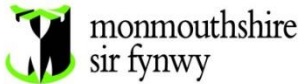


# Public Document Pack



County Hall  
Rhadyr  
Usk  
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 17 June 2026

## Notice of meeting

# County Council

**Thursday, 25th June, 2026 at 2.00 pm,  
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA**

## AGENDA

*Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 1.45pm. All members are welcome to join the Chair for prayers should they wish to do.*

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
3.	<b>Chair's Announcement</b>	1 - 2
4.	<b>Public Questions:</b>	
4.1.	<b>Submitted by Owen Lewis to County Councillor Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services</b>  Can you confirm that all concerns related to operations at Tudor Street have fully been considered and that the council remains committed to safeguarding and meeting the needs of users for the long term.	
5.	<b>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th May 2026</b>	3 - 8
6.	<b>Proposed Chepstow Bypass</b>	9 - 32
7.	<b>Code of Corporate Governance</b>	33 - 68
8.	<b>WG Salix Loan Funding Bid for Energy Retrofit Works</b>	69 - 104
9.	<b>Panel Performance Assessment</b>	105 - 132
10.	<b>Caldicot Leisure Centre - First Floor Fitness Suite Investment</b>	133 - 176
11.	<b>Representation of Political Groups Review</b>	177 - 184

**12. Motions to Council**

**12.1. Submitted by County Councillor Catrin Maby**

This Council requests that Cabinet adopts the Charter for the Rights of Rivers

**Rights of our Rivers**

**The Right to Flow and Perform Natural Functions** To maintain its natural course and seasonal rhythms without obstructions or extractions that detrimentally affect ecological function of any part of the river system.

**The Right to Biodiversity** To good biological health through the existence of balanced, diverse, and viable populations of native species and habitats specific to the Wye and its tributaries.

**The Right to Be Free From Pollution** To exist in a state of ecological health and not be subject to detrimental levels of known and emerging pollutants that adversely affect the life of the river.

**The Right to Be Supported by a Healthy Catchment** To flow through environments which support the river as a balanced, sustainable, and resilient aquatic ecosystem.

**The Right to Regenerate** To recover to full ecological function through natural processes and for this to be supported by intervention, where necessary, to halt the decline in biodiversity and abundance and to increase both over time.

**The Right to Representation** To be represented and have these intrinsic rights recognised in the determination of matters that directly affect the river's health now and in the future.

**12.2. Submitted by County Councillor Frances Taylor**

That this Council note the initial works undertaken by officers to deliver additional outdoor formal sports pitch provision on the land at Knollbury to serve the communities of Magor with Undy. This Council requests that those works are completed urgently so that the proposed planning application can be made for a change of use for recreational purpose in an urgent manner.

Council notes that circa residual £188,000 capital balance held by the council from the S106 agreement relating to the development of land at Vinegar Hill, Undy (Planning Ref: DM/2019/01937) are already largely committed to this development.

**12.3. Submitted by County Councillor Frances Taylor**

That this council take all such steps as to ensure urgent compliance with the unilateral undertaking related to the master planned development of 13.8 hectares of land at Rockfield Farm DC 2016/0083 in relation to clause 2.1

“To construct the estate road to be completed up to the site boundary with the adjoining Vinegar Hill prior to the occupation of any unit in phase C1 or C2.”

This Council notes the impact on the wider local road network as a result of the failure to comply with this condition and commits to learning from the matter.

**12.4. Submitted by County Councillor Simon Howarth**

Council notes the considerable impact that the current restrictions on Gilwern Viaduct are having on residents, businesses, public transport, school transport and the wider local economy.

Council also notes the importance of the viaduct as a key transport link for Gilwern, Govilon, Llanelly Hill and the surrounding communities, also recognises the growing concern within the community regarding the lack of certainty around a permanent solution.

Council believes that restoring the viaduct to a condition that safely accommodates all appropriate traffic including HGVS should be made a priority  
For the authority.

Council therefor calls upon the Cabinet member for Climate change and the environment to bring forward a report to full council setting out the following:

- A proposed long-term solution for the restoration off Gilwern Viaduct.
- The estimated cost of delivering that solution.
- The funding options available to the council including capital investment, borrowing also external funding opportunities.
- An individual timetable for delivery and any wider economic and community benefits arising from the proposed works.

Council further requests that upon receipt of this report, full council be given the opportunity to consider the options and associated funding arrangements prior to a Cabinet decision

## 12.5.

### **Submitted by County Councillor Tomos Davies**

#### A4042 Motion

This Council:

- Notes that the A4042 is a strategically important transport corridor linking Abergavenny and northern Monmouthshire with Cwmbran, Newport and key employment, education and healthcare facilities, including The Grange University Hospital.
- Further notes that collisions, road closures and traffic diversions on the A4042 have significant impacts not only on communities along the route, but also on residents across Abergavenny and northern Monmouthshire who rely on the road to access healthcare, including urgent and emergency services at The Grange.
- Recognises the need to improve road safety and pedestrian access along the A4042 for residents and all road users.
- Welcomes the recent opening of the new pedestrian crossing in Goytre and the benefits it will bring to the local community.
- Recognises the strength of local feeling in Llanellen, demonstrated by the recent village meeting attended by more than 100 residents calling for action on road safety, and ongoing concerns about vehicle speeds, collisions and damage to property along the A4042.
- Notes that residents of Llanover successfully led a cross-party Senedd petition calling for a pedestrian crossing, but are still awaiting progress.
- Calls on Monmouthshire County Council, the Welsh Government, relevant highway authorities and local stakeholders and partners to develop and deliver credible long-term solutions, including appropriate road safety, pedestrian access and traffic calming measures in Llanellen, Llanover and along the wider A4042 corridor.

**12.6. Submitted by County Councillor Jayne McKenna**

This Council: Notes that the UK's copper lines are due to be switched off by 31st January 2027. Recognises that many properties in rural Monmouthshire do not have access to Fibre to the Property (FTTP) or a mobile phone signal and are at risk of digital isolation. Calls on Openreach to delay the switch off until such time as all residents can access modern provision.

**13. Member Questions**

**13.1. From County Councillor Tomos Davies to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment**

To ask the Cabinet Member, further to my question of 4<sup>th</sup> of December, to provide an update on a proposed review of speeding through the village of Llanellen.

**13.2. From County Councillor Tomos Davies to County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader of the Council**

To ask the Leader, further to my motion of 4<sup>th</sup> December seeking a fairer funding settlement for Monmouthshire, what representations has she made to the newly elected Welsh Government.

**13.3. From County Councillor Tomos Davies to County Councillor Angela Sandles, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement**

To ask the Cabinet Member to confirm how the authority intends to support and promote next year 's Gwent Urdd Eisteddfod.

**13.4. From County Councillor Louise Brown to County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader of the Council**

How is the administration communicating with stakeholders, elected members and residents about the Cardiff Capital Region Strategic Development Plan?

