increased use of local produce in Food & Fun Summer activities. The sustainable food team has supported in the procurement of milk and dairy to explore local options; a number of local suppliers have expressed interest in bidding for the new contract.</p>

Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress
New climate and nature emergency strategy approved by Cabinet	May 2024	This has now been completed

Food strategy developed and approved	May 2024	This has now been completed
Increased use of seasonal and/or local produce in schools, care homes and domiciliary care	May 2026	Work with partners is ongoing to increase the use of seasonal, local produce in schools and play activities across the county.

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Carbon emissions (kgCO ₂ e) from the council's assets and operations	44,248	54,859	36,000	Previous is 2022/23, latest is 2023/24. This increase is mainly attributed to progress made in significant construction projects.
Percentage of our local authority fleet which is ultra-low emission	14	16.43	12	
Capacity (MW) of renewable energy equipment installed on the council's estate	6.598	6.722	6.7	Previous figure is for 2022/23, latest is 2023/24.
Amount (kwh) of renewable energy generated from Council installations	4,783,567	5,271,000	4,857,500	Previous figure is for 2022/23, latest is 2023/24.
Percentage of municipal waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting	71.7	71.8	72	This is provisional data which may be subject to change.
Number of active travel routes created or enhanced	20	3	14	These figures are linked to the funding available each year and the size and scale of projects delivered.

Objective: A Thriving and Ambitious Place

Thriving and ambitious place



**Interim
Evaluation
Score: 4**

Level 4 – Good. Important strengths with some areas for improvement. The weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not yet been achieved.

Why This Matters: We want to foster a diverse, fairer, greener and circular economy, generating sustainable employment growth and creating conditions for shared prosperity. This will ensure that town centres remain vibrant and welcoming places that meet the needs of the local communities, businesses and visitors. Alongside this, good connectivity and infrastructure will enable people to access the services, attractions, education and training opportunities that are central to a thriving and ambitious place.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

We have developed important strategies, such as the NEET Strategy and Local Transport Plan, which lay the foundations and provide clarity on what we need to do in the coming years.

We are working in partnership with town councils and other key stakeholders to develop placemaking plans and have attracted new funding to enable town centre improvements.

- We have a well-qualified population and have focused on addressing skills shortages in key industries and supporting residents into employment.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- The ability to secure additional employment sites as part of the RLDP will have a significant bearing on our success as will wider economic factors that influence business confidence and investment.
- The progress we make implementing the actions that flow from the new Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy will be critical in making progress towards our ambition to create a vibrant and thriving place.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Vibrant town centres which bring people together and attract investment</p> <p>Page 24</p>	<p>Attracting residents and visitors to our town centres is vital for the local economy. We will continue to work with businesses and local people to improve the look and feel of the town centres.</p> <p>We are working in partnership with town councils and other stakeholders to develop placemaking plans in Monmouth, Abergavenny and Magor with Undy. We have secured additional funding from Welsh Government and regeneration experts have been appointed to support the development of this work.</p> <p>We have brought in new funding to enable improvements to commercial properties in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth town centres. We are also working with Usk Town Council on the development of proposals for public realm improvements in Bridge Street and Twyn Square.</p> <p>We are making improvements to our heritage sites, including their accessibility. We have launched a small grants programme to support access improvements at visitor attractions and events throughout the county. There has been a total of 101,481 visitors to our heritage and culture sites so far in 2024/25, on track to meet our target.</p> <p>The number of jobs supported by tourism increased from 3,356 to 3,462 in 2023. The economic impact of tourism increased to £329.8m, a 2 percent increase on the previous year based on the indexed total, demonstrating that the sector has continued to recover following the challenges of the pandemic.</p>
<p>People of all ages and backgrounds have the skills to do well in work or start their own business</p>	<p>Monmouthshire values all of its citizens and the people who work for our businesses. In 2023 we developed an Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy. We are committed to helping people of all ages and backgrounds develop the skills needed by new and established businesses helping them to grow and thrive.</p> <p>We have provided support to people who want to start their own business. At quarter 2 we had assisted 42 pre-start and existing businesses. We will need to refocus our efforts if we are to achieve our target of 180.</p> <p>We have continued to provide employment support, with a specific focus on addressing skills in shortage areas. We supported four people to gain a Construction Skills Certification Scheme card and delivered two Pathway to Hospitality courses with 15 attendees who all gained accredited qualifications. In partnership with the Job Centre, we have organised two job fairs that saw 360 attendees.</p> <p>We have addressed barriers to employment and supported those who are economically inactive to re-enter the job market. We are running a number of projects, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, such as business coaching and advice. In total, we have</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?


What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	<p>supported 53 people to gain employment so far this year, which is forecast to achieve our annual target. We are also developing a new strategy to prevent young people ending up without education, training or employment, ensuring better outcomes and opportunities for our young people.</p> <p>The latest data shows that 58% of Monmouthshire residents are qualified to level 4 of the national framework (the highest level), compared to 43% for Wales and 47% for Great Britain. However, the ratio of jobs to population in Monmouthshire is lower than the figures for Wales and the UK as a whole. One of the reasons behind this is a shortage of the new employment sites needed to grow opportunities. Council has approved the deposit replacement local development plan highlighting new employment sites that will address this.</p> <p>78.9% of people in Monmouthshire are economically active, this is above the rates for Wales and Great Britain. We are seeing positive signs of progress such as an improvement in our economic position as measured by the UK Competitiveness Index.</p>
Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure	<p>Good transport and infrastructure are vital to our communities and economy, enabling access to a wide range of services and opportunities for all residents.</p> <p>Monmouthshire is not alone in facing challenges maintaining its highways. There is a significant backlog in roads maintenance across England and Wales. We simply cannot afford to fund all of the necessary improvements from our capital budget. These have varying levels of risk associated with them. We commission independent assessments of key highways infrastructure, and these have enabled us to prioritise maintenance expenditure.</p> <p>In May we adopted a new Local Transport Strategy setting out a clear ambition for transport infrastructure in Monmouthshire over the next five years. We have been awarded up to £8.4m to implement transport projects across the county. These will enhance access, safety and infrastructure. Projects awarded funding include community road safety training, bus infrastructure projects and road resilience projects to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.</p>

Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress
Development of draft Placemaking Plans for Abergavenny, Magor with Undy and Monmouth	March 2025	Draft plans are in development with partners and residents. These are due to be completed by March 2025. Work is progressing well.
Develop Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy	February 2024	This has been completed
Develop and approve NEET strategy	November 2024	The draft Strategy is being developed. This is on target to meet the milestone
Local Transport Plan supporting modal shift is produced	May 2024	This has now been completed

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Total number of visitors to our heritage & culture sites	194,700	101,481	198,000	Latest figure is for the period April to September 2024. Target is for full year April 24- March 25. We are forecast to exceed the target.
Number of NEET young people supported into employment	21	Not yet available	25	Data will be added as soon as this becomes available.
Number of working age people supported into employment during the year through action by the local authority	115	53	60	Performance is linked to the funding available each year and the size and scale of projects delivered. We are on the way to the annual target at the 6-month stage.

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Percentage of school leavers not in education, employment or training	1.8	1.8	1.5	Latest available date is for 2023/24 data. We are not yet able to assess progress against the 2024/25 target.
Percentage of care experienced young people who have completed at least three months in education, training or employment by the age of 19	Newly adjusted measures	52.5	60	Latest available date is for 2023/24 data. We are not yet able to assess progress against the 2024/25 target
Number of pre-starts and existing businesses assisted during the year by the local authority and its partners	165	42	180	Performance is linked to the funding available each year and the size and scale of projects delivered.

Objective: A Safe Place to Live

<p>Fair place</p> 	<p>Interim Evaluation Score: 4</p>	<p>Level 4 – Good. Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not yet been achieved.</p>
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Why This Matters: For most people, Monmouthshire is a really good place to live but this is not the case for everyone. It’s important that people have a place to call home, feel safe and have a sense of belonging.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

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Council has approved a deposit version of the Replacement Local Development Plan for public consultation. This sets out how land will be developed for employment and affordable housing.

We are continuing to implement our Rapid Rehousing model, and this is preventing more people from becoming homeless.

- We have started to acquire accommodation to increase the availability of temporary housing in the county which is reducing the number of homeless households placed into costly and inadequate bed and breakfast accommodation.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- The continued need to focus on delivering preventative approaches to homeless needed to achieve this objective. An increase in and/or greater complexity in demand for homelessness services could present challenges to capacity to deliver this.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve

Progress Update

Increased supply of good quality affordable housing.

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Having a safe, secure and warm place to call home is one of the most important contributors to peoples' well-being. High property prices and a limited supply of affordable housing mean this is currently out of reach for too many local people.

We have developed a deposit Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). This has been approved by Council and is now out for consultation. It will require each new development to contain 50% affordable housing. It is also introducing enabling policies which will allow more affordable housing developments to come forward at a later date. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county, this is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness.

We have engaged with owners of vacant properties, offering advice and support to help and encourage them to bring houses back into use. This has led to 36 applications to the Empty Homes Grant. Four owners have subsequently expressed an interest in leasing their property as temporary homeless accommodation.

We have introduced more formal mechanisms to help tackle empty properties within the county. This includes a Council Tax Premium on long-term vacant properties to encourage owners to bring them back into use. Our approach has reduced the number of recorded long-term empty homes from 541 to 447.

Reduce the number of people who become homeless.

We have seen increasing levels of homelessness in recent years, alongside this, limited temporary accommodation has meant we have been dependent on costly and unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation to fulfil our responsibilities to families.

We have applied a Rapid Rehousing approach and increased the resources for homeless prevention. This includes increased staffing and closer partnership working to support more people at risk and providing grants from the Homeless Prevention Fund to help tackle arrears/debt and enable households remain in their current accommodation or access alternatives.

