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Neuadd y Sir
Y Rhadyr
Brynbuga
NP15 1GA

Dydd Llun, 9 Mehefin 2025

Hysbysiad a Gyfarfod:

Pwyllgor Craffu Pobl

Dydd Mawrth, 17eg Mehefin, 2025, 10.00 am

Nodwch y cynhelir rhag gyfarfod 30 munud cyn dechrau'r cyfarfod ar gyfer aelodau'r pwyllgor

AGENDA

Rhif yr Eitem	Eitem	Tudalen nau
1.	Ethol Cadeirydd.	
2.	Penodi Is-gadeirydd.	
3.	Ymddiheuriadau dros Absenoldeb.	
4.	Datganiadau o Fuddiant	
5.	Fforwm Agored i'r Cyhoedd. Caiff cyfarfodydd ein Pwyllgorau Craffu eu ffrydio'n fyw a bydd dolen i'r ffrwd fyw ar gael ar dudalen cyfarfodydd gwefan Cyngor Sir Fynwy. Os hoffech siarad dan y Fforwm Agored i'r Cyhoedd mewn cyfarfod bydd angen i chi roi tri diwrnod gwaith o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod drwy gysylltu â Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk Y Cadeirydd fydd yn penderfynu faint o amser a roddir i bob aelod o'r cyhoedd i siarad, ond er mwyn ein galluogi i roi cyfle i nifer o siaradwyr gofynnwn nad yw cyfraniadau yn ddim hirach na 3 munud. Yn lle hynny, os hoffech gyflwyno sylwadau ysgrifenedig, sain neu fideo, cysylltwch â'r tîm yn defnyddio'r un cyfeiriad e-bost i drefnu hyn os gwelwch yn dda. Y dyddiad cau ar gyfer cyflwyno sylwadau i'r Cyngor yw 5 pm dri diwrnod gwaith clir cyn y cyfarfod. Os yw cyfanswm y sylwadau a geir yn fwy na 30 munud, caiff detholiad o'r rhain yn seiliedig ar thema ei rannu yn y cyfarfod. Bydd yr holl sylwadau geir ar gael i'r cynghorwyr cyn y cyfarfod.	

	Os hoffech awgrymu pynciau ar gyfer craffu arnynt yn y dyfodol gan un o'n Pwyllgorau Craffu, gwnewch hynny drwy anfon e-bost at Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk os gwelwch yn dda.	
6.	Adroddiad Archwilio Cymru ar Ryddhau Cleifion o Ysbyty (Gwent Gyfan) – Archwilio Cymru i gyflwyno canfyddiadau eu hadroddiad arolygu ar ryddhau o ysbytai yng Ngwent.	1 - 68
7.	Adroddiad Asesu Digonolrwydd Chwarae – I gynnal craffu cyn penderfynu ar yr adroddiad.	69 - 224
8.	Blaenraglen Waith y Pwyllgor Craffu Pobl.	225 - 230
9.	Cynllunydd Gwaith y Cyngor a'r Cabinet.	231 - 236
10.	Cadarnhau cofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol.	237 - 244
11.	Cyfarfod Nesaf: Dydd Mawrth 22ain Gorffennaf 2025 am 10.00am.	

Paul Matthews

Prif Weithredwr

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

MAE CYFANSODDIAD Y PWYLLGOR FEL A GANLYN:

County Councillor Jan Butler, Goetre Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Christopher Edwards, St. Kingsmark;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Simon Howarth, Llanelly Hill;, Independent Group
County Councillor Penny Jones, Raglan;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell, Pen Y Fal;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Sue Riley, Bulwark and Thornwell;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Maria Stevens, Severn;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong, Caldicot Cross;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt, Lansdown;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Gwybodaeth I'r Cyhoedd

Mynediad i gopiâu papur o agendâu ac adroddiadau

Gellir darparu copi o'r agenda hwn ac adroddiadau perthnasol i aelodau'r cyhoedd sy'n mynychu cyfarfod drwy ofyn am gopi gan Gwasanaethau Democrataidd ar 01633 644219. Dylid nodi fod yn rhaid i ni dderbyn 24 awr o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod er mwyn darparu copi caled o'r agenda hwn i chi.

Edrych ar y cyfarfod ar-lein

Gellir gweld y cyfarfod ar-lein yn fyw neu'n dilyn y cyfarfod drwy fynd i www.monmouthshire.gov.uk neu drwy ymweld â'n tudalen Youtube drwy chwilio am MonmouthshireCC. Drwy fynd i mewn i'r ystafell gyfarfod, fel aelod o'r cyhoedd neu i gymryd rhan yn y cyfarfod, rydych yn caniatáu i gael eich ffilmio ac i ddefnydd posibl y delweddau a'r recordiadau sain hynny gan y Cyngor.

Y Gymraeg Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu cyfraniadau gan aelodau'r cyhoedd drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Gofynnwn gyda dyledus barch i chi roi 5 diwrnod o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod os dymunwch siarad yn Gymraeg fel y gallwn ddarparu ar gyfer eich anghenion.

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

i ddod yn sir ddi-garbon, gan gefnogi lles, iechyd ac urddas i bawb ar bob cam o'u bywydau.

Amcanion rydym yn gweithio tuag atynt

- Lle teg i fyw lle mae effeithiau anghydraddoldeb a thlodi wedi'u lleihau;
- Lle gwyrdd i fyw a gweithio gyda llai o allyriadau carbon a gwneud cyfraniad cadarnhaol at fynd i'r afael â'r argyfwng yn yr hinsawdd a natur;
- Lle ffyniannus ac uchelgeisiol, lle mae canol trefi bywiog a lle gall busnesau dyfu a datblygu;
- Lle diogel i fyw lle mae gan bobl gartref maen nhw'n teimlo'n ddiogel ynddo;
- Lle cysylltiedig lle mae pobl yn teimlo'n rhan o gymuned ac yn cael eu gwerthfawrogi;
- Lle dysgu lle mae pawb yn cael cyfle i gyrraedd eu potensial.

Ein gwerthoedd

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.
- **Caredigrwydd** – Byddwn yn dangos caredigrwydd i bawb yr ydym yn gweithio gyda nhw, gan roi pwysigrwydd perthnasoedd a'r cysylltiadau sydd gennym â'n gilydd wrth wraidd pob rhyngweithio.

Canllaw Cwestiynau Craffu Sir Fynwy

Rôl y Cyn-gyfarfod

1. Pam mae'r Pwyllgor yn craffu ar hyn? (cefndir, materion allweddol)
2. Beth yw rôl y Pwyllgor a pha ganlyniad mae'r Aelodau am ei gyflawni?
3. A oes digon o wybodaeth i gyflawni hyn? Os nad oes, pwy allai ddarparu hyn?
 - Cytuno ar y drefn holi a pha Aelodau fydd yn arwain
 - Cytuno ar gwestiynau i swyddogion a chwestiynau i Aelod y Cabinet

Cwestiynau'r Cyfarfod

Craffu ar Berfformiad

1. Sut mae perfformiad yn cymharu â'r blynyddoedd blaenorol? Ydy e'n well/yn waeth? Pam?
2. Sut mae perfformiad yn cymharu â chynghorau eraill/darparwyr gwasanaethau eraill? Ydy e'n well/yn waeth? Pam?
3. Sut mae perfformiad yn cymharu â thargedau gosodedig? Ydy e'n well/yn waeth? Pam?
4. Sut cafodd targedau perfformiad eu gosod? Ydyn nhw'n ddigon heriol/realistig?
5. Sut mae defnyddwyr gwasanaethau/y cyhoedd/partneriaid yn gweld perfformiad y gwasanaeth?
6. A fu unrhyw awdid ac archwiliadau diweddar? Beth oedd y canfyddiadau?
7. Sut mae'r gwasanaeth yn cyfrannu at wireddu amcanion corfforaethol?
8. A yw gwelliant/dirywiad mewn perfformiad yn gysylltiedig i gynnydd/ostyngiad mewn adnodd?
Pa gapasiti sydd yna i wella?

Craffu ar Bolisi

1. Ar bwy mae'r polisi yn effeithio ~ yn uniongyrchol ac yn anuniongyrchol? Pwy fydd yn elwa fwyaf/leiaf?
2. Beth yw barn defnyddwyr gwasanaeth /rhanddeiliaid? Pa ymgynghoriad gafodd ei gyflawni? A wnaeth y broses ymgynghori gydymffurfio ag Egwyddorion Gunning? A yw rhanddeiliaid yn credu y bydd yn sicrhau'r canlyniad a ddymunir?
3. Beth yw barn y gymuned gyfan – safbwynt y 'trethdalwr'?
4. Pa ddulliau a ddefnyddiwyd i ymgynghori â'r rhanddeiliaid? A oedd y broses yn galluogi pawb â chyfran i ddweud eu dweud?
5. Pa ymarfer ac opsiynau sydd wedi eu hystyried wrth ddatblygu/adolygu'r polisi hwn? Pa dystiolaeth sydd i hysbysu beth sy'n gweithio? A yw'r polisi yn ymwneud â maes lle mae diffyg ymchwil cyhoeddedig neu dystiolaeth arall?
6. A yw'r polisi'n ymwneud â maes lle ceir anghydraddoldebau hysbys?
7. A yw'r polisi hwn yn cyd-fynd â'n hamcanion corfforaethol, fel y'u diffinnir yn ein cynllun corfforaethol? A yw'n cadw at ein Safonau Iaith Gymraeg?
8. A gafodd yr holl ddatblygu cynaliadwy, y goblygiadau cydraddoldeb a diogelu perthnasol eu hystyried?

	Er enghraifft, beth yw'r gweithdrefnau sydd angen bod ar waith i amddiffyn plant? 9. Faint fydd y gost hon i'w gweithredu a pha ffynhonnell ariannu sydd wedi'i nodi? 10. Sut fydd perfformiad y polisi yn cael ei weithredu a'r effaith yn cael ei gwerthuso?
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Cwestiynau Cyffredinol:

Grymuso Cymunedau

- Sut ydym ni'n cynnwys cymunedau lleol a'u grymuso i ddylunio a darparu gwasanaethau i gyd-fynd ag angen lleol?
- A ydym ni'n cael trafodaethau rheolaidd gyda chymunedau am flaenoriaethau'r gwasanaeth a pha lefel o wasanaeth y gall y cyngor fforddio ei ddarparu yn y dyfodol?
- A yw'r gwasanaeth yn gweithio gyda dinasyddion i egluro rôl gwahanol bartneriaid wrth ddarparu gwasanaeth a rheoli disgwyliadau?
- A oes fframwaith a phroses gymesur ar waith ar gyfer asesu perfformiad ar y cyd, gan gynnwys o safbwynt dinesydd, ac a oes gennych chi drefniadau atebolrwydd i gefnogi hyn?
- A oes Asesiad Effaith Cydraddoldeb wedi'i gynnal? Os felly a all yr Arweinydd a'r Cabinet /Uwch Swyddogion roi copïau i'r Aelodau ac eglurhad manwl o'r Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb (EQIA) a gynhaliwyd mewn perthynas â'r cynigion hyn?
- A all yr Arweinydd a'r Cabinet/Uwch Swyddogion sicrhau aelodau bod y cynigion hyn yn cydymffurfio â deddfwriaeth Cydraddoldeb a Hawliau Dynol? A yw'r cynigion yn cydymffurfio â Chynllun Cydraddoldeb Strategol yr Awdurdod Lleol?

Galwadau'r Gwasanaeth

- Sut fydd newid polisi a deddfwriaeth yn effeithio ar y ffordd mae'r cyngor yn gweithredu?
- A ydym ni wedi ystyried demograffeg ein cyngor a sut bydd hyn yn effeithio ar ddarparu gwasanaethau a chyllid yn y dyfodol?
- A ydych chi wedi adnabod ac ystyried y tueddiadau tymor hir a allai effeithio ar eich maes gwasanaeth, pa effaith allai'r tueddiadau hyn ei chael ar eich gwasanaeth/allai eich gwasanaeth ei gael ar y tueddiadau hyn, a beth sy'n cael ei wneud mewn ymateb?

Cynllunio Ariannol

- A oes gennym ni gynlluniau ariannol canolig a hirdymor cadarn yn eu lle?
- A ydym ni'n cysylltu cyllidebau â chynlluniau a chanlyniadau ac adrodd yn effeithiol ar y rhain?

Gwneud arbedion a chynhyrchu incwm

- A oes gennym ni'r strwythurau cywir ar waith i sicrhau bod ein dulliau effeithlonrwydd, gwelliant a thrawsnewid yn gweithio gyda'i gilydd i sicrhau'r arbedion mwyaf posibl?

- Sut ydym ni'n gwneud y mwyaf o incwm? A ydym ni wedi cymharu polisïau eraill y cyngor i sicrhau'r incwm mwyaf posibl ac wedi ystyried yn llawn y goblygiadau ar ddefnyddwyr gwasanaeth?

- A oes gennym ni gynllun gweithlu sy'n ystyried capasiti, costau, a sgiliau'r gweithlu gwirioneddol yn erbyn y gweithlu a ddymunir?

Cwestiynau i'w gofyn o fewn blwyddyn i'r penderfyniad:

- A gafodd canlyniadau arfaethedig y cynnig eu cyflawni neu a oedd canlyniadau eraill?
- A oedd yr effeithiau wedi'u cyfyngu i'r grŵp yr oeddech chi ar y dechrau yn meddwl fyddai wedi cael ei effeithio h.y. pobl hŷn, neu a gafodd eraill eu heffeithio e.e. pobl ag anabledau, rhieni â phlant ifanc?
- A yw'r penderfyniad yn dal i fod y penderfyniad cywir neu a oes angen gwneud addasiadau?

Cwestiynau i'r Pwyllgor ar ddiwedd y cyfarfod ...

A oes gennym ni'r wybodaeth angenrheidiol i ffurfio casgliadau/i wneud argymhellion i'r pwyllgor gwaith, cyngor, partneriaid eraill? Os nad oes, a oes angen i ni:

- (i) Ymchwilio i'r mater yn fwy manwl?
- (ii) Gael rhagor o wybodaeth gan dystion eraill - Aelod o'r Bwrdd Gweithredol, arbenigwr annibynnol, aelodau o'r gymuned, defnyddwyr gwasanaeth, cyrff rheoleiddio...

Cytuno ar gamau pellach sydd i'w cymryd o fewn amserlen/adroddiad monitro yn y dyfodol.

SUBJECT:	Audit Wales Report into Flow out of Hospital (Hospital Discharge) – Gwent Region
MEETING:	People Scrutiny
DATE:	17th June 2025
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To present committee members with the Audit Wales report published in September 2024 concerning Flow out of Hospital in the Gwent Region.

1.2 To consider the Audit Wales report from a Monmouthshire perspective and provide an updated position in terms of performance.

1.3 To provide the opportunity for members to scrutinise services that are in place to reduce and prevent unnecessary delays for Monmouthshire residents waiting to be discharged from hospital.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

For members to scrutinise:

- Monmouthshire's response to the Audit Wales report
- Current performance with regards to hospital discharge
- The actions that the service has taken and the services that are in place to reduce and prevent unnecessary delays in hospital discharge.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 In September 2024 Audit Wales published its report into "Urgent and Emergency Care: Flow out of Hospital – Gwent Region" (attached). The audit was undertaken using data from April 2023 – February 2024 together with a comprehensive range of focus groups, interviews and observation of practice. A fully methodology is set out at Appendix 1 of the Audit Wales report.

3.2 The audit was undertaken to,
"Satisfy the Auditor General that NHS bodies and local authorities have proper arrangements in place to secure the efficient, effective, and economical use of resources, as required by Sections 17 and 61 of the Public Audit Wales Act 2004."

3.3 For the majority of people who enter hospital, hospital discharge is a process that runs smoothly with minimal intervention, other than standard procedures around ensuing access to medication, arranging any follow-up procedures or assessments; and ensuring that there is

adequate support at home. However, for some groups of people particularly those who are more frail or have complex social or medical needs including dementia, delays can arise.

3.4 A delayed discharge is when a patient is 'medically optimised' but is not yet able to leave hospital due to a number of potential factors. These include: - hospital based assessments that have not yet been undertaken; decisions about move on arrangements that have not yet concluded; care and support arrangements that are not yet in place. Delays within hospital discharge can have a negative impact on a patient's recovery, rehabilitation and independence (for example, loss of mobility / confidence whilst in hospital; or hospital acquired infection). Delays in hospital can have an impact on the wider community when bottle-necks arise due to a lack of flow through the hospital system.

3.5 The report found that,

"Despite a clear focus on improving patient flow within the region, a significant number of medically fit patients are occupying hospital beds. This continues to have serious knock-on effects on other NHS pathways of care and creates risks for patients' physical and mental well-being" and

"For the twelve months up to and including February 2024 there were an average of 250 medically fit patients in the Health Board's hospitals whose discharge was delayed.... with the total number of bed days that had been lost to delayed discharges over that period was 55,685 which equates to £27.8 million of NHS resource based on an average bed cost of £500."

3.6 For Gwent as a whole, the rate of delayed discharges per 100,000 head of population during the period was found to be generally lower when compared to the all-Wales position. For Monmouthshire specifically, however, the rate was occasionally slightly higher than the all-Wales position. The average total length of stay for patients staying over 21 days in the acute sites was 44 days (compared to 56 days across Wales).

3.7 For Monmouthshire residents the top five social care reasons for delayed discharge were:

- Awaiting joint assessment
- Awaiting nursing/residential home for self-funding residents
- Awaiting completion of assessment by social care
- Awaiting start of new home care package
- Awaiting residential/nursing care home manager to visit and assess

The challenges that the service was experiencing at that time in respect of ensuring domiciliary care was also highlighted.

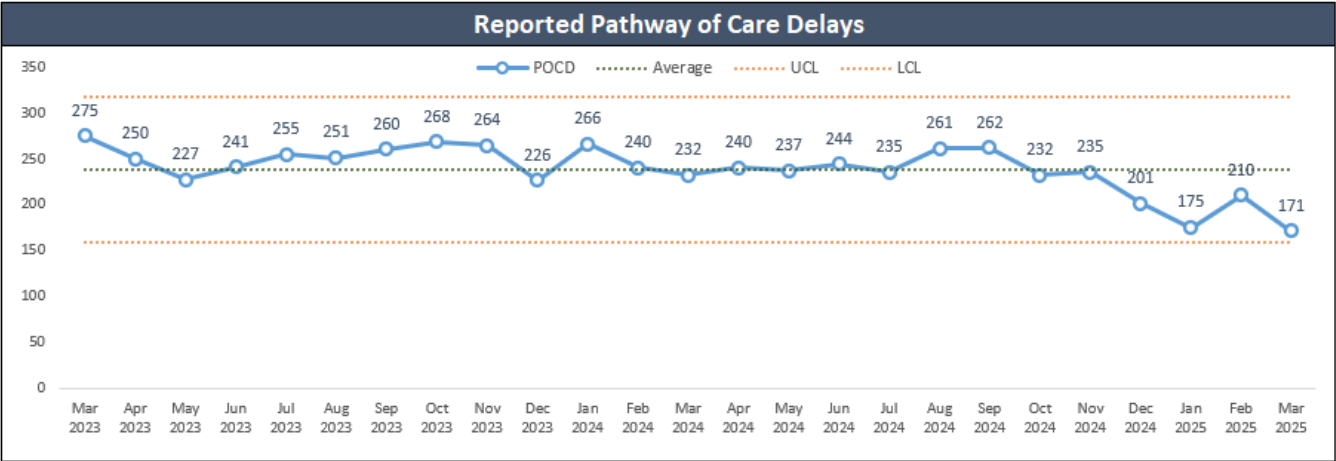
3.8 Eleven recommendations were made which are set out in detail at point 14, exhibit 1 of the Audit Wales report. In headline terms the recommendations are:

- Improving training and guidance on discharge planning
- Embedding a seven-day approach to discharge
- Clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to informal over prescribing of care packages
- Review risk appetite in relation to patient discharge
- Embedding the Trusted Assessor model
- Improving oversight of policies and guidance
- Improving the quality and sharing of information
- Patient, service user and staff feedback

3.9 A combined Local Authority / Health response to the recommendations is set out at Appendix 5 of the Audit Wales report.

3.10 It is fair to say that hospital discharge remains a key national priority. In November 2024, the Welsh Government issued a '50-day challenge' with accompanying practice guidance for Regional Partnership Boards with the intention to drive improvement specifically over the winter period. At a regional level various strategic and operational structures are in place to support joint working including the Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership and the Integrated Discharge Board. Equally, at a locality level, Monmouthshire's integrated arrangements between primary health and social care support day to day practice and operational decision making aimed at reducing delays for individual residents.

3.11 There is an intense amount of scrutiny of performance in this area exercised at a national, regional and local level with, during certain periods, weekly reporting up to the First Minister. Overall, this has shown an improved picture over the year 2024/25 for the Gwent region (including Monmouthshire) in both numbers of delayed discharge and length of stays.



Source: End of Challenge Report to the Care Action Committee, Gwent Region

3.12 The table below highlights the improvement seen as at March 2025 in terms of reported delays and days delayed with reported improvement across Health, Social Care and joint delays:

 Reported Delays 171	 Days Delayed 6,195	 Health Delays 32	 Social Delays 64	 Joint Delays 75																																																		
<table><tr><td>Last Month</td><td>Last Year</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2025</td><td>Mar 2024</td></tr><tr><td>210</td><td>232</td></tr><tr><td>↓</td><td>↓</td></tr><tr><td>-18.6%</td><td>-26.3%</td></tr></table>	Last Month	Last Year	Feb 2025	Mar 2024	210	232	↓	↓	-18.6%	-26.3%	<table><tr><td>Last Month</td><td>Last Year</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2025</td><td>Mar 2024</td></tr><tr><td>6912</td><td>8937</td></tr><tr><td>↓</td><td>↓</td></tr><tr><td>-10.4%</td><td>-30.7%</td></tr></table>	Last Month	Last Year	Feb 2025	Mar 2024	6912	8937	↓	↓	-10.4%	-30.7%	<table><tr><td>Last Month</td><td>Last Year</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2025</td><td>Mar 2024</td></tr><tr><td>49</td><td>71</td></tr><tr><td>↓</td><td>↓</td></tr><tr><td>-34.7%</td><td>-54.9%</td></tr></table>	Last Month	Last Year	Feb 2025	Mar 2024	49	71	↓	↓	-34.7%	-54.9%	<table><tr><td>Last Month</td><td>Last Year</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2025</td><td>Mar 2024</td></tr><tr><td>81</td><td>71</td></tr><tr><td>↓</td><td>↓</td></tr><tr><td>-21.0%</td><td>-9.9%</td></tr></table>	Last Month	Last Year	Feb 2025	Mar 2024	81	71	↓	↓	-21.0%	-9.9%	<table><tr><td>Last Month</td><td>Last Year</td></tr><tr><td>Feb 2025</td><td>Mar 2024</td></tr><tr><td>80</td><td>90</td></tr><tr><td>↓</td><td>↓</td></tr><tr><td>-6.3%</td><td>-16.7%</td></tr></table>	Last Month	Last Year	Feb 2025	Mar 2024	80	90	↓	↓	-6.3%	-16.7%
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Source: End of Challenge Report to the Care Action Committee, Gwent Region

3.13 Within Monmouthshire our progress is evidenced as follows:

- The number of monthly delayed discharges in Monmouthshire are tracked and between March 2023 and March 2025 the average is 53 with the highest being 63 (August 2024) and the lowest being 40 (March 2025).
- The number of monthly days delayed in Monmouthshire are tracked and between March 2023 and March 2025 the average number of days delayed was 2356. The highest number of days was 3392 (December 2024) and the lowest was 1179 (March 2025)
- The current number of delayed discharges at 21st May 2025 is 51 just below the average of 53. The number of bed days delayed is 1436, considerably below the average of 2356 when measured against the number of total delays. This highlights the trend of improvement in reducing the length of delays.
- It is important to note that fluctuations occur as a result of demand and capacity within both acute and community settings but the improvements in communication and responsivity are focused on delivering better outcomes for Monmouthshire residents.

3.14 It is imperative that hospital discharge remains as a priority area for Monmouthshire. This is required to ensure that services are orientated to supporting people to leave hospital in a timely manner, with the right care and support in place to achieve good personal outcomes and maximise wellbeing. At the same time, the service is working jointly with others to address some of the underlying systemic challenges including access to early, preventative support and treating people safely at home (admission avoidance) where this might support better outcomes.

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

4.1 The impact of delays in discharge and longer than necessary stays in hospital disproportionately affect older people and those with complex needs or disabilities. Staying in hospital longer than necessary can have a negative effect on people including reduced strength and mobility, loss of confidence and result in further deterioration to people's underlying needs / conditions. It can be an anxious and stressful time for individuals and their families / carers as major decisions are being taken about the patient's future living and care arrangements.

4.2 The steps that are being taken to reduce delays will support better outcomes for some of our most vulnerable residents.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Not applicable

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Intensive oversight and scrutiny of performance is in place including monthly dashboards to monitor delayed pathways; length of stay; reasons for delays; numbers of assessments undertaken and specific service outcomes. Oversight is provided through national and regional structures including the Regional Partnership Board and through into Welsh Government.

7. REASONS:

7.1 Hospital flow is an area of national interest and concern that members should have the opportunity to scrutinise at a local level.

7.2 There is an established mechanism for Audit Wales reports to be brought to the attention of Governance and Audit committee. However; as the findings and outcomes of the report directly concern Monmouthshire residents it was felt that a more detailed scrutiny exercise should be undertaken by People Scrutiny Committee.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 There are no specific resource implications. There are considerable resources within adults services that are turned towards supporting hospital discharge; however these are not disaggregated from the overall budget for the service. There are some specific government grants which support this area of work (including through the Regional Integrated Fund). Utilisation of grant monies, and adherence to the terms and conditions of the grant, are reported directly to Welsh Government.

9. CONSULTEES:

Social Care Directorate Management Group

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Urgent and Emergency Care: Flow out of Hospital – Gwent Region

Date issued: September 2024

Document reference: 4775A2025



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Urgent and Emergency Care: Flow out of Hospital – Gwent Region

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

Summary report	
About this report	4
Key messages	5
Recommendations	6
Detailed report	
What is the scale of the challenge?	9
What is impacting effective and timely flow of patients out of hospital?	15
What action is being taken?	26
What more can be done?	31
Appendices	
Appendix 1 – audit methods	35
Appendix 2 – reasons for delayed discharges	37
Appendix 3 – urgent and emergency care performance	41
Appendix 4 – waits for social care assessments and care packages	46
Appendix 5 – combined management response to audit recommendations	48

Summary report

About this report

- 1 Once a patient is considered medically or clinically well enough to leave hospital (also referred to as medically fit or clinically optimised) the timely discharge of that patient to the right setting for their ongoing needs is vital. Timely, effective, and efficient moving of patients out of an acute hospital setting holds important benefits for patient care and experience as well as for the use of NHS resources.
- 2 When the discharge process takes longer than it should there can be significant implications for the patient in terms of their recovery, rehabilitation, and independence. Delayed discharges will also have implications for other patients coming into the urgent and emergency care system¹ who need a hospital bed. Poor patient “flow” create bottlenecks in the system that contribute to well documented problems such as over-crowded emergency departments and an inability to secure timely handover of patients from ambulance crews.
- 3 The Auditor General had originally included work in his 2021 local audit plans to examine whole system issues affecting urgent and emergency care services, including the discharge of patients from hospital. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in this work being postponed and brought back on stream in 2023. Our work has sought to examine whether health boards and local authorities have effective arrangements in place to ensure the timely discharge of patients out of hospital. The approach we adopted to deliver our work is detailed in **Appendix 1**.
- 4 This work is part of a broader programme of work the Auditor General is currently undertaking in respect of urgent and emergency care services in Wales. We are also examining the arrangements in place to help manage urgent and emergency care demand, and to direct patients to the care setting that is most appropriate to their needs. The findings from that work will be reported separately in 2024.
- 5 The Auditor General's work on urgent and emergency care is designed to help discharge his statutory duties. Specifically, this work is designed to satisfy the Auditor General that NHS bodies and local authorities have proper arrangements in place to secure the efficient, effective, and economical use of resources, as required by Sections 17 and 61 of the Public Audit Wales Act 2004.
- 6 This report sets out the findings from the Auditor General's review of the arrangements to support effective flow out of hospital in the Gwent Region (the region). The region encompasses:
 - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (the Health Board);
 - Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council;

¹ Urgent and emergency care describes any unplanned, urgent, and emergency care provided by health and social care services. The urgent and emergency care system is complex with numerous organisations involved in providing services and it deals with acutely unwell, vulnerable, and distressed people in need of urgent assistance.

- Caerphilly County Borough Council;
- Monmouthshire County Council;
- Newport City Council; and
- Torfaen County Borough Council

7 In undertaking this work, we have also considered progress made by the Health Board against previous recommendations made in our 2017 report on discharge planning. Our findings from this work are set out in a separate report to the Health Board.

Key messages

- 8 Overall, we found that **despite a clear focus on improving patient flow within the region, a significant number of medically fit patients are occupying hospital beds. This continues to have serious knock-on effects on other NHS pathways of care and creates risks for patients' physical and mental well-being. More timely assessments of patients, a less risk averse approach to discharge planning and more consistent application of discharge policy is needed. Workforce and IT system challenges continue to be key barriers that partners will need to focus on to secure value from the investments they have made and to achieve the improvements they recognise are needed.**
- 9 For the twelve months up to and including February 2024, each month there were an average of 250 medically fit patients in the Health Board's hospitals whose discharge was delayed. The completion of joint and clinical assessments were the main causes for delayed discharge and the total number of bed days that had been lost to delayed discharges over that period was 55,685 which equates to £27.8 million of NHS resource based on an average bed cost of £500. A full list of the reasons for discharge delays is included in **Appendix 2**.
- 10 The consequent impact on patient flow within hospitals and the urgent and emergency care system is significant, with waiting times in emergency departments and ambulance handovers falling well short of national targets. In February 2024, there were over 3,000 lost ambulance hours because of handover delays, and the average wait within the Health Board's emergency department was 8.5 hours. More detailed analysis of the region's performance across a range of urgent and emergency performance indicators is included in **Appendix 3**.
- 11 Several factors are contributing to delayed discharges. Complexity and volume of demand are increasing in line with an ageing population, but the Health Board may be exacerbating that complexity by being risk averse to discharge which is contributing to problems elsewhere in the patient pathway. Workforce capacity in both health and social care is a challenge for the region, impacting on joint and clinical assessments, although waits for social care assessments are less problematic than many other parts of Wales, and the care sector capacity across the region is generally meeting demand. There are regular multi-disciplinary meetings in relation to patient discharge, but use of the existing discharge policy is

not embedded, the approach to staff training is inconsistent, and the discharge planning process is not well documented within patient case notes. Staff involved in the discharge process have created operational workarounds for data sharing such as patient flow meetings, but formal data sharing and data quality are variable and digital interfaces between organisations are not compatible.

- 12 We found that addressing patient flow is central to relevant strategic and operational plans across the Gwent region and in line with Welsh Government requirements. Strategic partnership working is evident building on existing collaborative relationships, but operational partnership working is less well developed. Financial resources are being targeted to support patient flow with positive outcomes, although the ability of the partners to match fund is increasingly challenging and the impact of the funded initiatives could be more transparent. There is clear oversight and scrutiny of actions being taken to improve patient flow, although more could be done to gather patient and service user feedback and oversee compliance with current discharge policies.
- 13 Whilst there is a clear recognition by regional partners of the problems associated with discharge, a desire to address them with the right focus within strategies and plans, impactful projects and good strategic relationships, the number of delayed discharges across the region have not significantly reduced. Continued action is needed across a range of areas to secure the improvements which are necessary for patients, their families, and the wider urgent and emergency care system.

Recommendations

- 14 Recommendations arising from this audit are detailed in **Exhibit 1**. The combined management response by the statutory bodies included in this review to these recommendations will be summarised in **Appendix 5** once considered by the relevant committees.

Exhibit 1: recommendations

Recommendations

Improving training and guidance on discharge planning

- R1 The Health Board and local authorities should embed processes to communicate discharge planning guidance to all relevant health and social services staff, including those working on a temporary basis, supported by an ongoing programme of refresher training and induction training for new staff. Where possible, this should be done on a joint basis.
- R2 The Health Board should update its discharge policy to ensure that it reflects the national guidance issued by the Welsh Government in December 2023.

Recommendations

Embedding a seven-day approach to discharge

- R3 The Health Board and local authorities should review capacity to embed and deliver seven-day discharge. Despite discharges needing to happen daily, current ways of working do not support this, and a lack of weekend discharge means patients have a prolonged stay in hospital which increases risk of deconditioning and acquiring infection.

Clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to informal over prescribing of care packages

- R4 The Health Board should clarify roles and responsibilities regarding care package prescribing to ensure patients are not given unrealistic and unnecessary expectations in relation to care provision. This is particularly the case with older patients who may be seen as frail. This can disempower patients from being independent and may lead to future readmissions.