**13.5. From County Councillor Peter Strong to County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Deputy Leader**

Has the new Welsh Government confirmed the commitment of the previous Welsh Government to developing a road link between the M48 and Severn Tunnel Junction railway station?

**13.6. From County Councillor Simon Howarth to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment**

Could the cabinet member please provide update on the site meeting from Church Road and upper Church Road Gilwern.

**13.7. From County Councillor Christopher Edwards to County Councillor Laura Wright, Cabinet Member for Education**

Can the Cabinet Member outline what actions have been taken to protect pupils and staff of Chepstow schools; leisure centre staff and users; and local

	<p>residents from a safeguarding perspective after the activities of the illegal traveller encampment at Chepstow Leisure Centre in March of this year, and what measures will be put in place to ensure that this will not happen again.</p>	
<b>13.8.</b>	<p><b>From County Councillor Lisa Dymock to County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Deputy Leader</b></p> <p>When was the Cabinet Member first aware that the PEDW hearings would need to be postponed because of a failure to comply with Regulation 23 and what steps is the Council now taking to ensure full compliance with the process?</p>	
<b>13.9.</b>	<p><b>From County Councillor Penny Jones to County Councillor Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources</b></p> <p>Please could the Cabinet Member give an update on the long-awaited Asset Transfer for the MUGA in Raglan to Raglan Community Council?</p>	
<b>13.10.</b>	<p><b>From County Councillor Richard John to County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader of the Council</b></p> <p>What discussions has the Leader had with Cabinet Ministers in the new Welsh Government?</p>	
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting - 16th July 2026</b></p>	

**Paul Matthews**

**Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr**

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

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

County Councillor Tudor Thomas  
County Councillor Armand Watts  
County Councillor Ann Webb

Park;  
Bulwark and Thornwell;  
St Arvans;

Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru  
Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru  
Welsh Conservative Party

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Please note that Monmouthshire County Council will film this meeting and it will be made available to view in live and archive form online. It is possible that the public seating areas could be filmed and by entering the Chamber you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting purposes. If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed.

Recordings of the meeting will be stored in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information.

### Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

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

### Watch this meeting online

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

### Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

### Public Speaking at Full Council

Members of the public may register to ask a question of the members of cabinet at full council meetings. There is no facility for the public to register to speak as part of the debate of an item on the agenda at full council meetings. The total time allocated for all questions at a meeting of full council is 15 minutes.

No more than one question is permitted per questioner at a meeting of full council and questions will be asked in the order that they are submitted.

In order to submit a question at a full council meeting, notice must be given in writing or by email to the head of democratic services no later than midnight three working days before the day of the meeting with each question providing the name and address of the questioner.

Questions may be rejected if the question;

- Is not about a matter for which the council has responsibility or which affects the county
- Is defamatory, frivolous or offensive
- Is substantially the same question which has been put at a meeting of full council in the past 6 months
- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information

Where a person is not able to ask the question to full council in person, the chair may decide to read the question out on their behalf, instruct a written response be provided or choose to not deal with the question in their absence. Those who do ask a question in person will be entitled to one supplementary question which must arise out of the original question or the reply. The chair may reject a supplementary question on these grounds.

Any questions that cannot be dealt with at the meeting due to exceeding the time limit for public questions will be dealt with by a written response.

# Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

## Our purpose

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

## Objectives we are working towards

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

## Our Values

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

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

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

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

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



# Agenda Item 3

## Report for Council 19<sup>th</sup> May – 22<sup>nd</sup> June

Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May 12.30 p.m.	Spade in the Ground Dell Park Play Area, Chepstow
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May	Give Dog Fouling the Red Card Action Day Bailey Park, Abergavenny
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> May	Steam Train Rally Bailey Park, Abergavenny
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 11 a.m.	Citizenship Ceremony Registrar's Office, Usk
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 12 p.m.	Royal Ascot Charity Day Chepstow Racecourse
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 10 a.m.	Fly a Flag for the Armed Forces County Hall, Usk

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of County Council held  
at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 14th May, 2026 at 2.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor Tudor Thomas (Chair)  
County Councillor David Jones (Vice Chair)

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

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Peter Davies	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Resources
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Matthew Gatehouse	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships.
James Williams	Chief Officer Law & Governance
Deb Hill-Howells	Chief Officer Infrastructure

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **3. To elect a Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2026/27**

[Watch part one of the meeting here](#)

The Chair of Council, County Councillor Peter Strong opened the meeting and took the opportunity to thank Council for the opportunity of representing the Council.

Group Leaders took the opportunity to address Council expressing thanks to County Councillor Strong for his year in office as Chair.

It was proposed by County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, and seconded by County Councillor Paul Griffiths, that County Councillor Tudor Thomas be elected as Chair of Monmouthshire County Council for the Civic Year 2026/27. There were no further nominations.

Upon being put to a vote it was agreed to elect County Councillor Tudor Thomas as Chair. County Councillor Thomas made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and thanked Members for their support. He thanked Council for the opportunity and introduced Mrs Jan Thomas as his consort for the year in office.

### **4. To appoint a Vice-Chair of Council for the Civic Year 2026/27**

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 14th May, 2026 at 2.00 pm**

The Chair welcomed nominations for Vice-Chair of Council.

It was proposed by County Councillor Frances Taylor and seconded by County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby that County Councillor David Jones be appointed as Vice Chair of the County Council for the Civic Year 2026/27.

Upon being put to a vote it was resolved that County Councillor David Jones be appointed as Vice Chair. County Councillor Jones made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He thanked Council for their support and introduced Mrs Shirley Jones as his consort for the year.

#### **5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 5th March 2026**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

#### **6. To elect a Leader of the County Council and to receive notification of Leader delegations (appointments to Cabinet)**

<https://www.youtube.com/live/cDbp-4wxXTQ?si=rokXSoO3tFA0byJW&t=147>

County Councillor Ben Callard nominated County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby as Leader of the Council for the year 2026/27. This was seconded by County Councillor Angela Sandles.

County Councillor Lisa Dymock nominated County Councillor Richard John as Leader of the Council for the year 2026/27. This was seconded by County Councillor Alistair Neill.