We remodelled our Housing Support service to include dedicated substance misuse support, temporary accommodation support and re-settlement support. This also includes dedicated support for young people with higher need through the expansion of the Housing First scheme with Pobl and the introduction of MoYo – dedicated housing floating support for young people. These initiatives have contributed to an increase in the proportion of applicants successfully prevented from becoming homeless to 71%. We may struggle to

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Page 30</p>	<p>meet demand for further support within current resources, particularly for younger people and those with mental health and substance misuse needs.</p> <p>We still have a lack of temporary, supported and permanent accommodation. The focus of our RLDP on affordable housing provision will help address some of this need, particularly for single person accommodation. There are presently 160 people in temporary accommodation. We are working to provide more settled accommodation for these households.</p> <p>We regularly hold a Corporate Parenting Panel to coordinate and support care leavers to prevent them from becoming homeless. During the last year, eight care leavers experienced homelessness within 12 months of leaving care, an increase from five the previous year.</p> <p>We have increased the availability of both temporary and settled homes for homeless households through partnerships with private landlords, new builds and acquisitions. We have worked with housing associations to make more social housing available for homeless households; currently 55% of social housing is allocated to homeless households. We need to ensure that allocating further social housing to homeless applicants will not be detrimental to other housing need groups.</p> <p>We have started to acquire accommodation for use as temporary accommodation. The first approval has been given to re-purpose a council owned agricultural property and, we have started work to re-purpose Severn View residential home as temporary accommodation. The increased support for those at risk of homelessness, combined with the increase in availability of both temporary and settled accommodation, has contributed to a reduction in the use of bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation which now stands at 52, although this is slightly higher than 46 last year, it remains below 92 during 2022/23. The number of 16- and 17-year-olds in B&B accommodation remains at zero. Ensuring increases in both temporary and permanent accommodation will be key to achieving our milestone of eliminating the use of B&B accommodation for households with children and young people.</p>
<p>A more energy efficient housing stock with a lower carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Tackling the climate emergency and reducing emissions is one of our priorities. Domestic properties are one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) has been approved for consultation by Council. This will require new homes in the county to be net zero carbon. Once implemented, this will lower carbon emissions and help to reduce energy costs for residents.</p> <p>We have continued to support low-income households to access grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. We are promoting the Eco4 scheme which provides funding for low-income households and those living with medical conditions worsened by</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	<p>damp or cold to access energy efficiency improvements. Our staff are working with the NHS to identify residents with respiratory or immune suppression illnesses. Later this year we will launch a targeted campaign to increase take-up from those who can benefit from the scheme.</p>
<p>Communities in which everyone feels safe and respects each other</p>	<p>Everyone should have the right to feel safe and have a sense of belonging in their local community.</p> <p>Our community safety team have worked with young people across the county to address concerns of knife crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. We are also working with the charity Fearless to deliver workshops on critical issues such as county lines and knife crime at our youth centres, helping young people to navigate these challenges. We have secured £10k from the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office to target young people involved in Anti-social behaviour. We are also working to improve the relationship between young people and local police by regularly inviting police to our youth centres to engage with young people and understand what is important to them.</p> <p>We have worked with partners to develop a Gwent Serious Violence Prevention Strategy 2024/25. This has helped identify the serious violence priorities across Monmouthshire. We are now working with key partners and agencies to ensure deliver a range of targeted interventions to address these.</p> <p>We have contributed to the development of a new Gwent regional violence against women and domestic sexual violence (VAWDASV) strategy. The strategy is now being implemented through partnership arrangements and will ensure that more people feel safe, and free from abuse and violence.</p>

Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress			
Replacement Local Development Plan approved by Council	July 2025	The Deposit RLDP was endorsed by Council in October 2024 ahead of public consultation.			
The use of B&B accommodation is eliminated for households with children and young people	March 2027	There are 9 families in B&B accommodation. Ensuring there is sufficient temporary and permanent accommodation in the county will be key to achieving this milestone.			
Rapid Rehousing Approach introduced	April 2023	This has now been completed. The Rapid Rehousing Approach was implemented in April 2023 and has contributed to increased focus on homeless prevention.			
Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment	
Number of affordable homes granted planning permission in year	46	15	50		
Number of additional affordable homes delivered	-	-	60	Data not currently available due to vacant post	
Percentage of homeless households who are successfully prevented from becoming homeless	71	71	70		
Number of 16- and 17-year-olds in bed and breakfast accommodation	0	0	0		
Number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation	New measure	9	New measure	The corresponding milestone is the use of B&B accommodation is eliminated for households with children and young people by March 2027	
Number of homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation	46	52	40		
Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation	161	160	150		

Objective: A Connected Place where People Care

Connected place



**Interim
Evaluation
Score: 4**

Level 4 – Good. Important strengths with some areas for improvement. The weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not yet been achieved.

Why This Matters: We want Monmouthshire to be a place where people’s contributions are valued, they feel part of a community and are connected to others. The need and complexity of demand for care and support is high. We need to maintain a range of services that support people in periods of vulnerability, from childhood to old age, allowing them to live their lives on their terms. We know that well-being is about far more than treating people when they get sick. We need to deliver approaches that promote, physical and mental health and well-being and reduce health inequalities.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

- We have developed strategies that will provide the provision to meet social care needs for children requiring support in specific placements and adults who require care at home.
- We have implemented preventative and reablement approaches to providing care that support long term well-being, with plans to grow these further.
- We are driving through significant programmes of change including increasing the use of Assistive tech within care and support planning.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- The continued need to focus on delivering preventative approaches to achieve this objective.
- The continuing challenge of responding to the complexity of demand for social care support which is placing huge cost pressures on the authority’s finances.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>High quality social care which enables people to live their lives on their terms</p>	<p>Early help is vital to prevent children coming into care. We have established a coordinated approach to early intervention and prevention in Children’s Social Services. Demand for these services is high, we have maintained low waiting times by building capacity through group work and supporting student placements. This ensures that families get the help they need in a timely way and supports good outcomes for children. So far this year, 100% of families reported a positive outcome following a Building Stronger Families team intervention.</p> <p>We have analysed demand and set a strategy to develop children’s residential and 16+ supported accommodation placements within the county. This sets out how we will support the transition to not-for-profit care for children in Wales and respond to the associated risks and challenges. We are developing two projects, with a further project in the pipeline. There remains a shortage of suitable placements, especially those who need additional support or who are not able to be placed with foster carers. Our strategy will improve availability.</p> <p>The recruitment and retention of foster carers remains a significant challenge. We are reviewing the foster care offer to Monmouthshire carers to support recruitment. The total number of foster carers increased from 36 to 38 (including 7 new carers) in 2023/24. The current projections for 2024/25 include a further 6 carers currently going through the assessment process.</p> <p>We are supporting an aging population. This is the prime driver for increased demand in adults social care. The proportion of residents aged 65 and over is expected to increase to 33.6% by 2043, compared to 25.7% across Wales. We are increasing the use of reablement wherever possible to support people to relearn how to do daily activities and to reduce their need for further support. We have provided 136 packages of reablement so far in 2024/25, with 47.1 percent of these resulting in a reduced or mitigated need for further support.</p> <p>We continue to work with partners in both primary and secondary health to prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and support timely discharges. Ensuring well-coordinated and timely discharges and managing the pressure within the hospital system remains challenging. We convene weekly multi-disciplinary meetings to identify and unblock delays when they arise. The number of patients awaiting discharge for social care reasons varies during the year. In September 2024, 14 patients were awaiting discharge.</p> <p>We are developing new provision and the way we can provide care and support. We opened Severn View Park, a specialist care home for people living with dementia in March 2024. The home provides 32 bedrooms for both long-term support and short-term support in the form of respite based on a relationship-centred care model. The new care home aims to maintain connections with the surrounding community. We are increasing the use of assistive technology within care and support planning. We made 267 installations in 2023/24, providing a range of technology that helps support someone to live independently at home for longer.</p>

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How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	<p>We want to ensure care is available for adults who require it. We have developed a long-term strategy for commissioned domiciliary care. This supports place-based care and the provider market. At the same time this ensures that wherever possible our in-house provision is supported for reablement, utilising our expertise to support residents to retain independence.</p> <p>We have taken action to significantly reduce the number of unmet care hours from 804 in March 2023 to 148 in September 2024 and have increased capacity across home care. 98.2% of hours of long-term domiciliary care are now being fulfilled. There has been an increase in the number of adults supported in residential care placements from 320 in March 2024 to 337 in September 2024. This is due to the complexity of people’s needs and has resulted in increased costs being met from our Adult Social Care budget.</p>
<p>Page 35</p> <p>A healthy and active Monmouthshire where loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded</p>	<p>Healthy life expectancy is critical to support wellbeing and increase independence. This averages 68.7 years for males 69.3 years for females, this is lower in the most deprived parts of the county. Life expectancy here is longer than most other parts of Wales.</p> <p>We continue to provide the National Exercise Referral scheme which provides pathways to positive lifestyle and exercise choices. Case studies of those participating has shown a positive impact, with reports of increased mobility, improvements in mood and a reduction in anxiety. We continue to work with healthcare professionals to increase participation and continuation in the scheme. We have 216 participants in the MonLife’s Active 60 programme, which is supporting people aged 60+ to become more physically active. Participants on the 60+ programme have reported wider benefits to the determinants of health including making friends and creating social networks, as well as improving their health.</p> <p>We have delivered three Green Infrastructure Nature-based projects across the county, with the preparation for 19 sites to be delivered in the rest of the year. This is supporting increased access to nature which supports well-being. In total 30 schools, volunteers, local interest groups and partners have been involved in nature-based health and wellbeing projects and initiatives across the county so far this year.</p> <p>We have supported young people’s mental health and wellbeing across the county through the youth service Shift project. We have expanded the offer with a focussed grant funded programme called Emotional Logic. 95% of young people engaged in the project reported an improvement in their mental health / emotional well-being, exceeding the target of 85%.</p> <p>We have commissioned carers services, provided information and advice and offered a range of free events and activities to support carers and young carers’ needs. There are 1,002 adult carers who have signed up to receive information, advice and assistance through our biannual carer newsletter and discounted leisure offer. Similarly, 168 young carers are registered with the Young Carers Service and</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?


What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	receive a comparable service with more targeted support. We also undertake carers needs assessments to ensure that carers needs are understood in their own right. There is increasing demand for support, carers awaiting a needs assessment has increased from 8 in 2023/24 to 23 in the same period in 2024/25.
A professional and passionate social care workforce	<p>We have focussed our social care workforce development on addressing areas where there is high demand and recruiting to essential posts to meet the care needs of our residents. Recruitment is focussed on demonstrating the opportunities, career progression, work life balance and job satisfaction that people experience who work within the sector. Generally, the workforce in social care remains stable, however attraction and recruitment of people into the social care sector, particularly in some roles, continues to be a challenge. The workforce market remains volatile; the number of vacancies across social care remains broadly stable with 26 vacancies in September 2024, compared to 23 vacancies in March.</p> <p>The micro-care project within Monmouthshire continues to support the self-employed carers to develop their businesses as well as providing the opportunity for greater oversight and governance of self-employed care workers operating in the county.</p>

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Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress
Development of a young persons Placement Development Strategy	April 2024	This has now been completed
Approval of a commissioning strategy to support a sustainable domiciliary care sector	May 2024	This has now been completed

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
The percentage of packages of reablement completed during the year that reduced or mitigated the need for support / positive outcome from reablement	55.3	47.1	60	
Percentage of adult service users who are happy with the care and support they have had	84.6	84.4	90	
Percentage of hours of long-term domiciliary care fulfilled	96.6	98.2	96	
Percentage of families reporting a positive outcome following a building stronger families team intervention	100	100	90	Latest figure is Quarter 1 2024/25
Percentage of adult service users who have had the right information or advice when they needed it	77.6	78.5	80	
Percentage of placements of children who are looked after by the local authority made with in-house foster carers	36.5	39	43	
Percentage of young people engaged in the youth service Shift project who perceive an improvement in their mental health / emotional well-being	84	95	85	
Number of schools, volunteers, local interest groups and partners involved in nature-based health and wellbeing projects and initiatives across the county	New Measure	30	30	

Objective: A Learning Place

<p>Learning place</p> 	<p>Interim Evaluation Score: 4</p>	<p>Level 4 – Good Important strengths with some areas for improvement. The weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not yet been achieved.</p>
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Why This Matters: We want Monmouthshire to 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 to reach their potential. The pandemic had a substantial effect on schools and pupils. The two years of uncertainty and significant disruption to learning inevitably left a legacy. Before the pandemic we knew that our disadvantaged learners did not achieve the outcomes we would wish. The pandemic has worsened the learning experiences of many vulnerable students such as those eligible for free school meals. The emotional and mental well-being of pupils was often affected, with many experiencing increased uncertainty, anxiety and loneliness.