Review risk appetite in relation to patient discharge

- R5 The Health Board should review its cultural appetite and approach to risk in relation to patient discharge. This should ensure risk is assessed across the whole patient pathway, so beds are not unnecessarily occupied.

Embedding the Trusted Assessor model

- R6 The Health Board should embed its approach to the Trusted Assessor model and communicate this approach to all partners. Whilst there is recognition this may not help secure care packages or placements more quickly; it will ensure there is capacity to assess patients when required.

Improving oversight of policies and guidance

- R7 The Health Board should monitor compliance with its discharge policy to assess the effectiveness and consistency of the application, and whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. This includes adhering to its own policy that an annual programme of learning will be reported to the Patient Quality, Safety and Outcomes Committee.

Improving the quality and sharing of information

- R8 The Health Board and local authorities should implement ways in which patient information can be shared more effectively, including opportunities to

Recommendations

provide wider access to organisational systems and ultimately joint IT solutions.

R9 The Health Board should improve record keeping by:

- 9.1. ensuring all staff involved in discharge planning fully understand the importance of documenting comprehensive information in patient case-notes to support effective discharge planning.
 - 9.2. establishing a programme of case-note audits focused on the quality of record keeping.
-

Patient, service user and staff feedback

R10 The Health Board should ensure it has mechanisms in place to understand the experiences of patients and carers in the discharge process in line with their existing policy and apply learning.

R11 The local authorities should ensure relevant social services teams routinely capture service users and carers' experiences and apply learning.

Detailed report

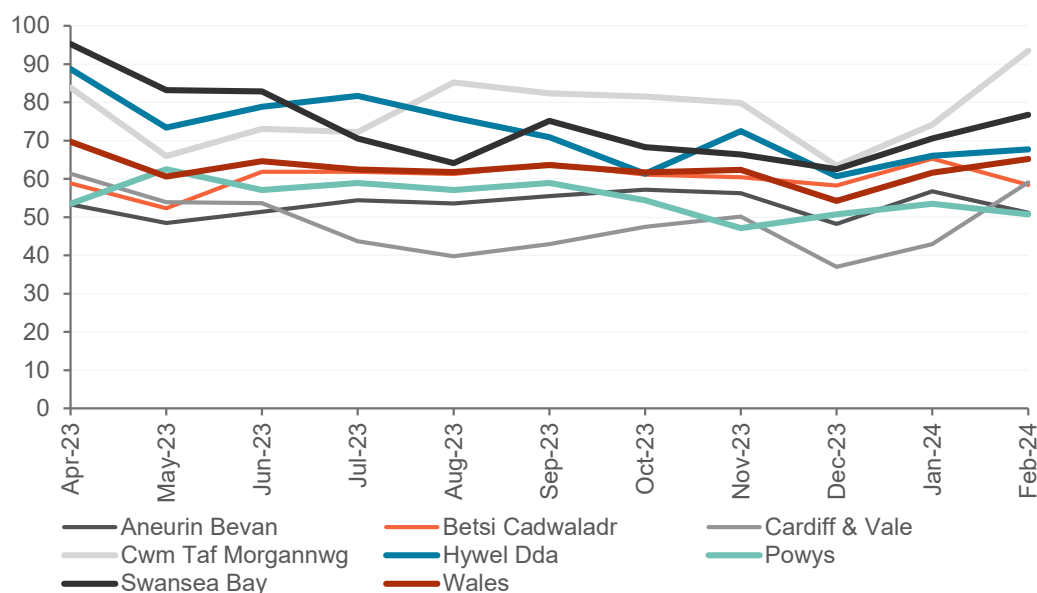
What is the scale of the challenge?

- 15 This section sets out the scale of the challenge that the region is facing in respect of delayed discharges and the subsequent impact on patient flow and the patient experience.
- 16 We found that **while the region has comparatively lower rates of delayed discharges, these are impacting on patient flow particularly in the emergency department and consistent patient access to stroke wards. Waiting for a joint assessment is the main cause of delay but there are challenges throughout the health and social care system.**

Delayed discharges

- 17 We found that **the region has comparatively low and stable rates of delayed discharges, though delays in completion of joint assessments continue to present a challenge.**
- 18 Delays discharging patients from hospital has been a longstanding issue for bodies in Wales and other parts of the UK. The available data shows that this issue has become significantly worse in recent years.
- 19 **Exhibit 2** sets out the number of delayed discharges experienced by the Health Board between April 2023 and February 2024, compared with other health boards across Wales. These relate to patients who are considered medically fit but remain in a hospital bed 48 hours after the decision was made that they were well enough to leave hospital. Whilst performance is slightly better than the average for Wales, there is still a large number of delayed discharges impacting bed capacity and patient flow.

Exhibit 2: number of delayed discharges per 100,000 head of population (April 2023 – February 2024)



Source: Welsh Government

- 20 Since the pandemic, the way in which delayed discharges are measured has changed. No data on delayed discharges was formally reported between the period March 2020 and March 2023. Prior to the pandemic, delayed discharges were reported as 'delayed transfers of care' which were defined as those who continue to occupy a bed after the date in which the patient is declared to be ready to move on to the next stage of their care. This compares with the current method for counting delays which focuses on those who remain in a hospital bed 48 hours after being identified as medically fit.
- 21 Although not a direct comparison, in February 2020 the Health Board reported 72 delayed transfers of care. The position at the end of February 2024 of 240 delayed discharges equates to 16.4% of the Health Board's total bed capacity². However, this is below the all-Wales average of 17.9% (ranging between 13.7% and 31.3%).
- 22 The top five reasons for delayed discharges compared to the all-Wales position are set out in **Exhibit 3**, with the most common reason being awaiting joint assessment (between health and social care). A full list of reasons for delay in the Health Board, and by local authority are set out in **Appendix 2**.

² Based on general and acute bed availability data in July 2023, StatsWales website (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Health-and-Social-Care/NHS-Hospital-Activity/NHS-Beds/nhsbeds-by-organisation-site>)

Exhibit 3: top 5 reasons for delayed discharges for the Health Board compared to the all-Wales position (February 2024)

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	All-Wales average
Awaiting joint assessment	14.2	9.0
Awaiting completion of clinical assessment (nursing/ allied health professional/ medical/ pharmacy)	9.6	10.3
Awaiting reablement care package	6.3	3.0
Awaiting residential care home manager to visit and assess (Standard 3 residential)	6.3	2.5
Awaiting start of new home care package	5.8	8.0

Source: Welsh Government

- 23 When broken down by local authority, the rate of delayed discharges per 100,000 head of population is generally lower when compared to the all-Wales position. This is except for Monmouthshire where the rate has occasionally been higher than the all-Wales position. Awaiting joint assessment is the highest cause of delay in Monmouthshire and Newport. Awaiting clinical assessments is the highest cause of delay in Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. Awaiting residential care home manager visit and assessment is the highest cause of delay in Caerphilly.
- 24 **Exhibit 3** indicates that delayed discharges are a result of challenges throughout the health and social care system and cannot be wholly attributed to one sector. Although waiting for a joint assessment is the highest cause of delay in the region, awaiting completion of a clinical assessment is the second highest with reablement waits and care home delays next. Any action to address delayed discharges in one area will need to consider the impact on other areas causing waits for patients.
- 25 Based on data reported in February 2024, the total number of delayed patients accounted for 5,211 bed days. Based on a typical cost per bed day³, this equates to costs in the region of £2.6 million for the month, and a full year effect of just under £30.43 million. Given the financial pressures facing the public sector, this represents a significant amount of NHS resource that is being used sub-optimally and which should be employed in other ways to meet other demand in the system.

³ Based on £500 per bed-day as set out in the NHS Confederation [briefing for the statement by the Minister for Finance and Local Government on the 2023-24 financial position](#)

Impact on patient flow

- 26 We found that **delayed discharges are having an impact on patient flow, particularly in relation to the Health Board's emergency department performance.**
- 27 Delays in discharging patients from hospital have consequences for patient flow and in particular the ability for patients to access services when they need them. Beds being used by patients who no longer need them means that they are not available for those who do, resulting for example, in longer waits in emergency departments. This in turn impacts on the ability for ambulance crews to hand over patients and respond to 999 calls in the community.
- 28 **Appendix 3** sets out the region's performance across a range of urgent and emergency care performance indicators in comparison to the position across Wales since April 2022. In summary:
- whilst the percentage of ambulance red calls responded within 8 minutes has been consistently better than the all-Wales position it has not reached the national target of 65% since July 2020 (**Exhibit 18**);
 - the median amber response time is longer than the national target of 20 minutes but generally in line with the all-Wales average, with performance at 81 minutes in February 2024 (**Exhibit 19**);
 - the percentage of ambulance handovers within 15 minutes at the Health Board's major emergency department is broadly in line with the all-Wales average, at around 21% which is significantly below the national target of 100% (**Exhibit 20**);
 - the percentage of ambulance handovers taking over one hour is relatively static at around 40%, and below the all-Wales average, compared to a national target of zero⁴ (**Exhibit 21**);
 - the total number of hours lost following notification to handover over 15 minutes is below the all-Wales average, fluctuating between 2,700 and 4,500 hours per month (**Exhibit 22**);
 - once the patient is in the emergency department, the median time from arrival to triage is generally in line with the all-Wales position at 21 minutes (**Exhibit 23**);
 - the median time from arrival to being assessed by a senior clinical decision maker is above the Wales average and since May 2023, is the highest in Wales fluctuating between two and just over three hours (**Exhibit 24**);
 - the percentage of patients seen within four hours in a major emergency department is below the all-Wales average and the second lowest in Wales, compared with the national target of 95% (**Exhibit 25**);

⁴ The target for no patient handover to take longer than one hour was introduced as an additional metric by the Welsh Government within the NHS planning framework in 2023/2024 as part of work to try and reduce the increasing trend of lost hours

- the percentage of patients spending less than 12 hours in a major emergency department is also below the all-Wales position and the second lowest in Wales (**Exhibit 26**); and
- the proportion of bed days accrued by people with a length of stay over 21 days has been better than the all-Wales average (**Exhibit 27**).

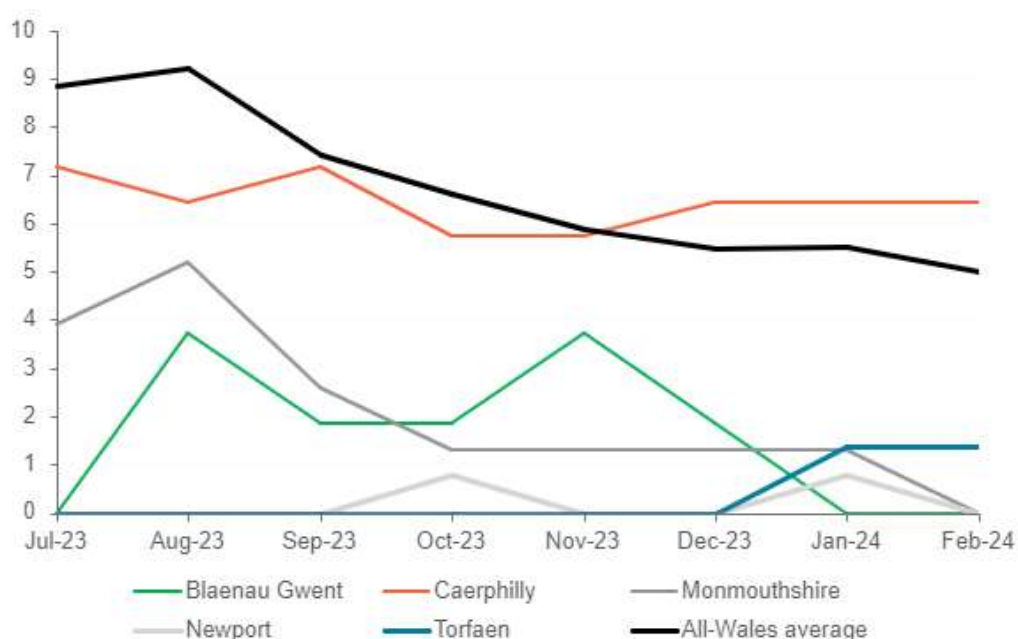
- 29 Based on our analysis of Health Board data relating to all emergency medicine patients discharged in October 2022, we found the average total length of stay for patients staying over 21 days in the acute sites was 44 days (compared to 56 days across Wales). This varied across the three acute sites, with the average total length of stay of 31 days at Grange University Hospital, compared to 47 days at Royal Gwent Hospital. The average total length of stay at Nevill Hall Hospital was 46 days. This demonstrates that the region's approach to discharge is having favourable impacts on a patient's length of stay compared with the all-Wales average for this period.
- 30 The Health Board's total bed capacity has fluctuated over recent years, with 1,793 total beds available in 2022-23, with just under 40% of these allocated to acute medicine (668). Bed occupancy in the acute medicine beds has been at 89.2%, compared with an optimal level of 85%. The Health Board is one of four health boards to have community hospital beds managed by GPs. These beds provide step-down facilities for patients who no longer need acute care. The number of these beds has remained stable at around 30 since 2010-11, however occupancy levels have been running high at 99%.
- 31 Pressure on available beds because of delayed discharges means that health boards are not always able to ensure that patients are placed on the best wards for their clinical needs. For example, health boards will usually hold vacant beds on stroke units to ensure that stroke patients have fast and direct access, enabling them to access stroke specialists and equipment.
- 32 Health boards have increasingly experienced difficulties in admitting stroke patients to a stroke ward as problems with patient flow and bed availability mean that these beds have been needed for non-stroke patients. Between April 2022 and April 2023, performance was volatile with the percentage of stroke patients with direct access to a stroke ward within four hours having fluctuated between a low of 5.9% and a high of 31%.
- 33 The impact of poor patient flow is also often felt within scheduled (or planned) care, as patients with their booked procedures are increasingly having their treatments cancelled due to the lack of available beds. During 2022-2023, 161 planned care admissions were cancelled due to the lack of an available ward bed in the Health Board, with half of those during June and July 2022, and February 2023. For the period, 2023-24 up to and including February 2024, only 42 planned care admissions were cancelled. Whilst this is below the levels of some other health boards, these cancellations represent poor patient experience and risk the conditions of planned care patients further deteriorating while they wait for their treatment to be rescheduled.

Meeting patients' needs

- 34 We found that **the region is largely managing to avoid the use of inappropriate short term unplanned care home placements. However, a stronger multidisciplinary approach to discharge planning is needed to reconcile different views on patients' needs and to avoid unnecessary discharge delays.**
- 35 The pressure to discharge patients and the lack of available care options can lead to patients being discharged to settings that are not always the most appropriate ones for their needs including:
- being discharged home before a proper care package is in place;
 - being discharged to a residential care home when they could have gone home with a support package;
 - being discharged to a temporary residential care home to await availability of longer-term placement;
 - being discharged to a community hospital bed to await availability of a package of care; and
 - being discharged to a setting which is far away from family and friends.
- 36 Patients who are delayed within hospital can become deconditioned, are at higher risk of experiencing an injury from a fall or contracting a hospital acquired infection, which can exacerbate their care needs, lengthening their hospital stay and making them more vulnerable to re-admission after they have been discharged.
- 37 Within the region, we found that both health and social care staff are focused on discharging people quickly, but general capacity and practical ways of working do not always support this. We heard how despite the discharge system being expected and needed to work seven days a week, patient discharge rarely happens on a weekend, and this prolongs the patient stay in hospital.
- 38 Staff from across the region recognise the challenge in acquiring suitable support for patients such as domiciliary care or a care home placement, but this is sometimes frustrated by senior clinicians "over prescribing" a patient's future care needs. We heard how some patients and families are reluctant to return home without the level of care in place senior clinicians have said they need, despite the patient not being assessed as needing that level of care by social workers. We also heard how some patients were not discharged home despite living independently before admission and not feeling the need for any form of care package. This is particularly the case with older patients who may be seen as frail. This can disempower patients from being independent and may lead to future readmissions. As a result, good multidisciplinary discussions on post discharge needs that seek to maintain independence whilst also minimising risks of re-admission are key, particularly for tackling risk aversion in discharge.
- 39 The use of unplanned short term care home accommodation should be limited so patients can use it as a transition to a more sustainable arrangement rather than a long-term placement. **Exhibit 4** sets out the extent to which unplanned short term care home accommodation is used across the region. Except for Caerphilly, since

July 2023 the region has had some of the lowest numbers of adults per 100,000 population in unplanned short term care home accommodation and well below the all-Wales average. The data indicates that the region is generally not moving patients into short-term accommodation inappropriately, although the situation in Caerphilly does merit some attention.

Exhibit 4: number of adults waiting 3+ months in a care home with no planned end date, per 100,000 head of population (July 2023 – February 2024)



Source: Welsh Government

What is impacting effective and timely flow of patients out of hospital?

- 40 This section sets out the issues impacting on effective discharge planning and the timely flow of patients out of hospital across the region.
- 41 We found that **increasing complexity of patient demand combined with general workforce capacity has limited the region's ability to embed its discharge policy amongst partners and share information through compatible databases.**

Volume and complexity of demand

- 42 We found that **complexity and volume of demand are increasing in line with an ageing population, but the Health Board may be exacerbating that complexity**

by being risk averse to discharge which is contributing to problems elsewhere in the patient pathway.

- 43 Across the Gwent region, population increases are predicted for people aged 65 and over in the next 10 years. Around 1 in 4 people will be aged 65 and over, compared to 1 in 5 currently and an increase of 147% of those aged 85 and over is expected by 2036⁵. As people live for longer, there is a correlating increase in the number of people who live with multiple long-term conditions and complex health needs and who will therefore need to rely on health and care services for support.
- 44 Those we spoke to during this review told us of increases they see in demand, particularly in terms of more complex, higher acuity demand. We were often told that patients come in with one problem, but routine tests can quickly uncover several other conditions that need to be treated and managed, which will typically require more complex discharge planning.
- 45 COVID-19 exacerbated this increase in complex demand. During the pandemic, demand for emergency departments declined rapidly. In addition, families provided additional care and support to avoid their loved ones being admitted to hospital or long-term care out of fear of contracting COVID-19. We were told that as the pandemic eased, demand began presenting through the emergency departments which was much more complex than before as people's condition had deteriorated at home. In recognition of the challenges relating to the increased complexity in demand, emergency departments have remained at high levels of escalation since the pandemic.
- 46 We also heard how some private care homes are reluctant to accept some patients back after a hospital stay if their needs have become more complex and therefore difficult for the care home to safely manage.
- 47 We were told that the risk aversion within the discharge process referred to in the previous section of this report is contributing to volume and complexity of demand. Keeping (especially older) patients in hospital until they have an arranged package of care can lead to further deconditioning and increase the complexity of need when packages of care become available utilising a bed which may be needed for a more profoundly unwell patient elsewhere in the system.
- 48 The risk of discharging a patient needs to be considered alongside the wider risk of contributing to complexity and volume of demand more generally.

⁵ [Demography - what does "Gwent" look like?](#)

Workforce capacity

- 49 We found that **workforce capacity in both health and social care is a challenge for the region, impacting on joint and clinical assessments, although waits for social care assessments are less problematic than many other parts of Wales.**
- 50 Increasingly staff involved in discharge planning are finding their capacity stretched due to factors such as high vacancy rates and unplanned absence rates. Reduced numbers of staff leads either to a reliance on agency staff or to fewer permanent staff attempting to manage increasingly complex patients and organise the ongoing care they need for discharge. High usage of agency staff has inevitable impacts on continuity within the workforce and risks having temporary staff who are not familiar with protocols and processes.
- 51 As of March 2024, the Health Board was reporting 4.8% vacancies as a percentage of its total establishment, with nursing and midwifery vacancies at 6.9% and medical vacancies at 15.6%. Nursing and midwifery vacancies are broadly in line with the all-Wales average, although medical vacancies are much higher (all-Wales average of 10.3%). The unplanned absence rate was at 7.3% for nursing and midwifery staff, and 8.7% for healthcare assistants and support workers. Again, broadly in line with the all-Wales average. The rate was much lower at 1.2% for medical staff.
- 52 In June 2023, the Gwent councils were reporting between 4%-15% vacancies in adult social services, with the highest rate of vacancies in Newport and the lowest in Caerphilly⁶. In February 2024, the unplanned absence rate in adult social services ranged between 6%-10%, as shown in **Exhibit 5**.

Exhibit 5: percentage of unplanned absence in adult social services (February 2024)

Local authority	Unplanned absence
Blaenau Gwent	9
Caerphilly	10
Monmouthshire	6
Newport	8
Torfaen	7
All-Wales average	7.9

Source: Welsh Government

⁶ Caerphilly 4%, Monmouthshire 6%, Blaenau Gwent 8%, Torfaen 13% and Newport 15%. No data has been made available since June 2023.

- 53 Newport has experienced higher rates of unplanned absence and vacancies compared with the all-Wales position, with the local authority carrying some significantly higher vacancy rates earlier in 2023. The other local authorities have had higher rates of vacancies but lower rates of unplanned absences, or vice versa. The use of agency staff across the five local authorities is generally low (below 2%) with Newport and Torfaen not utilising agency staff.
- 54 Workforce issues are recognised as a challenge by the Gwent Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and are a core theme action plan priority within the Regional Area Plan. There are initiatives supported by the RPB to help address capacity across the care sector including self-employed micro care initiatives and recruitment campaigns. A regional Workforce Board develops, monitors and coordinates the workforce plan. Actions, owners, milestones and progress measures all appear within the priority with a clear focus on what difference each action will make. The Q4 End of Year Reporting for 2023-24 on the Gwent Workforce Board recognises success such as integrated training for all care partners across the five local authorities and the development of a Restorative Culture Group. This group encourages sharing of best practices across health and social care in Gwent and improving working environments and wellbeing for employees. The Workforce Board also recognises some challenges such as pace of delivery across some of its objectives due to competing pressures and the need to improve communication channels across partners.
- 55 Workforce capacity constraints can adversely affect the discharge planning process. For example, pressure on ward nursing numbers means that time for proper discharge planning is constrained which may be exacerbated by using agency staff who are less familiar with discharge processes. Similarly, pressure on social worker capacity may affect their ability to complete assessments for a patient in a timely way. As highlighted in **Exhibit 3**, delays in joint assessments between health and social care staff and clinical assessments by hospital staff are some of the main reasons for delayed discharges across the region, accounting for 23.8% of all delays. Delays awaiting social care worker allocations and social care assessments account for a further 7.5% of all delays as of February 2024, although this compares significantly lower than the all-Wales average of 24.2%.
- 56 **Exhibit 6** sets out the extent to which adult social services across the five local authorities can meet demand for assessment. The number of patients waiting for a social care assessment in hospital account for a small proportion of the total number of people waiting for assessment.

Exhibit 6: number of social care assessments completed and awaiting to be completed per 100,000 head of population (February 2024)

Local authority	Social care assessments completed	Adults waiting for a social care assessment	% of those waiting for a social care assessment that are in hospital
Blaenau Gwent	158	44	0.0%
Caerphilly	453	148	2.3%
Monmouthshire	277	181	2.1%
Newport	155	84	4.0%
Torfaen	310	84	3.2%
All-Wales average	250	125	8.7%

Source: Welsh Government

- 57 Waiting lists for social care assessments are higher than the all-Wales average in Caerphilly and Monmouthshire, although the number of social care assessments completed in Caerphilly is the second highest in Wales. This may be due to their social work staff being part of an Integrated Frailty Team within the Health Board and actively seeking out and case managing people to speed up assessment and discharge from the emergency departments.
- 58 The number of social care assessments completed is below the all-Wales average in Blaenau Gwent and Newport. All five local authorities however appear to prioritise social care assessments for patients in hospital, with a low proportion of those waiting for assessment in hospital.
- 59 To support the completion of assessments, the partners introduced the Trusted Assessor Model⁷ during the pandemic. Health Board staff spoke very positively about the model but there was some confusion over whether the model was still operating. Directors of Social Services also recognised the benefits, although some noted that the model does not help secure care packages or placements any quicker. There was also recognition that standardising forms across all local authorities would help improve the process.

⁷ The Trusted Assessor is a specific role, with the associated skills and competence, to undertake a proportionate assessment on behalf of another organisation to support a discharge from hospital to the person's next stage in their care journey.

Care sector capacity

- 60 We found that **the care sector capacity across the region is generally meeting demand, with more people being supported at home than many other areas in Wales.**
- 61 Availability of home (domiciliary) care packages and long-term residential care home accommodation can be key causes of discharge delay across Wales. Across the region, very few delays were reported due to awaiting residential care availability, although waiting for home care packages accounted for 5.8% of all delays in February 2024. Waiting for reablement accounted for a further 6.3%. **Exhibit 7** sets out the number of adults receiving care sector support and the extent to which there are waits for provision. **Appendix 4** sets out waiting list performance for social care assessments and care packages since November 2022.

Exhibit 7: number of adults receiving (and waiting for) care packages and placements per 100,000 head of population (February 2024)

Local authority	Domiciliary care ⁸ in receipt (waits)	Reablement ⁹ in receipt (waits)	Long-term care home accommodation ¹⁰ in receipt (waits)
Blaenau Gwent	663 (5)	41 (9)	408 (2)
Caerphilly	480 (11)	10 (3)	515 (12)
Monmouthshire	789 (37)	41 (20)	412 (-)
Newport	677 (2)	40 (31)	494 (13)
Torfaen	762 (3)	57 (11)	409 (0)
All-Wales average	665 (34)	46 (9)	536 (11)

Source: Welsh Government

- 62 Three of the local authorities (Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen) were providing more people with domiciliary care packages than the all-Wales average, with Blaenau Gwent in-line with the all-Wales average. Except for Monmouthshire, all other local authorities have significantly less people waiting for a domiciliary care package than the all-Wales average. This suggests that overall, the region appears to be coping better than others at providing domiciliary care packages despite the pressure it faces. This is also reflected in **Exhibit 8** which indicates the extent to which there are domiciliary hours unfilled. Except for Monmouthshire, the

⁸ Includes domiciliary care both provided and commissioned by local authorities.

⁹ Includes reablement provided by local authorities.

¹⁰ Includes long-term care home accommodation commissioned by local authorities.

number of hours waiting to be filled are well below the all-Wales average and some of the lowest in Wales.

Exhibit 8: unfilled domiciliary hours and average hours of domiciliary care provided per adult, per 100,000 head of population (February 2024)

Local authority	Domiciliary care hours waiting to be filled	Average hours per adult in receipt of domiciliary care
Blaenau Gwent	75	14.6
Caerphilly	86	13.0
Monmouthshire	372	14.7
Newport	13	15.0
Torfaen	14	14.6
All-Wales average	353	13.2

Source: Welsh Government

- 63 Except for Caerphilly, the local authorities in the region provide some of the highest average hours of domiciliary care per adult per 100,000 head of population across Wales (**Exhibit 8**). Monmouthshire's high number of people receiving domiciliary care and the high number of hours waiting to be filled may be linked to its increased older population and more complex needs. It may also suggest that proportionally more people in Monmouthshire are being discharged home with a domiciliary care package as a first option or potentially that domiciliary care is being requested at higher levels than patients need.
- 64 Also except for Caerphilly, the local authorities in the region are broadly in line with the all-Wales average for the provision of reablement services with Torfaen exceeding the average. The Aneurin Bevan Winter Plan 2021-2022 implemented a reablement scheme which recruited five reablement support workers per local authority to help with admission avoidance and quicker discharge. However, waits for reablement services are high in Monmouthshire and Newport. These have fluctuated quite considerably since November 2022, although the number of people waiting for reablement in Monmouthshire has remained consistently above the all-Wales average. Monmouthshire's Integrated Medium-Term Plan 2023-2026 recognises 'Reablement' as one of its themes within the 'Hospital Admission and Discharge' workstream with the aim to decrease unmet need and lower the future need of those following reablement support. The Gwent Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2022-2023 recognises that more needs to be done to enhance its reablement support and the Aneurin Bevan Winter Resilience Plan 2023-24 still identifies reablement as a significant capacity challenge resulting in delayed discharge.

65 As of February 2024, the Gwent local authorities provided some of the lowest numbers of long-term care accommodation per 100,000 head of population. Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire have the second, third and fourth lowest rate in Wales. While both Caerphilly and Newport have just below average rates of long-term care accommodation provision, waits are just above the all-Wales average. There are very few people, if any, waiting in Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, which suggests that the level of long-term care accommodation in those counties is meeting demand.

Discharge process

66 We found that **there are regular multi-disciplinary meetings in relation to operational discharge, but the existing discharge policy is not embedded, there is inconsistent training, and the discharge planning process is not well documented within case notes.**

67 Good discharge planning is reliant on good communication and co-ordination across different professional groups, with consideration of discharge as soon as a patient is presented to services. Good discharge planning is also facilitated by having clearly documented processes which are shared with all staff involved to promote understanding and awareness of the different roles in the discharge process.

68 Regular operational meetings to discuss patient discharge such as multi-disciplinary ward rounds and length of stay meetings take place. Those we observed were well attended and provided a useful opportunity to discuss patients and assign actions related to discharge. However, the frequency of these meetings appeared to leave little time to take forward actions.

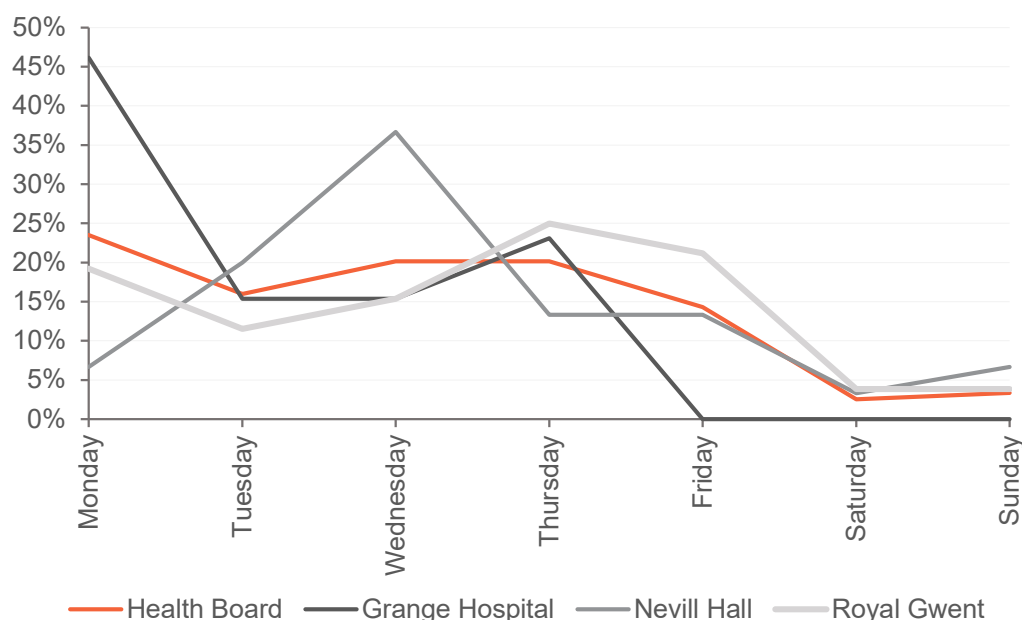
69 The Health Board has an updated discharge policy (October 2023) which is aimed at all clinical staff and those involved in the discharge process. The discharge policy provides links to several useful tools, such as the choice of accommodation policy or the policy for managing patients reluctant to discharge from hospital and includes several useful flowcharts. The discharge policy also usefully appends the D2RA¹¹ pathways which provide the journey patients should move through for each stage. However, it is not clear how the discharge policy is communicated to operational staff to enable its intended impact and there is limited evidence the implementation of the policy is being monitored and reviewed.

70 The policy encourages seven-day discharge and morning release to free up beds early for the rest of the working day. However, a review of data relating to all patients discharged from the Health Board's acute sites in October 2022, indicated that only 5.9% of patients were discharged at the weekend (**Exhibit 9**). During the week, discharges peak on a Monday, with the greatest proportion of Monday discharges taking place at Grange Hospital. No discharges took place at the

¹¹ Discharge to Recover then Assess (D2RA) is designed to support people to recover at home before being assessed for any ongoing need, thereby reducing length of stay in hospital.

Grange Hospital on a Friday, or at the weekend. The peak in Monday discharges would suggest that some of these patients could have been discharged earlier. Discharges peak on a Wednesday in Nevill Hall Hospital, and Thursday in Grange Hospital and Royal Gwent Hospital. We were told by staff that this pattern of midweek discharge persists and having the sufficient staff including consultants and senior clinicians available to support weekend discharge remains a challenge.

Exhibit 9: day of discharge of all patients discharged from acute hospital sites in October 2022, as a percentage of total discharges¹²



Source: Audit Wales

- 71 Our hospital patient case note review found that discharge planning is not considered early enough in the patient journey and is not always well documented with the quality of note taking variable. There was no evidence in our sample that expected dates of discharge were set within 48 hours of admission in line with the policy, and evidence of discharge planning within the notes was limited. Without clear discharge information in patient notes patients may stay in hospital longer than required.
- 72 Case notes did identify challenges such as a lack of suitable accommodation for patients, and fluctuations in patients' status of 'medically fit', which impacted the ability to discharge. There was evidence of patients' overall wellbeing, including discharge preferences being considered but in general, information recorded within

¹² Excludes patients who died.

the case notes was insufficient to gain assurance that discharge processes are routinely followed as intended.