Upon being put to a recorded vote County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby was appointed Leader. Votes were:

For: 23

Against: 22

Abstain: 1

Cabinet Appointments were announced as:

- County Councillor Paul Griffiths - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Sustainable Livelihoods.
- County Councillor Ben Callard – Cabinet Member for Resources.
- Councillor Laura Wright – Cabinet Member for Education.
- County Councillor Ian Chandler – Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services.
- County Councillor Catrin Maby – Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment.
- County Councillor Angela Sandles – Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement.
- County Councillor Sara Burch - Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of County Council held  
at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 14th May, 2026 at 2.00 pm**

NAME	Cllr Brocklesby	Cllr John	Abstain
Councillor J BOND	√		
Councillor M A BROCKLESBY	√		
Councillor F BROMFIELD		√	
Councillor L BROWN		√	
Councillor E BRYN			√
Councillor R BUCKLER		√	
Councillor S BURCH	√		
Councillor J BUTLER		√	
Councillor B CALLARD	√		
Councillor I CHANDLER	√		
Councillor J CROOK	√		
Councillor T DAVIES		√	
Councillor L DYMOCK		√	
Councillor A EASSON	√		
Councillor C EDWARDS		√	
Councillor M. NEWELL		√	
Councillor S GARRATT	√		
Councillor R GARRICK	√		
Councillor P GRIFFITHS	√		
Councillor M GROUCUTT	√		
Councillor S.G.M. Howarth		√	
Councillor M HOWELLS	√		
Councillor R JOHN		√	
Councillor D. W. H. Jones		√	
Councillor P. Jones		√	
Councillor T KEAR		√	
Councillor M LANE		√	
Councillor J LUCAS		√	
Councillor C MABY	√		
Councillor S MCCONNEL	√		
Councillor J MCKENNA		√	
Councillor P MURPHY		√	
Councillor A NEILL		√	
Councillor P PAVIA		√	
Councillor M POWELL		√	
Councillor S RILEY	√		
Councillor D ROOKE	√		
Councillor A SANDLES	√		
Councillor M STEVENS	√		
Councillor J STRONG	√		
Councillor P STRONG	√		
Councillor F TAYLOR		√	
Councillor T THOMAS	√		
Councillor A WATTS	√		
Councillor A WEBB		√	
Councillor L WRIGHT	√		

### **7. Local Resolution Protocol**

<https://www.youtube.com/live/cDbp-4wxTQ?si=T4cwpjEDHCdCPXNL&t=1128>

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report for Council to receive and approve the Local Resolution Protocol (“the LRP”) attached at Appendix 1, and for it to be incorporated into the Council’s Constitution.

**Council resolved to accept the recommendations:**

**To approve the LRP attached at Appendix 1;**

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held  
at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 14th May, 2026 at 2.00 pm

To instruct the Monitoring Officer to update the constitution to incorporate this new LRP.

### 8. Representation of Political Groups Review

<https://www.youtube.com/live/cDbp-4wxXTQ?si=JPVE6DZM0TQB8QP0&t=1380>

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report for Council to review the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments.

**Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**That the Council approves the report as a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to allocate ordinary committees with the numbers as indicated below representing political balance.**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Welsh Labour</b>	<b>Welsh Conservatives</b>	<b>Independent Group</b>	<b>Green Independent Group</b>
Scrutiny (9) *(x4)	16	15	3	2
Licensing & Regulatory (12)	6	5	1	0
Planning (16)	7	7	1	1
Democratic Services (12)	5	5	1	1
Governance & Audit (8) (excluding lay members)	4	3	1	0
Appointments (5)	2	2	1	0
Aggregate Entitlement (89)	40	37	8	4

### 9. Appointments to Committees

[Click here to watch the meeting](#)

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report to appoint committees, together with their membership and terms of reference in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

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

**That the committees be appointed as set out in the report.**

**That Council appoints County Councillor Frances Taylor as Chair of Democratic Services Committee.**

### 10. Outside Bodies Report

<https://www.youtube.com/live/cDbp-4wxXTQ?si=aWwl9AzWf1Uq3H8k&t=1742>

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 14th May, 2026 at 2.00 pm**

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report for Council to appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies.

**Council resolved to accept the recommendation:**

**That Council notes the appointments made at its 2025 AGM for the term of Council and confirms or amends the appointments that require annual renewal as well as confirming appointments to new positions.**

**If appointments are not able to made at the meeting itself then political group leaders should communicate their appointments to the Head of Democratic Services as soon as possible following the meeting.**

11. **Date of next meeting - 25th June 2026**

Noted.

**The meeting ended at 3.40 pm**

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**SUBJECT: Proposed Chepstow Bypass**

**MEETING: County Council**

**DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Chepstow**

## 1. PURPOSE:

This report has been prepared to provide the information set out in 8.2 of the motion agreed at the Full Council Meeting dated 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To note the content of the report.

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 At the aforementioned meeting County Council agreed a motion which related to the ongoing transport issues in Chepstow and specifically a proposed Chepstow by-pass. This report seeks to cover item 2 of the motion which specified the following:

That Cabinet bring a report to Full Council setting out:

- The current status of previous commitments made by the Council in relation to a bypass/relief road for Chepstow
- Available options for funding and progressing the next phase of Transport Appraisal Guidance for a bypass/relief road for Chepstow
- A clear timetable for engagement and decision-making with Gloucestershire County Council, Welsh Government and UK Government partners, including elected parliamentary members.

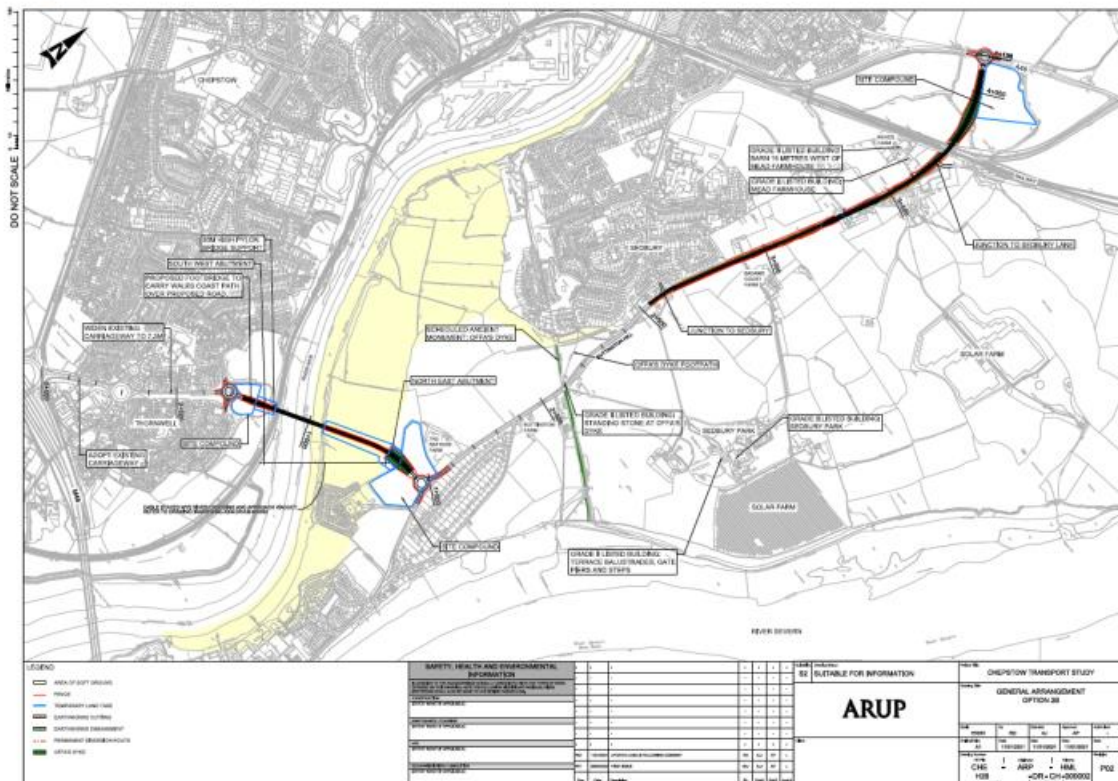
## Chronology

3.2 In 2018, A WeITAG Stage 1 Chepstow Transport Study was jointly commissioned By Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire County Councils and the Forest of Dean District Council. The study considered the strategic corridor of the A48 from Lydney in the east to Chepstow in the West.