Key factors influencing the interim evaluation:

- We are implementing a range of approaches and support to improve attendance, reduce exclusions and support pupils' well-being.
- Attendance in primary schools has improved to near pre-pandemic levels, secondary school attendance remains below pre-pandemic levels. Attendance of eFSM pupils remains lower, particularly in secondary school. The number of exclusions from schools is high and there is significant demand for support to pupils.
- We are developing an Inclusion Strategy that will help us to ensure consistent, high-quality delivery of inclusion services across Monmouthshire.
- We are developing the school estate, including the development of King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny and opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.

The learning from the interim evaluation has highlighted that focus on the following outcomes is required to affect the final evaluation:

- We need to evaluate the attainment of key stage 4 learners in our schools in the academic year 2023/24 to assess the outcomes achieved.
- We need to target our support for children and young people, using the approaches we have now developed, to support attendance in school and reduce behaviours that challenge.

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve

Progress Update

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 Improved school attendance and reduced levels of exclusion which remove barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils

Being in school is crucial for achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. The pandemic caused significant disruption to the education of our pupils, and we are still seeing the consequences of this today. Our education welfare officers are working with vulnerable pupils to bring them back into the educational setting, where possible, and are holding attendance consultations with schools regularly to promote attendance and provide bespoke support to families. We have updated our attendance policies to strengthen systems and processes to improve and sustain high levels of attendance in line with new Welsh Government guidance.

Attendance in primary schools during the 2023/24 academic year was 93.7%; this is near to pre-pandemic levels. Attendance in secondary school remains below pre-pandemic levels at 88.9%. Attendance for those eligible for free school meals (eFSM) remains lower in primary schools at 89.3%, and significantly lower in secondary schools at 78.7%; both remain lower than pre-pandemic figures. We need to increase attendance for those eFSM to ensure no pupil is left behind.

There has been an increase in episodes of behaviours that challenge in schools as a result of the continuation of trends that first emerged during the pandemic. This is challenging for schools, staff, and learners. There is a risk that this will also result in a worsening of educational attainment. We need to continue to develop and evolve our support to reduce and prevent behaviour that challenges.

We have implemented the whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being. This helps schools to understand how they are best placed to promote well-being. We have introduced this in a phased approach and increased the number of schools engaged in the approach from 74% to 88.2%. All schools and settings are engaged with Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs), and we currently have 63 practicing ELSAs who access regular supervision, operating across all but one school in the county, making a positive impact on the emotional literacy of pupils.

We have delivered Trauma Informed Schools Training to over 500 staff and seven schools have signed up to receive whole staff trauma skilled training. This approach focuses on understanding children/young people presenting with behaviours of concern and raising the awareness and capacity of adults supporting vulnerable pupils. Currently 23 (of 34) schools are engaged in professional learning related to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); Trauma Informed Approaches; and Autism.

The number of permanent exclusions from schools is high and increased to 22 in the last academic year. The number of fixed term exclusions has also increased and remain high. The continued work of the Vulnerable Learner Lead and increased capacity within the Inclusion Service will allow more focus on managing exclusions, this includes an increased focus on the role of critical friend to schools where the use of exclusion is of concern. The high levels of exclusions have increased the pressure on the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) to

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	<p>support pupils who have been excluded, and those at risk or exclusion. The service has limited capacity to support new learners unless they have been permanently excluded; the move into new accommodation will improve this position.</p>
<p>The benefits of the new curriculum in Wales are maximised through excellent teaching and learning</p>	<p>We need to support all learners to secure the necessary skills and knowledge that we would expect them to have at the relevant point in their education.</p> <p>Our focus remains on supporting excellent teaching and learning. We have worked with the Education Achievement Service to provide challenge, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in schools. All schools are provided with a bespoke support package that complements the priorities identified within their own School Development Plans (SDPs), in line with the levels of support they require. Key stage 4 attainment data for the academic year in 2023/24 is being validated and evaluated. A fuller assessment of 2023/24 performance will be provided to scrutiny and in the annual self-assessment report of this objective.</p> <p>We have an agreed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan that sets our strategic direction for the planning, delivery, and growth of Welsh medium education in Monmouthshire over the next ten years. We are working with childcare providers to expand the availability of Welsh medium childcare provision. We have improved the range and quality of information available on the benefits of a Welsh language education, to allow parents to make more informed decisions.</p> <p>We have established an immersion class at Ysgol Y Ffin and have secured funding to grow this provision across the county over the next three years. We are preparing for the opening of a second immersion class which will enable pupils from year 3 and upwards to transfer into Welsh-medium education, and in doing so support and increase demand. The number of Reception learners in Welsh medium schools is 56. Progress has been limited in developing systems to track linguistic progression between years 6 and 7. The number of children transitioning from a Welsh language primary school to a Welsh language secondary school in the summer of 2024 was 27, below our target. We will continue to implement our plan to increase Welsh medium education in the county.</p>
<p>What we want to achieve: A truly inclusive educational system that recognises learners' starting points, strengths and educational needs</p>	<p>Over the past three years, schools have seen a consistent increase in the number of learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM), ranging between 5% to 48% (with an average of 18%). We need to support learners who are eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM) or who are experiencing the impact of poverty, and those learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) throughout our provision.</p> <p>There remains a gap in attainment between those pupils eligible for free school meals and those not. We have worked with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) to provide challenge, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in schools. This has a</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
<p>Page 41</p>	<p>particular focus on vulnerable learners, which includes those eligible for free school meals. A fuller assessment of 2023/24 performance, including attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals, will be provided to scrutiny committee and in the annual self-assessment report of this objective.</p> <p>We are operating the Inspire programme in each secondary school in Monmouthshire to work with vulnerable learners, with a designated worker per school. So far this year 97 young people have been supported by Inspire to achieve an additional qualification and/or achieve a life skill.</p> <p>Our Community Focused Schools lead works with schools and partners to develop activities and relationships for the benefit of the whole school community. This has included building relationships, signposting to support and benefits entitlements, poverty proofing schools and providing cost of living support.</p> <p>We are developing our Inclusion Strategy. This will outline our collective principles, approaches and service offer, and will help ensure consistent, high-quality delivery of inclusion services. Our Inclusion support is now embedded as part of interconnected strategies and related toolkits, resources and policies. This covers ALN, relationships, children looked after and reducing exclusions. A framework is being developed for the management of specialist resource bases (SRB) to ensure a consistent, equitable approach across all settings.</p> <p>We are delivering the Additional Learning Need (ALN) Strategy, which aims to build sustainable and resilient provision. We have established an ALN Quality Assurance system for mainstream schools to support excellent practice in the identification and management of pupils with ALN. We are using the quality assurance to develop the consistency of ALN provision across the county.</p>
<p>Continue our programme of school modernisation</p>	<p>The environment children and young people learn in is important to their development and well-being.</p> <p>We are progressing with construction of the new King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny. Phase 1 of the school is scheduled to be completed by April 2025. The new building will be net zero in line with our commitment to decarbonise our operations. The school will have the capacity for 1,200 secondary school age pupils, 420 primary age pupils and 200 places for post 16 education. There will also be suitable accommodation for 71 pupils with complex neurodevelopmental and learning needs within the school. It is anticipated that the development will reduce the number of pupils attending an out of county secondary school.</p>

How well are we achieving our desired outcomes?

What we want to achieve	Progress Update
	<p>Full Council approved a capital investment of £1.2m to improve and remodel the accommodation to facilitate the relocation of the south Monmouthshire pupil referral service. This will provide the service with a permanent and dedicated high quality environment that is conducive to the needs and increasing demands of the vulnerable population of pupils it serves.</p> <p>We are expanding our provision of Welsh medium education. We have secured a new site for Ysgol Y Fenni which will increase the capacity of the school from 210 to 420 pupils. Work is scheduled to be completed in September 2025. We opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy on the site of Overmonnow Primary school in September 2024, with 19 pupils attending</p>

Milestones	Target for Completion	Progress
Attendance and Engagement Strategy updated to strengthen systems and processes to improve and sustain high levels of attendance in line with new Welsh Government Guidance	September 2024	A range of policies have been updated to support increased attendance levels. These include the Council attendance policy, primary and secondary school attendance model policies and fixed penalty notice policy.
Inclusion Strategy approved by Cabinet	November 2024	The Inclusion Strategy and ALN Policy have been drafted and are out for consultation.
Quality Assurance of Additional Learning Provision across the county via school's finance forms and provision pyramids is completed. Additional Learning Provision (ALP) meets the needs of vulnerable learners in the county and is of good quality	Regular Assessment	Almost all schools have submitted their finance forms and provision pyramids for quality assurance.
Additional Learning Need Coordinators and Specialist Resource Base Leads are engaged in quality assurance processes around the consistency and impact of Additional	Regular Assessment	Individual Development Plans moderation has taken place at both a cluster and Local Authority level. Secondary supported self-evaluation for ALN / ALP outcomes have been

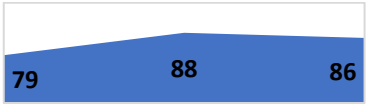
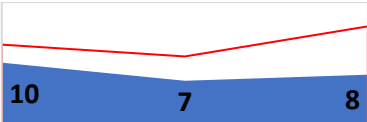
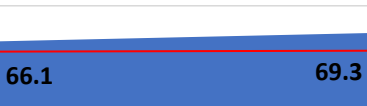
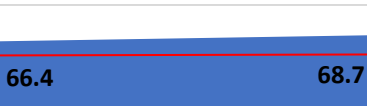
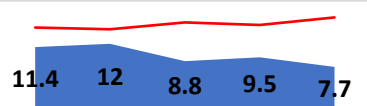
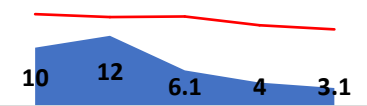
Learning Need provision through Additional Learning Provision forum and cluster / Specialist Provision and Outreach Team		shared with ALN coordinators and Headteachers; where relevant action plans have been developed with schools or existing plans added to.
A new carbon neutral, 3- 19 school is opened in Abergavenny	Phase 1 April 2025, Phase 2 April 2026	Phase 1 is on track for completion
A strategic review of school catchments is completed, and recommendations are made to Cabinet	Annual review of policy	The School Admissions Policy 2025/26, including a review of school catchment areas, was approved by Cabinet in April 2024, in which it was agreed to accommodate the villages of Tredunnoch, Llanhennock and Llandegveth into the catchment area for Usk Church in Wales Primary School.
Deliver a new non-maintained nursery in Trellech, invest S106 funding to improve the infrastructure at Castle Park and Archbishop Rowan Williams schools and improve and develop the buildings used to accommodate the Pupil Referral Service	Trellech March 2025, Archbishop Rowan Williams January 2027	We are delivering a new non maintained nursery in Trellech, this is on target to be ready by March 2025. We are investing S106 funding to improve the infrastructure at Castle Park and Archbishop Rowan Williams schools and expect to complete this by January 2027.
A new Welsh-medium seedling provision is opened in Monmouth	September 2025	We opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy on the site of Overmonnow Primary school in September 2024
A newly refurbished Welsh-medium primary school is opened	Opened and refurbished September 2025	We have secured a new site for Ysgol Y Fenni which will increase the capacity of the school from 210 to 420 pupils. Work is scheduled to be completed in September 2025