- 73 In November 2020, the Health Board developed a guide for patients, families and carers which explains what happens during the discharge planning process and the next steps. This aligns with the Health Board's discharge policy and has been updated and appended to the updated policy for staff to access, but it is unclear how or when patients are made aware of the guide or how it is distributed.
- 74 To ensure a consistent culture and approach to discharge planning across all sectors, discharge training needs to be consistent. Although we were told discharge planning training takes place as part of staff induction in the Health Board, there were inconsistent views from operational staff about whether relevant refresher training is offered. Training also needs to include social care staff to ensure that there is clarity on roles, responsibilities and expectations. While staff indicated that this would be useful, joint training had not been in place largely due to the number of statutory partners to coordinate. Joint refresher training would help ensure all relevant staff understand current policies and processes and embed the Health Board's approach across disciplines.
- 75 In 2018, the Welsh Government introduced the Discharge to Recover then Assess (D2RA) model, which is designed to support people to recover at home before being assessed for any ongoing need, thereby reducing length of stay in hospital. Implementation of the model was accelerated during the pandemic, and the Welsh Government has subsequently supported regions with additional monies to embed D2RA further.
- 76 National data submitted to the Welsh Government in early 2023 indicated the Health Board had difficulty in discharging patients to an appropriate setting for their assessment, as is advocated by D2RA. Data for the Health Board showed it had high proportions of patients waiting to transfer to D2RA pathways. Many of these patients were waiting to be discharged to their own homes, or step-down beds but were unable to leave hospital due to the lack of availability of such beds in the community. The Welsh Government issued updated national guidance on D2RA in December 2023. The partners will need to ensure that policies and procedures reflect this updated guidance.

Information sharing

- 77 We found that **staff involved in the discharge process have created operational workarounds for data sharing such as patient flow meetings, but formal data sharing and data quality are variable and digital interfaces between organisations are not compatible.**
- 78 Professionals within and across organisations will typically be required to share information about the patient to facilitate appropriate discharge arrangements and ongoing care, especially where the patient has more complex needs.
- 79 Agency and locum staffing can present a barrier to effective information sharing across organisations. Embedding ward and team procedures and local knowledge

can be hindered by transitional staff who may not know who to contact to progress a discharge or what local support options are available. This is the case for both health board and local authority staff. This can slow communication between them and with partner organisations such as care suppliers and the third sector. As a result, patients' length of stay in hospital is not reduced as quickly as it might have been.

- 80 There has been some success of data sharing at a local level. Health Board staff share information at various meetings regarding patient flow at operational meetings and on the ward. These meetings vary in form but have similar function and involve teams identifying patients and their stage of care. We observed some meetings and staff seem to be able to access this relevant information in a timely manner and provide verbal updates on patients whose recent changes have not yet been through the system.
- 81 Systems holding patient information have not been connected or viewable to all staff involved in the care and discharge planning of individual patients. Various IT systems that hold this information are not universally accessible across the different organisations involved. While four of the local authorities have implemented the Welsh Community Care Information System¹³, Monmouthshire council has not and although the Health Board has committed to using the system in mental health, it has not implemented the system across the Health Board.
- 82 Within the Health Board, there are differences in information access across hospital sites. Staff at Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr have access to the local authority data which allows them to see which care packages are being assessed and coordinated and keep up to date with progress. It is not clear why this is not standard across all hospital sites as it is seen as a positive tool by staff for driving effective discharge and communicating with patients and families.
- 83 Although we did identify some good examples of sharing information across organisational boundaries, we were made aware that the data may not always be accurate. For example, care home bed spaces may not reflect beds out of commission due to refurbishment or beds which cannot be staffed. This can cause frustration for staff regarding data integrity and can hinder discharge planning in the short and medium term preventing effective data analysis.
- 84 Introduced in 2021, the Six Goals Programme¹⁴ was discussed at a recent board meeting and the Health Board recognised that there are quality issues with the data relating to patient discharge. Data reliability issues were identified in respect of the number of medically fit patients and in coding the reasons for discharge

¹³ The Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS) is a single system and a shared electronic record for use across a wide range of adult and children's services. The idea being that all 22 local authorities and seven health boards should implement it, with the initial intended implementation date of the end of 2018. A new national programme 'Connecting Care' was established in May 2024 to replace WCCIS from January 2026.

¹⁴ Further information on the Welsh Government six goals for urgent and emergency care can be found via <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-six-goals-urgent-and-emergency-care-programme-update>

delays. The Health Board recognise there is work to be done in this area but in the interim, there must be recognition internally that data is flawed.

- 85 Ultimately, whilst there is a significant amount of data held by both the Health Board and local authorities within the Gwent region, data sharing and access to the relevant IT systems are variable. Regular meetings are used to validate existing assumptions, but data cannot always be relied upon or interrogated sufficiently to contribute to discharge planning in a consistent way.
- 86 In line with other health boards, staff are not always fully aware of the range of services within the community, and this is made more difficult by cross-borough service provision. However, we had feedback that where social care staff are an integral part of the discharge planning within hospital settings, access to this information was improved.
- 87 The lack of integrated digital systems with reliable data for patient information also means staff spend time calling settings such as care homes to verify if the beds listed as available really are. In June 2023 the Health Board invested £37,000 in a new digital 'Discharge to Recover then Assess (D2RA)' system. The system called CWS2 will hold data including a patient's clinically optimised status and their reason for delay. This is intended to help with discharge planning and reporting including the provision of real time ward level information. Unfortunately, technical challenges mean the implementation of this system and subsequent reporting have now been delayed.

What action is being taken?

- 88 This section considers the actions being taken by the statutory organisations, including through the Regional Partnership Board to improve the flow of patients out of hospital.

Strategic and operational plans

- 89 We found that **addressing patient flow is central to relevant strategic and operational plans across the Gwent region and in line with Welsh Government requirements.**
- 90 We reviewed relevant Health Board and local authority plans in relation to discharge planning, and urgent and emergency care and social care more generally. We found that plans in the region reflect a good understanding of the challenges affecting the flow of patients out of hospital. For example, the Integrated Winter Resilience Plans for 2022-23 and 2023-24 were collaboratively developed through the Regional Partnership Board. Keeping people well at home and early facilitated discharge were key aspects of the plans recognising the limitation of both bed capacity and workforce in the hospitals. The plans set out the challenges the Health Board faced and some of the activity which was planned to address these challenges.

- 91 The Winter Resilience Plan 2022-23 reflected key Welsh Government planning requirements, such as those in the Six Goals for Urgent and Emergency Care Programme, as well as the Welsh Government 1,000 bed challenge¹⁵. The plan was strategic but had some operational aspects. This included a high-level action plan outlining specific schemes, the impact required and the lead organisation. Schemes included reintroduction of the trusted assessor model and increased pharmacy support to the Grange Emergency Department.
- 92 The Winter Resilience Plan 2023-24 developed three core principles of Focus, Processing Power and Capacity to target the areas of specific challenge which remain largely the same as the previous year such as pressures within social care, urgent care and planned care recovery. Many of the actions within the core principles aim to have impact on patient flow such as an Elderly Frailty Unit in Royal Gwent Hospital to reduce unnecessary admissions. Another action was therapy focussed assessments at the Emergency Department in Grange University Hospital in the hope to assess patients and discharge home the same day, which has shown some early signs of success.
- 93 The Health Board's Integrated Medium-Term Plan (IMTP) 2022-2025 has a specific priority for older adults. This has been a developing area for the Health Board with transformation taking place each year. The Health Board intends to create a single pathway for older people in collaboration with social care and the third sector. This should streamline how patients and providers access services and places prevention at the core. Specific frailty units at acute hospitals for short stay assessment and diagnostics will be introduced where patients who would not benefit from traditional models of medical care can be admitted. If successful, this should reduce length of stay, reduce risk and align with the Six Goals Programme ambition for right care, right place, first time. However, the recent performance reporting to the Health Board's Board meeting shows that the length of stay measure has remained unchanged and that there has been little or no improvement in discharge and flow indicators such as increases in discharges before midday.
- 94 The Six Goals for Urgent and Emergency Care Programme contains two goals that are linked to improving discharge: 'goal five – optimal hospital care and discharge from the point of admission', and 'goal six: home first approach and reduce risk of readmission'. The Health Board has a specific six goals plan which is separate to its IMTP and is a one-year delivery plan. A section of 'key achievements' against each goal provides a useful narrative of activities underway although this could be more detailed. Goal 5 – optimal hospital care and discharge from the point of admission and Goal 6 – home first approach and reduce risk of readmission have

¹⁵ In July 2022 the Health and Social Care Minister set a challenge for Health Boards and Local Authorities to establish an additional 1,000 bed spaces or their equivalents to support timely discharge <https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-six-goals-urgent-and-emergency-care-programme-update>. The continuation of the additional bed spaces was included in the Welsh Government 'Building capacity through community care further, faster' statement of intent launched in June 2023.

been combined into 'Return and Stay Well at Home'. This includes five separate workstreams including 'Trusted Assessor Model' and an 'Integrated Discharge Hub'. The Delivery Plan includes anticipated impact and measures and quarterly deliverables. However, the plan would benefit from more defined targets to monitor progress.

- 95 The joint integrated service partnership board (ISPB) plans for 2023-26 set out high-level priorities for each of the local authority areas. Although they do not all discuss issues in relation to flow out of hospital directly, they do reflect the need to keep older people well and a whole system approach to supporting people after hospitalisation. The ISPBs also recognise the need to work together to support people at home and address the impact of workforce challenges. The Blaenau Gwent ISPB goes further and specifically refers to the need to deliver the ambitions of the six goals, and positively also, the need to provide system leadership across partners to ensure that population needs are met. All the ISPBs support the delivery of the Regional Area Plan.

Partnership working

- 96 We found that **strategic partnership working is evident across the region building on existing collaborative relationships, but operational partnership working is less well developed.**
- 97 Strategically partnership working is well developed and continues to build on existing positive partnerships throughout the Gwent region. Joint ownership for finding solutions to challenges is embedded within the RPB and its associated sub-groups and forums, and collective responsibility and collaboration appear to be central to project development and the way in which the RPB governance has been developed.
- 98 There is diverse representation from a range of statutory and voluntary organisations at the RPB. This partnership work is echoed throughout various projects supported by the RPB, including the development of the Winter Plan. Urgent and emergency care pressures and discharge planning feature as regular discussions at the RPB and the Regional Leadership Group which reports to the RPB. Previous updates have included progress with the 1,000-bed challenge during late 2022. The Welsh Government requirement was for Gwent to supply 122 of the 1,000 beds by October 2022. In November 2022, the region reported that it had identified 132 beds. These beds remained in place for 2023-24.

Use of funding

- 99 We found that **financial resources are being targeted to support patient flow with positive outcomes, although the ability of the partners to match fund is increasingly challenging and the impact of the funded initiatives could be more transparent.**
- 100 The region makes use of the Health and Social Care Regional Integration Fund (RIF) to support schemes aimed to improve discharge planning. The RIF is a

Welsh Government 5-year fund to deliver a programme of change from April 2022 to March 2027. The aim of the fund is to establish and mainstream at least six new national models of integrated care to provide a seamless and effective service for the people of Wales. Two contain a clear link to improving flow out of hospital for patients, namely: Home from Hospital Services; and Accommodation Based Solutions.

- 101 There is a clear expectation within the RIF guidance that partners 'match fund' projects up to 50% by the end of year 5, with Welsh Government funding for each project tapering each year to allow for successful projects to become business as usual. However, due to the financial pressures that the NHS is currently facing, this expectation has been relaxed.
- 102 More broadly, RIF monies have been used to support the wider health and social care community. Monies have been used to increase fuel allowances for social care staff to aid recruitment and retention and develop micro-carers in response to the national shortage of care workers. According to the RIF Strategic Outline Plan, partners were expected to contribute a total of £7.3 million in total to all RIF funded schemes by way of match funding. Those we spoke to highlighted that the requirement to match fund projects can create a reluctance to commit to new projects that require match funding in future years.
- 103 The RPB collects and reports data to the Welsh Government on the various RIF projects which take place on a regional basis. This is also shared with partners quarterly. Members are confident that projects are robustly monitored. However, it is not always clear to them what the data is being used for from an operational perspective and the impact this monitoring is having. However, the RIF Annual Report 2022-23 presents performance data for schemes, including the positive impact from the Improving System Flow programme on 8,824 individuals. The RPB Annual Report 2023-24 details there are now 18 projects under the Improving System Flow programme. This programme is collaboratively delivered with the Health Board, local authorities and the third sector with over 60,000 people having been supported to return home, recover, rehabilitate and regain independence in 2023-24.
- 104 The Gwent RPB developed a quarter 4 update 'Story for Change' as an annual reflection of the projects delivered under the RIF for the 2023-24 financial year. The full year allocation of the Improving System Flow programme was £5.395 million with all the money spent in year. A Project called 'Newport including OT' has had success in Royal Gwent Hospital by developing collaborative working between occupational therapists and the discharge team. This is to ensure pre-discharge assessments and planning ensure support is in place for the patient to return home, limiting readmission and encouraging recovery.
- 105 Similarly, the Monmouthshire County Council Hospital Discharge Co-ordination project has yielded success reducing hospital stays for patients and enhancing patient flow through coordinating more effectively between healthcare settings and community care providers. Case studies are provided as part of the 'Story for

Change' report, but these could be made more widely available on the RPB website.

- 106 Changes to the discharge lounge model have also been undertaken using RIF capital expenditure at the Royal Gwent Hospital using learning from a site in Somerset which operates a 'pull' model to pull patients who are ready to be discharged from the acute ward setting. The implementation and expansion of the updated discharge lounge is being monitored throughout 2024-25 under the Six Goals Programme to assess impact. This includes closer involvement of WAST services and pharmacy services to improve discharge. Going forward, space at the Grange University Hospital is also being scoped for potential discharge lounge expansion.
- 107 A 'Ready to Go' unit has also been established at the Royal Gwent Hospital which mirrors the support patients would receive in their home environment. This is for therapy optimised patients and has limited nurse involvement without regular medical intervention. Whilst this is not a project which the Health Board sees as sustainable in the long term, it is one which is seen as necessary given current bed capacity pressures. Again, the model is designed to pull people from acute sites whilst they wait for packages of care and encourage independence. However, a September 2024 update to Board regarding Discharge Improvement noted highest delay numbers in Royal Gwent Hospital with a review of discharge hubs, discharge lounges and the Ready to Go unit due to understand the delays in more detail.
- 108 According to the six goals programme update to the Health Board's Board meeting in May 2024, since October 2023, the average number of discharges per month from the Royal Gwent Hospital has been higher (535) than the average number of discharges between May 2021 and September 2023 (479). Whilst it may not be possible to attribute this improvement solely to the changes in the updated discharge lounge and the 'Ready to Go' ward, it is likely this initiative has contributed to improved patient flow and certainly patient independence.

Scrutiny and assurance

- 109 We found that **there is clear oversight and scrutiny of actions being taken to improve patient flow, although more could be done to gather patient and service user feedback, oversee compliance with current discharge policies and increase oversight of RPB activity by local authorities.**
- 110 The Health Board receives regular performance and activity reports which focus on delivery against key national targets included in the performance dashboard, via the Board and more specifically the Finance and Performance Committee. It also receives a quarterly Outcomes and Performance Report which includes some updates on progress against the six goals including milestones and actions for the next quarter.
- 111 The Health Board has operational structures in place to deliver and monitor the six goals programme through a Six Goals Programme Board. This is underpinned by three overarching workstreams which each have an allocated Senior Responsible Officer, Programme Manager and Executive Lead. This encourages ownership at

senior levels. The Six Goals Programme Board reports into the Health Board Executive Committee and the RPB.

- 112 A standalone Six Goals Programme update was presented at the May 2024 meeting of the Board. This included key updates, priorities and data. There was some evidence of scrutiny and challenge at the meeting, but this could be strengthened to be more discharge specific considering the current challenges the Health Board faces on the impact of patient flow. Reports on the six goals are routinely presented to the Quality and Patient Safety Committee.
- 113 The RPB oversees and monitors delivery of RIF funded projects against the regional plan through its performance management office and partnership structure such as the Gwent Adult Strategic Partnership. The RPB also enables identification and sharing of learning and good practice across partners and both Health Board and local authority staff we spoke to were broadly positive of its role. The RPB's Annual Report includes a mix of accessible narrative and data on projects including how it has engaged with citizens to include their views.
- 114 The Gwent Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2023-24 provides useful narratives and case studies of the work undertaken in the previous year with some impactful service user feedback statistics included. Hospital discharge is recognised as a core theme for 2024-25 with work focusing particularly on the impact and support for carers.
- 115 There is oversight at public Health Board meetings of the challenges with patient flow. A May 2024 update to Board outlined in its Finance Performance Report noted that the estimated cost for the year for blocked beds for all reasons was approximately £15.5 million. Finance and Performance Committee received an update report in September 2024
- 116 As mentioned earlier in this report, we have seen no evidence to suggest an audit is undertaken against the discharge policy and learning from it reported annually to the Quality and Patient Safety Committee, as set out in the policy. There is also limited evidence of organisations monitoring and scrutinising patient, service user and staff feedback. Although the discharge policy refers to an annual survey of users and carers to understand their discharge experiences, we saw no evidence of this happening. Social services directors referred to seeking feedback from clients and their families through conversations rather than surveys but acknowledged more could be done to routinely capture service user experience and feedback.
- 117 The oversight of the Regional Partnership Board activity at local authority level is variable. There is evidence that progress and performance are reported to scrutiny committees, but this is infrequent and usually annual which provides only sporadic, monitoring of activity.

What more can be done?

- 118 Whilst there is a clear recognition by regional partners of the problems associated with discharge, a desire to address them with the right focus within strategies and

plans, impactful projects and good strategic relationships, the number of delayed discharges across the region have not significantly reduced.

- 119 Our work has found that there are several further actions that could be taken which would help improve timely and effective flow out of hospital across the region and reduce some of the challenges currently being experienced by the health and social care system. These actions are explored in the following exhibit and align with the recommendations that are set out earlier in the report.

Exhibit 10: further actions for partners to help tackle the challenges for patient flow out of hospital

Improving training and guidance on discharge planning	Having access to jointly agreed guidance which clearly sets out roles and responsibilities, and expectations around when and how staff should share information, including referrals, is vital to ensuring consistency between wards, hospitals, professions, and organisations. Offering a comprehensive training programme for relevant staff involved in patient flow, including bank and agency staff as well as new starters, also ensures guidance is embedded.
Embed a 7- day approach to discharge	The ability to move away from a Monday to Friday approach and embed a 7-day approach to discharge across all disciplines including consultants and senior clinicians will have a positive impact on patient flow. Even focusing weekend discharges on those which are not complex will help avoid prolonged stays and reduce discharge pressure at the beginning of the working week.
Roles and responsibilities in relation to informal over prescribing of care packages	Ensuring all staff understand their roles and responsibilities regarding informal prescribing of care packages can prevent over prescribing and unnecessary expectations in relation to future care provision. Empowering patients to have only the level of care the relevant professional prescribes encourages future independence and may lead to reduced readmissions.
Risk appetite in relation to patient discharge	Having a consistent and management led risk appetite to patient discharge will encourage timelier discharge of patients.

	Balancing the risk of discharge against the risk of deconditioning and loss of independence and/or care packages for patients needs to be a key consideration.
Embed approach to the Trusted Assessor Model	Embedding the Trusted Assessor model and communicating this approach to all partners will increase capacity in the assessment phase. Whilst there is recognition this may not help secure care packages or placements more quickly; it will ensure there is capacity to accurately assess patients when required.
Improving oversight of policies and guidance	Ensuring monitoring and compliance of the Health Board's discharge policy will help assess the effectiveness and consistency of its application and if any changes to the policy need to be made. This will also ensure the Health Board is complying with its own commitment of undertaking an annual review of the policy and reporting that to its Patient Quality, Safety, and Outcomes Committee.
Improving the quality and sharing of information	Documenting and sharing patient information more effectively can enable smoother patient discharge and encourage better relationships. Having clear and comprehensive information within patient case-notes which sets out the actions being taken to support discharge, enables a clearer understanding of what is happening with a patient and supports effective discharge planning by all professionals involved in the care of patients whilst in hospital. Having joined-up systems that are accessible by all staff (regardless of organisation) involved in the care of individual patients enables effective and efficient methods of communication between organisations and supports effective flow out of hospital.
Establish mechanisms to gather feedback and apply learning	Establishing mechanisms where patient, staff and service user feedback can be monitored and analysed will help develop the patient journey.

By understanding the experience of people who have been part of a discharge process, the Health Board and the local authorities can develop more patient focused approaches.

Appendix 1

Audit methods

Exhibit 11 sets out the methods we used to deliver this work. Our evidence is limited to the information drawn from these methods.

Exhibit 11: audit methods

Element of audit methods	Description
Documents	We reviewed a range of documents, including: • Board, Cabinet, and committee papers • Updates on the Six Goals Programme and urgent and emergency care to committees • Operational and strategic plans relating to urgent and emergency care • RPB papers, including case studies • Standard Operating Procedure for discharge planning • Corporate risk registers and performance reports • Operational documents, such as proformas and checklists, escalation processes, staff handbooks and leaflets and guidance
Interviews	We interviewed the following: • Lead for Regional Partnership Board • Head of Patient Discharge • Executive Director of Operations • General Manager Family and Therapies • General Manager Urgent Care • Assistant Head of Patient Discharge • General Manager for Medicine • Deputy Head of Operations • Divisional Operations Manager • Director of Primary and Community Care and Mental Health • Chief Officer of Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council (now Llais) • Directors of Social Services for Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen • Heads of Adult Social Services for Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen

Element of audit methods	Description
Observations	We observed the following meeting(s): • Cross site flow meeting via Teams • Flow Meeting (Gwanwyn MDT) • Flow Meeting (Education Centre Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr) • Six Goals Urgent Care Meeting • System Leadership and Response Meeting We also observed the following individual(s): • Discharge Coordinator at Neville Hall Hospital
Data analysis	We analysed the following national data: • Monthly social services dataset submitted to the Welsh Government • Monthly delayed discharges dataset submitted to the NHS Executive • StatsWales data • Ambulance service indicators We also analysed data provided by the Health Board relating to all emergency medicine patients discharged in October 2022 with a length of stay greater than 21 days (excluding those who died)
Focus groups	We undertook focus groups with the following: • Social workers (Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly) • Social workers (Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen) • Discharge coordinators
Case Note Review	We reviewed a sample of 29 case notes relating to emergency medicine patients discharged in October 2022 with a length of stay greater than 21 days (excluding those who died).

Appendix 2

Reasons for delayed discharges

The following exhibit sets out the reasons for delayed discharges compared to the all-Wales position.

Exhibit 12: reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays (February 2024)

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	All-Wales average
Awaiting joint assessment	14.2	9.0
Awaiting completion of clinical assessment (nursing/ allied health professional/ medical/ pharmacy)	9.6	10.3
Awaiting reablement care package	6.3	3.0
Awaiting residential care home manager to visit and assess (standard 3 residential)	6.3	2.5
Awaiting start of new home care package	5.8	8.0
Awaiting completion of assessment by social care	5.4	15.7
Awaiting completion of arrangements prior to placement	4.6	3.5
Awaiting nursing/residential home self-funding	4.6	1.3
Awaiting community resource capacity	3.8	1.2
Awaiting transfer to intermediate care bedded facility	3.8	4.0
Awaiting health completion of assessment/provision for equipment	3.3	1.4
Awaiting nursing care home manager to visit and assess (standard 3 residential)	2.9	2.1
Awaiting extra care/supported living availability	2.5	0.9
Awaiting continuing healthcare (CHC) assessment	2.1	1.7
Awaiting social worker allocation	2.1	8.5
Mental capacity	2.1	2.1
Awaiting nursing home availability	1.7	2.6
Awaiting social care completion of assessment/provision for equipment	1.7	0.5
No suitable abode	1.7	2.3
Awaiting elderly mentally ill (EMI) residential availability	1.3	2.3
Awaiting funding decision (funded nursing care (FNC)/ continuing healthcare (CHC))	1.3	1.5

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	All-Wales average
Awaiting specialist bed availability	1.3	1.1
Court of protection delays	1.3	0.6
Homeless	1.3	0.9
Intervention by patient's legal representation	1.3	0.2
Patient/family refusing to move to next stage of care/discharge	1.3	1.6
Safeguarding issues impacting discharge arrangements	1.3	0.5

Source: Welsh Government

Note: where the reasons for delay relate to two or less patients, these have been excluded to minimise any risk of identifying individual patients.

Top five reasons for delayed discharges by local authority

The following exhibits set out the top five reasons for delayed discharges for each of the local authorities compared to the Health Board wide and all-Wales position.

Exhibit 13: top five reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays (February 2024) – Blaenau Gwent

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	Health Board average	All-Wales average
Awaiting completion of clinical assessment (nursing / allied health professional / medical / pharmacy)	24.1	9.6	10.3
Awaiting joint assessment	13.8	14.2	9.0
Awaiting reablement care package	6.9	6.3	3.0
Awaiting community resource capacity	6.9	3.8	1.2
Mental capacity	6.9	2.1	2.1

Source: Welsh Government

**Exhibit 14: top five reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays
(February 2024) – Caerphilly**

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	Health Board average	All-Wales average
Awaiting residential care home manager to visit and assess (standard 3 residential)	11.8	6.3	2.5
Awaiting completion of clinical assessment (nursing / allied health professional / medical / pharmacy)	10.3	9.6	10.3
Awaiting joint assessment	10.3	14.2	9.0
Awaiting community resource capacity	8.8	3.8	1.2
Awaiting completion of assessment by social care	5.9	5.4	15.7

Source: Welsh Government

**Exhibit 15: top five reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays
(February 2024) – Monmouthshire**

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	Health Board average	All-Wales average
Awaiting joint assessment	17.0	14.2	9.0
Awaiting nursing/residential home self-funding	17.0	4.6	1.3
Awaiting completion of assessment by social care	6.4	5.4	15.7
Awaiting start of new home care package	6.4	5.8	8.0
Awaiting nursing care home manager to visit and assess (standard 3 residential)	6.4	2.9	2.1

Source: Welsh Government

**Exhibit 16: top five reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays
(February 2024) – Newport**

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	Health Board average	All-Wales average
Awaiting joint assessment	19.1	14.2	9.0
Awaiting transfer to intermediate care bedded facility	17.0	3.8	4.0
Awaiting reablement care package	10.6	6.3	3.0
Awaiting completion of arrangements prior to placement	8.5	4.6	3.5
Awaiting completion of assessment by social care	8.5	5.4	15.7

Source: Welsh Government

**Exhibit 17: top five reasons for delayed discharges as a percentage of all delays
(February 2024) – Torfaen**

Reason for delay	Percentage delayed	Health Board average	All-Wales average
Awaiting completion of clinical assessment (nursing / allied health professional / medical / pharmacy)	15.3	9.6	10.3
Awaiting joint assessment	13.0	14.2	9.0
Awaiting completion of arrangements prior to placement	10.9	4.6	3.5
Awaiting residential care home manager to visit and assess (standard 3 residential)	8.7	6.3	2.5
Awaiting start of new home care package	6.5	5.8	8.0

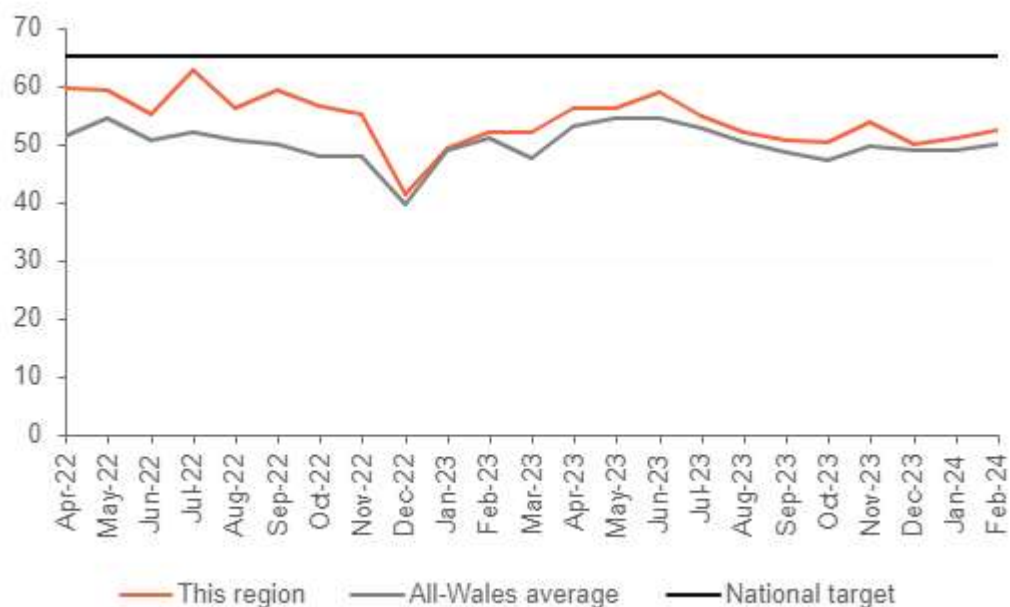
Source: Welsh Government

Appendix 3

Urgent and emergency care performance

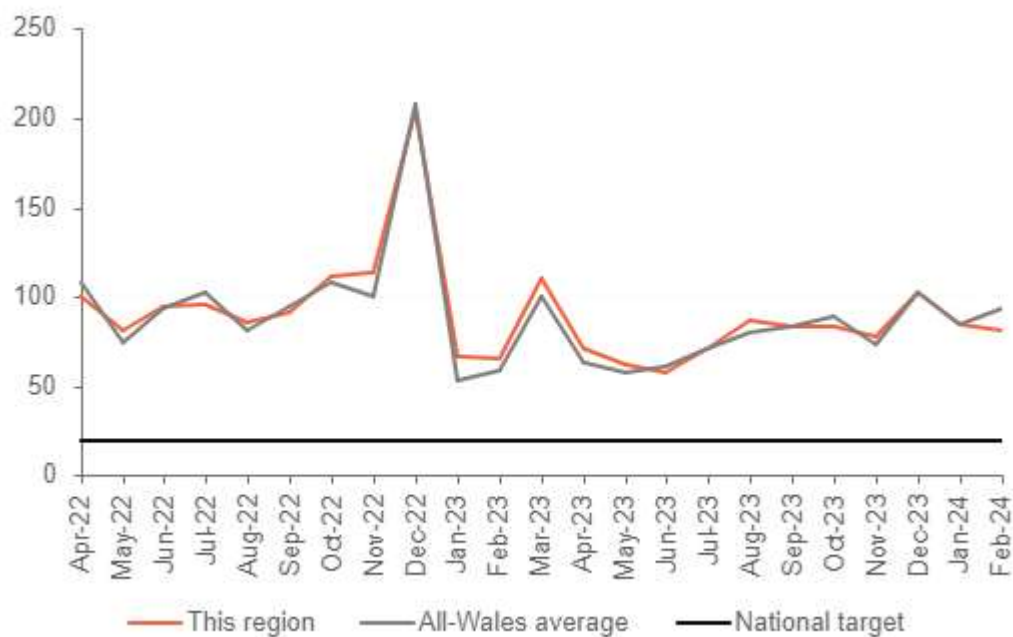
The following exhibits set out the region's performance across a range of urgent and emergency care performance indicators in comparison to the position across Wales since April 2022.