3.3 The study recommended that eight options were taken forward for further appraisal, these included:

- Chepstow By pass between Beachley and Sedbury
- Improved rail services to Bristol and park and ride rail

- A new M48 Junction
  - Do minimum
  - Public transport integration
  - Improvement in local bus services network to reduce local trips
  - Active travel upgrades and additions
  - Reducing the need to travel.
- 3.4 In May 2020, Monmouthshire County Council was awarded Local Transport Funding of £37,500 to commission a WelTAG 2 study for the shortlisted options recommended in the WelTAG Stage 1 report.
- 3.5 ARUP were appointed to undertake the report which was published in March 2021. The study identified three shortlisted options which should be taken forward into a Stage 3 Appraisal, they were; active travel improvements; Chepstow Transport Hub and connectivity improvements and Chepstow By-Pass.
- 3.6 Within the report they considered both a 60mph and 40mph Bypass between Beachley and Sedbury and concluded that the latter lower carbon, single carriageway was the most viable by-pass option.



Source: ARUP Stage Two Report

- 3.7 The report also proposed potential funding sources as S106; Welsh Government grant funding through the Local Transport Fund, Active Travel Fund, Safe Routes in Communities, Road Safety Capital, Local Transport Network Fund and the COVID emergency funding grant.
- 3.8 Work has progressed on the active travel routes and Chepstow Transport Hub, but no further studies have been commissioned to progress a WelTAG 3 study for the

Chepstow Bypass. Work on this aspect has paused for two main reasons; Welsh Government policies on road schemes and funding constraints both to progress the WelTAG 3 study and the infrastructure construction. In 2023, Monmouthshire County Council sought approval from UK Government to allocate £500,000 of the LUF grant award to progress a cross-border study to resolve cross border congestion issues, which was rejected. A similar request for Welsh Government LTF funding was also unsuccessful.

- 3.9 The route identified in 2022 for a Chepstow By-pass would require support from both the UK and Welsh Governments. Increased housing targets allocated to neighbouring English Local Authorities, will create additional pressure on an already constrained network. Whilst the proposed by pass is intended to relieve congestion in Chepstow, the greatest benefit is likely to be derived from commuters in England who would have improved highways access to the M48. We would therefore expect UK Government and neighbouring English Local Authorities to play a significant role in the progression and funding of the proposed By Pass.

## **Policy Landscape**

- 3.9 Whilst UK Government policies and funding play a pivotal role in the progression of the proposed scheme, the policy position of the Welsh Government is of equal importance in the development of the scheme proposal. The policy and funding landscape for road building in Wales has been shaped by the Roads Review which was commissioned in June 2022 by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change. The purpose of the review was to reassess the road investment pipeline against new government policies including the Wales Transport Strategy and Net Zero targets.
- 3.10 An independent panel was created which in February 2023 produced The Future of Road Investment in Wales. The report recommend that future road investment follow four purposes and four conditions. The specified purposes were to support modal shift, reduce casualties, adapt to climate change and support economic development via development sites that could support sustainable transport. The report also specified four conditions to be applied when for future road building schemes – minimise construction carbon emissions, there should be no increase in vehicle speeds that would generate increased emissions, the road should not increase the available capacity for cars, and it should not adversely affect ecologically valuable sites.
- 3.11 The recommendations of the review were adopted by Welsh Government, and the purposes and conditions have subsequently been used to assess any new highways proposals.
- 3.12 The proposed Chepstow Bypass was not in the investment pipeline of Welsh Government and was therefore not tested against the criteria.
- 3.13 The Cardiff Capital Region has developed a Regional Transport Plan with a vision “To provide an efficient, affordable and low carbon transport network that enhances quality

of life for our people and creates the conditions for shared prosperity across the Cardiff Capital Region”. Most of the objectives are aligned to improving sustainable transport opportunities, there is a recognition that highways infrastructure will continue to play a key role in the movement of goods and people in and out of the region through TP06. This policy is to improve connectivity, through the provision of transport, between South East Wales and the rest of Wales, the UK and beyond. The first listed strategic activity states:

Resolve traffic congestion on the M4 and feeder routes, particularly around Cardiff, Newport, Chepstow.... to free up road space, to ensure accessibility does not hinder sustainable economic growth in the Region, further west and north.

- 3.14 Whilst there is an acknowledgement of the impact of the issues in and around Chepstow, at this stage no funding has been allocated to enable the progress of WeITAG studies or development studies.

### **Financial Landscape**

- 3.15 The WeITAG 2 report in 2021 identified that the construction of the Chepstow Bypass would be in the region of £60m. In today's values that will have exceeded £75m and the geopolitical landscape will continue to create further risk around the supply chain costs. There are no known grant funding opportunities for new infrastructure in Wales outside the CJC. The UK government has published an Infrastructure Strategy that provides grant funding for schemes in England through the Major Road Network and Large Local Majors scheme. The UK Government has published its Infrastructure pipeline, a ten-year pipeline of investment projects which does not include the Chepstow by-pass
- 3.16 S106 and CIL may also provide opportunities to lever financial support where it can be evidenced that new infrastructure is necessitated by the proposed development. Any S106 request will, however, be balanced against the other Local Authority demands such as affordable housing, net zero adaptations, play and education contributions. The UK Government has increased house building targets in neighbouring English authorities, and they will need to consider the associated infrastructure demand and development costs when providing consent for further development along the estuary.
- 3.17 It remains uncertain how an infrastructure scheme of this magnitude can be delivered, unless public sector borrowing or private sector investment can be levered. The costs will remain uncertain until a WeITAG 3 report is completed which will be required to establish the environmental and financial viability, alongside deliverability and compliance with prevailing policies and legislation.
- 3.18 Given both the policy and financial constraints, the proposed Bypass has not been progressed to a Stage 3 WeITAG assessment. The other two recommendations Active Travel and Chepstow Transport Hub have progressed and are in the process of being delivered and we are continuing to work with key stakeholders such as Network Rail, TfW to improve the availability and access to improved sustainable transport solutions.