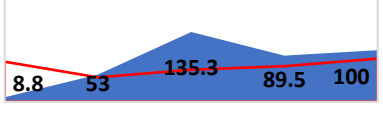
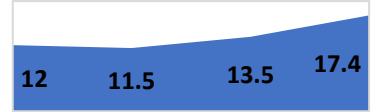
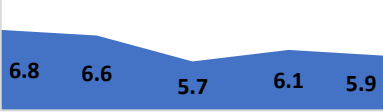

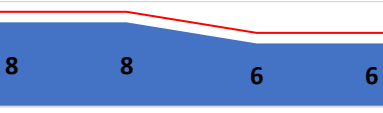
Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Pupil attendance (brackets show efsm figure)				
i) primary	i) 93.7 (89.3)	i) 94.6 (89.6)	i) 94.6 (92.6)	Previous is 2023/24 academic year data. Latest in 2024/25 academic year data – period from 1st September to 14th October
ii) secondary	ii) 88.9 (78.7)	ii) 90.8 (77.7)	ii) 91.2 (82.4)	

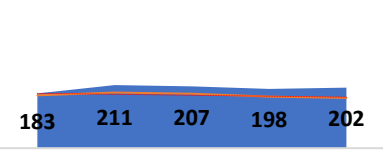


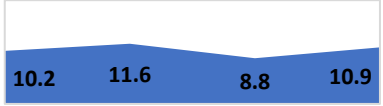
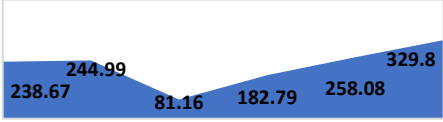
Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target	Comment
Percentage of schools engaged in professional learning related to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); Trauma Informed Approaches; and Autism	New Measure	67%	100%	New Measure for 2024/25
Number of Reception learners in Welsh medium schools	48	56	85	Longer term target is 105 by 2030.
Number of children transitioning from a Welsh language primary school to a Welsh language secondary school	27	27	46	Latest is summer 2024, transition numbers varied in primary schools. As a result, transition numbers are lower than the target this year.
Number of young people supported by Inspire (in school support/outreach support/post 16 support) to achieve an additional qualification and / or achieve a life skill	New Measure	97	133	New Measure for 2024/25
Total number of enrolments by adult learners on community education courses including Coleg Gwent franchise courses	937	Not yet available	876	Latest is 2023/24 data, update not yet available for 24/25.

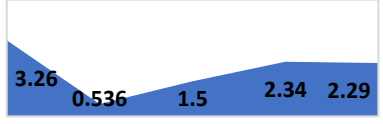
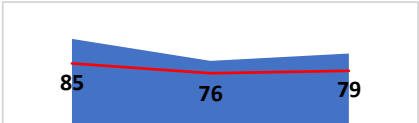
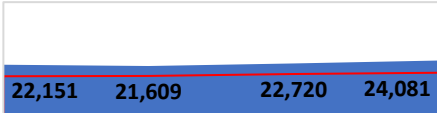
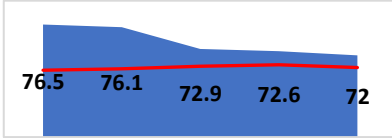
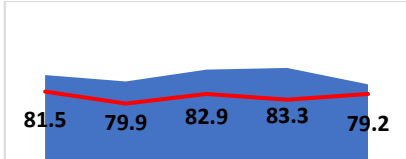
Appendix 2 – Latest update on the longer-term measures in Community & Corporate Plan 2022-2028

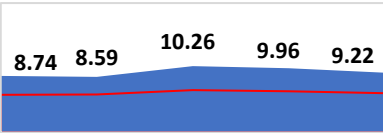
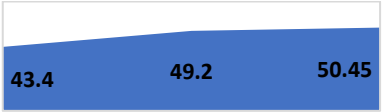
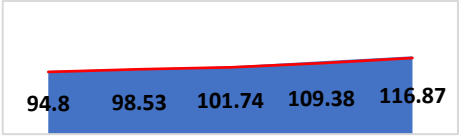
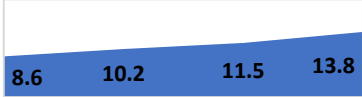
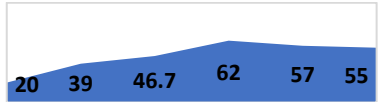
The table below provides the latest data on measures that are being tracked to inform the work in the plan. We want to see positive movement in these measures but they are things where our input is only part of a much bigger picture and so we are not able to set targets against them. Wales data is included in red, where available.

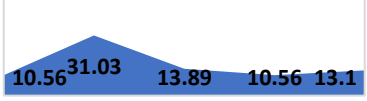
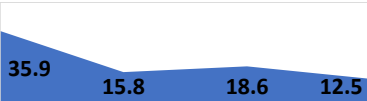
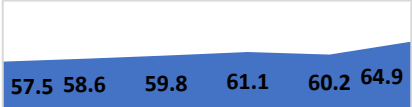


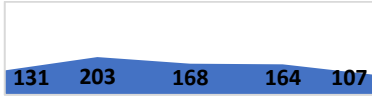

Longer term measures in Community & Corporate Plan 2022-2028	Trend	Latest
A Fair place to live		
Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/ access the facilities and services they need	 <p>79 88 86</p>	86
Percentage of people living in households in material deprivation	 <p>10 7 8</p>	8
Healthy life expectancy - female (years)	 <p>66.1 69.3</p>	69.3
Healthy life expectancy – male (years)	 <p>66.4 68.7</p>	68.7
Gap in healthy life expectancy between most and least deprived areas - female (years)	 <p>11.4 12 8.8 9.5 7.7</p>	7.7
Gap in healthy life expectancy between most and least deprived areas – male (years)	 <p>10 12 6.1 4 3.1</p>	3.1

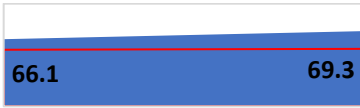
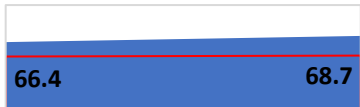
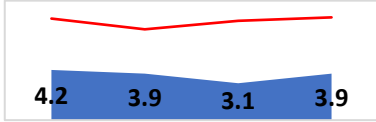
Difference in average pay between men and women working in the county (£)		100
Percentage of children living in relative low-income families		17.4
Percentage of residents who feel 'People in my local area get on well and help each other'	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
Percentage of residents who feel 'People in my local area pull together to improve the local area'	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
A Green place to live		
Average carbon emissions per capita in Monmouthshire (tonnes)		5.9
Number of rail passenger journeys		194,306
Average level of nitrogen dioxide pollution in the air (µg/m3), measured at Air Quality Management Areas in Monmouthshire		6

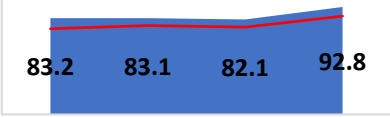
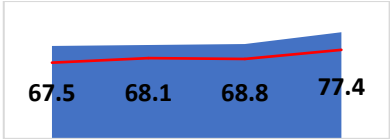
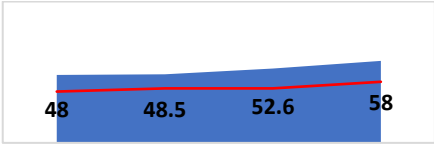
Average annual residual household waste produced per person (kilograms)		202
Percentage of the Special Area of Conservation river catchment waterbodies that fail the phosphorus targets	Trend data not available	88 for Usk 67 for Wye
Percentage of people who agree that their local area has a clean environment	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
A Thriving and Ambitious place		
Percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live		95
Average hourly town centre footfall		288
Percentage of vacant town centre premises		10.9
Annual economic impact of tourism (£)		329.8

Number of tourists visiting the county (million)		2.29
Percentage of people who attend or participate in arts, culture or heritage activities three or more times a year		79
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework i) no qualifications, ii) qualified to level 2 or above, iii) qualified to level 3 or above iv) qualified to level 4 or above	Update in learning place below	Update in learning place below
Gross disposable household income per head (£)		24,081
Percentage unemployed i) females ii) males	Data not available	Data not available
Percentage employed – female		72
Percentage employed – male		79.2
Percentage of council expenditure spent in local supply chain through public sector contracts	Data not yet available	Data not yet available

Percentage increase in active travel route usage	New measure – trend data not available	8.43
A Safe Place to Live		
Median house prices compared to median workplace-based earnings		9.22
Percentage of all homes in the county with an energy efficiency rating of 'C' or above		50.45
Average weekly rent for social housing in Monmouthshire		116.87
Average time (months) homeless households spend in Band 1 with a homeless duty before moving on to settled/permanent accommodation		13.8
Percentage of social housing allocated to homeless households		55
Number of overall crimes recorded	Trend data not yet available	5807
Number of recorded crimes - sexual offences	Trend data not yet available	205
Number of recorded crimes - public order offences	Trend data not yet available	770

Rate of anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population		13.1
Percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area during the i) day ii) night	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
Percentage of those referred to the youth offending service who subsequently re-offend		12.5
A Connected Place Where People Care		
Percentage of children supported to remain living with their family (not including children looked after)		64.9
Percentage of adult service users who feel part of their community		50.3
Percentage of children looked after supported to remain in Monmouthshire		45.9
Number of carers and young carers supported by the carers team		107
Percentage of people who are lonely		12
Percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours	Trend data not available	93

Healthy life expectancy at birth (women)		69.3
Healthy life expectancy at birth (men)		68.7
Percentage of people who agree 'People in my local area get on well and help each other'	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
A Learning place		
Number of permanent exclusions across primary and secondary schools	Trend data not yet available	22
Rate of permanent exclusions across primary and secondary schools	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
Rate of fixed term exclusions i) primary ii) secondary (all/eFSM)	Data not yet available	Data not yet available
Capped 9 Point Score i) all ii) females iii) males iv) eFSM	Trend data not yet available	i)374.7 ii)381.3 iii)368.1 iv)304.7
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework i) no qualifications		3.9