Exhibit 18: percentage of emergency responses to red calls arriving within (up to and including) 8 minutes – national target of 65%



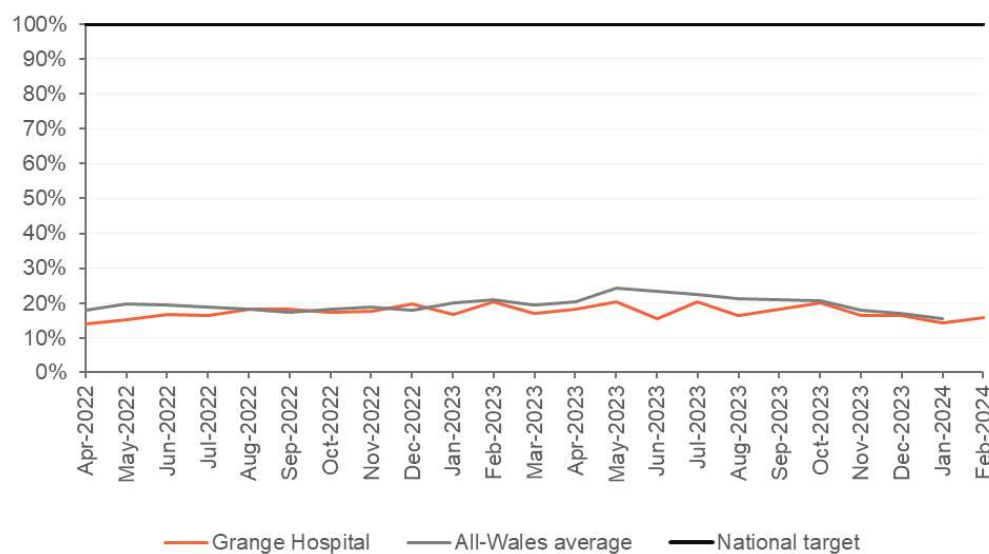
Source: StatsWales

Exhibit 19: median response time for amber calls (minutes) – 50th percentile – national target of 20 minutes



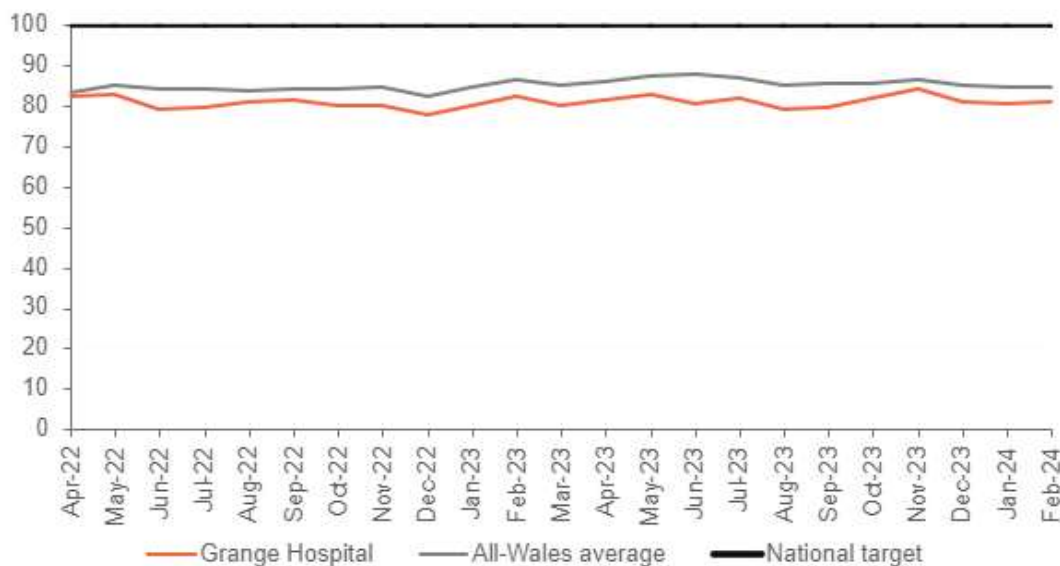
Source: Ambulance Services Indicators

Exhibit 20: percentage of ambulance handovers within 15 minutes at a major emergency department – national target of 100%



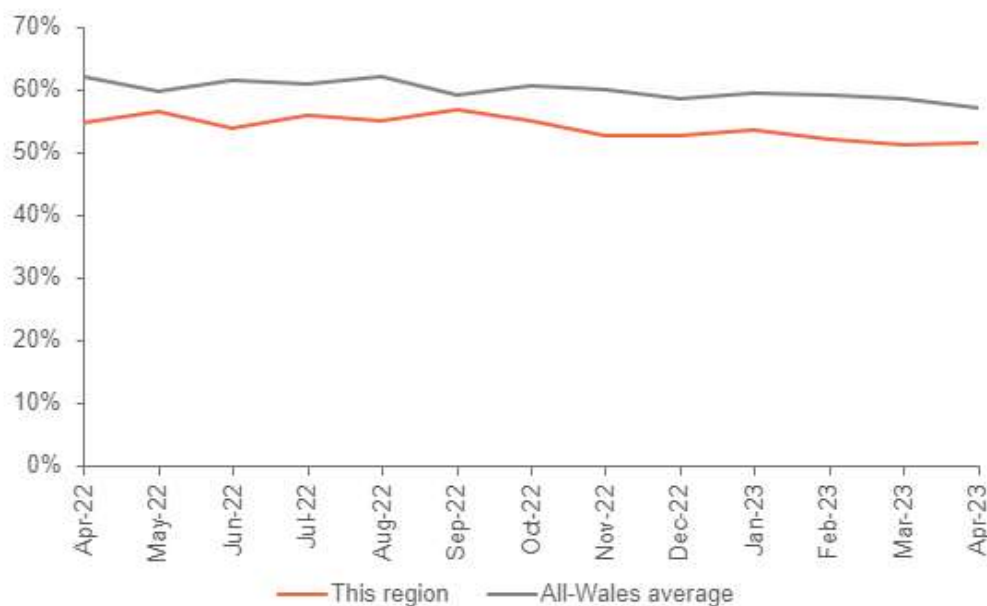
Source: Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust

Exhibit 25: percentage of patients spending less than 12 hours in a major emergency department – national target of 100%



Source: StatsWales

Exhibit 26: percentage of total emergency bed days accrued by people with a length of stay over 21 days – national target of 12-month reduction



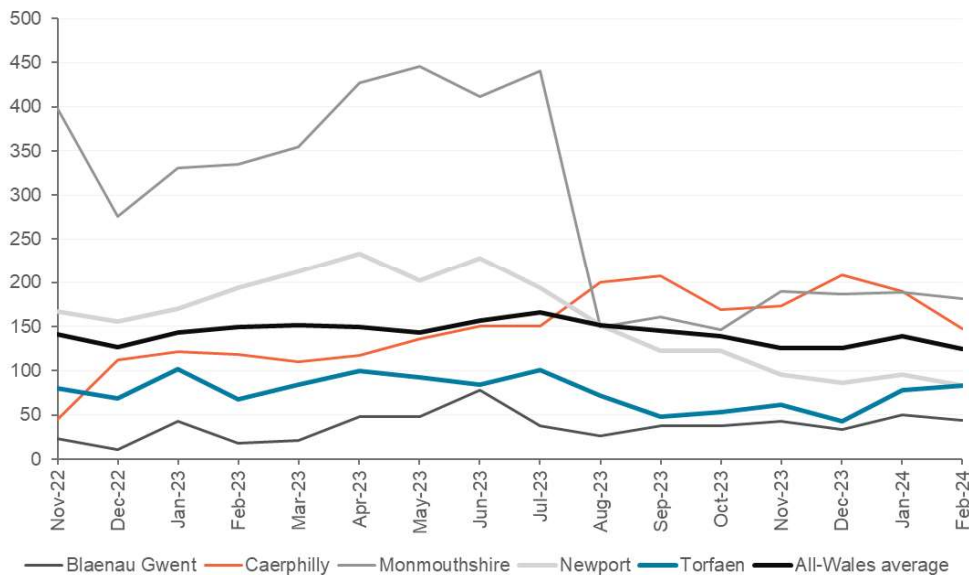
Source: Health Board performance reports

Appendix 4

Waits for social care assessments and care packages

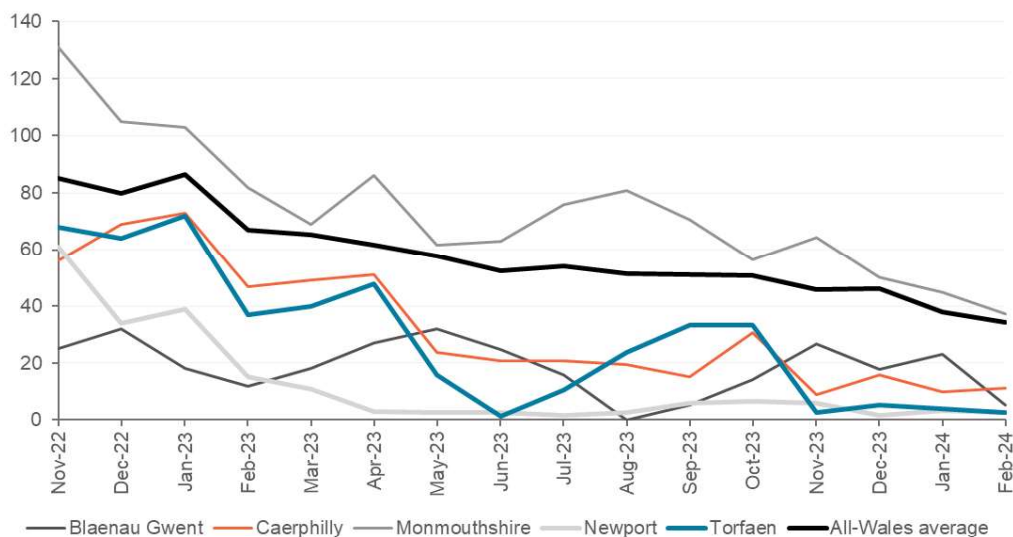
The following exhibits set out the region's waits performance for social care assessment and receipt of a range of care packages in comparison to the position across Wales since November 2022.

Exhibit 27: number of adults waiting for a social care assessment (per 100,000 head of population)



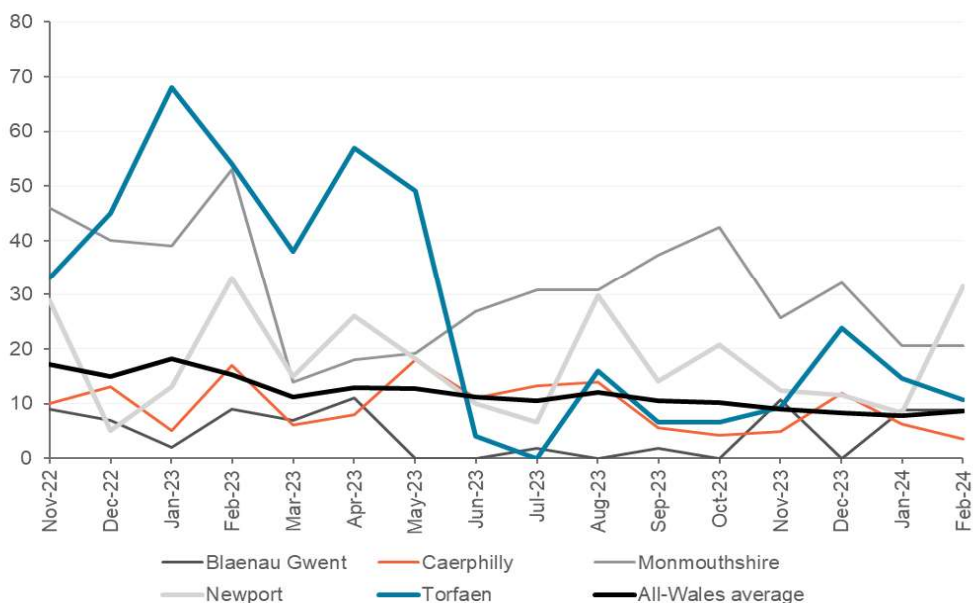
Source: Welsh Government

Exhibit 28: number of adults waiting for domiciliary care (per 100,000 head of population)



Source: Welsh Government

Exhibit 29: number of adults waiting for reablement (per 100,000 head of population)



Source: Welsh Government

Appendix 5

Combined management response to audit recommendations

Exhibit 30: combined management response

Recommendation	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Improving training and guidance on discharge planning R1 The Health Board and local authorities should embed processes to communicate discharge planning guidance to all relevant health and social services staff, including those working on a temporary basis, supported by an ongoing programme of refresher training and induction training for new staff. Where possible, this should be done on a joint basis.	Current hospital discharge models are being reviewed and once finalised will be communicated clearly to all hospital and community staff. The current system is over complex and must be simplified for the benefit of people Significant investment across the region on Balancing Rights and Responsibilities (BRR) training, focussing on front door pathways to support staff to take proportionate rights and risk-based decisions that put the person at the heart of	March 2025	Executive Director of Nursing/ Local Authority Heads of Service/ Head of Patient Discharge

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
R2 The Health Board should update its discharge policy to ensure that it reflects the national guidance issued by the Welsh Government in December 2023.	decision making and whether an admission is necessary and appropriate. This is multi-professional and multi-agency training across the five Local Authorities and Health Board. All staff operating in the hospital discharge space will have access to the range of policies and procedures as part of their induction and ongoing CPD Update discharge policies including – complex and reluctant discharges and choice policy to reflect the national guidance		February 2025	Executive Director of Nursing/ Local Authority Heads of Service/ Head of Patient Discharge
Embedding a 7-day approach to discharge R3 The Health Board and local authorities should review capacity to embed and deliver 7-day discharge. Despite discharges needing to happen daily, current ways of working do not support this, and a lack	The Local Authorities and Health Board have discharge support in place to via Home First and Hospital to Home 7 days per week. Care packages can be reinstated and restarted on weekends, continue to embed a 7-day approach to discharge across the		March 2025	Executive Director of Nursing/ Local Authority Heads of Service

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
of weekend discharge means patients have a prolonged stay in hospital which increases risk of deconditioning and acquiring infection.	system. Temporary care can also be commissioned. Continue to embed 7-day discharge planning via the Home First and Hospital to Home, there is often reluctance to support discharges at weekends (risk averse) even where the Local Authorities'/Health Boards' assessments indicate the person can be safely discharged home. Trusted Assessor model via Home First, workforce is a challenge Progression of nurse led discharge as part of the optimal hospital ward model at RGH across three wards Community Resource Team – medical staff to work 7-day end of January Senior Nurse for Discharge appointed at RGH, in post from 6 January, Senior Nurse for Discharge Community Hospitals out to advert, focus on embedding the delivery of 7-day discharge		March 2025 March 2025 January 2025 January 2025	Executive Director of Nursing/ Local Authority Heads of Service

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
Clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to informal over prescribing of care packages R4 The Health Board should clarify roles and responsibilities regarding care package prescribing to ensure patients are not given unrealistic and unnecessary expectations in relation to care provision. This is particularly the case with older patients who may be seen as frail. This can disempower patients from being independent and may lead to future readmissions.	Review of roles and responsibilities regarding care package prescribing through the optimal ward model at RGH across three wards to include education/training and review of board rounds. Develop roll out plan for the optimal ward framework across all Hospital sites.		March 2025	Executive Director for Nursing
Review risk appetite in relation to patient discharge R5 The Health Board should review its cultural appetite and approach to risk in relation to patient discharge. This should ensure risk is assessed across the whole patient pathway, so beds are not unnecessarily occupied.	Updated discharge policies will be shared and form part of the education and communication framework to help prioritise the discharge agenda across the MDT, supported by the Strategic lead for discharge and the senior nurse. The risk in relation to non-compliance with the discharge		March 2025	Executive Director for Nursing

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
	framework is evaluated and discussed at divisional and corporate level via local meetings and integrated boards and will feed into the discharge work streams			
Embedding the Trusted Assessor model R6 The Health Board should embed its approach to the Trusted Assessor model and communicate this approach to all partners. Whilst there is recognition this may not help secure care packages or placements more quickly; it will ensure there is capacity to assess patients when required.	The Local Authorities and Health Board have undertaken a review of opportunities to embed a Trusted Assessor model against national best practice and local datasets for Pathway of Care Delays linked to assessment codes. Three areas of recommendation have been presented to Integrated Discharge Board to progress. <u>Integrated front door</u> Embedding of quality conversations that promote positive risk management through the Balancing Rights and Responsibilities training plan prepared with first cohort targeting the Integrated Front Door team, 2 cohorts arranged for February 2025 for up to 60 spaces. <u>Wider system opportunities</u>		Ongoing	Executive Director for Nursing

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
	Review undertaken of assessment code delays from POCD datasets, top areas identified. • Embedding of DST model in the community not hospital to reduce 'joint assessment' delays, December figures reduced dramatically following focus on this. • Work with care homes to implement model of 'trusted assessor' for patient discharge when there is a vacancy, rather than waiting for a visit. Project streams to be established to implement the work identified: • Integrated front door, bringing trusted assessor model. • Facilitating early discharge, moving DST to community not as inpatient. • Care Homes accepting nursing assessment and not requiring to visit to review a patient.			
Improving oversight of policies and guidance				

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
R7 The Health Board should monitor compliance with its discharge policy to assess the effectiveness and consistency of the application, and whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. This includes adhering to its own policy that an annual programme of learning will be reported to the Patient Quality, Safety and Outcomes Committee.	Data collected via POCD, CWS2 length of stay and discharge work streams will form the cornerstone of improving guidance, shaping the educational programme and focusing resources to improve and evaluate outcomes. Further development of CWS2 to replace the Complex List. Formal dashboard in development and reported to the Integrated Discharge Board. Learning and feedback to be presented at local forums and integrated boards and the patient Quality outcomes committee.		Next 12 months	Director of Digital Executive Director of Nursing
Improving the quality and sharing of information R8 The Health Board and local authorities should implement ways in which patient information can be shared more effectively, including opportunities to provide wider access to organisational	Local Authorities in the process of replacing the existing IT client record (WCCIS) over the next 18 months. There is potential with a new system for it to link with the Health Board system over time. There are processes in place to share information to support		Next 18 Months	Director of Digital/Executive Director Nursing/Local Authority Heads of Service

Recommendation	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
systems and ultimately joint IT solutions. R9 The Health Board should improve record keeping by: 9.1. ensuring all staff involved in discharge planning fully understand the importance of documenting comprehensive information in patient case-notes to support effective discharge planning. 9.2. establishing a programme of case-note audits focused on the quality of record keeping.	discharge planning, but this does not amount to a joint IT solution. Health Board progressing with scoping an IT solution to merge the Complex List with CWS2, with sharing of data across Local Authorities to support meaningful, real-time data analysis. Monthly Audits: Ward staff conduct monthly audits of nursing documentation to assess the standard and detail of information recorded in patient records. This includes Admission documents, Risk Assessments, Care Records, and Discharge documents. Ward Accreditation Programme: The completion and detail of information recorded on these documents are included in the Ward Accreditation programme, which ensures that staff are aware of the importance of comprehensive documentation. Electronic WNCR Programme: Discharge Planning documentation is available on the electronic WNCR programme, which	Priority for 2025/2026 Monthly Audits	Deputy Director of Nursing Assistant Director for Quality and Patient Safety Head of Health Records/Referral and Booking

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
	facilitates better access and understanding of the importance of documenting comprehensive information. Audit Results: Recent audits have shown room for improvement in documenting estimated discharge dates (EDD) and discharge planning. For example, the documentation of discharge planning in medical and nursing notes/PSAG was 76.6% in October, 82.7% in November, and 77.3% in December. Medical Records Review: A review conducted in March 2024 found that only 19% of Discharge Planning documents were completed, indicating a need for more rigorous audits and follow-up actions. Case note audits are part of the internal audit plan for the Health Board. Medical records audit the notes, as do the Corporate QPS audit team to look at standards of record keeping .		January 2024 Ongoing	Deputy Head of Health Records – DHR Medical Director / Clinical Audit Team – Corporate

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
	Case-Note Audit Programme: The Health Board has a structured programme aimed at assessing and improving the quality of record keeping. This programme focuses on compliance with established standards, enhancing patient safety, and ensuring adherence to relevant policies and guidelines. This audit has been undertaken and will be presented at Clinical Standards and Effectiveness Group. Medical records Audit Programme: The Health Board carries out regular case-note audits. Compliance checks include audit criteria of: black ink, dates, legible, signed and times. The current compliance for outpatients for this audit is 68% and in-patients' documents is 95%. By focusing on these areas, the Health Board can ensure that staff understand the importance of comprehensive documentation and establish a robust audit programme to maintain high-quality record keeping.		Ongoing monthly audits	Medical Director / Clinical Audit Team – Corporate

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
	The results from the audit findings are scheduled to be fed back at the Clinical Standards and Effective Group. Audit results will be used to develop targeted action plans and address specific deficiencies. Recommendations from the Group will be presented at the Learning and Improvement Forum. Learning from the current practices and audit results will enhance the Health Board's record-keeping processes. Regular audits are scheduled for 2025/26 and will help identify gaps in record keeping and provide opportunities for continuous improvement. Immediate feedback and actions for improvement will be fed back to service leads. This supports learning from the current practices and, the Health Board can improve the quality of record keeping, ensuring better patient care and compliance with standards.		April 2025	

Recommendation	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Patient, service user and staff feedback R10 The Health Board should ensure it has mechanisms in place to understand the experiences of patients and carers in the discharge process in line with their existing policy and apply learning.	Patient experience feedback is captured within the Health Board on the CIVICA Experience Platform. This system is across all inpatient wards and a number of other areas e.g., ED, MIU, SDEC, AMU, etc. All feedback captured is viewed by the ward and wider Directorate and Division, so any comments around discharge could be viewed (from open questions in surveys), however, there is no specific question regarding 'Discharge'. In addition, all comments collected are analysed by the system and put into themes to understand trends. One theme is dedicated to 'Patient Pathway' with a sub theme around 'Discharge', this allows for specific analysis of experience on this subject and understanding of where the feedback has been recorded if any patient or relative has referenced anything specifically about discharge. Local Authorities regularly seek feedback from service users both	Ongoing	Executive Director for Nursing
R11 The local authorities should ensure relevant social services teams routinely capture service		Ongoing	LA Heads of Service

Recommendation	Management response		Completion date	Responsible officer
users' and carers' experiences and apply learning.	formally and informally. This can be more challenging in relation to hospital discharge but is an area for improvement. There is the annual census questionnaire and a range of internal feedback mechanisms/ questionnaires including complaints and compliments. Annual report re complaints and compliments.			



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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a
galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.



SUBJECT:	Monmouthshire Play Opportunities for All and Play Spaces and Playgrounds Capital Funding
MEETING:	People Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	17th June
DIVISION/WARDS	
AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To afford scrutiny of Monmouthshire's, Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan for 2025 to 2028.
- 1.2 To similarly afford scrutiny of Monmouthshire's All Wales Play Opportunities Grant Capital Funding programme for 2025/26.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ahead of subsequent consideration by Cabinet for committee members to:

- 2.1 Scrutinise Monmouthshire's Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan for 2025 to 2028.
- 2.2 Scrutinise the annual update of the Play Sufficiency Action Plan.
- 2.3 Scrutinise the proposed prioritised schemes to benefit from the All Wales Play Opportunities grant 2025/26 Capital Grant for Play Spaces and Playgrounds across Monmouthshire.

3. KEY MESSAGES:

- 3.1 The Council's Community and Corporate Plan has as one of its six objectives the aim for Monmouthshire to be a "*connected place, where people feel part of a community and are valued*". As part of that the Council strives for Monmouthshire to be a healthy and active place where loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded.
- 3.2 Play positively impacts on children and families who are vulnerable. The provision appeals to families who benefit from early preventative systems. Play is a vital element in children's development and something that can provide a strong protective factor in children's lives.

- 3.3 Recognising the importance of play and its statutory guidance Monmouthshire has undertaken Play Sufficiency Assessments (PSA) in 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022.
- 3.4 The 2025 – 2028 PSA (**Appendix 1**) sets out in more detail the background, progress and proposed areas for actions for the next three-years. The actions aligns to those of the Corporate and Community Plan objective of A Fair Place and the action within the plan contributes to *promoting healthier lifestyles, which reduce health inequalities, through increased physical activity, nutritious food and access to open spaces*.
- 3.5 Monmouthshire Play Strategy group is responsible for the PSA and action plan. The group's membership includes cross-departmental offices and is supported by WGLA & WG officers.
- 3.5.1 Membership of the Play Strategy Group: Active Travel; Community infrastructure; Community Focused schools; Community and Wellbeing team; Early years and Childcare; Flying Start; Sport and Community; Play Development; Leisure Services; Children's Disabilities team; Youth service and Neighbourhood services officers.
- 3.5.2 It has been recognised by Welsh Government that Monmouthshire is sector leading in its approach to cross departmental collaboration. It is noted that in so many areas play fits heavily within agendas. This is particularly noted in Active Travel, Heritage and Culture and Sport Development.
- 3.6 Using the 'playing out survey', officers attended every primary school in Monmouthshire. The survey was delivered through the PlayMakers Award program. The playmakers (young children) at each school supported their peers to complete the survey. Further information was gathered on children's views on play in schools.
- 3.6.1 To gather parents and carers thoughts on play for their children, we used the Play Wales parent survey. Further opportunities were available at the councils' main facilities through QR codes and paper copies, if requested.
- 3.6.2 The responses from both surveys have been considered within the assessment. However, questions regarding spaces locally for children to play, asked to parents did not marry with the same question asked to children.

- 3.6.3 The annual Play Action Plan (**Appendix 2**), details the actions to address the issues/ shortcomings recorded in the Play Assessment to secure sufficient opportunities for play.
- 3.7 Playing helps children to develop their inner resources and build resilience to difficulties and uncertainties in their home and other parts of their lives. Through school holiday periods, Monmouthshire has established opportunities for supervised play, under the umbrella of Active Play and Stay & Play. Children's services through their holiday clubs support families with children with disabilities to access suitable play provision.
- 3.7.1 The School Holiday Enrichment Programme, 'Food & Fun' is delivered in the school summer holidays. A school-based scheme providing healthy meals, food and nutrition education, physical activity, and enrichment sessions to learners in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.
(Appendix 3).
- 3.8 Monmouthshire neighbourhood services manage and regularly maintain more than 100 fixed play areas and open spaces across the county. Most fixed play areas are developed and installed by officers within the team.
- 3.8.1 Fixed play areas are categorised by 'Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP's) and Local Equipped Areas for Play' (LEAP's).
Monmouthshire has a mix of play areas and ownership included Monmouthshire; Town and Community Councils and Housing Associations.
- 3.9 An independent play value assessment was undertaken on all Monmouthshire fixed play areas in 2019. There is a commitment to review this assessment more frequently and as a minimum when making improvements to these facilities the play value is reassessed.
- 3.9.1 When the opportunity arises to upgrade or replace play areas, two of the important considerations at the forefront of our thinking are accessibility and sustainability.
- 3.10 As part of the Welsh Government Final Budget 2025-26, there was an agreement to focus on a series of shared priorities. This included £5m of capital funding to local authorities to improve the quality of play spaces, refurbish playgrounds and support the creation of accessible play spaces

and opportunities for children. Monmouthshire has been awarded **£128,619.28** of this fund.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

- 4.1 Approval of the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan provides direction and vision in delivery. It allows access to All Wales Play Opportunities Grant and associated funding and will build on collaboration, joint outcomes and future workstreams identified under the Annual Play Action Plan.
- 4.2 The Play Spaces and Playgrounds Capital funding programme has seen an objective and evidence-based assessment result in a prioritised number of projects and deliverables proposed achieved within the financial year 2025-2026.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- 5.1 The assessment criteria for the PSA measures are set out in Statutory Guidance/ the PSA Toolkit prepared by Play Wales on behalf of Welsh Government and the requirement to undertake an annual review of achievement against the action plan.
- 5.2 The annual update on Actions for PSA action plans is completed by the Play Development lead and submitted to Welsh Government on the 1st of June each year of the PSA Cycles. These annual reports are reviewed and approved at the Play Strategy group meetings.
- 5.3 The sport, community and play outcomes within the delivery plans are identified as measures within the Corporate and Community Plan within Fair Place; Connected Place; and Learning Place and are reported quarterly.
- 5.4 The Award of funding is subject to successful delivery of the agreed outcomes in the application and delivered by March 2026.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 “Wales: A Play Friendly Country” is statutory guidance to local authorities on assessing and securing sufficient play opportunities for children in their areas. It gives detail to the duty under Section 11 of the Play Opportunities, Children and Families (Wales) Measure 2010.
- 6.2 The duty on local authorities is to undertake a full review of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) every three years and update the Play Action Plan on an annual basis.
 - 6.2.1 Each local authority is responsible for managing the Play Sufficiency Assessment and Play Action Plan. This includes engagement with a range

of partners, data collection and analysis to help inform the assessment. Partnership working, collaboration and participation are core elements of conducting the Play Sufficiency Assessment against the criteria outlined within the Statutory Guidance.

- 6.3 The Play Spaces and Playgrounds Capital funding provides us with the opportunity to build on our cross-departmental collaboration, whilst making improvements to our identified play areas and project. Providing children with better opportunities to play within their local communities.
- 6.4 The PSA outcomes and deliverables contributes to the objectives set out within the Corporate and Community Plan.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The Play development lead has established effective cross department working. A key element of success has been embedding play within the sport, play and community team and wider customer, culture and wellbeing directorate.
- 7.2 The Play development lead has recently been trained to deliver the L2APP, a playwork qualification for those who work in provisions that support children and children's play.
- 7.3 The children's disabilities team has made a commitment to deliver additional needs training annually to all school holiday site assistants and staff across, customer, culture and wellbeing, where staff are delivering provision to children and young people.
- 7.4 Funding streams and opportunities.
 - 7.4.1 The Play Strategy group collaboratively seeks funding opportunities to ensure there are sustainable opportunities for play in Monmouthshire and to support the delivery of the play action plan.
 - 7.4.2 Annual funding and support has included revenue contribution and grants from our stakeholders including;
 - a. Town and Community Council contributions,
 - b. WLGA - Play Works Holiday Project and Food & Fun Holiday enrichment programme.
 - c. Children and Communities Grant (CCG) 2024/25. Inclusive grant. Used to support Action for Children to deliver Playscheme sessions to children who are referred by the Children's Disabilities team.
 - d. **Appendix 4** highlights the activities programme for the summer of 2024.

- 7.5 There have been several successful projects delivered and funded through S106 contributions or commitments; Lottery Bids; third sector grants and cross-departmental funding and outcomes. Several play areas have been upgraded in the period 2019 to 2024.

Location	Site	Comment
Abergavenny	Bailey Park	S106 funding
Caldicot	KGV Playing Field	Town Council funding
Chepstow	Castle Dell	Chepstow Town Council National Lottery Community Fund Transforming Towns Grant Programme
Monmouth	Chippenham	S106 funding Monmouth Town Council and Wye Valley AONB
Usk	Maryport Street	National Lottery Community Fund
Magor with Undy	Sycamore Terrace	Town Council funding

- 7.6 Welsh Government has stated that local authorities should consider the outcomes of their Play Sufficiency Assessment when allocating the money to projects:

- **Matter B** – *Providing for Diverse Needs, which* directs local authorities and partners to aim to offer play opportunities that are inclusive and encourage all children to play and meet together.
- **Matter C** – *Space available for children to play, which* directs local authorities to undertake access audits at all designated play spaces and implement proposals to improve access and safety, and assess its play value; and,
- **Matter H** - *Community engagement and participation* which directs local authorities to consult widely with children, their families, and other stakeholders on their views on play provision. This includes engaging with relevant groups to enhance play opportunities for children in their area.

- 7.7 To identify where the Play Spaces and Playgrounds Capital funding for 2025/26 should be allocated, the Play Strategy Group invited officers from the group to be part of a ‘task and finish group’.

- 7.7.1 The task and finish group membership were officers from departments who contribute towards play/playgrounds. Officers have whole authority knowledge of need and contributors to the recent Play Sufficiency Assessment. In addition, support was given to, finance and monitoring to ensure the funding criteria was met.

7.7.2 Data and insight included;

- Grant criteria,
- Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan,
- Play Value Assessments for Play Parks,
- Future opportunities for funding or known improvements, S106, RLDP, partner funding,
- Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019,
- List of all play parks within Monmouthshire.

7.8 Based on the criteria of funding which stated that;

- All projects need to be **completed** by March 2026. Funding cannot be allocated to projects that won't be ready to use by March 2026.
- The grant must be used to support actions of the 2025 PSA.
- WG would like the money to be used, as far as reasonably practicable, to encompass a wide range of users including a range of ages. In relation to this it is concluded that this grant would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play). The funding would then cover a wider range of ages and needs whereas LAPS focus more on lower age groups, mainly the pre-school under-5s.
- WG would like to see funding being utilised to support cross policy objectives e.g. active travel, community.
- Supporting areas of deprivation is desirable but can be used in lower deprived areas if there is rational to do so.
- Current Play value should be considered when making decisions with a view to improving play value. A score between 0-29 is considered LOW play value.

7.8.1 The group reviewed all data and information of parks and concluded that in line with the criteria stated above the funding should be allocated to the following projects, **Appendix 5**.

7.8.1.1 Improvements to Burntbarn Road, NEAP (also known locally as Western Avenue) and Bulwark Park, NEAP (also known locally as Piggy Hill).

7.8.1.2 Improvements to the skatepark (separate funding).

7.8.1.3 Improvements to the routes, where match funding could be achieved.

7.9 Consultation on the proposed plans to improve the identified play parks would be achieved through Let's Talk Monmouthshire and local drop-in sessions. These can be administered throughout the school summer holidays 2025 with analysis to be completed by end of September 2025.

7.9.1 This engagement will include children and young people who attend summer holiday provisions across play, youth and leisure centres in the identified area for the funding allocation.

8.WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING & CORPORATE PARENTING)

8.1 The statutory matters mean that the PSA includes an assessment of the extent that play opportunities are inclusive and recognises the positive impact that securing sufficient and accessible play opportunities can have on children, families and communities. **Appendix 6.**

9. CONSULTEES:

People Scrutiny Committee.
Strategic Leadership Team.
Customer, Culture and Wellbeing DMT.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[Wales: A play Friendly Country](#)

[Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit](#)

[Creating accessible play spaces – a toolkit - Play Wales](#)

Appendix 1 – Monmouthshire Play Sufficiency Assessment Form 2025-2028.