### **Next Steps**

- 3.19 Meetings between Gloucestershire County Council and MCC have taken place. It was agreed that until there was a reasonable prospect of funding from UK Government and Welsh Government, local expenditure on a further WelTAG study could not be justified. A working group of officers of both counties has been formed to identify future options.
- 3.22 In the interim we will continue to work with Welsh Government to push for improvements at High Beech roundabout and lobby for the M48 link road at Severn Tunnel Junction. We will also deliver the Chepstow Transport Hub and Active Travel improvements that will reduce local trips with improves sustainable transport options. The improvements to the South Wales Mainline will improve rail frequencies to Bristol and Gloucester

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

The report does not seek to change existing Council policy or advance a proposal, instead it is intended to provide an update on the policy and funding landscape which has prevented the progression of the proposed By Pass to a WelTAG 3 study. The report acknowledges that the WelTAG 2 study identifies environmental and policy constraints that will need to be considered as part of the WelTAG 3 process as well as any current funding sources.

### **4 OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

The options are limited to:

*Do Nothing* – Given the congestion in the Chepstow Area this is not considered a viable option.

*Progress Active Travel and Chepstow Transport Hub recommendations in the Stage 2 WelTAG Assessment* – The Council has been awarded grant funding via the UK government to improve the Chepstow train station, local bus links and the active travel network in Chepstow. This work is actively progressing which seeks to improve the availability and attractiveness of sustainable transport options in the Chepstow area.

*Commission WelTAG 3 study of the Chepstow Bypass* – Given the current policy and funding landscape, the scheme cannot be progressed at this time.

### **5 REASONS:**

- 5.24 The Council remains committed to investigating and if viable constructing the proposed Chepstow bypass. Following the publication of the WelTAG 2 study in March 2021, the Welsh Government initiated a review of road building a few months later which resulted in a change of policy which effectively frustrated large scale road building projects.
- 5.25 Given the change in Welsh Government policy, this Council has invested its resources in delivering the two other WelTAG 2 recommendations which align with national policies and have attracted UK grant funding.

- 5.26 The Council recognises that congestion in Chepstow continues to have a negative impact on the local community and is working with Welsh Government to develop improvements to High beech roundabout to improve traffic flows and support local journeys through sustainable transport and active travel. The Council also continues to lobby for the development of a new link road between Severn Tunnel Junction and the M48 which will improve the attractiveness of rail travel and reduce local traffic movements at High beech.
- 5.27 Until such time Welsh Government reviews its position there is no real prospect of unlocking grant funding support through either the CJC or Welsh Government. Any approach to UK government for grant funding will need evidence that the scheme is supported by Welsh Government, viable and capable of delivery.
- 5.28 Any further financial investment in a Stage 3 WelTAG assessment of the bypass would be abortive as environmental studies and cost projections need to be undertaken at a point where the infrastructure would be capable of delivery.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The Stage 2 WelTAG report published in March 2021 estimated that the cost of construction of the bypass would be in the region of £60m. No further studies have been undertaken to update these costs.

## **7 CONSULTEES:**

Cabinet  
SLT

## **8 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

WelTAG Stage 1 report  
WelTAG Stage 2 report

## **9 AUTHOR:**

Debra Hill-Howells                      Chief Officer Infrastructure

## **10 CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Tel:** 01633 644281

**E-mail:** [debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk)



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# Integrated Impact Assessment Template

(incorporating Equalities, Socio-economic Duty, Future Generations, Welsh Language Measures, Corporate Parenting)

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation</p> <p>Debra Hill-Howells  <b>Phone no:</b> 01633 644281  <b>E-mail:</b> debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>This report provides an update on the proposed Chepstow Bypass from the Cabinet decision to progress a WeITAG 3 Study in March 2022</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Infrastructure</p>	<p><b>Date</b> 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026</p>

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

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<p><u>Protected Characteristics</u></p>	<p><b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<p><b>Age</b>  <i>Consider the impact on our community in relation to age, e.g. how do we engage with older and younger people about our services, access issues etc. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>

<p><b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b></p>	<p><b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<p><b>Disability</b>  <i>Consider the impact and what issues there are around each of the disability needs groups e.g. access to buildings/services, how we provide services and the way we do this; producing information in alternative formats, employment issues etc.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b>  <i>Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>  <i>Same-sex couples registered as civil partners have the same rights as married couples and must be provided with the same benefits, such as survivor pensions, flexible working, maternity/paternity pay and healthcare insurance. Consider the impact of your proposal on these rights.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>

<p><b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b></p>	<p><b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<p><b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>  <i>A woman is protected from discrimination during her pregnancy, maternity leave and 26 weeks from the day she gives birth. Including the provision of services, goods and facilities and recreational or training facilities. Consider the impact of your proposal on these protections.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>What will the proposal do to promote race equality with the aim of eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between different racial groups. Think about the potential to affect racial groups differently. Possible issues include providing translation/interpreting services, cultural issues and customs, access to services, issues relating to Asylum Seeker, Refugee, Gypsy &amp; Traveler, migrant communities and recording of racist incidents etc.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b>  <i>Consider the impact e.g. dietary issues, religious holidays or days associated with religious observance, cultural issues and customs. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	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?
<p><b>Sex</b> Consider what issues there are for men and women. Will this impact disproportionately on one group more than another e.g. equal pay, responsibilities for dependents, issues for carers, access to training, employment issues.</p>	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
<p><b>Sexual Orientation</b> Consider the provision of inclusive services for e.g. older and younger people from the Lesbia, Gay and Bi-sexual communities. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</p>	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty

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.

*Socio-economic disadvantage can be defined as living in less favorable social and economic circumstances than others in society. It also includes social justice, which is about reducing inequalities by working towards more equal distribution of wealth and opportunities so everyone can achieve their full potential.*

**Consider how the proposal could affect the following vulnerable groups:**

Armed Forces Community (including veterans)

Single parents

Vulnerable families

Single adult households

Carers

Students

People living in the most deprived areas

Pensioners

Homeless People

People misusing substances

People who have experienced the asylum system

People involved in the criminal justice system

<u>Socio-economic Duty</u>	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering from socio economic disadvantage.</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts in relation to the Socio-economic disadvantage?</b>
<i>Think of what evidence you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this proposal. Will it impact disproportionately on certain groups? Can the proposals be improved to reduce inequalities of outcome?</i>	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

### 3- Policy making and the Welsh language

*What are the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated? Explain how you believe the proposals could be improved so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.*

<p><b>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the <a href="#">Council's Welsh Language Standards</a>:</b></p>	<p><b>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</b></p>	<p><b>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</b></p>	<p><b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</b></p>
<p><b>Policy Making:</b>  <i>Consider what impact this policy decision will have on the Welsh Language. This includes opportunities for people to use the language, opportunities to promote the language and treating the language no less favourably than the English language. Include any data and evidence e.g. WESP, Census Data, Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Language Strategy.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report.</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Operational:</b>  <b>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</b>  <i>Carefully consider whether vacant posts require Welsh language skills as a desirable or essential skill. This is especially pertinent with front line roles as more than 10 % of the population of Monmouthshire speak Welsh. Also, when assessing the need for Welsh language skills keep in mind the existing Welsh language skills within the workforce. In service areas where there is a current lack of Welsh language skills, posts should be advertised as Welsh language essential. Additionally, consider where further training may be needed to increase the number of staff who can speak Welsh and to enhance the skills of current Welsh speakers.</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>
<p><b>Service Delivery:</b>  <b>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</b>  <i>When advertising our services you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by</i></p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>	<p>The report provides a chronology on the Chepstow Bypass and the barriers to progression. There are no identified impacts arising from this report</p>

phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.			
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**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!