<p>Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework ii) qualified to level 2 or above</p>	 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>83.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>83.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>82.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015</td> <td>92.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage	2012	83.2	2013	83.1	2014	82.1	2015	92.8	<p>92.8</p>
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Year	Percentage											
2012	48											
2013	48.5											
2014	52.6											
2015	58											
<p>Percentage of learners studying for an assessed qualification in Welsh as a subject</p>	<p>Data not yet available</p>	<p>Data not yet available</p>										

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
19 th November 2024	School Exclusions	To scrutinise the latest figures and the Council's performance.	Morwenna Wagstaff Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Monitoring
	Planning Annual Performance Report	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	Philip Thomas Craig O'Connor Cllr Griffiths	Performance Monitoring
	Community & Corporate Plan progress update	To inform members of the plan's progress at the six-month stage.	Richard Jones Hannah Carter	Performance Monitoring
3 rd December 2024 Special	Month 6 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 6.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Risk Register Update	To update members at the six-month stage.	Richard Jones Hannah Carter Cllr Callard Cllr Chandler	Performance Monitoring
	Secondary Schools Leadership Funding	To scrutinise proposed changes to the funding formula for Leadership funding for secondary schools	Nikki Wellington Cllr Callard?	Performance Monitoring

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
11 th February 2025	Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	To scrutinise the 2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Month 9 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 9.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Complaints Process	To scrutinise the performance of the Council's complaints process, and issues raised by it.	Annette Evans Cllr Sandles	Performance Monitoring
11 th March 2025				
29 th April 2025 <i>(provisional)</i>				
10 th June 2025 <i>(provisional)</i>				
To be confirmed (Spring 25 – April?)	Alternative Learning Provision / Specialist Resource Bases	Follow up from May 24 report: Scrutiny of MCC Alternative Learning Provision/Specialist Resource Bases.	Morwenna Wagstaff Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Reporting
To be confirmed (early 25?)	Strategic Equality Plan AMR			

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
To be confirmed	Recruitment and retention	Effect on the Council's performance and ability to deliver.		
To be confirmed	Use of Reserves	Future proofing and resilience planning as well as supporting long-term strategic priorities.	Peter Davies Jonathan Davies Cllr Callard	
To be confirmed (Summer 25)	Self-Assessment 24/25	To scrutinise the self-assessment and identify areas for further scrutiny.	Richard Jones Hannah Carter	Performance Reporting
To be confirmed (Summer 25)	Public Protection Performance 24/25	To review the performance of the service area.	Alun Thomas Huw Owen Cllr Sandles	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed (Summer 25)	Registration Services Annual Report 24/25	To review the performance of the service area.	Jennifer Walton Cllr Sandles	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed (Summer 25)	Welsh Language Annual Report 24-25	To scrutinise the Council's performance.	Nia Roberts Pennie Walker Cllr Sandles	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	Chief Officer for Social Care Annual Monitoring Report	To scrutinise the progress and strategic direction for the service area.	Jane Rodgers Cllr Chandler	Performance Reporting
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	Safeguarding Annual Report	To scrutinise the performance of safeguarding arrangements.	Jane Rodgers Cllr Chandler	Performance Reporting

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	Socially Responsible Procurement strategy	To review progress of the strategy.	Gemma Ellis Scott James John Paxton Cath Fallon Cllr Brocklesby	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	Revised NEET Reduction Strategy	To scrutinise the revised strategy prior to Cabinet decision.	Hannah Jones Louise Wilce Cllr Griffiths	Performance Monitoring / Policy Development
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan)	To scrutinise performance against the plans.	Sharon Randall Smith Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed (Autumn 25)	Planning Annual Performance Report	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	Philip Thomas Craig O'Connor Cllr Griffiths	Performance Monitoring
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the P&O Scrutiny Forward Plan:				
Social Justice Strategy progress				
Business Monmouthshire Project monitoring				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
'Learning led' review of educational provision in Chepstow				
Review of Property Assets				

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Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Action List

15th October 2024

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
4	To provide details of consultancy spend	Scott James	
6	To provide the percentage of pupils studying other languages, compared with Welsh	Will McLean / Sharon Randall-Smith	

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Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	de	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Cabinet	Jan-TBC	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	10-Jul-24
Cabinet	Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
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	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	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Changes to the funding formula for Leadership funding for secondary schools	Ben Callard - Resources		Nikki Wellington	30-Oct-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
ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources			
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	13-Jun-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts draft	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	Council Tax Base 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	
Council	12-Dec-24	Remuneration Report			Julie Anthony	30-Sep-24
Council	12-Dec-24	Deforestation Free Champion Council			Hazel Clatworthy	4-Oct-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources		Richard Jones	7-Oct-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	Community and Corporate Plan Performance Update	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Richard Jones	7-Oct-24
				To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.		
				To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress that has been made to deliver the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28.		

Cabinet	04-Dec-24	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 6	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	PSOW Annual letter 2023-24			Annette Evans	1-Oct-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	10-Jul-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	Monmouthshire NEET Prevention Strategy			Louise Wilce	10-Jun-24
ICMD	27-Nov-24	Planning Service Annual Performance Report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Phil Thomas	
ICMD	13-Nov-24	TROs Amendment Order No. 15 2024 (Catrin Maby)			Graham Kinsella/Gareth Freeman	15-Oct-24
Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Future of the Former Abergavenny Library'			Nick Keyse	21-Oct-24
Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 – Special Procedure Licensing			Linda O Gorman	
Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Monmouth Churches Petition			Ian Bakewell	1-Oct-24
Council	24-Oct-24	RLDP			Craig O'Connor	

Council	24-Oct-24	Safeguarding report – Social Care & Health			Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Connecting Care – Social Care Case Management System - deferred		Deferred	Jane Rodgers	7-Oct-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Statement of Gambling Policy and proposals for casinos			Linda O Gorman	9-Jul-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Standards Committee Annual Report			James Williams	4-Oct-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Chief Officer report – Social Care & Health			Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
ICMD	23-Oct-24	UWN Land Charge			Amy Longford	25-Sep-24
ICMD	23-Oct-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 2	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	16-Oct-24	2025/26 Revenue and Capital MTFP update and process	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	16-Oct-24	2024/25 Revenue Monitoring Month 4	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Daviea	4-Jun-24
ICMD	09-Oct-24	Building at Risk Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O'Connor	28-Aug-24

Cabinet	25-Sep-24	People with Care Experience			John Pearson	
Council	19-Sep-24	Appointment to Outside Body			Charlotte Drury	
Council	19-Sep-24	Self-assessment report – People, Performance and Partnerships		To appoint a Monmouthshire Councillor to be a representative on the Rachel Herbert's School Endowment Charity.	John Pearson	
Council	19-Sep-24	Gov & Audit Annual Report			Matt Gatehouse	4-Jun-24
Council	19-Sep-24	Home to School Transport – response to consultation			Andrew Blackmore	21-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Measurement Framework	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Deb Hill Howells	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To approve an update to the measurement framework that enables Cabinet to track progress against the priorities in the community and corporate plan	Matt Gatehouse	7-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	USE OF SECTION 106 FROM N584 LAND AT FORENSIC SCIENCE CHEPSTOW	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To receive feedback on the statutory consultation concerning the proposed relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.	Matt Jones	
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Authorisation of Proper Officers - Public Protection, Environmental Health (Communicable Disease)			Christian Schmidt	7-Aug-24
ICMD	11-Sep-24	Monmouthshire Local Toilets Strategy - revised version 2024	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Louise Driscoll	

ICMD	11-Sep-24	GRT sites	Angela Sandles - Engagement		David H Jones	
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Future of the former Tudor Street Day Centre, Abergavenny	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding			4-Jun-24
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1			Nick Keyse	
ICMD	21-Aug-24	Increasing Building Regulations Charges	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	6-Jun-24
ICMD	21-Aug-24	Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		nigel george	
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ~ Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 16th July 2024			Frances O'Brien	
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Older People's Champion			Alistair Neill	
Council	18-Jul-24	Chief Officer report – Children and Young People	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To formally appoint to the role of Age Friendly champion in line with the commitment made by Council in January of this year and to provide a brief update on work done towards making Monmouthshire an age friendly county	Matthew Gatehouse / Jane Rodgers	27-Jun-24
Council	18-Jul-24	Medium Term Financial Strategy			Will McLean	4-Jun-24
Council	18-Jul-24	Budden Crescent business case	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24

Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Feedback from P&O Scrutiny	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Connected Care report – Social Care and Health (possible Sept)				26-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Digital and Data Strategy	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	4-Jul-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Revenue and Capital monitoring outturn report (including early update on 2024/25)	Ben Callard - Resources			10-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	SPEED LIMIT PROPOSALS – AMENDMENT ORDER NO. 14	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	10-May-24
ICMD	10-Jul-24	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	This report seeks Cabinet Member approval to proceed with several Traffic Orders throughout the County.	Graham Kinsella	
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	People Strategy		To provide cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority and to agree the revised strategic risk management policy	Richard Jones	26-Apr-24
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	Consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek Cabinet approval of a revised people strategy, which is one of a suite of enabling strategies that sit underneath the community and corporate plan to ensure the authorities resources are aligned with the delivery of its purpose.	Matt Gatehouse	1-May-24
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	Feedback from P&O Scrutiny	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Matthew Jones	26-Feb-24
Cabinet	22-May-24	Strategy for Commissioned Domiciliary Care in Monmouthshire		Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee – Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 14th May 2024	Hazel Ilett	14-May-24

Cabinet	22-May-24	Council Tax Assistance for MCC Foster Carers	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Ceri York	24-Apr-24
ICMD	22-May-24	Florence Jones Report & FGE	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	The purpose of this paper is to present the case for providing Monmouthshire County Council foster carers with a subsidy on their council tax. to consider the options in relation to the collection of monies secured under a land charge on land at and- including Upper House Farm, Wonastow, Monmouth	Jane Rodgers	8-May-24
ICMD	22-May-24	Political Balance Report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Amy Longford	30-Apr-24
Council	16-May-24	Appointments to Committees	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Council	16-May-24	Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Council	16-May-24	Uploading S106 Capital Sums into 2024/25 Capital Budget	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Cabinet	15-May-24	Development of a Supported Accommodation Project for care experienced young people	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Mike Moran	9-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Repurposing of Severn View Residential Home, Chepstow	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	24-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Housing Market Assessment	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To seek approval for the repurposing of Severn View Residential Home to support policy objectives around temporary accommodation, in accordance with the Rapid Rehousing Strategy.	Nick Keyse/Cath Fallon	
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Flood Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	The LHMA provides a review of the need for affordable and market housing across Monmouthshire and an overview of the current housing market.	Sally Meyrick	8-Jan-24

Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Transport Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Carl Touhig	9-Oct-23
Cabinet	15-May-24	Climate and Nature Emergency	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Transport Plan	Debra Hill-Howells / Christian Schmidt	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	15-May-24	Greenfingers Report		To receive an update on progress made towards the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and to agree the new overarching Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and action plan format	Hazel Clatworthy	19-Oct-23
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Housing Market Assessment Refresh 2022-2037	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	26-Mar-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Food Strategy		To provide an overview of the Local Housing Market Assessment Refresh 2022-2037 which provides an estimation of the additional affordable housing need across Monmouthshire.	Sally Meyrick	15-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Placement Development Strategy			Marianne Elliot	18-Apr-24
Council	18-Apr-24	ICMD Report - 20 mph Speed Limit Revocation Order	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	development of in-county residential and supported accommodation placements for children who are looked after. To make recommendations about i) changing the use of 3 existing properties in order to support the strategy	Jane Rodgers / Diane Corrister	8-Jan-24
ICMD	17-Apr-24	ICM report - Florence Jones DEFERRED	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Graham Kinsella	22-Mar-24
ICMD	17-Apr-24	Public Spaces Protection Order Dog Controls	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Amy Longford	11-Mar-24
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Primary School catchment areas consultation feedback	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Huw Owen	19-Feb-24

Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme update	Martyn Groucutt - Education	For Members to receive feedback on the consultation relating to a review of Primary School catchments areas and determine whether to implement proposals	Matthew Jones	20-Nov-23
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To provide members with details of the revisions to the Strategic Outline Programme for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which will inform the development of projects within the rolling programme of	Debbie Graves	12-Sep-23
ICMD	27-Mar-24	Experimental TRO Prohibition of driving except for access Goldwire Lane Monmouth	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	
ICMD	27-Mar-24	Increase in building control charges	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Graham Kinsella	
ICMD	13-Mar-24	To consider a Business Case for the acquisition of a property for use as a registered children's home	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O'Connor	
Cabinet	06-Mar-24	Adoption of Abergavenny Placemaking Plan	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		jane Rodgers	13-Feb-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Adoption of Magor Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the Abergavenny Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Abergavenny Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Adoption of Monmouth Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Road Safety Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		To adopt the Monmouth Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Monmouth Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Agree the name of the new Welsh-medium Primary School in Monmouth	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Road Safety Strategy	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22

Council	29-Feb-24	Standards Committee Appointment	Martyn Groucutt - Education	Agree the name of the new Welsh-medium Primary School in Monmouth	Debbie Graves	15-Nov-23
Council	29-Feb-24	Strategic Equality Plan 2024			James Williams	6-Feb-24
Council	29-Feb-24	Appointment of Monmouthshire Local Access Forum		To seek approval of a new Strategic Equality Plan for the period 2024-28, incorporating MCCs contribution to national action plans on race equality, LGBTQ and other protected characteristics	Matthew Gatehouse	15-Nov-23
Council	29-Feb-24	Final Budget Proposals		To secure the appointment of members to the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for its next 3 year period.	Matthew Lewis	18-Jan-23
Council	29-Feb-24	Capital and Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	29-Feb-24	Council Diary	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	29-Feb-24	WCF/Trust Treasury Fund Investment	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
ICMD	28-Feb-24	2023/24 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources			
Cabinet	28-Feb-24	2023/24 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	27-Apr-23
Cabinet	28-Feb-24	Economic Development Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	

Cabinet	07-Feb-24	Amendment to Street Naming and Numbering Policy regarding Replacement or additional Street nameplate signs for Existing Streets		REFRESHING THE MONMOUTHSHIRE BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGY and action plan in setting the economic ambition for the county and providing a strategic framework that guides future economic	Hannah Jones	9-Jan-23
ICMD	24-Jan-24	Community Council & Police Precepts - Determination	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Hand	2-Jan-24
ICMD	24-Jan-24	Introduction of Council Tax Premiums for Second homes from 1 st April 2024	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	18-Jan-24	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Ben Callard - Resources	Council to re affirm their decision on the Second Home Premium	Ruth Donovan	5-Dec-23
Council	18-Jan-24	Asset Management Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	
Council	18-Jan-24	Community & Corporate Plan performance update			Nick Keyse	28-Sep-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	REPURPOSING OF ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTY FARMS PORTFOLIO TO SUPPORT HOMELESSNESS AND OTHER POLICY OBJECTIVES	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide cabinet with the latest performance report of commitments in the Community and Corporate Plan	Richard Jones	5-Sep-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni		To seek approval for the repurposing of vacant cottages held within the County Farms Portfolio to support policy objectives such as alleviating pressures with homelessness and to address the reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation.	Nick Keyse	4-Dec-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Approval of the revised MCC Counter Fraud, Corruption & Bribery Policy	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Matthew Jones	23-Aug-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Draft Budget Proposals	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jan Furtek	2-Nov-23

Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3 held on 7th December 2023 Meeting didn't happen	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	29-Sep-23
ICMD	03-Jan-24	Community Council & Police Precepts - Proposed payment schedule	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	30-Mar-23

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK on Monday, 7th October, 2024 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill, (Chairman)
County Councillor Rachel Buckler, (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Jill Bond, John Crook, Steven Garratt, Meirion Howells, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong and Ann Webb

Also in attendance County Councillors: Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Peter Davies, Acting Chief Executive
Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Jonathan Davies, Head of Finance
Ian Saunders, Chief Officer Customer, Culture and Wellbeing.

APOLOGIES: None

Note: Minutes do not serve as a verbatim record of the meeting but provide a summary of the Committee's discussion. For the full discussion, please access the recording of the meeting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=ET1HGrdQXGI&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fdemocracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk%2F&source_ve_path=Mjg2NjY

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Financial update

Cabinet Member Councillor Callard and Jonathon Davies introduced the report and answered the members' questions.

Key points from Members:

- It was asked whether the Council's reliance on grants is typical, when compared with other local authorities, and if the committee could be provided with the number of staff who are grant-funded (Action).
- Concern was raised about the impact of budget cuts and vacancies on existing staff, particularly in health and social care. Members questioned whether

additional pressure on staff arising from increased workloads is being monitored and whether the Council is adequately supporting staff.

- Members asked how we are ensuring that, as vacancies arise, the right people are in the right place, and how we ensure that processes are lean and efficient.
- The level to which school staff are engaged with and supported with their deficit budgets was explored, and members asked if the results of staff surveys will be shared with council colleagues such that the Committee could be informed in future. It was further asked what messages of support are being given to Headteachers about the future trajectory of school spending.
- The Chair noted from the Chief Officer response that Covid remained a significant issue in our schools and among teacher and wider staff absence.
- Members asked about the staff impact of the £1.5m reduction in health and social care, with what impact on service delivery, and how this is managed.
- Clarity was sought as to whether the £2m shortfall in the budget savings target is in addition to the £4m overspend in core services from the end of last year. It was noted that the £2m was part of the £4m.
- It was asked if core services continue to overspend at the end of this financial year as is forecast, whether that will add to the £35m shortfall that was forecast in July, and how a forecast overspend will be dealt with as the clear direction in this and earlier reports is that the Council must not use reserves, and the Council cannot borrow to pay for any revenue shortfall. It was confirmed that if that situation arises, the Council would have to use reserves, though the focus was on the current in year shortfall being managed away through targeted budget recovery action.
- Regarding innovation, clarity was sought as to the extent to which those delivering the services are having an input into where savings can be made.
- Members asked for clarity about the impact of vacancies, with 3 vacancies in the Decarbonisation team given as an example.
- On the matter of Council Tax, members asked for more detail about the evidence that premiums are starting to bring properties back into use (Action).
- The Chair noted the impressive reduction of £820k in energy costs.
- It was asked how realistic the expectation is of reversing the current overspend trend in social care.

- Members asked if enough resource is being invested to build resilience and prevent families breaking down, and whether this is an area affected by grants.
- Clarity was sought about savings in relation to the Home to School Transport policy.
- It was asked if we are making best use of our staff with consultations, and whether an in-house team could do more of the ground work before a specialist team is used.
- Members asked about how the overspend in passenger transport is being addressed and why there has been a decrease in income for the solar farm.
- An answer was sought for the question asked by many residents as to why the authority appears to have financial problems when Council Tax is running between 3-4 times the rate of inflation.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for the significant discussion that had taken place and moved the report.

3. Medium Term Financial Plan Update

Cabinet Member Councillor Callard and Jonathon Davies introduced the report and answered the members' questions.

Key points from Members:

- Members asked if it is correct to say that Monmouthshire is better able to raise money through taxation.
- Regarding consultants and experts, it was asked if we are looking at value stream mapping our processes to reduce inefficiencies.
- Using the profiles of 'typical' Monmouthshire residents was queried, and it was asked how intersectionality and non-typical residents would be covered.
- Clarity was sought about the Future Generations Evaluation.

- A member asked for an explanation as to how impact assessment mitigations are reviewed and the officer agreed that there is further work to do to more explicitly report on how mitigations and impacts are being monitored.
- Further detail was sought about the modelling for Council Tax, and it was suggested that with less than 6 months until the start of the next financial year, we should remember that this is the financial plan, not 'modelling assumptions'.
- Members asked how many second homes have been reduced since the Second Homes policy was implemented, and whether the intention is to get rid of them entirely.
- It was asked whether any assessment has been carried out on the impact of a 5% Council tax increase on low-income households, and when the Council should contemplate a review of the size of the school estate as a necessary option for service redesign in Education.
- Regarding data, members asked how confident we can be that the right matrices have been identified and that the right data to make decisions has been captured.
- Clarity was sought about the fundamental need for 'radical change to the Council's operating model' as this was described in the July financial update.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member, officers and the committee for the thorough scrutiny and moved the report.

4. Next Meeting: 8th October 2024 at 10am and 15th October at 2pm

5. Investment and Commercial Portfolio Performance Update

Cabinet Member Councillor Callard and Nick Keyse introduced the report and answered the members' questions.

Key points from Members:

- Members asked if the forecast for Newport Leisure Park is realistic, and if other contingencies should be considered.

- It was asked if it is accurate that Monmouthshire residents are subsidising a private company, and if risks and contingencies should not be considered now, rather than later.
- Members asked what can be done to attract film production companies to Monmouthshire and for further elaboration on the proof of concept for MonSpace at Innovation House.
- It was asked how new tenants are encouraged, and how much rent the Council receives from Raglan Livestock Market.
- Members asked if there any pieces of estate currently being considered for alternative uses or disposal.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the officers for the informative report. The report was moved.

The Chair thanked the officers and Cabinet Member for the three reports and their responses to the committee's questions and said that the committee wished to recognise and give its thanks for all of the hard work done by staff across the organisation in delivering services against a challenging financial picture.

The meeting ended at **1.19 pm**

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK on Tuesday, 8th October, 2024 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill, (Chairman)
County Rachel Buckler, Councillor (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Jill Bond, John Crook, Steven Garratt, Meirion Howells, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong, Ann Webb, Simon Howarth, Penny Jones, Maureen Powell, Sue Riley, and Jackie Strong

Also in attendance County Councillor:
Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services

Officers in Attendance

Jane Rodgers, Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Diane Corrister, Head of Children's Services
Jess Scarisbrick, Safeguarding and Early Help Service Manager
Jenny Jenkins, Head of Adult Services

APOLOGIES: None

Note: Minutes do not serve as a verbatim record of the meeting but provide a summary of the Committee's discussion. For the full discussion, please access the recording of the meeting:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOqolimCObE&list=PLlmqn4nAaFJDsC93C-EKJZrFkDEQBdiXK&index=23

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Development of Children's Placements Policy

Cabinet Member Ian Chandler and Jane Rodgers introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Diane Corrister.