Appendix 2 - Monmouthshire Play Sufficiency Action Plan 2025-2026.

Appendix 3 - Food and Fun Programme 2024 impact infographic.

Appendix 4 - Summer Holiday infographic.

Appendix 5 - Funding Panel Assessment document.

Appendix 6 - Integrated Impact Assessment.

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Play Sufficiency Assessment Form

Local Authority: Monmouthshire County Council

Responsible Officer: Rebecca Hall

Job title: Play Development Lead

Date of completion: June 2025

An Executive Summary of the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) 2025: The state of play in Monmouthshire Local Authority.

1. Local Authority Summary Statement

The Council recognises the importance of play in children's lives, for both its recreational value and for the important part that it plays in children's physical and emotional health and well-being and in their personal development.

Accessible play opportunities contribute to children's lives and to the well-being of their families and communities, thereby contributing to the well-being objective to provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. Play is an important aspect of achieving the vision of the Council's Corporate Plan.

- A Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced.
- A Safe place to live where people have a home and community where they feel secure
- A Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued.
- A Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

These strands of our corporate plan mirror the objectives of Welsh Play Policy where children should have time, space and permission to play as part of their community.

Our goal as an authority is to ensure that there is sufficient access and opportunity for children and young people to participate in play. The

2. Methodology

The Play Development Lead held initial meetings with the play strategy group to discuss and plan how the PSA was to be completed. Members of the Play Strategy group include representatives from the following departments

- Active Travel
- Community infrastructure
- Community Focused schools
- Community and Wellbeing team

- Early years and Childcare
- Flying Start
- Sport and Community
- Play Development.
- Leisure Services
- Children's Disabilities team

Using part of the Play Wales Tool kit we identified stakeholders both externally and internally that should be contacted and should report into the PSA. Each of these stakeholders were asked to complete a document to report on what work they have completed since the last PSA that pertains to children's right to access time space and permission to play. Play development lead met with cluster heads to discuss the play duties and how schools play a part in that. Schools were asked to complete documentation on how they include play into their school day and how they make space available. All of these were in relation to themes of the PSA.

Using the playing out survey we went to all schools using playmakers teams to consult with children and ask them to complete the questionnaire. We held two focused groups at the Bronze young ambassador's day using some of the questions from the playing out survey to facilitate open dialogue on how children viewed their opportunity to access play and if play needs where met. Focus groups were facilitated using the same methods at 5 schools. This provided a wider range of ages and abilities. We added some questions to the playing out survey to gather information on children's views on play in their schools.

All leisure centres and libraries advertised using QR codes links to parent questionnaires and children's questionnaires within their centres. These were also shared on social media. These services have been fully updated on the progress not just of the completion of the current PSA but developments for play throughout the authority as forward facing to the public.

To ensure we reached children with additional needs/disabilities we used Action for children to consult with children in their sessions. We also reached out to our schools with specialist units to complete with their children.

The council works with local town councils who support with some funding of activities within their locality. We meet regularly with these councils to provide updates on provisions within their areas and they share with us their own consultation with constituents. This was also considered when preparing for the PSA.

All departments whose work pertains to themes of the PSA completed update documents to include how their work has met the criteria, what work has been completed, any challenges and future projects and any data. These were sent to the Play

Development Lead who inputted them into the 2025 PSA. These were then approved and edited where necessary by those relevant departments. These departments were also responsible for providing actions to inform the action plan.

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Responsible department</i>
Population [Matters A, B, E].	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Data team</i> <i>Children with Disabilities team</i> <i>Early Years and Childcare</i> <i>Communities and Wellbeing team</i> <i>Youth Service</i> <i>Sport Development team</i> <i>Children's Services</i>
Places where children play [Matters C, F and I]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Heritage and Attractions</i> <i>Leisure services</i> <i>Town and Community Councils</i> <i>Community infrastructure</i> <i>Active Travel</i> <i>Traffic and road safety</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Communities focused schools</i>
Supervised provision [Matters D and G]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Monlife Sport and community</i> <i>Youth service</i> <i>Children with Disabilities team</i> <i>Town and Community Councils</i> <i>Action for Children</i> <i>Family information Service</i> <i>Early years and Childcare</i> <i>Flying start</i> <i>Heritage and Museums</i> <i>Workforce</i>

Policy, engagement, advocacy and information [Matters F, G, H, I]	<i>MonLife Play</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Communities and Wellbeing team</i> <i>Community focused schools</i> <i>Active Travel</i> <i>Traffic and road safety</i> <i>Countryside's</i> <i>Leisure services</i> <i>Marketing team</i> <i>Family information services</i> <i>Workforce Development</i>
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3. How engagement with children and families has informed the Play Sufficiency Assessment [max 2,000 words]

Using the playing out survey we went to all primary schools as part of the PlayMakers Award program. Using playmakers teams to consult with children and ask them to complete the questionnaire. We added some questions to the playing out survey to gather information on children's views on play in their schools. The PlayMaker Award is an introduction to leadership skills. It gives children knowledge of how to organise small games and activities that can be used in school, in community groups, and with family and friends. The PlayMaker Award helps learners develop leadership skills such as organisation, communication and teamwork. While completing the playmaker sessions in schools staff worked with year 5 and 6 children to complete the questionnaire alongside the set activities. They then attended lunch and breaktimes to access the rest of the children in the school to get a wider range of ages.

We held two focused groups at the Bronze Young Ambassador's Day. These days have 2-3 children from each primary school, and they participate in a variety of workshops such as learning on sport delivery, play delivery, wellbeing, disability awareness. These workshops are intended to develop children and young people's leadership skills.

A play theme is included at every event. In 2023 the play workshop involved talking to the children about the importance of play. The UNCRC and what play means to them. They were provided with the opportunity to discuss how they felt schools allowed them to meet their play needs at breaktimes. They produced feedback on how they can advocate for improvements to their break time

sessions. The information gathered here informed play sufficiency assessment and work began to develop play further in schools starting with two pilot schools in 2023/2024.

This year's play theme for the ambassador's event used some of the questions from the playing out survey to facilitate open dialogue on how children viewed their opportunity to access play in their area as well as schools and if play needs where met. Children openly discussed what they liked to play and how and if they can access this.

To reach further children Focus groups were facilitated using the same methods as above at 4 schools. The schools chosen covered rurality, high percentage of free school meals and schools located in busy urbanised areas. This provided a wider range of ages and abilities.

These discussions have been used to feed into the PSA and to evaluate actions that can be put into the 2025 PSA action plan.

To gauge parents and carers thoughts on play for their children we used Play Wales parent survey. This was promoted via social media and our website. We also used QR codes at all four leisure centres, libraries and the councils stay and play sessions. Teams who had close contact with families were also asked to share the questionnaire with parents. This included the communities and wellbeing team, and Flying Start. During the school holidays inclusive stay and play sessions staff members encouraged parents to complete questionnaires and had open conversations regarding their thoughts on children's play.

These responses have been considered within the assessment however questions regarding spaces locally for children to play did not marry with the same questions asked to children. Parents stated that there was not enough places and opportunities for children to play the things they like however this was not the case when children were asked in their consultations. It was also interesting to note that a higher percentage of children stated they were able to play out in their neighbourhood and a low percentage of parents stated they allow their children to play out. From this piece of work, it is felt that improvements parents would prefer is more access to free supervised provision and this is what is being considered in the action plan.

A common theme noted in both children and parents' consultations is that one of the barriers to playing out is road safety and the speed of cars. This is already noted in works completed by active travel and has been used to assess the sufficiency of access within the PSA.

To ensure we reached children with additional needs/disabilities we used Action for children to consult with children in their sessions. We also reached out to our schools with specialist units to complete with their children. The same survey that was used

for all children was used in this instance. We had a very small response using these methods. Given the short amount of time these children have in these settings and the ability to engage in changing tasks led to this not being an accessible approach. More parents responded providing their thoughts on play for their children with additional needs. Two points were highlighted, a need for more specialist provision and for more inclusive play equipment in parks. This has an impact on a lot of the matters of the PSA. All new developments have included more inclusive equipment in parks and these views from parents highlight that this needs to continue to be assessed and acted upon as necessary. Feedback on specialist provision is included in matters pertaining to supervised provision and providing for diverse needs.

It should also be noted that external providers Action for Children and Parents Carers network complete their own consultations with families of children with additional needs on what the needs are for their children. These consultations are regularly shared with the play team, and this informs sufficiency assessment and actions as well as the consultations we completed ourselves.

Consultations with young people ages 11+ was completed using the Make your Mark survey. As part of Monmouthshire's Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28, under the objective of "A Fair Place to Live," the annual Make Your Mark survey is a key instrument for measuring progress against the aim, "Citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures." Make Your Mark is a cornerstone of engagement initiatives for young people in Monmouthshire, orchestrated by Monmouthshire Youth Service. This consultation aimed to identify critical issues for local young people aged 11-18. Youth Service will focus on addressing the most pressing of these issues, selected from a list of 10 key topics. This has been fed into the PSA.

School Sports surveys are completed every 3 years. These surveys seek to gather the views on children and young people's access to sport, physical activity and space to apply these. Using this data the sports team has completed capital grants to improve astroturf and MUGAs. Decisions on where these have been developed has been based on the views of the children from the sports survey. Comparing this data to the consultations completed with children as part of the current PSA MUGAS and sports areas are a destination that a lot of children want access to therefore this sports survey also informs the PSA.

The Active Travel team conduct an annual hand 's up survey. This survey gathers information on how children get to school whether that be walking, cycling or non-active travel. The data from this survey identifies areas where active travel routes are to be developed. This data allows us to assess the sufficiency of access for travel for children and young people.

4. Maximising resources

The Council has not previously had a dedicated play budget, however as a result of the 2022/23 budget round a new Play Development Lead post was funded to contribute to the strategic direction and delivery of play right across Monmouthshire.

This post, based in MonLife's Community and Sport and Team coordinates the statutory play duties, manages delivery of the Playworks Holiday Project fund to support actions of the PSA, chairs the Play Strategy Group and liaises with stakeholders and Council departments whose work can impact play.

Over the last three years the Council has directed play funding to work on the priorities identified in the 2022 Play Sufficiency Assessment and subsequent Action Plans. Across service budgets there are revenue resources used by the Council to support children's access to play opportunities. As well as its coordination role MonLife services provide supervised play opportunities, promote recreational and sport involvement, secure improvements to fixed and green space play provision and provide playful spaces within attractions and heritage sites.

Play forms an important part of the Council's early years and pre-school provision and it is also an important element of the foundation phase once children enter the formal education structure. Children's Services use their budget to support families with children with disabilities to access suitable play provision. Neighbourhood Services manage green spaces and 109 fixed play areas across the county.

Progress on supervised provision includes targeted family engagement for families with children with additional needs as well as cross partnership working with wider stakeholders of children with additional needs to ensure a wide-reaching program. A consistent approach to open access holiday provision throughout all holidays has been developed utilising Playworks Holiday Project funding and Town and Community Council Funding. These programmes run alongside an expanded Food and Fun offer which now includes elements of play in its planning.

The Council and its partners will continue to prioritise available play budgets to concentrate on priorities identified as a result of ongoing consultation and demand from local communities.

The Welsh Government programmes and funding provided through AWPOG, Holiday Playworks, have been used locally to extend provision beyond the school summer holiday period, to work in partnership with more agencies, to increase provision for disabled and more vulnerable children and, in respect of capital funding, to improve and increase play value in a number of the Council's fixed play sites. Grant via the WLGA supports the Food and Fun scheme and the continuing contributions from Town and Community Councils support open access play provision.

5. Monitoring

The Play development lead is responsible for leading on the strategic direction of play within the local authority. This is supported by the Sport and Community lead. All strategic direction filters in the Councils Corporate and community plan which includes yearly development plans and KPI's. This is monitored by the development and performance manager with quarterly updates and monitoring.

The Action Plan is managed by the play development lead who monitors progress regularly and provides updates to Welsh Government on an annual basis. There is a play strategy group (PSG) which consists of representatives from the following departments

- Active Travel
- Community infrastructure
- Countryside
- Community Focused schools
- Community and Wellbeing team
- Early years and Childcare
- Flying Start
- Sport and Community
- Play Development.
- Leisure Services
- Children's Disabilities team

The group has been reestablished since the implementation of the Play Development lead with quarterly meetings. The purpose of these quarterly meetings is to discuss work being completed by members and how this relates to Play. The PSA action plan is reviewed at these meetings with progress updates and actions identified. The Play strategy group were instrumental in the development of the full 2025 PSA. The team established timelines, identified stakeholders, reviewed own work in line with the PSA and supported in the marketing of the consultation work needing to be completed. The Play development lead chairs these

meetings providing an agenda and completing minutes and actions post meetings. These meetings are also used to plan play events such as National Play Day which provides opportunities for cross department support to keep costs to a minimum.

The Play Strategy Group provides sufficient benefits for Play. It ensures that Play is a focus on all agendas and that officers understand the importance of play being a whole authority approach. Monmouthshire is recognised for its successful cross department networking and resources sharing and the Play Strategy Group is a large part of this success. There are difficulties in maintaining attendance at these meetings due to the high levels of workloads across all departments. It is also recognised that there are some gaps in representation. This is continually monitored, and all members of the group are proactive in identifying where there is a need for representation from other departments.

6. Conclusion

There has been a great deal of development across the local authority since the 2022 PSA. Cross department working has strengthened and key messages around play have been adopted by all departments whose work directly affects children access to time, space and permission to play. The appointment of the Play Development Lead in 2022 has ensured that there is a consistent focus on play both in terms of providing opportunities for quality play sessions but also in terms of play being a standing agenda on a range of policies and work plans across the authority.

Play being repositioned into the sport and community team has proven to be a sector leading success. With sports development working alongside play development this has ensured that play is included in sport objectives as far as possible, and this has been recognised by other authorities as a positive. All sport development officers are now Level 2 Playwork trained and advocating for play in all their work. Training has also been provided to heritage and museum staff which has contributed to the development of playful spaces at all our heritage sites include castles and a 300-year-old courthouse. Again, this is unique as most of these places are not usually seen to be child friendly. We encourage children visiting to play.

There are close links with play and active travel with active travel officers ensuring they are considering how their work can encourage play for children. The Williamsfield park Monmouth project providing a play park within an active travel route has been a big success and seen an increase in families walking to and from school. It is a good demonstration of how cross department working can provide positive results and meet many agendas as well as providing the most out of funding. This was identified by Welsh Government as a good example of best practice and as such was chosen as the venue for the launch of the 5 million Capital funding for Local Authorities to develop their parks and open spaces. It has been identified that this funding will be used to complete a similar project in Chepstow

There is a consistent program of activities for play co-ordinated by the Play Development Lead. These consist of open access play, stay and play, inclusive stay and play, playschemes for children with disabilities and Food and Fun. This has progressed since the last PSA with focus on developing a quality and consistent program for children and families. To achieve this, we utilise the Playworks Holiday Program grant funding and town council contributions. We are able to access funding for Food and Fun and some families first CCG funding to support children with disabilities. Without these streams we would not be able to hold such a consistent program. It is recognised though that these streams are fully utilised and without additional funding we could not expand on this further.

The direction of travel for play within Monmouthshire has been positive and it continues to grow and reach more stakeholders and departments. Our biggest action is to continue the trajectory of cross partnership working and to ensure that the strategic direction is consistently monitored and evaluated. There will be a big focus on workforce development in the 2025 PSA cycle with a target to train 40% of leisure assistants. This will not only support open access play but also The Monmouthshire Games Programme. This is a structured sport programme which falls within the exceptions order. With the exceptions order being reviewed and a drive to maintain and improve quality, training staff in Playwork will support these objectives. We will continue to develop our CPD with focus on additional needs training for all play staff. With regard to open spaces and active travel we have proposed actions to improve the play value in our parks and to continue to link active travel and play within walking routes. We also intend to continue to work with schools to develop the use of school grounds for play and to provide support in offering a playful experience during break and lunch times.

7. Theme analysis

Population:

Matter A: The number of children in respect of each age range within its area

Matter B: The needs of children from different cultures and backgrounds within its area Matter E: Whether there is a charge for play provision and where there is a charge	
What children have told us: Primary age children were consulted for the PSA with an age range of 5-11. Although all children responded it was apparent that children from age 8+ were more vocal in stating their play needs as well as having more opportunity to be able to play in their neighbourhood. We received a very limited response from children with additional needs compared to those in mainstream. Of the responses we did have half of the children did not play outside of their house or bedroom while the others could but with strict supervision. Reasons given for this is that the children's needs meant they needed a securer environment with appropriate adults. Of the 332 children who responded to the consultation 65% elected to answer the question on ethnicity. 13.8% identified as either Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese or Mixed. There were no comments made that children from different cultures or backgrounds did not feel they didn't have their play needs met or understood as a result of their background, however it is not fair to deduce that this was the case as they were not asked this question directly and may not have felt able to comment on this.	
Strengths The council provides opportunities for children's voices to be heard. They are consulted on their play needs both in schools and outside. There are play provisions available for children to access which are free. There is also low-cost sport specific activities that children can access.	
Weaknesses There needs to be further work done on ensuring that younger children can voice their play needs in the same way that older children can. A different process for consulting with children with disabilities and children from different cultures is desirable.	
Opportunities Play Sufficiency Lead has good links with schools and organisations supporting children with additional needs to draw upon their expertise in identifying more robust consultation methods to meet all needs.	
Threats There is limited funding and threats of budget cuts to some departments. Although we do well cross department working this could be a risk down the line	
Places where children play: Matter C: The space where children can play, including open space, and any other space Matter F: Traffic measures that are used to promote access to play Matter I: The extent to which education and local development planning policies take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children	
What children have told us: Using the playing out survey 40% of children stated that there were most of their favourite places to play in their area. 48% said there were some of their favourite places and only 12% said there were hardly any. Children were asked where their favourite places were to play. A high percentage of children said it was theirs or a friend's garden, a local grassy area or sports pitch or local parks and school playgrounds. Although not excessively low less children said that community	

centres/leisure centres, skate parks or spaces with sand and water came out lower than those stated above. It could be noted that most of these spaces are more adult led and controlled.

Children were asked what adults could do to help them play out more often and the highest suggestions were to find safe ways to crossroads to get about, ask dog owners to pick up dog mess and the help parents understand that it's okay to play out.

Regarding enhancing play opportunities in schools only 5% of children reported that they could play hardly anything they like with an almost even split between being able to play *lots* and *some* of the things they like. In consultation with children the majority said they would like to see more equipment; particularly open-ended items and it came up repeatedly that football was either an issue in as much it stops others from accessing space or that schools are limiting football to avoid negative behaviours.

Strengths

All schools understand the importance of freely chosen play to children's wellbeing and development. Schools have good links to the sport and play team and most are keen to engage with these teams to further enhance children's opportunities for freely chosen play.

Some schools have found ways to balance the concerns noted with footballs, so all children feel their play needs are being met.

The Active Travel team input to all planning applications focused on creating safe, non-vehicle access to any proposed site. At this point play enhancements are also considered for the local community through the allocations of section 106 funding.

Regular monitoring of active travel schemes takes place to look at usage and impact for walking, wheeling and cycling on creating/improving traffic calming and segregated infrastructure. Regarding motorized vehicles, our road safety team also carry out regular speed monitoring work to check compliance.

Weaknesses

Capacity within the Play team makes supporting every school in the authority to develop their breaktimes to be more playful difficult.

There is limited funding available for schools to purchase additional equipment to support play at breaktimes.

There is no play priority signs within the community to allow children to feel they have permissions to play. Capacity to build on this from the previous PSA has not allowed work to be completed on this.

Opportunities

As funding becomes available priority will be given to develop the play team to allow for more capacity. Close partnership working with sports development and community and wellbeing teams offers a solution to support this and there is a willingness to further strengthen this as this team is moving into MonLife. This closer alignment provides opportunities for development.

MonLife Play team have developed strong links with town and community councils. These councils are positive towards providing opportunities for children's play and working with these can allow for more priority focus on play within in the community being more visible.

Threats

Cuts to public spending and council funds will adversely affect further development. There are plans to further develop our parks and open spaces to increase play value and although these have been reviewed and designed and fit into a workplan there is always a risk with building that problems can arise. We will need to treat this as and when it could arise.

Supervised provision: Matter D: Supervised play provision Matter G: Playwork training and workforce development	
What children have told us: The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for the children following the Playwork Principles. These included supervised provision for 1 hour and 55 min which includes the option to use the leisure centre pool to play freely and a packed lunch. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions. The average uptake percentage across all provisions is 67%. This meets the national average.	
Strengths The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of Playwork to partners in a variety of departments whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting Playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. PDL is a qualified trainer and assessor with high level qualifications in play so is able to deliver training to staff and stakeholders which reduces the cost of training and provides a bigger reach of people.	
Weaknesses Capacity may affect the amount that can be achieved. There is only a Play development lead within the team and sports development officers that can be used to support play tasks, but this is a big remit.	
Opportunities The delivery of play training to more on the ground staff can support the capacity in the longer term.	
Threats Staff retention. A lot of staff who work in holiday provision where our programmes predominantly sit are usually just temporary as they progress to further careers. This could have an effect for consistency across the programmes.	
Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information: Matter F: Measures used to promote access to play, including the provision of information, publicity and events Matter G: Training opportunities for the play workforce Matter H: The level of community engagement and participation Matter I: The extent to which other policies of a local authority take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children	
What children have told us:	

MonLife Play team has been working with MonLife Marketing team to develop a more robust area of the MonLife website. This includes information on what is available for play provision and spaces for play within Monmouthshire. The area also contains information on the importance of play, linking to a variety of information portals that can provide families with advice and guidance on play. It also contains all reporting and updated and historical PSA documents. Social media teams for MonLife also promote available provisions and as part of their “soft content” engagement, promote play importance, rights and guidance. From consultation with parents for the 2025 PSA it was identified that 52% of parents use MonLife/MCC social media and website to access information on opportunities and guidance on play.	
Strengths	
There are good cross department partnerships across the authority which enables play to be a fixture in all agendas. MonLife marketing team work closely with the play team to ensure that play opportunities and play importance is promoted across all platforms. There are good links with schools for the promotion and development of play as well as a means of communication to parents.	
Weaknesses	
Priorities of other policies can run the risk of taking precedence over play.	
Opportunities	
The Councils senior leadership team priorities play within its decision making and strategic direction which can ensure focus across departments.	
Threats	
Changes to staff and departments could set us back in our progress.	

Play Sufficiency Assessment Form

As well as establishing a baseline of provision, the Play Sufficiency Assessment (PSA) will enable the following:

- Identification of gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation
- Support the establishment of evidence to give an indication of distance travelled in relation to play sufficiency
- Highlight potential ways of addressing issues relating to partnership working
- The input and involvement of all partners increasing levels of knowledge and understanding
- A monitoring system which will involve and improve communication between professionals
- The identification of good practice examples
- Increased levels of partnerships in assessing sufficient play opportunities
- The identification of actions for the Securing Play Sufficiency Action Plan, which accompanies the Play Sufficiency Assessment

This template is a technical tool to support a corporate appraisal of the matters that need to be considered as set out in the [Statutory Guidance](#). It is set out in themes which allow the local authority to assess the matters set out in The Play Sufficiency Assessment (Wales) Regulations 2012 and [Statutory Guidance](#):

- Matter A: Population
- Matter B: Providing for diverse needs
- Matter C: Space available for children to play
 - Open spaces
 - Outdoor unstaffed designated play spaces
 - Playing fields
- Matter D: Supervised provision
 - Playwork provision
 - Structured recreational activities
- Matter E: Charges for play provision
- Matter F: Access
 - to space/provision
 - to information; publicity; events
- Matter G: Securing and developing the playwork and the play workforce

- Matter H: Community engagement and participation
- Matter I: Play within all relevant policy and implementation agendas

A guide to completing the template is included in the PSA Toolkit. The template informs a *State of Play* report to the Welsh Government, which will include:

- The local authority's statement: Aims, vision for play in the area
- The methodology for undertaking the PSA
- How resources are maximised for play sufficiency
- How the PSA is monitored
- How the views of children have shaped the PSA
- An analysis of each theme, which identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

The *State of Play* reports can include examples of actions taken locally to support children's play that the local authority wishes to highlight. A report card template, inspired by play sufficiency research, is included in the Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit.

Criteria

This section contains the “matters that need to be taken into account” as set out within the [Statutory Guidance](#).

The criteria column: sets out the data that needs to be available and the extent to which local authorities meet the stated criteria.

The RAG status columns (Previous PSA RAG status and Current PSA RAG status)

Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status is a tool to communicate status quickly and effectively.

Criteria fully met.	Green - Fully met
Criteria partially met.	Amber -Partially met
Criteria not met.	Red - Not met

The evidence to support strengths column: To be used to provide the reason for the chosen criteria status and how the evidence is held.

The shortfall column: To be used to explain the areas in which the local authority does not fully meet the criteria.

What would address the shortfalls? Use this column to highlight potential solutions and/or facilitators.

Additional comments: Use this section to add in anything of relevance that is not covered elsewhere.

Theme: Population

This theme relates to:

Matter A: The number of children in respect of each age range within its area

Matter B: The needs of children from different cultures and backgrounds within its area

Matter E: Whether there is a charge for play provision and where there is a charge

The Play Sufficiency Assessment should provide an overview of population and demographic data of children aged 0-17 used locally to plan for providing opportunities to play.

Criteria to consider:

- The play needs of children of all ages are understood and provided for
- The play needs of children living in areas of deprivation and low income families are understood and provided for
- The play needs of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for
- The play needs of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of ethnic minority children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of Gypsy Traveller children are understood and provided for
- The play needs and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for
- The play needs and support needs of children with Additional Learning Needs are understood and provided for
- The play needs of girls are understood and provided for

- The play needs of children in emergency or temporary accommodation are understood and provided for
- The play needs of LGBTQ+ children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of asylum seekers and refugees are understood and provided for
- The play needs of care experienced children are understood and provided for
- The play needs of disabled children and children with additional learning needs are understood and provided for
- The play needs of young carers are understood and provided for
- Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion
- There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for children with Additional Learning Needs
- There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for disabled children and those with additional support needs
- Premises and spaces used for play provision are provided at no cost or low cost to providers
- The local authority provides grants or subsidies for providers offering opportunities to play
- Subsidised transport for children travelling to provision, which offers opportunities to play, is provided for

Complete the table for 'population' using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring that the following points are covered:

- Provide an overview of population and demographic data used locally to plan for providing opportunities to play
- What has changed in terms of population and demographic trends since the last Play Sufficiency Assessment?
- How has/will the local authority use its population data to plan for sufficient opportunities to play locally?
- How has data been used (or how will the data be used) to address the barriers that children with diverse needs/protected characteristics face in accessing opportunities for playing?
- How is the local authority ensuring that children have access to no or low-cost provision?
- Has the local authority worked with other local authorities on regional projects?
- Have there been challenges? If so, how can these be overcome?
- Have there been successes? If so, please expand
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan

- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	The play needs of children of all ages are understood and provided for			The appointment of Play Development Lead has allowed for more focus to be given to consulting with children. Work has been completed using Play Wales Play sufficiency tool kit for children's consultations. These have been completed in playmaker sessions in schools, young ambassador's workshops and used as guide questions for conversations in focus groups. 332 completed the questionnaire across the authority proving a wide range of ages views. Children are consulted regularly at the regular open access play	It was recognised in reviewing of consultation that more children in the foundation phase needed to be reached. Responses were very heavy for older children and so we need to consider this in future consultations.	Look at a different way to consult with younger children.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				sessions; family stay and play programs and Food and Fun. Evaluations and fun ratings are completed at each session with options for children to provide what they need in future sessions. Flying start services use regular sessions with families and children to understand the needs of all children under age 5. Children and young people services meet regularly as part of the CCG funding and support team. Outcomes are shared with partners and support where needed from cross services is implemented regularly. All these services ensure there is a good understanding of		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				the play needs of children across the authority.		
	The play needs of children living in areas of deprivation and low income families are understood and provided for			The local authority holds information on children living in areas of deprivation at ward and LSOA level and in the Census 2021 population and household estimates for Wales. We have updated PLASC data (updated March 2025) which shows us where the levels of eFSM are as well as those with additional needs. This information is used with eligibility for Food and Fun provision.	It is understood that there are families who may not be living in areas of deprivation who may still be facing work poverty which can affect the wellbeing of children and young people. All our open access play and stay and play sessions are open to anybody with no stigma around a need to identify those most in need. Due to the nature of funding the food and fun program which supports up to 480 children during the school holidays means that only schools with 16% or higher can access. We work with schools to identify those that are in need and would benefit from the scheme	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
					outside of this eligibility, but we do understand that we may not meet all children who are on a low income based on this percentage eligibility.	
	The play needs of children living in isolated rural areas are understood and provided for			Most supervised play provision takes place in the county's four main settlements and Magor and Undy which has recently been given town status. In most rural communities, children have access to fixed play areas and the majority of these are managed by the county council although some are the responsibility of town and community councils. Pilots of outreach play sessions within these rural areas have taken	It is understood that there are pockets of children in rural areas whose needs are not fully met in comparison to other children, however regular consultations have highlighted that there are appropriate areas for children to access play within their areas.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				place over the past three years, but these have not been well attended. The LA has also attempted to use transport to bring children from rural areas to supervised play provisions in the main towns. Again, this was not well attended. We have consulted with children in the rural areas and the consensus found that they felt their play needs were being met within their local area. This was due to access to open spaces, woodland areas and farms which have quality play appeal. most who want to access supervised play provision can travel.		
	The play needs of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for			The commitment to providing opportunities to use the Welsh language in the	We have rated this as amber. This is due to there being no exclusively Welsh language	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				community is a vital part of the council's 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy which aims to contribute towards the Welsh Govt vision of creating a million Welsh speakers by 2050. There are two Welsh schools within the LA and both have after school club in the medium of Welsh. Although there are no fully Welsh speaking holiday provisions provided by the LA play services 50 % of the workforce are either fluent in Welsh or identify as Welsh learners. All provisions are promoted bilingually and for children who want to communicate in Welsh at all our provisions there is a Welsh speaking staff member	holiday provision, however this has been attempted in the past but not been well attended. We actively ensure that all our play provisions are bilingual with a good number of Welsh speaking staff.	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				available.		
	The play needs of ethnic minority children are understood and provided for			The LA seeks to ensure there is updated data of children from all ethnic minorities. We also have teams who support refugees.	There are no	
	The play needs of Gypsy Traveller children are understood and provided for			Extensive work has been completed by the council to assess and evaluate the needs and locations of Gypsy Travellers. This has included The Gypsy and Traveller Advocacy Group, Travelling Ahead, who have worked with Council Officers over many months, running two training sessions for Elected Members to raise awareness of Gypsy and Traveller's needs. As of January 2025, there are 4 children attending schools in Gilwern	Consultation did not take place in the travelling community although it was completed in the schools that they attend. As a whole the council has good ongoing working connections with the community but an action from this PSA is to join those officers in this capacity with the play team to further assess any needs that the play team could support with	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				and Usk.		
	The play needs and support needs of disabled children are understood and provided for			There is 1:2:1 support for disabled children to attend After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs. This is managed by the Early years and childcare team to support with paid childcare. The council commissions Action for Children to operate out of school's clubs and holiday provision across each holiday for children with disabilities (CWD) Since 2022 MonLife Play team, Children's disabilities team and action for children have worked together to establish a wider offer for all children. This includes holiday provision operating from the same premises to allow	Appropriately trained and qualified staff to support disabled children is difficult to find and retain. There is limited funding to support the need for the extra staff that is needed to support all the children's needs	It is important that this is consistently monitored, and we always look for improvements. Seeking additional funding when and if it becomes available,

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				families to access provision for the children they have who need additional support as well as children they have that can access the more mainstream provision. This has allowed consistency for families. It also offers opportunity for integration between the two provisions to allow those with additional needs to access play provisions with the support of their 1:1. Work has also been completed to provide water play for those with disabilities across all leisure centers throughout the holidays. Since the last PSA there has been an increase in the number of opportunities is available for (CWD)		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				The council also works closely with the QB Project to provide additional family sessions for children with more complex needs. When improvements have been made to the Council 's fixed play areas, the proportion of accessible items of equipment has increased both in overall terms and on a number of the individual sites that have been upgraded.		
	The play needs of girls are understood and provided for	N/A		Within our sports development team an area of work focuses on Women and Girls- "Provide wellbeing opportunities for women and girls to engage in a physically active	There is no direct consultation with girls on their play needs although they are consulted within whole play consultations	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				lifestyle.” Within this remit girls are consulted with regularly with actions such as the development of specific classes to meet their needs. Although this is sport and physical activity focused the lead for this is playwork trained and able to sign post if there are play needs identified		
	The play needs of children in emergency or temporary accommodation are understood and provided for	N/A		There are links between the play team and the social services team. Funded places for our TMG program have been regularly provided to the social services team to issue to those in need.	Although links exist no work has been done to directly assess the play needs of those in emergency or temporary accommodation.	The lead for social work will be asked to become a member of the play sufficiency group to allow for awareness across the teams to become a focus
	The play needs of LGBTQ+ children are understood and provided for			The Youth Service (MYS) staff are trained in aspects of LGBTQ+ and they ensure that young		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				people from this community have access to provision and support where required. There is an LGBT+ Group operating in four locations in each of the four main town centres, these operate as a mixed approach between support and social action. Following previous very successful events in 2018 and 2019 the groups are planning a further Youth Pride event and there are plans for another, larger event to promote equality and inclusivity in summer 2023, which will be organised as a coalition between MYS and young people from the LGBT+		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				community.		
	The play needs of asylum seekers and refugees are understood and provided for	N/A		Beginning March 2022, the council provided a play development worker on site at the hotel with the young people initially and then through the holiday periods once the young people were enrolled into school. Subsidised leisure centre access and playschemes were provided as well as a few local football clubs who invited the young people to play. Youth service provision was offered 5 evenings a week from Innovation House. Schools have supported greatly with transition for children and young people with refugee	There is no specific funding to have a specific pro-active program in place incase of the event of mass refugees but the council access those that do become available as the need arises	The Communities and wellbeing team continue to be the point of contact to support those in need of support and will liaise with the Play Development need if it is identified that support is needed

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				status. These children continue to be signposted to the Food and Fun program		
	The play needs of care experienced children are understood and provided for	N/A		There are links between the play team and the social services team. Funded places for our TMG program have been regularly provided to the social services team to issue to those in need.	Although links exist no work has been done to directly assess the play needs of those in care.	The lead for social work will be asked to become a member of the play sufficiency group to allow for awareness across the teams to become a focus
	The play needs of young carers are understood and provided for			Monmouthshire has a Carers Strategy and there is a young carers provision operating in the county delivered by Crossroads Care Southeast Wales. There is also regular contact between the Young Carers Group and the Youth Service		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion			Play projects run by the Council have access to resources that support inclusion. Inclusion packs Including sensory equipment is available as part of a kit library that can be shared with voluntary organisations and projects supporting inclusivity. Monmouth leisure center has had a refurbishment to its soft play center to include more inclusive and sensory equipment. Over the past three years there has been an increase in the number of resources purchased to support inclusivity. MonLife Play service has provided wall mounted equipment, soft furnishings and inclusive sensory	We have rated this amber even though there is a good range of resources and developments since the last PSA. However, we are continuing to develop this and work with sport development team to enhance their kit library to include play equipment including inclusive resources.	We are including into our action plan that we will further develop our kit library and have robust procedures in place to ensure inventory and replenishments.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				activities to Monmouth, Caldicot and Chepstow leisure center to be fixed within their cafes/public sitting areas for children to participate in play while waiting and or using cafe areas with parents.		
	There is a well-known and agreed mechanism which is used to identify the need for separate provision for children with Additional Learning Needs			The Council's policy and practice is to support inclusive provision wherever possible. In response to requests from families with diverse needs an action from the previous PSA 2022 was to introduce-disabled only sessions. The Children With Disabilities Team have been commissioning these and through CCG funding MonLife Play team are contributing to there being an increase to the		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				number of sessions available. Action for Children (AFC) are commissioned to run these sessions with an aim of these sessions to build confidence and resilience so that these children can transition into mainstream provision. There has been exceptional growth in this over the past three years. These sessions now operate alongside MonLife play provisions where it makes it possible for partnership working to integrate children into the mainstream provision and to support in enhancing the disabilities provision.		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Premises and spaces used for play provision are provided at no cost or low cost to providers			The council does not provide indoor premises free of charge but it does provide outdoor space free of charge for play provision.		This would not be able to be changed as the need for a hire charge supports keeping the buildings operating. There is no additional funding to provide free facilities but costs to play providers are kept low and can be covered using the Playworks Holiday Project funding.
	The local authority provides grants or subsidies for providers offering opportunities to play			Monmouthshire Early Years provides an out of school childcare grant for additional support at holiday clubs and after school clubs in the county. There is a limited budget available for this and it is only available to children		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				with additional needs. Also, the grant funds a 1:1 worker but does not subsidise the place for the child. Food and Fun in the summer holidays provides grant funding for opportunities to play. The funding is for an education program, but planning ensures it includes opportunities for freely chosen play. However, this is also a targeted provision and only children attending eligible schools or identified as in need through schools and social services can attend		
	Subsidised transport for children travelling to provision, which offers opportunities to play, is provided for			This is currently not provided; however, this is something that has been provided for in the last PSA and uptake for the		We will continue to monitor the need for this provision and act accordingly were reasonably practical.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				service was not high enough to justify sustainability.		