<u>Well Being Goals</u>	<b>Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b>	<b>Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b>	<b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Prosperous Wales</b>  <i>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises global limits and uses resources efficiently (including acting on climate change); a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides jobs.</i></p>	<p>The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not been progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. If the proposed bypass were to be constructed it would reduce emissions through the centre of Chepstow as traffic from England would be diverted onto the new road. The bypass would generate temporary jobs in the construction phase.</p>	<p>The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not been progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. The proposed bypass if constructed would result in additional carbon emissions through increased traffic and the embodied carbon in the construction phase.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b>  <i>Maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</i></p>	<p>The current impacts of congestion (air quality and emissions) in Chepstow on the local community would be significantly reduced as commuter traffic from England would be diverted onto the new highway.</p>	<p>The proposed alignment of the bypass would negatively impact on existing woodland and local biodiversity due to the impact of the construction and new infrastructure.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>

<p><u>Well Being Goals</u></p>	<p><b>Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b></p>	<p><b>Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b></p>	<p><b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> <i>People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</i></p>	<p>The Council is actively developing improved active travel and bus routes in Chepstow to provide alternatives to car travel for local journeys. We are also working with Network Rail and TfW to improve the train station facilities.</p>	<p>The proposed Bypass could make car journeys more attractive as there will be increased highway capacity which would reduce journey times.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>
<p><b>Wales of cohesive communities</b> <i>Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</i></p>	<p>The Council is actively developing improved active travel and bus routes in Chepstow to provide alternatives to car travel for local journeys. We are also working with Network Rail and TfW to improve the train station facilities. The proposed bypass would divert through traffic away from Chepstow improving the local environment for residents</p>	<p>The proposed Bypass could make car journeys more attractive as there will be increased highway capacity which would reduce journey times.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> <i>Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</i></p>	<p>None</p>	<p>The proposed bypass does not meet the Roads Review tests.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> <i>Promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language,</i></p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and</p>

<u>Well Being Goals</u>	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<i>and participation in the arts, and sports and recreation</i>			considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b>  <i>People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances. (This includes the protected characteristics listed in Section 1 above. You can add more detail there. Don't forget to think about the impacts on poverty)</i></p>	<p>The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not been progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. If the proposed bypass were to be constructed it would reduce emissions through the centre of Chepstow as traffic from England would be diverted onto the new road. The bypass would generate temporary jobs in the construction phase.</p>	<p>The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not been progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. The proposed bypass if constructed would result in additional carbon emissions through increased traffic and the embodied carbon in the construction phase.</p>	<p>Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>

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

<p><b><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></b></p>	<p><b>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<div data-bbox="91 263 293 464" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="129 475 264 507"><b>Long Term</b></p> <p data-bbox="315 256 600 403">Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> <p data-bbox="315 440 600 539"><i>We are required to look beyond the usual short term timescales for</i></p> <p data-bbox="107 544 600 683"><i>financial planning and political cycles and instead plan with the longer term in mind (guidance says at least 10 years, but preferably 25)</i></p>	<p data-bbox="633 256 1330 676">The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not been progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. The UK Government has increased house building targets in neighbouring English Local Authorities which will result in increased demand on the local highway network and in particular Chepstow as the commuter route to the motorway network, the bypass would divert traffic from Chepstow onto a purpose built road reducing the impact on the local communities.</p>	<p data-bbox="1352 256 2107 389">Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>
<div data-bbox="91 703 136 863" data-label="Page-Header"> <p>Page 26</p> </div> <div data-bbox="91 850 293 1051" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="112 1058 277 1090"><b>Collaboration</b></p> <p data-bbox="315 845 600 957">Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p data-bbox="633 718 1330 866">Any decision to progress with the proposed bypass would need to be delivered in conjunction with neighbouring English Authorities. Wider consultation will be undertaken as part of a WeITAG assessment.</p>	<p data-bbox="1352 751 2107 884">Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WeITAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WeITAG 3 assessment.</p>

<p><b><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></b></p>	<p><b>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<div data-bbox="107 268 280 448" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="120 459 259 485"><b>Involvement</b></p> <p data-bbox="309 256 613 363">Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p data-bbox="309 400 613 499"><i>Who are the stakeholders who will be affected by your proposal? Have they been involved? Do those people reflect the diversity of the area which is served?</i></p>	<p data-bbox="636 256 1328 403">Any decision to progress with the proposed bypass would need to be delivered in conjunction with neighbouring English Authorities. Wider consultation will be undertaken as part of a WelTAG assessment</p>	<p data-bbox="1355 256 2107 387">Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WelTAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WelTAG 3 assessment.</p>
<div data-bbox="107 767 280 948" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="120 959 259 984"><b>Prevention</b></p> <p data-bbox="309 743 595 890">Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p data-bbox="636 643 1328 1058">The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. The UK Government has increased house building targets in neighbouring English Local Authorities which will result in increased demand on the local highway network and in particular Chepstow as the commuter route to the motorway network, the bypass would divert traffic from Chepstow onto a purpose built road reducing the impact on the local communities.</p>	<p data-bbox="1355 643 2107 774">Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WelTAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WelTAG 3 assessment.</p>

<p><b><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></b></p>	<p><b>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<div data-bbox="107 336 282 517" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="136 528 259 555"><b>Integration</b></p> <p data-bbox="309 312 607 456">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p data-bbox="309 496 607 592"><i>Focus here on how you will better integrate the Wellbeing Goals impacts</i></p> <p data-bbox="107 600 591 767"><i>on people, economy and environment described above and balance any competing impacts. Think about impacts the proposal may have on other organisations</i></p>	<p data-bbox="636 256 1328 751">The report outlines that the Bypass proposal has not progressed since March 2022 as a result of the prevailing policy landscape and the lack of funding opportunities. The proposal will result in environmental impacts and increasing emissions, but have a positive impact on Chepstow which is negatively impacted by commuter through traffic. There is a conflict between the prevailing policy position in Wales which discourages the creation of new highways infrastructure and the UK government increasing housing development targets which would increase traffic and demand on the Chepstow road network.</p>	<p data-bbox="1355 256 2107 384">Any decision to progress would be subject to a detailed WelTAG 3 study along with the requirement for statutory consents. The impact of the proposals would be identified and considered during the WelTAG 3 assessment</p>