Key questions from Members:

- A member asked about the public consultation process in relation to locations for residential care homes and sought reassurance that due diligence is applied. The Cabinet Member clarified that while there is no public consultation for specific property acquisitions, local elected members are consulted. Once a property is acquired, engagement sessions with immediate neighbours are held to ensure good relations.
- The delays in the development of children's residential placements was raised, with members asking if there is any hope of bringing forward the completion dates. Officers explained that while there have been delays, the properties will be ready by their respective deadlines. The transition work for supported accommodation has already commenced.

- The reliance on grants was raised, with members asking about the potential impact if a grant is not approved. Officers clarified that the money for the Caerphilly technical team is already encompassed within the original grant, so there will be no detrimental effect if the new grant is not approved. Grants are pursued for capital purchases, but revenue is not reliant on grants. Future projects may involve prudential borrowing if grants are not available.
- Questions were asked about the structure for purchasing properties. The criteria for property purchases were explained, including physical requirements and location considerations, and value for money in relation to business cases was stressed.
- Members queried the transition of risks from for-profit to in-house provision. Officers explained that transition risks include workforce recruitment and the challenges of setting up in-house residential teams. Partnerships with experienced providers and regional colleagues help to mitigate these risks.
- The mentorship for care leavers was raised, with members strongly supporting the need for ongoing support. Officers explained that mentorship for care leavers is provided through personal assistants and peer support groups. Efforts are made to integrate young people into their communities.
- It was asked what role and powers the council has if a private provider were to open a home somewhere that we would consider inappropriate. Officers responded that the council has little control over that, with the registration process undertaken by Care Inspectorate Wales, who have their own regulations and requirements.
- There were questions about the technical elements needed for developing in-house residential care placements and workforce recruitment risks. Officers explained that workforce recruitment is challenging, but the council aims to attract workers through unique selling points and good terms and conditions.
- Clarity was sought on the regional not-for-profit market and members queried the opportunities for potential future partnerships. Officers explained that the appetite for not-for-profit providers to expand is constrained, but efforts are ongoing to build partnerships.
- A member sought reassurance that we are not considering bringing back young people into the county who are in settled and successful placements elsewhere. Officers explained that each case is considered individually, and the best long-term interests of the young person are prioritized. Some children with complex needs might not be brought back.
- A question was asked about additional capacity being included in the original business case. Officers clarified that the additional costs of a service manager was built into the first two business cases as part of the ongoing revenue cost.
- Members asked how much input young people have had in the development of the properties, and what the potential career development is for workers in the new service. Officers explained that young people have been involved in recruitment and visiting properties, while residential care is a great entry point for careers in social work, and Monmouthshire has a history of growing its own talent.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair extended his thanks, on behalf of members, to every member of staff across the whole of Adults and Children's social care, emphasising that members are conscious of the fact that these reports are about individual people and the great work and efforts made by all the staff. The report was moved.

4. Chief Officer for Social Care Annual Monitoring Report

Cabinet Member Ian Chandler and Jane Rodgers introduced the report. Jane Rodgers answered the members' questions with Jenny Jenkins.

Key questions from Members:

- The rationale for the significant increases in pressures and numbers requiring services in Monmouthshire was questioned, in particular, how the team is coping with the increased demand for services. The Chief Officer explained that the pressures are felt across the service, with the most notable increase at the front door of children's services. Factors include the long-term impact of Covid on children's development and family functioning, pressures within partner organizations, and societal issues like the cost-of-living crisis. A deep dive analysis is being conducted to understand and address these pressures – **ACTION (to provide this deep dive analysis for the committee once it is ready)**
- In terms of the decommissioning of Budden Crescent, whether the council has achieved an equivalent level of service satisfaction after the decommissioning, with members asking what progress has been made to improve the offer for those with complex needs. Officers acknowledged that while the decommissioning of Budden Crescent was difficult, the current respite offer includes direct payments, shared lives carers, and spot purchasing, which have not led to overall negative impacts. However, there is still a need to improve options for people with more complex needs.
- In relation to foster carers, it was asked whether increasing our offer to foster carers would result in savings by recruiting more foster carers and reducing reliance on independent fostering agencies. Officers discussed the challenge of balancing financial incentives with practical and emotional support. While increasing financial offers might help, it could lead to a competitive cycle with independent agencies. They are considering reviewing the financial offer to find a balance.
- Members asked how they can publicly share the good news and achievements of the social care team to the public in a sensitive manner. The discussion highlighted the importance of involving communications teams to share the positive news and achievements of the social care team with the public.
- Whether there are enough resources to deliver the ambitious priority actions was raised and whether we are working closely with the health board to reduce the need for resources. Officers explained that while more resources are always needed, they are working with what they have.
- Members asked if it would be possible to get more detail about the approximately 20% who disagree to the questions in the questionnaire – **ACTION (Chief Officer to collate outcomes and try to get more detail)**
- A member asked whether a detrimental financial impact on foster carers is factored in officers responded that that will be taken into consideration as part of what's offered.
- Officers were asked what has been working particularly well and what has been of concern. They responded that Reablement and the amazing practitioners working with families in need are areas that have worked well, while implementing oversight and controls at a whole service level has provided valuable insights into need, demand, and practice, enabling more tailored support for the workforce. Furthermore, developing a training module to support social workers in having complex conversations about care charges and financial situations has been effective. Particular concerns include the increased demand in the numbers and complexity of cases, the ageing demographic, and the need to do more to support unpaid carers.
- A member asked about the current state of waiting lists and reablement beds at Severn Park. Officers explained that there has been significant progress in reducing waiting lists, with the focus on strengthening the front door response to avoid putting people on waiting lists. Additionally, there is 'further faster funding' which is being used to add extra resources to the front door, as part of a broader project around the reablement transformation pathway.

- Regarding learning disability, members asked about the practice solutions report and timescales involved. It was explained that the report was agreed 15 months ago but there have been delays in its implementation. The Overmonnow base is now complete and currently being furnished but the base in Melville Theatre has been more complicated to bring forward but there is now a timescale for its completion.
- Regarding children's services, a member asked how much risk is still held with partners and what the impact is on them. Officers responded that despite expanding family support services, there are still high levels of risk. Intensive support services and monitoring arrangements are in place to manage these situations. When dealing with high-risk cases, a tight core group of partners works together, with the lead agency ensuring the safety and welfare of the child.
- Members asked how Severn View Park care home is doing now it's up and running and whether there are plans to open similar homes. Officers explained that the transition to Severn Park Care Home was successful, with extensive work done to familiarise residents with the new environment and allow them to choose their rooms. The feedback from staff has been positive, noting how smoothly the transition went and how quickly everyone adapted. There are no plans to open anything similar in the short term.
- Members asked for the caseload numbers in Children's care, and the number of newly qualified social care workers – **ACTION (to provide the figures)**
- The Chief Officer clarified the difference in the figures of FTE workers in the report: 600 total in the workforce and 471 in Adults Social Care.
- The Chair noted the discrepancy between Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Expectancy, proposing that a future meeting focus on what more can be done to build prevention and resilience – **ACTION (To programme in FWP)**

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer for the report and encouraged residents to read it in order to appreciate the team's work and to understand where the majority of the council's expenditure goes. The report was moved.

5. Safeguarding Annual Report

Cabinet Member Ian Chandler and Jane Rodgers introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Diane Corrister.

Key questions from Members:

- The source of the definition 'what good looks like' was queried and how it is determined. Officers explained that the definition comes from a range of sources, including legislation, corporate safeguarding policy, and experience working at a whole authority level. The cornerstone approach has been developed over many years and is informed by tools used in the past around effective safeguarding boards.
- Members asked how dependent we are on training for driving improvement, and when the Thingi training will be in place. It was explained that the transition to the new national standards for safeguarding is ongoing. Thingi has been implemented within social care for over a year and across the Council. The full implementation, including safeguarding modules, is expected to be completed in six months.
- How the Council supports the development of parental understanding and skills around different impacts was questioned. Officers explained that there is a range of services from prevention to intensive provisions aimed at supporting families and parents. Building Stronger Families and other services work to achieve good safeguarding outcomes for children by supporting parents.

- Whether there are there any improvements related to addressing issues of misogyny or extreme misogyny in schools. A joint bid has been submitted for a grant to address misogyny and relationship violence in schools. This pilot project will involve social care and education working directly in schools.
- It was asked how the Chief Officer feels about the delivery of her action plan, given that many actions are marked as ongoing or amber. Actions marked as amber are brought forward into the current year. The activities are whole authority efforts, not just social care, and are worked on continuously.
- Members enquired about the level of support in place for adult safeguarding concerns, particularly for domiciliary care workers who may face complaints or accusations. It was explained that the process for professional concerns includes a multi-agency panel that ensures the welfare and well-being of the staff involved. Support structures are in place to offer assistance, including mental health and emotional well-being support.
- The Chair raised concerns around self-assessment as a method of measuring the performance of services, querying the frequency of inspections was held, and reiterating the suggestion of bringing in other authorities in to give their opinion and to share learning. It was explained there is no specific regulatory report for whole authority safeguarding, but it is assessed during other inspections. The most recent inspection in February 2024 suggested strong safeguarding arrangements across the council.

Chair's Summary:

On behalf of the committee, the Chair wished to again pass on the committee's enormous appreciation to all staff. The report was moved.

6. Next Meeting - 15th October at 14.00

The meeting ended at **12.48 pm**

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with remote attendance on Tuesday, 15th October, 2024 at 2.00 pm

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill, (Chairman)
County Councillor Rachel Buckler, (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Jill Bond, Rachel Buckler, John Crook, Steven Garratt, Meirion Howells, Alistair Neill, Peter Strong, Ann Webb, Jan Butler, Mary Ann Brocklesby, Paul Griffiths and Martyn Groucutt

Also in attendance County Councillors: Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader, Paul Griffiths, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Economy and Martyn Groucutt, Cabinet Member for Education

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Scott James, Strategic Procurement Manager
Louise Wilce, Employment and Skills Youth Lead
Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise
Hannah Jones, Head Of Economy, Employment And Skills
Sharon Randall-Smith, Head of Achievement and Attainment

APOLOGIES: County Councillor Paul Pavia substituted by County Councillor Jan Butler

Note: Minutes do not serve as a verbatim record of the meeting but provide a summary of the Committee's discussion. For the full discussion, please access the recording of the meeting:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJzqz4_7Jq0&list=PLlmqn4nAaFJDsC93C-EKJzrFkDEQBdiXK&index=24

1. Declarations of Interest.

None.

2. Public Open Forum.

None

3. Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy - To review progress of the strategy.

(Note: this item was swapped with Item 6)

Council Leader Mary-Ann Brocklesby and Gemma Ellis introduced the report and answered the members' questions with John Paxton and Scott James.