*(Type in green, amber or red)

Population: Additional comments

A variety of data assessment tools are used to support in the planning of play assessments and provisions. These include the 2021 census and Data Cymru Dashboard, this allows us to view each ward in Monmouthshire by a number of themes such as people, transport, housing, and skills & employment. The Council has created a Wellbeing assessment, The assessment has been produced following a range of engagement and draws on a wide range of data, reports, and academic studies to develop an evidence base to help us understand well-being in our county. Updated PLASC data shows us the levels of eligible free school meals in schools to allow us knowledge of low income and areas of deprivation.

Monmouthshire is geographically large compared to many local authority areas in Wales. It is semi-rural in nature and is often perceived as leafy and affluent. The county covers an area of approximately 880 square kilometres, with an estimated population of 95,164. There is a higher-than-average proportion of older people in the county which is forecast to rise further. In contrast, the number of under 18s is forecast to decline by 2033.

As a predominantly rural county, with 53% of the total population living in wards defined as being in urban areas the rurality of our county needs to be considered when planning for play. Historically we have funded transport to allow those in rural areas to be transported into the main towns to access supervised play provision; however, the uptake of this was limited and could not be sustained. We provided outreach stay and play sessions in these rural areas but again this was not well attended. During consultation periods for the current Play Sufficiency focus groups were held with children within rural schools. It was voiced by the children that due to the environment of their locality it allows for quality play and meets their needs. Approximately 70% of children in rural schools stated they play and hang out with their friends most days. The percentage of children across Monmouthshire as whole that said they play and hang out most days was 42%. Trellech primary school, a rural school has opened the school grounds for play after school once a week for children to stay behind with those collecting to continue playing.

This has been positively received, and it is highlighted in the action plan that MonLife Play will continue to work with and encourage further schools in rural areas to offer this as an option for families.

Given Monmouthshire's location in the South-East corner of Wales, as well as its shared border with England, there is a general perception that Welsh language use is low. However, the 2011 Census showed that Monmouthshire was one of only two local authorities in Wales to see a rise in Welsh language speakers over the previous decade, from 9.7% to 9.9%. A likely factor in this rise is the growth of the two Welsh-medium primary schools, based at either end of the county: Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni in Abergavenny, and Ysgol Y Ffin in Caldicot. This is recognised and the authority continues to develop its Welsh Language offer. At recent recruitment for summer holiday play assistant, it was stated as desirable for candidates to be Welsh speaking. Of the 208 applicants who applied 50% stated they were either fluent in Welsh or were Welsh learners. This will allow for all holiday provisions to have a high level of Welsh speaking staff and allows us to confidently say that we provide bilingual provision throughout the authority.

As a local authority we pride ourselves on our cross departmental collaboration. MonLife Play team, Children's Disabilities team and schools with SEN units work closely to ensure children can access appropriate provisions. The sport and community team provides services for the re-engage team where they work with children and education services to provide provision and support to children who struggle to access school. It is felt that this collaboration allows for good knowledge and opportunity to continually assess the play needs and act accordingly. During the consultation process for the PSA Action for Children, the Children's disabilities teams and SEN schools all worked to consult with their children using the consultation surveys. Although there were responses from these children, they were very limited, and it can't be said that we reached an appropriate amount of these children to say we heard their voice. It is felt that we need to develop a different approach to consultation in the future to ensure consistency with this demographic. This will be an action from the PSA.

Since the last PSA the councils play provisions has developed in quantity and consistency. Using a mixture of funding pots to ensure there is a mix of supervised provision, family provision and inclusive provision. This continues to grow and is an action of this PSA to continue to grow this program. All of these are free at the point of access.

Theme: Places where children play

This theme relates to:

Matter C: The space where children can play, including open space, and any other space

Matter F: Traffic measures that are used to promote access to play

Matter I: The extent to which education and local development planning policies take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children

Criteria to consider:

- An up-to-date record of all designated play space, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), is kept
- Designated play areas and playgrounds are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use
- Public spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use, as set out in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- An Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the [Statutory Guidance](#), has been undertaken
- Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of [Planning Policy Wales](#), have been developed
- Green spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play
- Neighbourhood spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase play
- Access audits are undertaken at all designated play spaces and proposals are implemented to improve access and safety
- A new fixed play provision standard has been developed and agreed
- Brownfield sites owned by the local authority are assessed for the potential for the site to be reclaimed to provide for children's play
- The Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 that require playgrounds in Wales to be smoke-free, are adhered to
- 'No ball games', or similar signs have been removed, to encourage more children playing in the community
- Play Priority Signs or similar, have been erected to encourage more children playing in the community
- A recognition of the importance of playing fields to children's play is included when any disposal decisions are made
- Children and their families are included in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields
- Access audits for all settings, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), are undertaken

- Guidance around creating *accessible* play space is referred to when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds
- Partners collaborate to identify a mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities
- There is a plan to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- There is a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas. To be included on the Active Travel Network Maps
- Road safety grants and/or other funding is used to provide pedestrian safety training and cycling training for children
- There is an accessible and well-promoted way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes
- [Active Travel Act guidance](#) is used when considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm to ensure that safe and convenient routes for walking, wheeling and cycling are incorporated from the start
- Child pedestrian road accident casualty data is used to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities
- Active Travel Fund, Safe Routes in Communities and Road Safety grants and/or other funding is used to support access to opportunities to play
- The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children. An example of this is school street schemes which are funded through the [Safe Routes in Communities Grant](#). They create opportunities for play at the start and end of the school day
- Schools ensure that children are provided with a rich play environment for breaks during the school day
- Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours
- Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times
- Guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed, is provided
- The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the [Community Focused Schools](#) initiative
- The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the [Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme](#)
- The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge
- The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate a benefit-risk approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by ISO, the International Organization for Standardization
- The local authority offers the provision of insurance through the local authority scheme, to all third sector play providers and community councils

Complete the table for 'places where children play' using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What children have told us about the places where they play
- Please highlight successes of collaboration across policy areas to improve access to opportunities for playing
- Have there been challenges?
- How can these be overcome?
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan
- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	An up-to-date record of all designated play space, as described in the Statutory Guidance , is kept			The council keeps an up to date record of all designated play spaces in its ownership and is aware of those that are not in its ownership. We also maintain a number of sites not in council ownership.	Some sites used as designated play spaces are in the ownership of other parties.	
	Designated play areas and playgrounds are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use			A further Audit was completed in June 2024. 6 of the 11 play areas assessed were	It has been identified that there are a lot of parks with a low play value. Although	We will be reassessing parks this financial year

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				also assessed in 2019 and improvements since the last audit have shown an increase in the value of all 6 of these place spaces. When The competition of the Castle Dell works in Caldicot are completed, we will have a destination play area with a play value ranked as "good" in each of the five main towns	work has been completed to enhance 6 parks to have a destination park in all 6 main towns there are still a lot of parks that fall short particularly in areas of deprivation. We have identified Chepstow is a high priority for investment. Castle Dell has been completed but this is in the main town, and this is too far from the Bulwark side of town which is in higher deprivation. There is a need to develop Bulwark park but also Piggies hill including the skatepark. This has been identified by children and young people. It is also noted that since the decommissioning of school transport	for play value. It is noted that some will increase from work that has been completed since the last assessment. We will be using capital funding to develop Chepstow play areas this financial year

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
					this area has become an access for children walking to school. Investment here would greater benefit communities as a whole	
	Public spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use, as set out in the Statutory Guidance			Audits have been carried out at most but not all sites. A lot of work on the play requirements for the new Local Development Plan, with specific proposals for the 18 sites are currently contained in the consultation document.		
	An Open Space Assessment (OSA) that maps areas that are used, or might be used for playing as listed in the Statutory Guidance , has been undertaken			As part of the preparation of the replacement local development plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire, an updated OSA has been prepared, which identifies standards of public		

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				open space and recreation, including fixed play, designated play space and casual play space.		
	Open Space Standards in accordance with the advice and requirements of Planning Policy Wales , have been developed			The Monmouthshire Greenspace Study from 2010 has been updated as part of the preparations for the Monmouthshire RLDP		
	Green spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play			Access audits have taken place at most sites and the audits are reviewed when an changes or improvements are made on an ongoing basis	There are a number of open spaces that are in the ownership or control of some of the town and community councils in Monmouthshire and they are responsible for their own access audits.	
	Neighbourhood spaces are assessed for play value and potential to increase play			The Local Authority has adopted the Fields in Trust Six Acre Standard in relation to parks and open spaces but has developed		There is a move away from providing LAPs (local areas for play), as they offer very limited play value.

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				its own categorisation for fixed play provision.		Instead, we are seeking to provide, both on existing sites and in new developments, a number of new LEAPs (local equipped areas for play) which offer better standards of play value – and, in some locations, NEAPs (neighbourhood equipped play areas).
	Access audits are undertaken at all designated play spaces and proposals are implemented to improve access and safety			Since the original independent play value assessment of all local authority play areas in 2019 a number of sites have been substantially improved, and we re-assess those sites to measure the improvements in play value.		These audits are helpful in identifying areas where action may be necessary in the future, as and when funding permits.

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	A new fixed play provision standard has been developed and agreed			We have adopted the Fields in Trust Six Acre Standard in relation to play provision and use this as guidance. However, we now concentrate on installing LEAPs (Local Equipped Area for Play) and NEAPs (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play) rather than LAPs (Local Areas for Play) due to the fact that traditional LAPs offer limited play value. Also, in the main urban centres (the six Town Council areas), we try to ensure that at least one of the NEAPs is regarded as a destination play area (i.e. a play area that is likely to attract families and children from a		

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				wider geographical area).		
	Brownfield sites owned by the local authority are assessed for the potential for the site to be reclaimed to provide for children's play				We do not assess brownfield sites for their play potential, however the number of such sites in council ownership is limited.	
	The Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles (Wales) Regulations 2020 that require playgrounds in Wales to be smoke-free, are adhered to			Smoke free signage, in the designated format, has been installed on all fixed play sites in council ownership. Guidance has also been given to those Town & Community Councils that manage their own playgrounds.		
	'No ball games', or similar signs have been removed, to encourage more children playing in the community			The council has removed the majority of "no ball games" signs but a small number	A small number of such signs exist but these are mainly on sites	

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				still exist in some areas, usually in areas with a high concentration of social housing	not in council ownership	
	Play Priority Signs or similar, have been erected to encourage more children playing in the community				No play priority or similar signs have been erected	
	A recognition of the importance of playing fields to children's play is included when any disposal decisions are made			The council recognises the importance of children's play where disposal decisions are made – this is also picked up in Future Generations Evaluations and Equality Impact Assessments		
	Children and their families are included in any consultations regarding decisions to dispose of playing fields			There have been very few cases of the council disposing of playing fields. When this took place in Caldicot		

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				and Govilon, the views of families were sought as part of the consultation process. The council would continue to include this in their consultation process if this became the case in the future.		
	Access audits for all settings, as described in the Statutory Guidance , are undertaken			Active Travel mapping looks at access to a range of destinations which will include access to play spaces. This work is uploaded to councils GIS system and data map Wales to look at improving access to AT standards.	Audits do not extend to all sites that are in the ownership of, or managed by other bodies such as Town & Community Councils	
	Guidance around creating <i>accessible</i> play space is referred to when refurbishing or developing new playgrounds			The council does take into account guidance on accessibility when refurbishing		

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				or developing new playgrounds and increases the amount of accessible equipment when existing playgrounds are upgraded		
	Partners collaborate to identify a mechanism for assessing the impact of speed reduction and other road safety measures on the opportunity for children to play outside in their communities			Regular monitoring of active travel schemes takes place to look at usage and impact for walking, wheeling and cycling on creating/improving traffic calming and segregated infrastructure. Regarding motorised vehicles, our road safety team also carry out regular speed monitoring work to check compliance.		Continue to monitor active travel, travel to school and modal share data, through Drakewell in-house data dashboard, PHW Travel to School survey and other specific user group qualitative and quantitative data gathering, as a tool to assess the effectiveness of Active Travel and road safety interventions.

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	There is a plan to reduce the negative effect of busy roads and junctions through the introduction of speed reduction measures and provision of safe crossing points/routes for pedestrians and cyclists			Through core AT funds, the team run a series of large strategic schemes and smaller quick win interventions to support a cohesive network to facilitate walking and wheeling. Alongside the infrastructure improvements, AT funding supports behavior change and promotional activities to raise the visibility of active travel and convert short car trips into active travel journeys, to reduce car use and increase driver awareness.		
	There is a plan(s) to improve walking and cycle access to parks, outdoor play facilities and local leisure centres from residential areas. To be included on the Active Travel Network Maps			Monmouthshire County Council's Active Travel Strategy focuses on journeys of three miles or less. This means making active travel the first natural choice		

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				for local journeys by improving walking and cycling infrastructure to connect people to key destinations within communities.		
	Road safety grants and/or other funding is used to provide pedestrian safety training and cycling training for children			Road Safety Grants are used to deliver Cycle Training via an external company who follow the National Standards scheme. Welsh Government Funding has been received to deliver Level 1 and Level 2 funding to 4 schools in Monmouthshire in 25/26, with Level 1 (on yard) training, being offered to every other primary school, delivered by the RSO. A		

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				six week child pedestrian training programme is offered to all schools in the county to enhance the knowledge and understanding of children in years 1 and 2 around being safe at the roadside and how to cross safely. Active travel workshops are offered to the foundation phase within schools in Monmouthshire. These include "scoot2school" that teaches children how to share footways, whilst underpinning key road safety messages. "Cool kids		

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				wear lids” teaches children the importance of wearing a helmet when using bikes, scooters and skateboards, etc. School transition training is offered to year 6 pupils and is an interactive workshop, highlighting the key road safety issues to this age group, as well as discussions around active travel and their new comprehensive school.		
	There is an accessible and well-promoted way of arranging temporary road closures, to support more children to play outside their homes			MCC have previously delivered playing out pilot and have an agreed process		

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				with the road safety management team how to implement within the community. Wider promotion of this through the community network team and play service can be focused on linked to increased marketing of play provision.		
	Active Travel Act guidance is used when considering new developments and changes to the highway network/urban realm to ensure that safe and convenient routes for walking, wheeling and cycling are incorporated from the start			AT refer to the Manual for Streets, ATAG and Planning Policy Wales when commenting on planning applications to push for high quality accessible routes and facilities in communities. All projects are designed in accordance with the AT (Wales) Act 2013 and to national AT design guidance standards. In		

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				financial year 23/24 MCC was allocated the highest funding in Wales based on the work being developed (7.49 million).		
	Child pedestrian road accident casualty data is used to inform the location and design of interventions which help children get around independently in their communities			AT network maps have been informed on a data led approach and consultation. Any projects which progress through AT are done in line with the WeITAG process to ensure community input and options appraisal at each stage. Our Road safety team monitor the accident and casualty data.		
	Active Travel Fund, Safe Routes in Communities and Road Safety grants and/or other funding is used to support access to opportunities to play			The AT team input to all planning applications focused on creating safe, non-vehicle access to any proposed site. At this point play		

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				enhancements are also considered for the local community through the allocations of section 106 funding.		
	The Local Development Plan recognises and addresses the outdoor play needs of children. An example of this is school street schemes which are funded through the Safe Routes in Communities Grant . They create opportunities for play at the start and end of the school day			The adopted LDP contains a policy requiring the provision of open space and play provision in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The adopted Green Infrastructure (GI) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) recognises the need to increase both formal and informal play opportunities as a distinct benefit and a key design consideration. A more coordinated approach in responding to pre-application enquiries and to	Funding to repair weather damage and wear and tear to play spaces and equipment has been identified across some schools	Further collaboration with the LA play team to support schools in further developing play times

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				submitted planning applications has been implemented. This encapsulates comments relating to green infrastructure, ecology & biodiversity, play & recreation, trees, landscape & street services		
	Schools ensure that children are provided with a rich play environment for breaks during the school day			All schools within the authority have developed their outdoor space to encourage play. All schools have a mixture of areas including yards and field areas. All schools were asked to provide details of opportunities to report with the PSA. Over 50 % of schools responded and it was evident that all schools have climbing equipment, game markings, trails,		

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				quiet and sensory areas, wooden equipment and tires with children having access to play equipment. All schools are involved in the playmaker and young ambassador program. Children part of these programs play an important role in advocating for quality play opportunities at break and lunch time. Children have attended workshops on how to deliver play activities to others and most schools reported that these children are implementing this within thier schools. Trellech primary school took part in a pilot project to train LSA's in playwork. As a result of this they		

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				have further developed break times to include a play pod where children can access loose parts. It has been reported that this has improved behavior at breaktimes, and children are engaging more. There are plans in place to offer this support to further schools.		
	Schools provide play opportunities during out of teaching hours			All schools hold a plethora of extracurricular activities that children can choose to participate in. Alls schools offer the EG breakfast clubs where they also offer opportunities to play and provide play equipment. 12 schools provide the school grounds for out of school childcare where		

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				provision is run using the playwork principles. In 23/24 2 schools were supported to provide the school grounds for stay and play afterschool with support from Play Wales.		
	Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times			Most schools provide school grounds to accommodate supervised play and childcare provisions. 2 schools allow the grounds to be used for family stay and play sessions at the end of the school day. Outside of these, schools close the school grounds, so they are not accessible to children outside of school. It is reported that the reasons for this is security and risk to	The security and risk to property damage prevents schools from opening the grounds for freely accessible use	Play development lead will continue to work with schools to develop the use of school grounds for play utilising the stay and play offer piloted and supported by Play Wales, Community focused schools and the Play Development team.

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				damage of property		
	Guidance to ensure schools understand and ensure that regular outdoor play is not curtailed, is provided					
	The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the Community Focused Schools initiative					
	The importance of play is considered as part of the local delivery of the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme					
	The Health and Safety policies explicitly recognise the value of children being able to experience risk and challenge			This is not recognised in the main health and safety policy but is covered in the Trips and Visits policy under "hazardous pursuits" and "adventurous activities".		
	The Health and Safety policies and procedures incorporate a benefit-risk approach to health and safety assessments as recommended by ISO,			The council works & operates in line with the All Wales Guidance for Educational		

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	the International Organization for Standardization			Visits - a safety guide for learning outside the classroom, which embraces the HSE principles of sensible risk Management. MonLife's open access play services follow policies in line with CIW and therefor includes RBA		
	The local authority offers the provision of insurance through the local authority scheme, to all third sector play providers and community councils			The council does not offer the provision of insurance through its own scheme and can see difficulties in doing so, particularly the transfer of legal liabilities.		

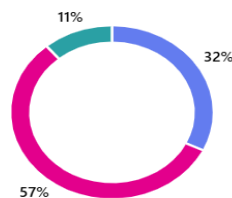
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Places where children play: Additional comments

Consultation has taken place across the local authority to gauge how children feel about their access and spaces to play. Across an online questionnaire, attendance at all schools during playmaker sessions, young ambassador's events and focus groups in schools we were able to gain 332 responses from children aged 5-11. When asked about their favourite things to play and if they can play these things in their neighbourhood 40% said they could do most of their favourite things, 48% said they could do some of their favourite things while only 12% said they could do none of their favourite things. When children were asked, what grown-ups can do to help them play out more there were two suggestions that came out the most- Find safer ways to cross the roads to go out/get around" and "help my parents understand that it's okay to play and hang out" Children were asked about their neighbourhood:

In your neighbourhood, which of these is true?

● There are lots of my favourite places to play or hang out	107
● There are some of my favourite places to play or hang out	188
● There are hardly any of my favourite places to play or hang out	37



Children were consulted on the quality of their play opportunities at lunch and breaktimes in school. 49% of the children asked said they could play most of the things they like in school break times with only 5% stating they couldn't play any of the things they like. All schools within the authority have developed their outdoor space to encourage play with all schools having access to large fields and play yards. 50% of schools responded to provide detail for the PSA and it was evident that most of the schools have opportunity for climbing, physical play, natural play, quiet areas and a variety of equipment for children to access. Schools are very understanding of the importance of freely chosen play and provide for this as much as possible. In consultation with children the majority said they would like to see more equipment; particularly open-ended items and it came up repeatedly that football was either an issue in as much it stops others from accessing space or that schools are limiting football to avoid negative behaviours. Some schools have found ways to balance this need, so all children feel their play needs are being met.

All schools provide opportunities for extracurricular activities in a range of interests with 12 schools providing their premises for after school childcare operating with the ethos of the Playwork Principles. 2 schools have implemented stay and play after school allowing use of the school grounds for play after school hours.

Audits for play value and potential to increase play use have been completed across all parks in the council's ownership. 6 out of 11 parks have been reassessed in 2024 and all have increased in value to be rated as good. These have been improved because of information gained through previous assessments. Castle Park playground in Caldicot is near completion and once this is complete there will be a destination play area with a play value ranked as "good" in each of the five main towns.

Theme: Supervised provision

This theme relates to:

Matter D: Supervised play provision

Matter G: Playwork training and workforce development

Criteria to consider:

- An up-to-date record of all supervised playwork provision, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#), is kept
- Playwork provision offered by the local authority provides a rich play environment, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- The local authority ensures that partners offering playwork provision are supported to offer rich play environments, as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and the Welsh Government's [National Minimum Standards \(NMS\) for regulated childcare](#) for children up to the age of 12 years
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority funds meets the regulatory requirements and [NMS](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that the local authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and [NMS](#)
- Staffed playwork provision that is not registered under the Child Minding and Day Care Regulations is supported to ensure staff suitability and quality of opportunities for children to play
- Staffed playwork provision across the local authority works to a recognised quality assurance programme
- Settings assessed as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessments (CSAs) have been assessed in respect of the quality of play opportunities they provide and offer
- Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing access to play and recreational activities.
- The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children
- The cultural and arts agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children.
- The playwork workforce in regulated provision is supported to achieve the qualification level required by the Welsh Government's [National Minimum Standards \(NMS\) for regulated childcare](#) for children up to the age of 12 years
- The playwork workforce in unregistered provision has access to training and qualifications in playwork
- The Local authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including playwork

- There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area
- Playwork is included within local Workforce Development strategies
- Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their children to play
- The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of opportunities to play
- Early years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich opportunities to play for younger children

Complete the table for 'supervised provision' using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What is the organisational structure of play policy and play sufficiency in the local authority? Who manages the play policy area of work? Who is responsible for workforce development?

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

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D1	The Local Authority keeps an up to date record of all supervised playwork provision as described in the Statutory Guidance			Up to date records of supervised play settings are kept by the Family Information Service which provides the initial access portal to this information for families and their children. This database holds	This area has improved since play has been repositioned into its own team. As a result, there is more focus on ensuring this information is up to date. It is difficult to be	

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				information on open access play and childcare that provide sessions using the Playwork ethos. MonLife co-ordinates and manages council open access play across the authority. This is held centrally within MonLife and shared with the family information service, schools and other stakeholders before each holiday. A working group on provisions for children with diverse needs consisting of stakeholder groups and MonLife Play Development lead meet regularly and share information on what provision is available and this is shared and held by each stakeholder.	100% accurate all the time due to any ongoing changes but links are stronger to monitor this	
D2	The Local Authority offers playwork provision which offers a rich play environment as described in the Statutory Guidance			The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for	Although this has greatly improved since the repositioning of play in the LA	

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				the children following the Playwork Principles. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions.	there is an ongoing need to monitor and increase provision where need is identified. The increase to provision would need a larger workforce which at present is still being developed. It is also funding dependant.	
D3	The Local Authority ensures that partners offering playwork provision are supported to offer rich play environments as described in the Statutory Guidance			The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of playwork to partners in a variety of departments		

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				whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. This has been recognised as sector leading by Welsh Government and other partners.		
	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority provides meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The open access schemes that we operate are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards. The Play Development lead is highly experienced in CIW processes and regulations and ensures that policies, safeguarding and		

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				registration procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the national minimum standards.		
	Staffed playwork provision that the Local Authority's partners provide meets the regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards			The council works with Action for Children, with the Quest Busters programme and with other partners to deliver playwork provision that meets the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards		
	Staffed playwork provision across the Local Authority works to a recognised quality assurance program			The Play Development lead has been developing the provisions provided by the local authority since taken up the role in 2023. They have been working to develop the consistency of the provisions by developing a regular workforce at each provision where focused		

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				training is provided. Using observations and feedback from children they have purchased resources and changed planning processes to improve quality. In 2024 a Play Quality Audit - (First Claims) was used as a baseline assessment to all provisions and this also informed improvements including the implementation of use of the swimming pools for play across 3 of the sites. This audit will be completed again in 2025 by the site leads who will take ownership of the development plan with support from the Play Development lead		
	The Local Authority prioritises quality issues when engaging with/ commissioning the private sector to deliver recreational activities for children.			The council works with third sector partners to deliver activities for children and in those cases		

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				where it does quality issues are Prioritised. The council commissions Action for Children (AFC) to provide holiday play provision for children identified through the disabilities team as having additional needs. In these cases, the environment that AFC can provide is better suited to the children's needs. The relationship between the operational team of AFC has developed exponentially over the past 2 years. Both councils led provisions and AFC provisions now operate alongside each other at most venues to allow for consistency for the whole family who may have a need for both provisions. We also work together on planning where the		

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				council can support in enhancements and where accessible integrate the children with support from ACF staff into council led provisions. This has enhanced the quality for both provisions.		
	Local authority sport, physical activity, and active recreation plans are contributing to increasing free play and recreational activities			Monmouthshire provide and collaborate with partners to provide free, enriching activities for children and young people. The following programmes are delivered: • parkruns • Free Swimming Initiative (targeted and open splash) • Positive Futures • Active Play • Stay and Play • Food and Fun • Playmaker award • Ambassador programme		

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				Subsidised memberships Through these programmes they are providing free opportunities to participate in sport, play, arts and crafts activities. These contribute to children and young people building their confidence, skills, friendships and connection with the community. LA's play duties sit within the sport and community team and as such there is sector leading collaboration to ensure that play features heavily within sports agendas.		
	The sports agenda contributes to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children			Monmouthshire is committed to creating a wealth of sporting opportunities for children and young people. The programmes are under pinned by frameworks		

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				provided by Education, Government, National Governing Bodies and Sport Wales. These opportunities are delivered through the following pillars of work: • Foundations • Education • Health and Wellbeing • Workforce • EDI • Community Through these pillars of work, opportunities are delivered through key programmes: • Festivals • Sport specific sessions • Leadership activities • Targeted education provision • Diversionary activities • Adaptive sessions • Community sports provisions		

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				Volunteering The above information is governed and monitored by Sport Wales to ensure that Monmouthshire is delivering the priorities set out for physical activity. Data, insight and learning is captured through attendances, case studies and feedback. The work delivered in Monmouthshire has been acknowledged as good practice by Sport Wales and other National Governing Bodies.		
	The cultural and arts agenda, is contributing to the provision of sufficient recreational activities for children			A playful places audit has been undertaken at the council's museums and heritage & cultural attractions to explore the physical infrastructure of the sites as well as the human and		

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				cultural conditions that support the development of play and playful opportunities for children and families. The staff at these sites have also received training around the nature and value of play and developing and supporting playful approaches and working with heritage sites and collections. The attractions learning manager works closely with the Play Development Lead to continuously enhance the playful spaces and provide activities during the school holidays		
	The Local Authority Youth			Monmouthshire Youth		

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	Service provides for children's opportunities for leisure and association			Service (MYS) provide opportunities on a regular basis for young people aged 11 years+ to engage in leisure and recreational activities in youth drop-in centers, more traditional youth club settings, village halls and outreach sessions. The service regularly provides trips for YP which are well attended. Residentials and camping trips took place in summer 2024. MYS also provides services to young offenders, support with anti-social behavior intervention and co-ordinates the shift project which supports YP with emerging mental health and wellbeing and emotional issues. In		

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				summer 2023 MSY made 2598 contacts, and this increased to 3123 contacts in summer 24. MYS completed a Make your Mark survey with young people in 2024 This consultation aimed to identify critical issues for local young people aged 11-18. Youth Service will focus on addressing the most pressing of these issues, selected from a list of 10 key topics.		
	The playwork workforce in regulated provision is supported to achieve the qualification level required by the Welsh Government's National Minimum Standards (NMS) for regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years			The council keeps up to date information regarding the Early Years and After School play workforce and this is updated as part of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. The Council works closely with Clybiau Plant Cymru to be able to provide Level 2 and 3 playwork qualifications and transitions to		

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				playwork as and when this is needed.		
	The playwork workforce in unregistered provision has access to training and qualifications in playwork			As of 2022 there was a more defined play management structure within the authority with a level 5 Playwork qualified Play Development Lead who oversees all aspects of play sufficiency and supervised play. Play sits within the Sport and Community team who have all now become qualified to level 2 in Playwork. All staff that work within the open access and stay and play provisions have received an introduction to playwork training and have the opportunity for CPD in Play provided by the play development lead. All departments within MonLife that support with play have opportunity to access		

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				training and qualifications in play via the Play development lead		
	The Local authority has a staff development budget ring fenced for play, including playwork			There is no ring fences budget for play within the local authority, however the Play Development lead (PDL) now manages the Playworks Holiday Program funding. As per the criteria the PDL ensures that a portion of that budget is used to provide training for staff to further develop Playwork Knowledge. There is also scope within this budget to fund qualifications if needed but for the past two years and for the next two years there is funded places available for Playwork qualifications through Clybiau plant Cymru		
	There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development			The council promotes CPD to	The provision, whilst valuable	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	(CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area			play workers, also providing underpinning knowledge courses – for example, food hygiene, Safeguarding health & safety and Manual handling. Childcare providers who offer registered provision providing Playwork have access to CPD Via the Early years and Childcare team including all mandatory training. The Play Development Lead has a suite of Play training that they can deliver to those who need it and continues to source CPD from external providers when these are available and financially viable.	and constantly evolving, does not cover all play workers in the area and it cannot be classed as comprehensive.	
	Playwork is included within local Workforce Development strategies				The workforce development strategy for the LA does not include Playwork,	There have been initial meetings with the LA training, learning and

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
					however, there has been further development since the repositioned work on increasing the amount of playwork training available has increased.	development team to implement play on thingi- the LA's learning system. This will allow play to be an option for all employees but a mandatory training badge for all those employed to work with children in a recreational capacity.
I12	Family support initiatives provide up to date information and support for parents to enable them to support their children to play			There is a plethora of family support initiatives throughout the authority. Flying Start provide a variety of opportunities for family support and promotes the importance of play within these programs. MonLife Play team provides Stay and Play sessions for families and inclusive stay and		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				play for those families with children who have additional needs. The importance of play is promoted heavily at these sessions. The play section on MonLife's website has a dedicated section for parents where links can be accessed to up-to-date information on how to support children's play as well as signposting to Playful childhoods website.		
	The local implementation of the Families First programme recognises the importance of play and contributes to the provision of opportunities to play			There are a range of programs that are funded through the Families First program within the LA. The Families First Program in Monmouthshire is small compared to other areas. The projects that are funded through Families First are: • The Acorn Centre • Watch Wait and		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				Wonder • Early Years Disability • Inclusive Play • Young Carers • Building Strong Families • Face to Face Creative Therapies Play threads throughout most of the program with some providing direct opportunities for children to play. Where appropriate these programs promote the benefits of play to their families. The FF program sits under the CCG umbrella. Regular meetings of all recipients of funding from CCG occur. The Play Development Lead sits on this group and provides advocacy for play here.		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Early years and Flying Start plans and services recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich opportunities to play for younger children			The council's Early Years Policy deals mainly with early education and promotes the importance of play as an important educational tool. The fundamental principle of the Foundation Phase Framework is that learning should be active/play based and should take place both indoors and outdoors. The council's service specification agreement with approved early education providers states that all children must have access to a stimulating, safe & secure outdoor learning environment		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				during every session.		