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

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b>  <i>Safeguarding in this context applies to children (not yet reached 18th birthday) and adult at risk (identified as a person over the age of 18 and who (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.) Safeguarding is about ensuring that everything is in place to promote the well-being of children and adults at risk, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect.</i></p>	None	None	

<p><b><u>Corporate Parenting, Care Leavers and Care Experienced People</u></b></p> <p><i>This relates to those children who are 'looked after' by the Local Authority either through voluntary arrangements with their parents or through a Court Order. The Council has a corporate duty to consider 'children who are looked after especially and to promote their welfare (in a way, as though those children were their own). It also relates to care experienced people (people who have spent time in care when they were under 18 years old). The Council must consider how to help overcome the disadvantages and discrimination they experience.</i></p>	None	None	
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**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

*This will include your baseline position, measures and studies that have informed your thinking and the recommendation you are making. It should allow you to identify whether any changes resulting from the implementation of the recommendation have had a positive or negative effect. Key strategies and documents that may help you include: Community and Corporate Plan, Asset Management Strategy, Digital and Data Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, People Strategy, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy: [Enabling Strategies](#) See Guidance for more examples.*

A WeITAG 1 and 2 assessment has been completed which provide a baseline assessment of the potential benefits and impact of a proposed Chepstow bypass. The WeITAG 2 assessment recommended progression to a WeITAG 3 assessment on the basis of a 40mph by pass. The WeITAG 3 assessment has not been progressed due to Welsh Governments policy landscape on highways construction and no realistic prospect of funding opportunities to construct the proposed bypass. The report does not propose a change in the Councils policy position and is intended to provide members with a chronology of activities since March 2022 as requested in the January 2026 motion.

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

*This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee Report Template*

The report does not seek to change existing Council policy or advance a proposal, instead it is intended to provide an update on the policy and funding landscape which has prevented the progress of the proposed by pass to a WelTAG 3 study. The report acknowledges that the WelTAG 2 study identifies environmental and policy constraints that will need to be considered as part of the WelTAG process as well as a lack of available funding sources.

**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?

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**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Integrated Impact Assessment 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 <i>e.g. budget mandate, DMT, SLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet etc</i>	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration

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**SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE 2026**

**DIRECTORATE: Resources  
MEETING: Council  
DATE: June 2026  
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the updated Code of Corporate Governance for consideration and to ensure that the Council's governance framework remains aligned with the CIPFA/SOLACE *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework* and the 2025 Addendum, thereby supporting the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

## 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Full Council considers the updated Code of Corporate Governance and approves its adoption as part of the Council's Constitution.

## 3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Code of Corporate Governance sets out the Council's formal commitment to the highest standards of governance, transparency and accountability. It is based upon the governance principles developed by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), as set out in the 2016 *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework*. The revised Code also reflects the 2025 Addendum, which strengthens the requirements relating to the annual review of governance and the Annual Governance Statement.
- 3.2 The purpose of the Code is to provide a clear framework for the responsibilities, processes and values that underpin good governance across the Council. It forms part of the Council's Constitution and applies to all Members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council.
- 3.3 Within local government, corporate governance is concerned with ensuring that the Council conducts its business in the right way, for the right people, for the right reasons and in a manner that is open, honest and accountable. It encompasses the systems, processes, culture and values that shape how the Council operates, makes decisions, manages public money and demonstrates accountability to the public.
- 3.4 The Code of Corporate Governance provides the framework upon which the Council's Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is based. The AGS explains how the Council

demonstrates that appropriate governance arrangements are in place and how those arrangements are reviewed annually in support of continuous improvement. Preparation of the AGS is required under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and it is included within the Annual Statement of Accounts.

- 3.5 The Council's Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework, was last reviewed and updated in June 2020.
- 3.6 In 2025, CIPFA and SOLACE reviewed the Framework and issued an Addendum to the 2016 publication. The Code has therefore been revised to reflect the updated guidance and to ensure that it remains current and fit for purpose.
- 3.7 Monmouthshire County Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted lawfully and to proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3.8 A range of internal and external policies and guidance underpins the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. This includes the requirement for financial management to comply with CIPFA's Financial Management Code. A commitment has already been included within the agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy (2024–29) Delivery Plan to review compliance with the Financial Management Code and to identify clear actions to address any areas of weakness.
- 3.9 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council must ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the governance of its affairs and for the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

#### **4 The Purpose of the Governance Framework**

- 4.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, together with the culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled. It also describes how the Authority accounts to, engages with and provides leadership to the community. The framework enables the Authority to monitor the delivery of its strategic objectives and to assess whether those objectives have resulted in appropriate and cost-effective services.
- 4.2 The system of internal control forms a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance of effectiveness. The system is based upon an ongoing process to identify and prioritise risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

#### **5 The Governance Framework**

- 5.1 The Council's Code of Corporate Governance has been developed in accordance with the following principles:

Overarching requirements for acting in the public interest:

- A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
- B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

In addition achieving good governance in the Council requires effective arrangements for:

- C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits
- D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

5.2 As part of its review of the Code of Corporate Governance, the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) considered whether a dedicated Corporate Governance Group, comprising cross-departmental officers, should be established to further strengthen the Council's governance arrangements. Whilst this approach was suggested within the CIPFA/SOLACE 2025 Addendum, SLT concluded that, given the organisation-wide importance of good governance, responsibility should remain with SLT and continue to be monitored by it on a regular basis rather than through a separate group. As a minimum, this will include a mid-year review of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan and early input into, and review of, the draft Statement as it is prepared.

5.3 The Governance & Audit Committee considered the updated Code of Corporate Governance on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026. During that meeting, officers clarified the relationship between the Code, the governance framework and the Constitution, and emphasised the need to improve accessibility to, and awareness of, the Code amongst Members and Officers. The Committee resolved that the updated Code be endorsed and recommended to Full Council for approval and adoption.

## **6 REASONS**

6.1 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to be prepared and included within the Council's year-end financial statements. The Code of Corporate Governance provides the framework upon which the AGS is based. The AGS explains how the Council's governance arrangements operate, how those arrangements are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain effective, and what arrangements are in place to support delivery against each of the principles set out within the Code.

- 6.2 At Monmouthshire County Council, the AGS is independently coordinated by the Chief Internal Auditor, who also provides an impartial view of the internal control environment. The review is informed by work undertaken during the year by Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other regulatory bodies. Any areas requiring further improvement are considered for inclusion as a Significant Governance Issue or a Priority for Improvement. The document is collectively owned by the Strategic Leadership Team and the Leader of the Council. It is presented to the Governance & Audit Committee for approval as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts.