Key points from Members:

- A member asked about the benefits of the collaborative partnership. The officer responded that the collaboration allows for the transfer of knowledge and expertise, which helps address inconsistencies and standardize processes across the partnership. The Leader added that the collaboration with Ardell provides economies of scale, access to expertise, and helps to address recruitment and retention challenges in the public sector.

- Members asked about value for money from the Procurement partnership. It was explained that collaboration and working together are essential to address budget pressures, leading to more efficient services and better community well-being outcomes.
- It was asked how it is ensured that local contractors are bidding and getting work in the area. It was highlighted that the new Procurement Act allows for below-threshold tenders to be advertised to local suppliers, maintaining competition to ensure value for money.
- Members asked how being socially responsible can be linked with ensuring good value. The officer explained that tenders are evaluated based on value for money, quality, and well-being criteria, ensuring a balanced approach. The Leader emphasised the importance of socially responsible procurement, which includes ethical considerations, local supply chains, and community benefits.
- A member asked for clarity about how the employees are funded. It was explained that the funding model for Ardell includes contributions from each of the four local authorities and levy income from three collaborative frameworks. It was confirmed that the 6 full-time employees are on secure contracts.
- Members sought clarity as to whether the 40 employed are in addition to those who would have been employed anyway. Officers explained that the 40 employees form part of the whole team, funded through a combination of local authority contributions and collaborative frameworks, maintaining expertise within the team.
- A member asked for clarity about the apparent difference in consultancy costs between this report and the budget – **ACTION: officers to provide details of consultancy spend**
- It was asked how officers ensure value for money and manage demand. The officers explained that the Procurement team uses Power BI to track and manage spend, ensuring compliance and identifying contract leakage. They also have a contract forward plan to prepare for upcoming procurements.
- Explanation was sought about the Contract Forward Plan and its progress. The Contract Forward Plan is being developed to provide a forward pipeline of work, helping to prepare the market and resource the procurement team effectively.
- With PowerBI, it was asked if members will be able to see the information by the end of the year. The officer explained that the information is provided on a quarterly basis to senior managers who can disseminate it through their teams.
- A member asked which key performance indicators are being used to measure the strategy's success and how often they are reviewed. Officers explained that KPIs include carbon reduction, Fair Work, and other well-being indicators. These are reviewed regularly, and Welsh Government is developing statutory KPIs for compliance.
- Examples of benefits to Monmouthshire communities beyond King Henry school and Magor Hub were sought. Officers responded that benefits include job creation, environmental improvements, and community well-being initiatives. Examples include the Magor Hub and King Henry School projects, which have provided local employment and educational opportunities.
- Members asked about increasing procurement from those with good environmental practices and how it is ensured that procurement doesn't lead to higher costs. The officer explained that the Council assesses suppliers on environmental performance and social value during the procurement process. They aim to balance cost, quality, and social value to ensure value for money without significantly increasing costs.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the officers and Leader. Before moving the report, he emphasised the importance of viewing the report from the residents' perspective, and what they might think about the tangible outcomes and achievements from the investments made, efficiency of suppliers and contracts, detail about expenditure, and the accuracy of assessments.

4. Revised NEET Reduction Strategy - To scrutinise the revised strategy prior to Cabinet decision.

Cabinet Member Paul Griffiths introduced the report. Louise Wilce delivered a presentation and answered the members' questions with Hannah Jones and Councillor Griffiths:

Key points from Members:

- Regarding the use of the word 'aspiration', it was asked if the services are doing well. The officer responded that they are doing well overall, but the area needing improvement is identifying and supporting young people who have not been flagged as at risk of becoming NEET.
- A member asked if there is an opportunity to look at the risk markers before age 7, and if any mental health or trauma support is available. The officer acknowledged the importance of early intervention and mentioned that previously, under ESF funding, there was a year 6-7 transition program. However, due to reduced funding under the UK SPF, the focus shifted to support just ahead of the post-16 transition. She emphasized the reliance on partnerships and stakeholders to provide mental health and well-being support.
- Clarity was sought about the initial source of funding that has been lost. It was clarified that the initial funding came from European Structural Funds (ESF), which supported the programme until 2022.
- Officers were asked to elaborate on the link between being NEET and homelessness. The officer explained that the Welsh Government merged the identification tools for NEET and youth homelessness due to overlapping risk markers such as attendance, exclusions, and looked-after status. This merger helps to ensure collaboration and avoid duplication in support services.
- It was asked if there are NEETs in the county that we don't know about, possibly due to information gaps from schools or because they moved into the county after age 16. The officer noted that the annual destination data tracks young people educated in Monmouthshire, while tier data tracks residents. There can be differences, and efforts are made to identify and track all young people, including those who move into the county.
- For those pupils aged 16 and 18 who decide to go into work directly, it was asked what we know about the job market for them. The officer responded that young people going directly into employment often find low-skilled and low-paid roles in sectors like construction and retail. There is a need to develop more apprenticeship opportunities and upskilling programs to improve their career prospects.
- A member asked what the main factors are to flag up in those who are in danger of becoming NEET, to identify a young person at risk. The officer mentioned that the early identification tool uses indicators such as poor attendance, exclusions, looked-after status, free school meals, school moves, and academic levels. These indicators help to benchmark the risk, but ongoing conversations with stakeholders are crucial to identify and support at-risk young people.
- A member asked if measures are in place for the work to continue once the funding runs out in March '25. The officer responded that the team is waiting for the outcomes of the Autumn budget statement on October 30th, like all other authorities in the UK. The team is exploring other funding sources, including the Welsh government and other avenues, but the end of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) on March 31st will significantly affect the local authority.
- A member asked how we track young people who drop out of their destination and come back. The officer explained that the system relies on stakeholders and partners to flag young people who drop out of their destination. Monthly "keeping in touch" meetings review the data and ensure that any young person who has become NEET is identified and supported.

- Members asked what happens to young people who drop out of university or other destinations beyond the age of 19. It was explained that while the youth engagement progression framework tracks up to age 19, support is available for those beyond this age through Job Centre Plus and adult employment and skills provision. However, it requires the young person to reach out to access this support.
- A member asked about the scenario in which someone goes to university in England and comes back. It was explained that if a young person has dropped from their destination and come back into the county they won't be flagged unless they have made contact with the support agency.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the officers for their work. He emphasised the importance of reports being written in a manner which is accessible and meaningful to residents, particularly the utility of a one-page summary from which residents can grasp the key points while still providing detailed data for those who wish to delve deeper. He also suggested shifting the focus on key issues and strategy towards external challenges and opportunities. The report was moved.

5. WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) - To scrutinise performance against the plans.

Cabinet Member Martyn Groucott and Sharon Randall-Smith introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Will McLean.

Key points from Members:

- A member asked whether the low number of students progressing to AS or A level Welsh is a concern and how the small classes are funded. The officer acknowledged the small number of students progressing to AS and A-level, attributing it partly to difficulties in recruiting Welsh language specialists, but promoting the benefits of bilingual education in the workforce is now more emphasised. Schools use their post-16 funding to support these classes, and the Escal project helps to maintain curriculum breadth by offering remote tutoring.
- More details were sought about how the E-sgol programme works. It was explained that the project involves remote tutoring for most of the time, but students also have regular face-to-face interactions with their peers and teachers. This project helps to maintain A-level provisions that would otherwise be under threat due to small class sizes.
- The Chair asked about the prospect of the number of students progressing to A-level to improve now. The officer emphasised the strong imperative from the government's aspiration to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050 and the number of posts, particularly government ones, for which Welsh is essential or desirable.
- It was asked further if it is expected that the support within the workforce for Welsh speaking will boost the number of A-level students. It was explained that it is challenging to determine whether support within the workforce for Welsh speaking or the number of A-level students comes first. Individual choices and aspirations were emphasised, along with the benefits of learning a second language to cognitive functions and future language acquisition, and it was noted that achieving the goal of a million Welsh speakers will rely on the overall levels of Welsh proficiency within the community and local authority.
- A member asked how the council is assessing and promoting the demand for Welsh medium education across the whole county. The officer explained that the council promotes Welsh medium education through various channels, including information in school booklets, social media, and community events. The Welsh Education Forum (WEF) has a promotion subgroup that meets regularly to strategise and implement promotional activities.
- It was asked how WESP aligns with the government's goal of 1 million speakers by 2050, what the annual targets are for Monmouthshire, and whether we are meeting them. The officer stated that Monmouthshire's target is 105 reception pupils by 2031, and they are currently at

65% of this target. The initial years are challenging, but progress is being made through various promotional efforts and the establishment of new schools and immersion provisions.

- A member asked if there could be a Welsh language comprehensive school in Monmouthshire in the future and, if so, what could be learned from existing comprehensives elsewhere that are achieving fantastic results. The Chief Officer responded that there are ongoing partnership discussions about providing a secondary Welsh medium school for Monmouthshire. Currently, secondary provision is based on partnerships with neighbouring authorities. He expressed concerns about the viability of a single secondary Welsh medium school in Monmouthshire due to the likely small cohort size, suggesting collaboration with other local authorities to ensure a rich curriculum.
- In relation to Outcome 7, a member asked for more detail regarding English medium schools and performance lacking in a number of areas versus targets. The officer explained that previous data capture was not as accurate as the current data, which affected the targets. The new data set will allow for better tracking of progress. There is ongoing work within the local authority and with the EAS to provide training and develop skills further.
- Members asked about the cost-benefit analysis of maintaining Welsh provision versus other services that are being cut. The Chief Officer acknowledged the slight additional cost of Welsh medium education compared to English medium (about 10% more on teaching costs and 15% more on resources). However, he emphasized the importance of providing meaningful choice for parents and meeting policy obligations. The benefits include promoting bilingual education, which has cognitive and career advantages.
- A member asked for clarity about the engagement with other authorities, and whether there is a concern about Torfaen not taking Monmouthshire pupils into their secondary schools. The officer clarified that while the partnership with secondary schools is strong, the challenge lies in aligning the measurement of progression, which varies between schools. Regarding secondary school places, she mentioned that current projections do not indicate an immediate concern, as the growth in Welsh medium education is gradual, giving time to address future capacity needs.
- It was asked if there is a case for continuity in assessment and standards that should be in place across the authorities. The officer noted that the curriculum allows schools to determine their own assessment methods based on their context. While there is a debate about standardizing assessments, the current approach is to work through these processes within individual schools.
- The Chair asked what percentage of pupils in the county are studying any other language, in order to compare with Welsh – **ACTION: officers to provide the percentage of pupils studying other languages, compared with Welsh**

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the officers for the informative report. The report was moved.

6. Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.

Officers will email members about Risk Register ideas.

7. Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Action lists:

16th July 2024

8. Cabinet and Council Planner.

9. To confirmation of following minutes:

The minutes were agreed.

Special Meeting - Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee dated 11th July 2024.

Ordinary Meeting - Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee dated 16th July 2024.

10. Next Meeting: 19th November 2024 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at **4.50 pm**