*(Type in green, amber or red)

Supervised provision: Additional comments

The council operates a range of inclusive play provisions which offer rich play environments for the children following the Playwork Principles. These included supervised provision for 1 hour and 55 min which includes the option to use the leisure centre pool to play freely and a packed lunch. Since the last PSA the amount of provision that is available has increased and has become a regular timetabled feature in all holidays providing consistency to residents. There is evidenced feedback from children & families with high satisfaction ratings. We continue to monitor, expand and adapt where needed. Children's voices in these provisions determine how we develop the quality of these provisions. The average uptake percentage across all provisions is 67%. This meets the national average.

The appointment of a Play lead since the last PSA has allowed for even more contact with other partners providing Playwork. Work has been completed to provide knowledge of Playwork to partners in a variety of departments whose work has a direct effect on children's play. Sport Development team collaborate alongside the play team promoting Playwork. Ensuring it is incorporated into the outcomes delivered for Sport Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. This has been recognised as sector leading by Welsh Government and other partners.

The open access schemes that we operate are not required to be registered with the CIW but they do meet the regulatory requirements and the national minimum standards. The Play Development lead is highly experienced in CIW processes and regulations and ensures that policies, safeguarding and registration procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the national minimum standards.

The Play Development lead has been developing the provisions provided by the local authority since taking up the role in 2023. They have been working to develop the consistency of the provisions by developing a regular workforce at each provision where focused training is provided. Using observations and feedback from children they have purchased resources and changed planning processes to improve quality. In 2024 a Play Quality Audit - (First Claims) was used as a baseline assessment to all. This audit will be completed again in 2025 by the site leads who will take ownership of the development plan with support from the Play Development lead.

Continued professional development has increased with the implementation of the Play Development Lead. There is a suite of training now available that can be delivered by the play development lead (PDL). The PDL has recently become qualified to be able to deliver the L2 APP. Agored Cymru Level 2 Award in Playwork Practice – this course provides a broad introduction to Playwork. It is the entry requirement for the P3 route and has to be completed successfully before progressing to the other qualifications in the series. As a standalone qualification, it is also suitable for those working in holiday playschemes. It includes information about the importance of play, inclusion, Playwork theory and creating spaces for playing. An action of the 2025 PSA is to provide this training to 50% of leisure center staff to support them in ensuring the Leisure Centers can be developed into a playful space. This will also support The Monmouthshire Games program. With consideration to the review of the exceptions order this will prepare the TMG program for the possibility that there could be a need to register with CIW as part of an appropriate standard.

There have been initial meetings with the LA training, learning and development team to implement play on Thingi- the LA's learning system. This will allow play to be an option for all employees but a mandatory training badge for all those employed to work with children in a recreational capacity. This will be an action of the PSA.

The Play Development Lead is responsible for the completion of the PSA. Their role sits within the Sports Development team. This is unique across Wales and has been recognised as sector leading. All sports development officers are trained in Playwork and use this knowledge as part of their work in developing the sports agenda across the authority. Play now plays an integral part of the leadership program, young ambassadors and playmakers program. With the implementation of Sport Wales Foundation Framework, play sits appropriately into this. Our sports Development team continuously endorses play in the implementation of the Foundation Framework.

Theme: Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information

This theme relates to:

Matter F: Measures used to promote access to play, including the provision of information, publicity and events

Matter G: Training opportunities for the play workforce

Matter H: The level of community engagement and participation

Matter I: The extent to which other policies of a local authority take into account the need to enhance play opportunities for children

Criteria to consider:

- There is a clearly identified section on the local authority website, which gives information about opportunities to play as described in the [Statutory Guidance](#) (play areas, playwork provision, clubs and their accessibility)
- Information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required
- Events which encourage opportunities to play and events for children and families are publicised and supported
- Information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play is publicised
- Information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play is publicised
- The local authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area
- A comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce, as defined in the [Statutory Guidance](#), has been undertaken
- There is a variety of learning and development opportunities offered to staff so that they can consider their role in supporting play
- There is a comprehensive range of continued professional development opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children
- Play sufficiency and other training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play
- Initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play opportunities for children in its area, are promoted

Community engagement is promoted in:

- Making space available and suitable for play

- Organising play events
- Positive attitudes towards children and play
- Training on the importance of play
- There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children's play
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within, the Well-being Plan
- The local Public Health Team supports play and play sufficiency
- There is a named person on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who champions children's play
- The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within the work of, the RPB
- Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities.

Complete the table for Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information using the 'criteria to consider' list and ensuring the following points are covered:

- What are the successes across policy areas and advocacy for play?
- Have there been challenges?
- How can these be overcome?
- Actions considered for Play Action Plan
- Actions agreed for Play Action Plan
- Rationale for action prioritisation

To what extent does the local authority meet the criteria?

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	There is a clearly identified section on the local authority website, which gives information about opportunities to play			Work with marketing partners in 2023 was		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	as described in the Statutory Guidance (play areas, playwork provision, clubs and their accessibility)			undertaken to develop the play portion of MonLife website. This has now been live for 12 months. The website has clear tabs to provide clear information. These include "what's on"- this takes residents to all activities available for children and young people with focus on the open access provisions and stay and play. A section on places to play which holds information on outdoor parks and spaces within the authority. A section on play information which links to playful parenting websites and other play related information		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				website. The final tab has all our play reports and completed PSA		
	Information on access to play opportunities and contact for support if required			Information is updated on the Play unit of MCC website. It is also shared before each holiday on social media platforms with contact information to include the central play email address where all queries are addressed by the sport and play team. Information is also shared with the council's family information service who share it on their information site and signpost to the play team as needed.		
	Events which encourage opportunities to play and events for children and families are publicised and supported			Events are publicised and supported by the FIS, they advertise specific events on the FIS website and through social		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				media throughout the year. All public events planned via MonLife Play and partners are advertised via MonLife social media and website.		
	Information which contributes to positive community attitudes to play is publicised			There is a dedicated page on the play section of MonLife that provides links to the importance of play for children and communities. Local communities are collaborated with on activities to promote positive community attitudes to play and these links promote this within their own mediums.		
	Information and support for parents to help them encourage their children to play is publicised			There is a dedicated page on the play section of MonLife that provides links to the importance of play for children with ideas on how to support their		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				children with play. National and international days of play are promoted on all social media with ideas of how to access play opportunities.		
	The local authority engages with the media to encourage the positive portrayal of children playing in the local area			The council has an effective engagement with the media, and we promote positive portrayals as and when there is an opportunity to do so.		
	A comprehensive training needs analysis for the play workforce, as defined in the Statutory Guidance , has been undertaken			Work has been completed since the implementation of the Play Development lead to assess the current workforce and its training to date. A training program has been developed to provide staff working in open access play to undertake and introduction to	The casual nature of those employed to work the school holidays provisions makes it difficult for them to attend full play qualification training. The development of the play workforce is ongoing, and this has developed to a good standard since the last PSA, but we continue to look at avenues to	Continuing collaboration with partners to access appropriate training routes that can accommodate our workforce. Continuing to provide CPD and update training on the importance of play to ensure all staff maintain

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				playwork. All Play and sports development officers have level 2 playwork with pathways to level 3. Links between Clybiau Plant Cymru, Play Wales and the early years and childcare team to access qualifications when needed.	further develop this area,	their knowledge and skills as far as reasonably practical.
	There is a variety of learning and development opportunities offered to staff so that they can consider their role in supporting play					
	There is a comprehensive range of continued professional development opportunities for a range of professionals who work with children			The council promotes CPD to All professionals working with children. CDP we provide doesn't just involve introduction to playwork and opportunities to access qualifications but also underpinning knowledge		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				courses for example, food hygiene, safeguarding, autism awareness, first aid and health and safety. The council has recently introduced a central learning management system which includes all induction and mandatory training as well as CPD. There are plans to include play-related training to this system in the future. The Early Years and Childcare development team provide CPD and update training to all childcare providers who offer out of school childcare and holiday care.		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	Play sufficiency and other training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play			Since the implementation of the Play Development lead (PDL) the Play Strategy Group has been reinstated with a robust structure. This group meet quarterly to discuss the development of play across the authority and what the various departments are planning and how these impacts play and play sufficiency. The group consists of many decision makers and those who can influence policy. The PDL meets regularly with town councilors who support with funding to provide play opportunities. These meetings are an opportunity to further promote	It is felt that the council completes a lot of work to ensure that all professionals are providers with awareness and play is very much seen as an important priority across the council. The messages and work need to be a regular discussion with all professionals continuously. Specific training sessions would be difficult to implement across all professionals but there are resources to deliver this if there is capacity. It is felt that a continuing focus on including play on all agendas and regular meetings to continue to have play as a focus is	

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				the importance of play. Work pertaining to play is a regular agenda item with the Department Managers Team meetings and this is fed further up the council to The CEO and senior team. Training has been available to schools on play sufficiency and how schools can provide a more playful experience during break and lunchtimes.	sufficient	
	Initiatives to engage relevant groups in enhancing play opportunities for children in its area, are promoted			Feedback is routinely obtained from parents and children at every supervised play session run by the council and those commissioned through external agencies such as Action for Children and some of the activity providers we use to		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				deliver active play and recreation sessions. When improvements are planned to fixed play sites we engage with local children and families about the revised layout. equipment schedule and border treatments. We also consult on the items of accessible equipment to be included in the revised provision. The council also engages regularly with a number of Friend Groups across the county, set up to promote improvements to green open spaces and outdoor fixed play		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				sites		
	Community engagement is promoted in: • Making space available and suitable for play • Organising play events • Positive attitudes towards children and play • Training on the importance of play • There is a named person on the Local Public Service Board who champions children's play • The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are incorporated within, the Well-being Plan • The local Public Health Team supports play and play sufficiency • There is a named person on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) who champions children's play • The Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan contribute to, and are			There is a strong emphasis via the planning process on making space available and suitable for play and for the provision of play and recreational opportunities for children and young people. Cross department working is a high priority within this council, and this works especially well with the promotion of play. Leisure centers, Youth centers, outdoor parks and natural areas, heritage and attractions are all focused on providing space for children to play. There is a strong membership in the play strategy group who meet regularly	Due to workloads attendance at all meetings for LPSB and RSB can sometimes be sparse. This is something that needs to be addressed with support for the Play Strategy Group.	Including other boards as a standing agenda item on the Play strategy group meeting to join up on feedback and to see where gaps might be.

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
	incorporated within the work of, the RPB Plans to reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences recognise the importance of play and contribute to the provision of rich play opportunities.			to assess how these spaces can continue to be developed and utilised for play. The Play Development lead works alongside Leisure center managers to provide open access play within their buildings as well as outdoor education centers. Museums and castles are arranged to be playful spaces for freely chosen play and play events. The play strategy group works together to plan National Play Day events annually drawing on shared resources. There has been an increase on available play training since the 2022 PSA and this will continue to be		

LA Ref No	Criteria	Previous PSA RAG Status*	Current PSA RAG Status*	Evidence to support strengths	Shortfalls	What would address the shortfalls?
				rolled out to a variety of departments and stakeholders. Members of the play strategy group sit on the local public services boards and regional service boards to represent play.		

*(Type in green, amber or red)

Policy synergy, engagement, advocacy and information: Additional comments

Monlife Play team has been working with MonLife Marketing team to develop a more robust area of the MonLife website. This includes information on what is available for play provision and spaces for play within Monmouthshire. The area also contains information on the importance of play, linking to a variety of information portals that can provide families with advice and guidance on play. It also contains all reporting and updated and historical PSA documents. Social media teams for MonLife also promote available provisions and as part of their “soft content” engagement, promote play importance, rights and guidance. From consultation with parents for the 2025 PSA it was identified that 52% of parents use MonLife/MCC social media and website to access information on opportunities and guidance on play. It is an action of the 2025 PSA to continue to promote play through our social media and online platforms. Cross partnership working continues to ensure that the councils Family Information Service is utilised to promote opportunities for play within the local authority.

2024 National Play day was celebrated by offering a full day of play opportunities within the Caldicot area. All opportunities were free at the point of access and the importance of play was promoted throughout the day. The event saw a variety of activity including fire building, climbing wall, sumo wrestling, den building, messy play and sport. Departments across the local authority provided activities at no cost including, youth service, heritage and attractions, leisure services, Monmouthshire housing association and communities and wellbeing. The event was promoted as being accessible for the whole local authority. There were approximately 400 people who attended the event. It has been approved that this will happen again in 2025 with the option to hold two events one in the North and one in the South. As well as the event, play was regularly promoted on social media using posts to provide ideas on low-cost play.

The communities and Wellbeing team are being relocated into MonLife as of March 2025. This team links to the communities of Monmouthshire supporting with a variety of services. These include, community focused schools, tackling poverty and promotion of community support. Historically this team has produced a way of delivering street play which supported the closure of roads within housing estates to allow children to play in the street. With changes to management and structure, work on this has been halted, however, the structure is still robust to continue this, The PDL already has strong links with this team and the repositioning will allow for this to develop further.

Community focus school lead has worked with the PDL and Play Wales to support two schools to open their grounds for the use of play after school. This has proved successful with strong case studies. An action of the PSA is to further develop this work with more schools with particular focus on schools in rural areas.

Museums and Heritage completed a play audit in 2022 and produced an action plan to create all museums and castles to be playful spaces. The heritage education manager continues to assess and promote these spaces for children to play. As part of the Cultural Strategy Plan which is currently being developed an action highlighted in this is "Support and develop partnership

working with heritage, libraries and museums to develop and promote playful spaces through a young ambassador's programme". This will be included in the 2025 PSA action plan.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Play Sufficiency Action Plan

Name of local authority: Monmouthshire

Name of responsible officer: Rebecca Hall

Job title: Play Development Lead

Completion date: June 2025

Page 188

Proposed actions for the period of (1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

Theme / Matters	Action to achieve sufficient play opportunities	Priorities	Milestones	Resources needed	Funding source	Lead Person
Population [Matters A, B, E]. The play needs of Welsh language speaking children are understood and provided for	Continue to ensure there are sufficient Welsh speaking staff at all play provisions to allow Welsh speaking children to communicate through the medium of Welsh. Ensure that all resources are bilingual. Monitor the implementation of incidental Welsh as far as reasonably practical.	Keep an up-to-date record of Welsh speaking staff Continue to assess and monitor the need for exclusive Welsh speaking provision with consideration to sustainability. This will be a priority agenda item of the Play sufficiency group	As part of annual quality audits. These take place in February and October holiday periods and are actioned accordingly. Consultations will take place annually at the beginning of each financial year and again at the end of the financial year. PDL will assess this termly	MCC translation services Play Development Lead (PDL) time. Sport development time Disabilities team time.	PHP funding Food and Fun WGLA Core funding CCG funding	Becky Hall PDL 2025 Children's disabilities team-
The play needs and support needs of disabled children are	We will continue to work with stakeholders who	This will be prioritised as a				

understood and provided for Play projects and providers have access to a range of resources which support inclusion	support children with disabilities and additional needs. A more practical approach will be sort and implemented to ensure that the needs of disabled of children can be consulted in a more meaningful way. MonLife Play team will work closely with commissioning services to achieve this. The Disabilities team will provide additional needs training annually to all play staff Further develop our kit library to include a range of play resources and have robust procedures in place to ensure inventory and replenishments.	completion for the end of this cycle of the PSA Training booked into our summer training program each year	Training review and evaluations end of each summer period		Sport Wales Core funding (EDI)	Spots Development Officer 2025
Places where children play [Matters C, F and I]						

Schools provide access to school grounds for playing out of school times Designated play areas and playgrounds are assessed for play value and potential to increase in play use	Play development lead will continue to work with schools to develop the use of school grounds for play utilising the stay and play offer piloted and supported by Play Wales, Community focused schools and the Play Development team. A full re assessment will be completed on all parks to assess for new scores and to re score those that have had improvement. Piggies Hill and Western Hill have been identified as priority for improvement this will include increasing the value of the skatepark in Piggies Hill to support older children's play. All parks identified as low play value	This will be prioritised as a completion for the end of this cycle of the PSA This will be completed by March 2026		PDL School support staff	Core funding for PDL time. Schools to identify possible funding streams. AWPOG funding S106 funding Town Council funding	PDL Community Focused Schools Lead Community Infrastructure Manager
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	will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding					
Supervised provision [Matters D and G] There is a comprehensive range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities available for playworkers in the area	PDL will continue to provide CPD to all staff providing play provision. A target of 40% of leisure assistance (10% at each site) will be trained in L2APP to ensure knowledge of playwork and playful spaces at all LC's and to prepare for any changes that may come about as a result of the exception order review.	This will be prioritised as a completion for the end of this cycle of the PSA	Annual assessment to monitor target	PDL time. Play Wales course cost	PHP funding	PDL Leisure centre managers and Duty officers to arrange compliance
Playwork is included within local Workforce Development strategies	Learning and development team to implement play on Thingi- the LA's	This will be prioritised as a completion for the end of this cycle of the PSA	Annual assessment against progress	PDL time. Request for support from sports	Core funding (for PDL time and Learning and development team)	PDL Sport and community manager

	learning system. This will allow play to be an option for all employees but a mandatory training badge for all those employed to work with children in a recreational capacity Continue to provide a quality consistent program of delivery and enhance where a need is identified.	Ongoing	Annual reporting and consultation with children, town councils and stakeholders.	development team. Thing system PDL Leisure manager Town councils Children and young people	Town and community council funding PHP Food and Fun (WGLA) Sport Wales	Learning and development team. PDL Sport and Community Manager Leisure services department manager Town and Community councils
Policy, engagement, advocacy and information [Matters F, G, H, I] Play sufficiency and other training awareness sessions are available for professionals and decision makers whose work impacts on	The promotion of play sufficiency will continue to be a priority of the council and a standard agenda item on all sectors	Play Strategy Group (PSG) will continue to meet quarterly.	Minutes of PSG meeting will be drawn quarterly.	PDL Sport and community Manager. PSG DMT	Core funding PHP	PDL Leisure manager

children's opportunities to play Community engagement is promoted in: -Making space available and suitable for play -Organising play events -Positive attitudes towards children and play -Training on the importance of play	whose work impacts on children's opportunities to play. Play sufficiency group will continue to meet and priorities play on all agendas that connect to matters of the PSA. Membership of the group will be constantly reviewed and extended upon as priorities develop The Cultural Strategy Plan is currently being developed an action highlighted in this is "Support and develop partnership working with heritage, libraries and museums to develop and promote playful spaces through a young ambassador's programme". This will be developed	Heritage Education manager will monitor as part of their work plan. Regular meetings with heritage and play to ensure actions are met.			PHP	Heritage Education Manager PDL PSG
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	over the course of this PSA Cycle and will include training support to museum staff. Playful spaces in museums will continue with cross partnership between the PDL and heritage manager to ensure consistency.					
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Monmouthshire County Council



Page 195

Food and Fun Programme 2024 – Impact Infographic



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sir fynwy

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Headline Figures

Page 196

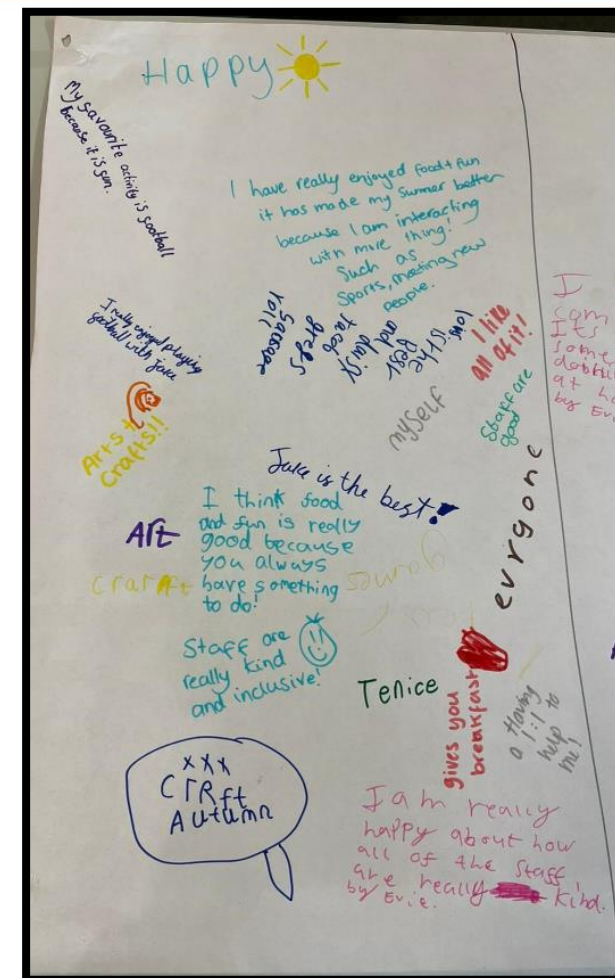
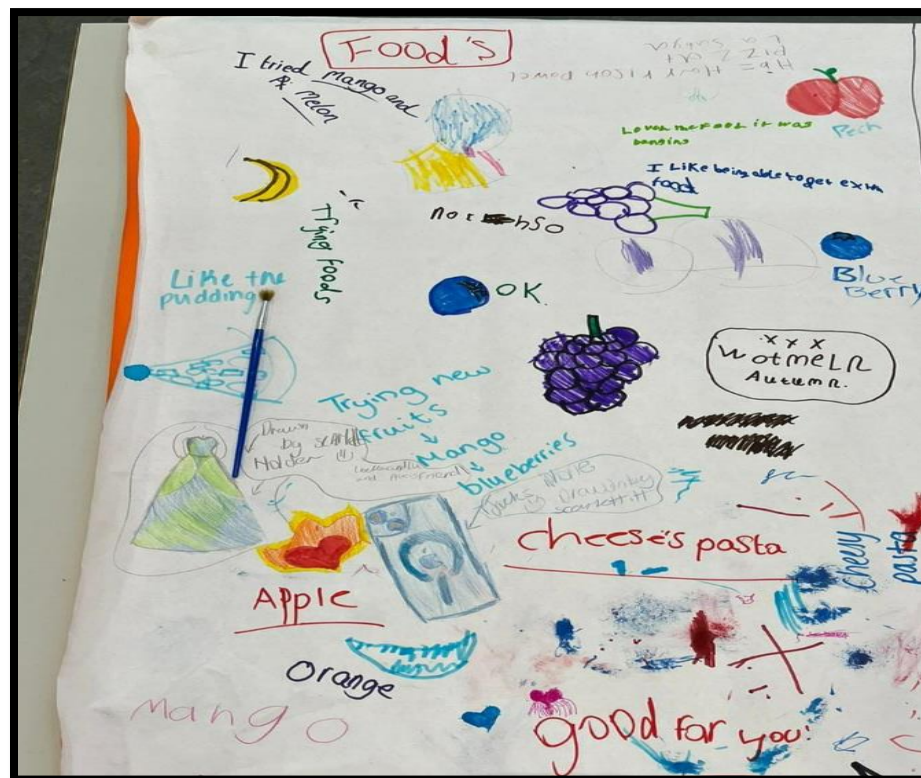


The programme's impact on children

What have children most enjoyed?	How has it made them feel about being active and healthier?	What did children highlight are the wider benefits to them?
• Sports and activities • The food • Arts and crafts • Making new friends • Taking part in tennis	• 'I've enjoyed getting out of the house'. • Less screen time • 'I'm active here than I am at home'. • 'The school gives us more space to move'. • 'The food is really healthy'. • 'I love being outside'.	• Increased confidence • Socialising with others • Being in the comprehensive school and increased familiarity. • Making new friends and seeing school friends through the summer. • Being able to express themselves



The programme's impact on children



The programme's impact on parents

Opportunity for their children to make new friends.

Free healthy breakfast and lunch reduces cost of the summer holidays.

Being able to work, without the programme many would not be able to. It provides great balance for parents.

Children come home fed and exhausted.

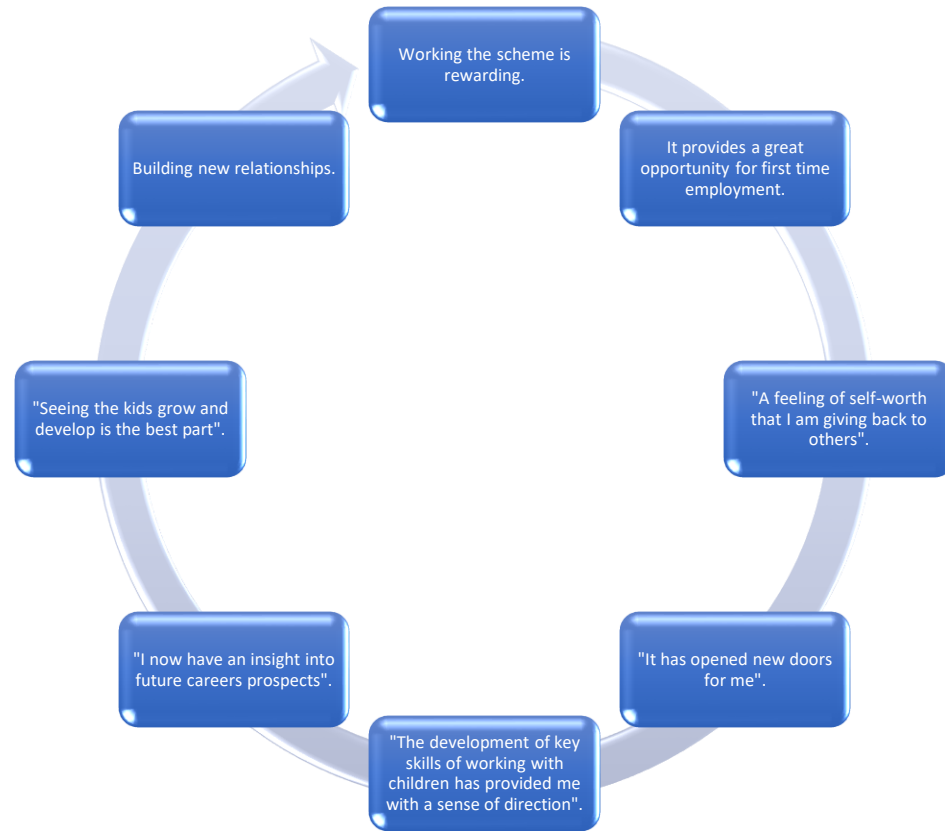
It's important for children to socialise with different age groups.

The scheme provides routine.

"It helps to keep them mentally stimulated so when they go back to school it isn't so much of a shock".



The programme's impact on staff





SUMMER 2024



MonLife



Mission:

To promote healthier lives and inspirational experiences, and promote the vibrancy of Monmouthshire as a great place to be.



Vision:

Enriching people's lives and creating vibrant places.



Aims:

- Enrich people's lives through participation and activity
- Build strong communities in Monmouthshire
- Developing leadership skills for our future generations



Values:

- Openness
- Fairness
- Kindness
- Flexibility
- Teamwork

Summer Provisions

The Monmouthshire Games (TMG) – TMG is an all-day sports provision delivered across our four MonLife Leisure Centres. The programme aims to promote learning of new skills, develop confidence, meeting new people, and most importantly having fun through sport. Each day is action-packed, with a range of sporting activities for children and young people to enjoy.

Food and Fun – The Food and Fun scheme is a school-based education programme that provides food and nutrition education, physical activity, enrichment sessions, Play and healthy meals. The program also enabled families to be provided with a Bag Bwydd which contained a wide selection of staple food items. Through working with partners in Education and Social Services, the team have delivered the programme across four Monmouthshire Primary School settings this summer for a total of five weeks, with the full impact demonstrated below.

Active Play / Stay and Play – Both our Active Play and Stay and Play sessions run throughout most school holiday periods. This summer they ran once a week from Chepstow and Abergavenny. These 2-hour sessions encompassed the Playwork principles as highlighted in 'Wales – A Play Friendly Country Policy'. The Playwork principles state that the play process for children should be freely chosen, intrinsically motivated and personally directed. The children were given the opportunity to choose from a variety of resources and activities that would support their physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and creative development. The team have delivered sessions in Abergavenny, Chepstow, Magor and Undy, and Wyesham this summer.



MonLife Active

Summer Headlines 2024



703



children attended The Monmouthshire Games across our four leisure centres

3,170



total bookings for The Monmouthshire Games across our four leisure centres

418



attendances at 'Free Swim' sessions across our four leisure centres

1,547

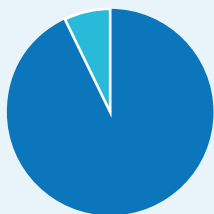


children attended Monmouth Play Centre throughout the Summer Holidays



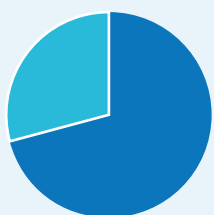
The Monmouthshire Games

Summer Headlines 2024



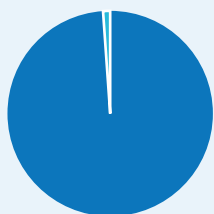
86%

of children said they had met a new friend



77%

of children tried a new sport that they hadn't before



97%

of children said they would come back again



9.4



average rating for how friendly staff were

9.1



average rating for how much fun the kids had

8.4



average rating for how likely they are to recommend us to family or friends

(TAKEN FROM 343 CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED THE MONMOUTHSHIRE GAMES)

MonLife Connect

Summer Headlines 2024

**774**

children were supported
through MonLife Summer
Play Provisions

**8,950**

meals provided across
ALL our summer
provisions

**617**

children supported
through our food
and fun provision

**4,445**

total attendances
for our food and
fun provision

**41.8%**

of children eligible for
free school meals took
part in Food and Fun

**258**

children in receipt of
free school meals
attended Food and Fun

**7**

partners worked with
us to help carry our
Summer Provisions

**157**

Children were supported
via our 'Active Play' and
'Stay & Play' sessions



www.monlife.co.uk/connect

MonLife Connect

Summer Headlines 2024



168

number of inclusive
attendances at our
summer play provisions



1,410

total hours of play provided
throughout the summer
via our play provisions



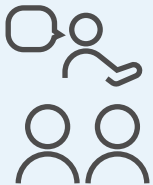
400

people attended our
National Play Day
event at Caldcot



508

individuals engaged with
across our youth centres,
trips and outreach work



3,123

contacts were made with
young people via our
youth centres this summer



90

youth centre sessions
took place throughout
the summer holidays



MonLife Heritage

Summer Headlines 2023



396

children attended craft sessions arranged by MonLife Heritage Museums



98%

of feedback from MonLife Heritage Museum craft sessions were positive



960

people attended Outdoor Theatre Events at Abergavenny Castle

“

“Everything you've done has been really good this summer holidays”

- **Parent of Child attending craft sessions**

”

“

“Been an amazing way to spend quality time with my grandson”

- **Grandparent of Child attending craft sessions**

”



Funding Panel Assessment.

Grant criteria information

The below must be considered when assessing the use of the AWPOG grant.

- All projects need to be **completed** by March 2026. Funding cannot be allocated to projects that won't be ready to use by March 2026
- The grant must be used to support actions of the 2025 PSA
- WG would like the money to be used, as far as reasonably practicable, to encompass a wide range of users including a range of ages. In relation to this it is concluded that this grant would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play). The funding would then cover a wider range of ages and needs whereas LAPS focus more on lower age groups, mainly the pre-school under-5s.
- WG would like to see funding being utilised to support cross policy objectives e.g. active travel, community.
- Supporting areas of deprivation is desirable but can be used in lower deprived areas if there is rational to do so
- Current Play value should be considered when making decisions with a view to improving play value. A score between 0-29 is considered LOW play value.

Assessment

SITE	CATEGORY	DEPRIVATION	PV SCORE 2019	PSA detail	COMMENT	Funding Panel Review	To be funded
Abergavenny							
Underhill	Neighbourhood	Cantref 2 (1)	9	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	Investment likely from new RLDP site at Penlanlas, although that could be a few years away – but at least it does have the prospect of future funding that could be significant.	History of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. This isn't a reason not to invest but there is a prospect of future S106 funding and there is another Neighbourhood play area on the same estate at Rother Avenue. The Underhill site is more of a playing field with a zip wire, a basketball court and a limited number of other pieces of play equipment. The site is currently on the edge of the estate but if developed in the future as proposed it will have a much better level of overlooking, creating an extra level of safety for users. This is definitely one for future investment, preferably through S106 funding contributions. The level of work needed for this will not be possible to complete by the end of March 20262.	x
St Faith's Close	Local	Castle&Llanfoist(19)	13	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	LAP.	It was discussed and concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play). The funding would then cover a wider range of ages and needs whereas LAPS focus more on lower age groups, mainly the pre-school under-5s.	x
Belgrave Road	Neighbourhood	Cantref 1 (49)	21	As part of the PSA 2025 action plan this is one of the parks that is to be reassessed for its play value as it has already had investment.	Recent investment, further minor investment due in 2025 from Ross Road S106.	High affluent area. Has had significant investment recently. Fence required to complete site. When reassessed it will score a much higher play value.	x
Bailey Park	Neighbourhood	Priory 2 (18)	61	With a high play value this is not included in the 2025 PSA action plan	2 nd best PV score in MCC, more small-scale investment due in 2025 from volunteers.	High play value score, recent improved access work completed. Volunteers have raised funding for new play panels that will further increase play value score.	x
St Helen's Close	Local	Grofield (10)	25	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA	LAP.	Serves a large area and is well-used, but all tarmac surfacing. Not in one of the highest areas of deprivation.	x

				2025 as “All parks identified as; low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding ”			
Rother Avenue	Neighbourhood	Grofield (10)	24	As part of the PSA 2025 action plan this is one of the parks that is to be reassessed for its play value as it has already had investment.	Significant investment due in 2025 from Ross Road S106.	Located in central position on the Underhill Estate – when improvements carried out will raise play value score to “adequate” status.	x
Glan Gavenny	Local	Croesonen (4)	13	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; “All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding ”	LAP.	It was discussed and concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play). The funding would then cover a wider range of ages and needs whereas LAPS focus more on lower age groups, mainly the pre-school under-5s.	x
Caldicot							
Longfellow Road	Neighbourhood	West End (5)	22	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; “All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding ”	Ongoing discussions locally, to assess the site.	Relocation, replacement or significant upgrading would be a longer-term aim and is not practical with timelines for this year’s AWPOG grant	x
Chepstow							
Garvey Close	Local	Thornwell 1 (3)	10	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; “All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding ”	LAP.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play).	x
Summerhouse Lane	Local	Thornwell 1 (3)	10	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; “All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on	LAP.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play).	x

				access to appropriate funding "			
Pheonix Drive	Local	Thornwell 1 (3)	10	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; "All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding "	LAP.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play).	x
Burnt Barn Road (also known as Western Avenue)	Neighbourhood	Thornwell 2 (17)	25	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; "All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding "	Play area located in high-use area, next to rugby pitches and close to Thornwell Primary School.	Equipment is in poor condition. Improvements have been requested by local residents and local members. No prospect of future S106 funding, if AWPOG capital is allocated there is sufficient space within the existing site boundary to accommodate the improvements. Work can be completed by 31 March 2026.	Y
Larkfield Close	Neighbourhood	Thornwell 2 (17)	13	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; "All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding "	Ongoing discussions locally, to assess the site.	Not accessible for disabilities, not overlooked and too far removed from anywhere that children would play/access. Nowhere to relocate sensibly. Even if there was a way to improve on this it could not be achieved by March 2026. This park is located in the same ward as Western avenues and therefore residents can access that park.	x
Bulwark Park (also Known as Piggy's Hill)	Neighbourhood	St Christophers (23)	19	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; "All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding "	High level of use, located on through route and close to St Mary's Primary School – very well used by children and families at drop off/pick up times throughout the school year.	Site is located approx.100yds from Chepstow skatepark, which is also in need of some investment to provide a better skating surface on the apron surrounding the main skatepark bowl. Some funding exists and there is potential to match fund, using part of the AWPOG money – which would ensure that the AWPOG money would benefit a wide range of children and young people. Work can be completed by 31 March 2026.	Y
Hardwick Avenue (also known as Garden City)	Neighbourhood	St Christophers (23)	21	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; "All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding "	Links to NEAP.	Can link to Bulwark Park. Does need some investment (circa £50K) but not as urgent as other areas. The site is well used, has an active Friends Group and is located next to a community garden and well used junior football pitch.	x
Clydach							

Recreation Ground	Neighbourhood	Llanelly Hill 2 (12)	16	As part of the PSA 2025 action plan this is one of the parks that is to be reassessed for its play value as it has already had investment.	Recent investment from S106 funding from Ty Mawr and Cae Meldon sites.	Site needs to be re-assessed in terms of play value.	x
Llanelly Hill							
Playing Field	Neighbourhood	Llanelly Hill 2 (12)	15	As part of the PSA 2025 action plan this is one of the parks that is to be reassessed for its play value as it has already had investment.	Recent £22K S106 investment in improvements from Ty Mawr/Cae Meldon.	Site needs to be re-assessed in terms of play value.	x
Penllwyn Open Space	Local	Llanelly Hill 2 (12)	11	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	LAPS.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play)	x
Monmouth							
Carbonne Close	Neighbourhood	Overmonnow 2 (2)	28	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	Moderate investment needed to increase play value to "adequate".	Further discussion with housing association to increase play value and any investment.	x
Goldwire Lane	Local	Overmonnow 2 (2)	24	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	Recent investment – site need to be reassessed in terms of play value	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play).	x
King's Fee Estate	Local	Overmonnow 2 (2)	30	With an adequate play value this is not included in the 2025 PSA action plan As part of the PSA 2025 action plan this is one of the parks that is to be reassessed for its play value as it has already had investment.	Playpark replaced via Active Travel funding. as part of Williamsfield Lane footpath upgrade.	Significant recent investment – site needs to be re-assessed in terms of play value.	x

Magor with Undy							
Manor Chase	Local	The Elms (52)	13	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	LAPS.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play)	x
Rockfield View	Local	The Elms (52)	7	As low play value this aligns with the action of the PSA 2025 as; <i>"All parks identified as low play value will be included in infrastructures development plans for improvements and actions will be made based on access to appropriate funding"</i>	Confirmed S106 funding to upgrade in 2025 and/or 2026.	Concluded that this fund would have better value if invested into larger neighbourhood playparks (NEAPS) rather than LAPS (local areas for play).	x
Usk							
Usk Playpark	Neighbourhood	Usk 1 (41)	69	With a high play value this is not included in the 2025 PSA action plan	Best ranked play value site in Monmouthshire.	Already significant investment. High play value and low level of deprivation.	x

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Integrated Impact Assessment document

(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Nick John Rebecca Hall Phone no: 077680 55408 E-mail: nicholasjohn@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Monmouthshire Play Opportunities for All and Play Spaces and Playgrounds Capital Funding
Name of Service area Culture, Customer and Wellbeing	Date 10/4/2025

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

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The PSA seeks to assess the sufficiency of access to play for all children 0-18 and to identify any actions that will improve opportunities	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Disability	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs including disability	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Gender reassignment	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

Marriage or civil partnership	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Pregnancy or maternity	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Race	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Religion or Belief	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Sex	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Sexual Orientation	Matter B of the PSA related to proving for diverse needs which includes all diversity and protected characteristics.	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice.

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	Describe any negative impact your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice.	The purpose of the PSA is that all children irrelevant of social-	For Food and Fun which is featured within the PSA there is	The eligibility criteria is set out by WGLA who funds the program.

	economic status has a right to play and it everyone's responsibility to ensure this right is met	an eligibility criterion. This criterion meets those children who are in receipt of eFSM however is they are not, or parents haven't applied, and they don't go to an eligible school they are not entitled to a place on the scheme; this may cause some disparity.	This is not something we can affect but we do work with schools and upon their recommendation we are able to offer priority spaces to those in need.
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal.	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts.
Policy Making effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language no less favorably	As part of matter B- diverse needs the provision of Welsh language needs to be considered. It has been identified that all provisions for children and young people are bilingual. As part of workforce development, it has been noted that the level of Welsh speaking staff sits at around 50%	It has been identified that there is no provision that is delivered solely through the medium of Welsh, however it is noted that those children who attend Welsh speaking schools do access our bilingual sessions which contain Welsh speaking staff	Continue to monitor the need for sole Welsh Medium provision and implement if funding allows. This is identified on the PSA Action plan.
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	It is noted in the PSA that the food and fun and holiday provisions create a pathway for employment for the young people who come through the leadership program. There is a comprehensive suite of training that can be delivered by the play development lead. This has been completed to a percentage of	Without further input into the workforce for play it will be difficult to expand further.	We provide regular training and monitoring to leisure centre staff who regularly work the play sessions.

	staff within holiday provisions. Play development lead has recently qualified to deliver Level 2 playwork, a recognised qualification for those working in holiday provisions.		
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	Please see above.	Please see above.	Please see above. All our advertising and registration materials are bilingual.

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

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generate wealth, provides jobs	The PSA has established that there is coordination's between teams across the council to support the actions needed. Workforce development is a matter of the PSA and an action is to continue to develop the workforce for play	Careful use of funding to ensure quality provisions throughout the local authority.
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	No impact was identified at this stage.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized, and health impacts are understood	The PSA assesses children's time, space and permission to play. Play provides children with opportunities to participate in physical activity enhancing their physical wellbeing. There is strong evidence that play has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing and that play	The PSA action plan highlights the need to further develop provisions in Abergavenny and Monmouth

	deprivation can be negative to childrens future mental health.	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Play as part of the community is a big part of the PSA. It is noted that there are opportunities across the authority for communities to support play.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of the impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	The positive impact of the Food & Fun scheme is captured by children and parents and informs future programmes and the PSA action plan.	Share the impact of the programme more widely.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and the Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	The PSA is derived with consideration of the UNCRC. Article 31 says that children have a right to play, rest and recreation. The focus of the PSA is to ensure that this right is assessed for and met as far as reasonably practical.	Continue to monitor is the need for a full welsh medium Active Play is needed within the Welsh Schools. At present all our provisions are bilingual and are attended by Welsh speaking children with Welsh speaking staff.
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Matter B of the PSA is concentrated on Diverse needs. This includes disabilities, Welsh speaking, those from Gypsy communities, LGBTQ+. All criterions within this matter has been assessed for its sufficiency	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

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

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not, explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 Balancing short term needs with long term and planning for the future. Long Term	Actions within the PSA relating to Workforce development highlights the Play teams plan to develop a trained workforce for play to continue to be in a position to support free play provisions.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.



Collaboration

Working together with other partners to deliver objectives.

Play strategy group consists of a variety of stakeholders within the local authority. This group meets regularly to plan for and assess ongoing projects that may affect children's access to play

- Active Travel
- Community infrastructure
- Community Focused schools
- Community and Wellbeing team
- Early years and Childcare
- Flying Start
- Sport and Community
- Play Development.
- Leisure Services
- Children's Disabilities team
- Youth service

The outcomes of the PSA and action plan is reported quarterly through departmental delivery plans and forms part of the actions of the Corporate and Community plan.



Involvement

Involving those with an interest and seeking their views

As part of the PSA completion consultation took place with children from age 5-17. Parents were also consulted with both providing feedback on what they feel the authority could provide. We also consulted with schools and other stakeholders whose work related to or could affect children's time, space and permission to play

No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

 Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The PSA by its very nature can prevent problems occurring as it is not just a one off assessment of the situation but reviewed regularly.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
 Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies	Play is an important factor in supporting the wellbeing of children and communities.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

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

	Describe any positive impact your proposal has.	Describe any negative impact your proposal has.	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	The PSA ensures that stakeholders provide a variety of play opportunities that enhance children's wellbeing. All activities/opportunities are governed by MCC's safeguarding policies and procedures	There is nothing as part of the PSA that could negatively impact safeguarding.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.
Corporate Parenting	Criteria within the PSA relate directly to looked after children and children within the care system. By assessing these areas, we are	The PSA is fully inclusive and equitable.	No mitigation actions were identified at this stage.

	ensuring that the best possible outcomes for children are being implemented.		
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7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

[Wales a play friendly country](#)
[Play Sufficiency Assessment Toolkit](#)

Lates census and data about Monmouthshire
 Consultations with Children, parents and stakeholders

Equalities dashboard link. [Equality data dashboard for EQIA's 2020.xlsx](#)

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

The PSA is a statutory duty that puts onus on Local Authorities to assess the sufficiency of play in the authority. This has been completed and will be submitted to the Welsh Government at the end of June 2025. The positive of this completion is that it allows all stakeholders to assess their part in children being able to access space and opportunities to play. Play that is inclusive and meets children's needs and preferences. Play supports children's physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

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

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?

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

Version No.	Decision making stage. Budget mandate; DMT; SLT; Scrutiny; Cabinet; Council, etc	Date considered.	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration.
1.	Peoples Scrutiny	17 June	

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Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

People Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
17 th June 2025	Audit Wales Report on Hospital Discharge (Gwent Wide)	For Audit Wales to present their findings of the inspection report on hospital discharges in Gwent.	Audit Wales Jane Rodgers Jenny Jenkins <i>Possibly Trish Edwards or Leanne Watkins</i> Councillor Chandler	Performance Monitoring
	Play Sufficiency Assessment Report	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny of the report.	Nick John Councillor Sandles	Pre-decision Scrutiny
P&O Invitation: 9th July 2025	Domiciliary Care Procurement	Invitation to Performance & Overview Scrutiny to scrutinise the process of domiciliary care procurement.	Jane Rodgers Jenny Jenkins Cllr Chandler	Performance Monitoring
22 nd July 2025	Review of HSG Programme	Pre-decision Scrutiny of the Recommission of the Housing Social Grant Programme	Ian Bakewell	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Strategic Equality Plan 24/25 AMR	To scrutinise the council's progress in delivering the Strategic Equality Objectives for the year 2024-2025.	Pennie Walker Matt Gatehouse Councillor Sandles	Performance Monitoring
	Adult Services Inspection Report	To present the finding of the Adult Services Inspection.	Jane Rodgers Councillor Chandler	Performance Monitoring

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

People Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
	Attendance and Children Missing Education Policy TBC		Sharon Randall Smith Councillor Groucutt	
30 th September 2025	Homelessness Update		Ian Bakewell Rebecca Cresswell	Update
	Disability Confident Pledge	Report outlining actions for the next three years.	Pennie Walker	Policy Development
	Monmouthshire Public Library Strategy 2025-30	To scrutinise the Monmouthshire Public Library Strategy 2025-30 following public consultation.	Richard Drinkwater	Policy Development
25 th November 2025				
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Planning and Provision of School Places</i>	<i>To scrutinise data and projections for pupil places and the impact of future housing development.</i>	<i>Will Mclean Matthew Jones</i>	<i>Policy Development</i>
<i>To be confirmed</i>	<i>Review of Community Meals</i>		<i>Naomi Lovesay Jenny Jenkins</i>	<i>Policy Development</i>
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the People Scrutiny Forward Plan:				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

People Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Participatory Budgeting Programme				
Race equality action plan for Wales				
LGBTQ+ action plan				
Disability Action Plan				
Gender Equality Action Plan				
Homes for Social Rent and work to bring empty properties back into use				
Review and update shared housing allocations policy				
Rapid Rehousing approach/rapid rehousing action plan delivery				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

People Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Care without profit – increase in-county placement options				
Support effective discharge from hospital – integration between health and social care				
Provide a high-quality residential care facility for people with dementia				
Chief Officer for Social Care and Health Annual Report				
Safeguarding Performance Report				
Develop a broader 14-19 education offer through				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

People Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
collaboration with partners				

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Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Cabinet member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Cabinet	Deferred	Pavement Café Policy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences	Carl Touhig	4-Oct-22
Council	23-Oct-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Rachel Lewis	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	Review of Monmouth Cluster and proposed statutory consultation	Laura Wright - Education		Matt Jones	3-Mar-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	Cultural Strategy	Sara Burch		Tracey Thomas	20-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	County of Sanctuary Strategy	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To approve a county of sanctuary strategy which establishes clear principles which will run through all council services and which promotes inclusion and welcome across the wider community.	Sharran Lloyd and Jane Harvey	27-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Review of Housing Support Grant Programme.	Sara Burch		Ian Bakewell	23-May-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Destination Management Plan	Sara Burch & Paul Griffiths		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Shire Hall Delivery Stage - Financial Approval	Ben Callard - Resources		Tracey Thomas	25-Mar-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023: Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Report	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2025, setting out how the Council will build on existing practice, and work collaboratively with trade unions, to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act	Philippa Green	6-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Play Sufficiency Assessment	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Play sufficiency assessment update.	Nick John	28-Mar-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Strategic OfficerLeadership and Organisation Structure changes	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Paul Matthews	5-Jun-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Appointments to Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	23-May-25

Council	26-Jun-25	Separation of Licensing Functions	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Linda O Gorman	28-May-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Licensing Act Policy 2025	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Policy has to be approved by Full Council and it needs to be in place by 1 st July 2025	Linda O Gorman	10-Jan-25
Cabinet	25-Jun-25	Nature Recovery Action Plan & Green Infrastructure Strategy	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Placemaking Grant 25/26 & 26/27	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O Connor	29-Apr-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies / Cath Fallon	1-Apr-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Active Gwent Sports Partnership	Angela Sandles - Engagement	For Monmouthshire County Council to formally enter into the Active Gwent sport partnership.	Nick John	28-Mar-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Y Prentis Update	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	26-Feb-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Digital, Data and Technology Collaboration	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To develop proposals to build on existing collaborative arrangements in place for the provision of technology services through the Shared Resource Service. Expanding on these to include digital and data services will generate	Peter Davies & Matt Gatehouse & Sian Hayward	14-Mar-25
Council	15-May-25	SAC Membership Report	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To inform Council of SAC recommendations to appoint members of SAC	Sharon Randall-Smith	16-Apr-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Constitution Review	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	25-Mar-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Senior Pay Review	Ben Callard - Resources		Julie Anthony	3-Mar-25

ICMD	09-Apr-25	PSPO Lane Closure to prevent fly tipping & off roading	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Cleaver	13-Mar-25
ICMD	09-Apr-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4	Ben Callard - Resources			
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies - Lead (Cath Fallon)	3-Mar-25
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Reponse to Boundary Commission Electoral Review Consultation	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	12-Feb-25
ICMD	26-Mar-25	Proposal to increase the fee payments to Monmouthshire Foster Carers	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Charlotte Drury	4-Feb-25
ICMD	12-Mar-25	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 16	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment			
Council	06-Mar-25	Appointment of Chief Officer - Head of Transport - Exempt info	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Deb Hill Howells	21-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Publication of the Councils Pay Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Matt Gatehouse / Pip Green	17-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Contract Procedure Rules	Ben Callard - Resources		Scott James	9-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Budget sign off including CT resolution	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24

Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	Approval of a Discretionary Policy for Council Tax Premiums	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	27-Jan-25
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 WCF/Mon Farm Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
ICMD	26-Feb-25	County of Sanctuary: Homes for Ukraine	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To confirm future support arrangements for Ukrainian's living in Monmouthshire as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme following changes to the national arrangement for both funding & visas	Richard Drinkwater/Matt Gatehouse	7-Feb-25
ICMD	26-Feb-25	Housing Allocations Policy				
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	10-Jul-24
ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	17-Dec-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Diary 2025/26	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
Council	23-Jan-25	GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND RPB ANNUAL REPORT 23/24	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	

Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Business case for the purchase of a property in Abergavenny to develop supported accommodation for care experienced young people	Ben Callard - Resources		Jane Rogers	7-Jan-25
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Education Middle Tier	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Will McLean	20-Nov-24
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Decision to transfer Dixton Archive from Monmouth Museum to Herefordshire Record Office			Rachael Rogers	9-Dec-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

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK on Wednesday, 30th April, 2025 at 2.00 pm

Councillors Present

County Councillor Laura Wright (Chair)
County Councillor Jackie Strong, (Vice Chair)

County Councillors: Jan Butler,
Christopher Edwards, Penny Jones,
Maureen Powell, Sue Riley, Jackie Strong,
Jill Bond, John Crook, Tony Kear, Su McConnel
and Peter Strong substituting for Maria Stevens

Also in attendance County Councillors: Jill Bond,
John Crook, Tony Kear, Su McConnel

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young
People
Hannah Jones, Head Of Economy, Employment
And Skills

APOLOGIES: County Councillors Simon Howarth and Maria Stevens

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Stevens, who was being substituted by Councillor Peter Strong, and apologies were also received from Councillor Simon Howarth. Four additional councillors attended the meeting: Councillor Tony Kear, Councillor John Crook, Councillor Jill Bond, and Councillor Sue McConnell.

2. Declaration of Interest

None received.

3. Public Open Forum

There was an attendance by "The Gathering Community", who had notified the Chair in advance that they would like to present some slides. The Committee had agreed to allow additional time to the Public Open Forum to enable members to also ask questions.

Jenny Powell and Scott Price from the Gathering Community presented their work at Tudor Street in Abergavenny, focusing on providing accessible services for people with disabilities and mental health issues. They advised that the aim of the Gathering Community is to provide accessible services for people with disabilities and mental health issues at Tudor Street in Abergavenny.

They explained that The Gathering Community had taken over a 12-month lease starting from January 15th 2025. Their presentation included before and after photos and statistics on the progress of their work. They highlighted the progress made since

taking over the lease, including cleaning, repairs, and setting up various activity spaces. They also mentioned the increase in attendees and volunteers, as well as the grants and fundraising achieved.

They discussed the following key points:

- The Initial Condition of the building: The building had broken windows, an overgrown garden, random furniture, and a broken water pipe causing ceiling damage. Following extensive cleaning and redecoration, they also set up classroom spaces for craft activities, obtained an electrical safety certificate, and completed fire safety equipment tests.
- Attendees have increased by 50%, and volunteers tripled in number.
- In terms of grants and fundraising, they have achieved £5563 in grants and £2150 in fundraising over two events.
- A range of fundraising events and activities had helped raise funds and engage the community.
- Sensory and Music Spaces had been created together with garden and outdoor Space, including clearing overgrown areas, creating raised beds, and planting vegetables.
- Counselling Services had been introduced Emily Watson, a qualified counsellor and Well-being Manager for the Gathering Community, providing mental health support and well-being activities for attendees every Tuesday.
- Future plans include converting the back kitchen into a commercial kitchen for cooking lessons and working with local chefs. They advised that they would be seeking a longer lease to ensure the sustainability of the project and to secure additional funding to continue their work.

Members expressed their admiration and support for the Gathering Community's achievements and emphasised the importance of learning from their experience.

Councillors raised concerns about the lease terms, financial sustainability, and the need for accessible facilities. Jenny Powell and Scott Price addressed these concerns and highlighted the support they have received from local businesses and the community to help sustain the project.

The chair summarised by emphasising the success and community impact of The Gathering, recognising the hard work and dedication of Jenny, Scott, and the volunteers and she thanked them for attending and presenting to the Committee.

4. Yprentis - Shared Construction Apprenticeship Scheme

Hannah Jones introduced the proposal to close the Apprentice shared construction apprenticeship scheme and transition it to a project under Cyfle, a similar scheme based in West Wales.

- The Apprentice scheme was established in 2012 by Monmouthshire County Council and Melin Homes to address the need for socially procured goods, services, and work in the construction industry across Southeast Wales.

- Hannah discussed the successes of the scheme, that has trained over 340 apprentices, secured more than £1.95 million in funding, and worked with five colleges and 149 contractors.
- She also advised that the scheme had faced challenges such as declining completion rates, difficulty sourcing placements, apprenticeship wage deficits, and financial losses over the past two years.
- A review had been undertaken by Monmouthshire County Council and Torfaen Borough Council, which presented two options: cease operations or redesign the delivery model. She explained that in January 2025, Melin Homes who was a shareholder had withdrawn, so the proposal was to transition the scheme to Cyfle.
- Cyfle is an established shared apprenticeship scheme in West Wales, which could take over the delivery of the scheme, ensuring a seamless transition for staff and apprentices.
- Monmouthshire County Council conducted due diligence checks on Cyfle, confirming its suitability to take over the scheme. The current company has a surplus of £100,000, which will be transferred to Cyfle to support the transition.
- In terms of future plans, Monmouthshire County Council aims to develop a skills centre to meet the needs of children, young people, businesses, and industry in the region.
- Cyfle will provide strategic leadership, to ensure the completion of apprenticeships and support the long-term sustainability of the scheme.

Key Points raised by Members:

- What guarantees do we have that the scheme will be high profile and not just a small part of a bigger beast? Is there any evidence to suggest that it being run by three organisations based in West Wales is the ideal way forward?

Hannah expressed confidence in Cyfle's delivery model and business focus, noting their engagement with Welsh government and contractors, stating that she believes Cyfle's expansion into Southeast Wales will be effective.

- What are the historical figures of apprentices from Monmouthshire, and why is the current figure only one out of 60 apprentices?

Hannah acknowledged the low number of apprentices from Monmouthshire and explained efforts to source more opportunities. She noted that the scheme is regional, and higher numbers are expected in other authorities.

- The report mentions a recommendation that the Council has a seat on the new Directors Board. Will this be a Cabinet Member or an officer? How often does the board meet, and what is the role of directors in taking the scheme's plans forward?

Hannah suggested that an officer would be more suitable for the board seat, given the need for knowledge and regular updates.

- Why have completion rates declined significantly over the past three years, and what has been done to remedy this? What is the feedback from apprentices and employers?

Hannah attributed the decline in completion rates to the challenges of the Level 3 qualification and other barriers. She mentioned ongoing conversations with Welsh government and contractors to address these issues.

- Is the figure of 340 apprentices and £1.95 million in funding specific to Monmouthshire or the entire region?

Hannah clarified that the figures are for the entire region, with Monmouthshire having a proportionate number of apprentices.

- We have concerns about the geographical location of Cyfle being in West Wales and not having a base locally and whether this would create travel issues for apprenticeships and affect local business engagement. Also we are concerned there may be a lack of knowledge and connections to Southeast Wales. Why couldn't we find more businesses to support the existing provision, and what has Cyfle said about coming into the region? Have they done any research?

Hannah acknowledged the concern and mentioned that Cyfle has engaged with colleges in the region and is having conversations with contractors. She expressed confidence in Cyfle's ability to build up knowledge and have ongoing conversations across the region.

- Will Cyfle retain the existing staff from YPrentis?

Hannah confirmed that Cyfle would ensure a seamless transition for staff and apprentices, retaining the existing staff.

- Why can't we recruit quality apprentices, and what will we get back from the transition to Cyfle? Is there a need for this scheme?

Will explained that the scheme is no longer meeting the needs of Monmouthshire's young people and businesses. The transition to Cyfle will allow current apprentices to complete their qualifications and enable Monmouthshire to develop a more suitable vehicle for future apprenticeships.

- Why have some apprentices not been paid? Is it because they haven't completed or haven't been turning up? Who is supervising them?

Hannah acknowledged there had been challenges in completion rates and barriers faced by learners.

- What are the key successes of YPrentis, and how do they reflect the achievement of grants?

Hannah highlighted the training of over 340 apprentices and securing £1.95 million in funding as key successes. She acknowledged the challenges but emphasised the importance of these achievements.

- What are the risks of apprentices not completing, redeployment of staff, and the risk of reputation?

Hannah outlined the risks, including apprentices not completing their qualifications, redeployment of staff, and potential damage to reputation. She emphasised the importance of a seamless transition to mitigate these risks.

- Is the proposed project within the Cyfle Shared Building Skills Shared Apprenticeship Scheme the ideal way forward, considering it is run by organisations based in West Wales?

Hannah explained that they have been meeting regularly with Cyfle and are confident in their delivery model and business focus. They have engaged with Welsh Government and believe the match is fit for purpose going forward.

- What guarantees do we have that the scheme will be high profile and not just a small part of a bigger beast?

Hannah assured that Cyfle is keen to expand into Southeast Wales and has already engaged with colleges and contractors in the region. They are confident that Cyfle will build up the necessary knowledge and presence.

- What is the feedback from apprentices on the reasons for declining completion rates, and what has been done to remedy this over the last two years?

Hannah acknowledged the concerns around declining completion rates and explained that the lack of a Level 2 qualification in Wales has been a significant barrier. They have spoken to Welsh Government about this issue and are aware of the challenges.

- What is the feedback from employers, and how has this been constructively dealt with to improve the situation?

Hannah mentioned that they have been in discussions with employers and Welsh Government to address the challenges and improve the completion rates.

- In terms of the completion rates of apprentices, is there a record of completed apprentices having got permanent jobs?

Hannah responded that the scheme has trained over 340 apprentices, and those are the figures that would reflect sustainable employment. She mentioned that she could provide more detailed breakdowns if needed.

- In terms of the sustainability of the project, I'm concerned about the £1600 overspend, the reliance on grants, the negotiation of the next lease and the potential urgent costs. I don't feel I have enough information and have concerns about the proposal.

Hannah responded that they are aware of the overspend and have income coming in a number of grant funding streams and from contractors. There has been added costs over the past few years. She acknowledged the Member's concerns, but advised this is the best option moving forward.

Chair's Summary:

- The Committee thanks officers for a detailed report and presentation and highlighted key points discussed, including the challenges faced by the YPrentis scheme, such as declining completion rates and the lack of a Level 2 qualification in Wales.
- Members acknowledge that the proposed transition of the YPrentis scheme to become a project under Cyfle would offer potential benefits, including a seamless transition for staff and apprentices and the strategic leadership which would be provided by Cyfle.
- We have expressed our concern about the proximity to Monmouthshire, Cyfle being based in West Wales and therefore we feel there is a need for regular updates on the progress of the transition to ensure the scheme's success in Southeast Wales.
- We have had a rounded debate and Members have expressed a range of views, however, there is consensus to support option 3, which is the cessation of YPrentis and its transfer to Cyfle.

Upon the vote, 8 were in favour for the cessation of Y Prentis and its transfer to Cyfle with 1 abstention.

5. People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List

- The Chair advised that the next meeting would include the Audit Wales Report on hospital discharge and pre-decision scrutiny of the Play Sufficiency Assessment.
- Councillor Jackie Strong suggested reviewing Council policies on inclusion, diversity, and impact assessment. It was noted that the strategic equality plan will be discussed in the meeting on July 22nd, which could include discussion of these matters.

6. Council and Cabinet Work Planner

Noted.

7. Minutes of the meetings held on 18th February 2025 and 4th March 2025

The minutes of the meetings held on February 18th and March 4th 2025 were accepted as true and accurate records of the meetings held.

8. Next Meeting

17th June 2025 at 10am.

The meeting ended at 4.03 pm.

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