## **7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct resource implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

## **8 CONSULTEES**

Chief Executive  
Deputy Chief Executive & Strategic Director – Resources (S151 Officer)  
Chief Officer – Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer)  
Strategic Leadership Team  
Cabinet Member – Resources  
Governance & Audit Committee

## **9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework* (2016)  
CIPFA/SOLACE, *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework Addendum* (2025)

## **10 AUTHOR AND CONTACT DETAILS**

Jan Furtek, Chief Internal Auditor  
Email: [janfurtek@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:janfurtek@monmouthshire.gov.uk)



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

# CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Date of Approval  
Report Status  
Review

Not yet approved  
Draft v5 (Full Council Approval)  
4 Years (March 2030)



## Contents

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Code of Corporate Governance is the council's formal commitment to the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability. Our framework has adopted the governance principles developed by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) as detailed within the 2016 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework'. The 2025 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework' Addendum, covering the annual review of governance and the annual governance statement, has also been incorporated.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Code of Corporate Governance is to provide clarity on responsibilities, processes, and values that underpin good governance within the council. The Code is part of council's constitution and applies to all members, officers, and those acting on behalf of the council.
- 1.3 Corporate governance in UK local government means making sure we do the right things, in the right way, for the right people — openly, honestly, and with accountability. It covers the systems, processes, culture, and values that guide how the council is run, how decisions are made, how money is managed, and how the council is held responsible to the public.
- 1.4 Good governance leads to effective:
- leadership and management
  - performance and risk management
  - stewardship of public money
  - public engagement and outcomes for our citizens and service users.
- 1.5 This will enable the council to provide services and deliver its Community & Corporate Plan whilst ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to identify and mitigate any risk.

## 2. Core Principles

- 2.1 Values matter to Monmouthshire County Council. They set out the expectations for ourselves, each other and the way we conduct business with organisations that we work with. Our organisational values are:
- Teamwork
  - Openness
  - Flexibility
  - Fairness
  - Kindness

These values provide a foundation for everyone attached to our organisation to be accountable, to be positive and to be bold in delivering on our purpose of:

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

Our values and the behaviour of our elected / lay members and all Officers of the Council underpins our governance framework.

- 2.2 The councils' Code of Corporate Governance is based on the following seven core principles as set out in the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework' published by CIPFA / SOLACE:

- 2.3 **Principle 1: Behaving with Integrity, Demonstrating Strong Commitment to Ethical Values, and Respecting the Rule of Law**
- All council members and officers will act with integrity in all their dealings and decision-making.
  - The council will maintain and promote a robust ethical framework, including a code of conduct and whistleblowing policy.
  - Compliance with the law and adherence to relevant policies, procedures, and guidance shall be regularly monitored.
  - Training and awareness programmes will ensure all staff and members understand their ethical and legal responsibilities.
- 2.4 **Principle 2: Ensuring Openness and Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement**
- The council will operate transparently, making information publicly available unless restricted for legal or confidentiality reasons.
  - Stakeholder engagement, including with local residents, businesses, and community groups, will be actively encouraged and facilitated.
  - Regular consultations and feedback mechanisms will inform policy and service delivery.
  - Decisions and their rationales will be clearly communicated to stakeholders.
- 2.5 **Principle 3: Defining Outcomes in Terms of Sustainable Economic, Social, and Environmental Benefits**
- Strategic objectives will be set to deliver long-term benefits for the community, aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
  - Performance measures will be established to assess progress against economic, social, and environmental targets.
  - Resource allocation will reflect priorities identified through stakeholder engagement and council strategy.
- 2.6 **Principle 4: Determining the Interventions Necessary to Optimise the Achievement of Intended Outcomes**
- The council will use evidence-based decision-making to determine the most effective interventions.
  - Risk management processes will identify and mitigate potential obstacles to achieving outcomes.
  - Regular review of interventions will ensure they remain fit for purpose and deliver value for money.
- 2.7 **Principle 5: Developing Capacity and Capability**
- Staff and elected members will receive ongoing training and development to fulfil their roles effectively.
  - Succession planning and talent management will ensure continuity and resilience within the council.
  - Partnerships with other organisations will be leveraged to enhance capacity and share best practice.
- 2.8 **Principle 6: Managing Risks and Performance Through Robust Internal Control and Strong Public Financial Management**
- The council will maintain effective systems of internal control, regularly reviewed by internal and external audit.
  - Financial management will comply with CIPFA's Financial Management Code and other relevant standards.
  - Risks will be identified, assessed, and managed transparently, with clear accountability for mitigation actions.
  - Performance management frameworks will monitor achievement of objectives and drive continuous improvement.

2.9 **Principle 7: Implementing Good Practices in Transparency, Reporting, and Audit to Deliver Effective Accountability**

- Annual Governance Statements will be produced in line with CIPFA/SOLACE guidance, providing assurance on governance arrangements.
- The council will publish transparent reports on financial and non-financial performance.
- Recommendations from internal and external audit will be acted upon promptly, with progress tracked and reported.
- Scrutiny committees and other accountability mechanisms will be maintained to challenge and improve council performance.

2.10 Further detailed information regarding the Governance Principles can be found within Appendix 1.

### 3. Implementation

3.1 The council will ensure that this Code of Corporate Governance is embedded throughout its policies, procedures, and culture. The code will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and best practice, including evolving CIPFA recommendations.

#### 3.2 Embedding the Code in Council Operations

3.2.1 **Constitutional Integration:** The Code is formally included in the council's constitution, making it binding on all members, officers, and those acting on the council's behalf. This ensures that governance principles are not optional but are a core part of how the council operates day-to-day.

3.2.2 **Policy Alignment:** All council policies and procedures need to align with the Code's principles.

#### 3.3 Governance Framework and Accountability

3.3.1 **Governance Framework:** The Code sets out the council's governance framework, which includes systems, processes, culture, and values. This framework is the basis for the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which is a statutory requirement under the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

3.3.2 **Roles and Responsibilities:** The Monitoring Officer oversees legal compliance and ethical standards, while the Section 151 Officer is responsible for financial management. The Chief Internal Auditor coordinates the review of internal control activities.

3.3.3 **Ongoing Review of Corporate Governance:** The ongoing review of Corporate Governance will be undertaken by the Strategic Leadership Team, with regular monitoring and consideration. As a minimum this will involve a mid-year review of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan and an early input into and review of the draft Statement as it gets produced. Key officers — including the Chief Internal Auditor, Health & Safety Manager, and Head of Information Technology & Security — will be invited to participate in discussions as appropriate.

### 4. Meeting the commitments set out in the Code

4.1 Each year, the Council must publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to accompany the Annual Accounts. The AGS provides an overview of how the Council's governance arrangements operate, including how they are reviewed annually to ensure they remain effective. The AGS identifies what arrangements the authority has put in place to achieve each principle, and key examples are given of how the Council has met the governance commitments set out in this Code.

- 4.2 In Monmouthshire County Council, the AGS is independently co-ordinated by the Chief Internal Auditor who also provides their unbiased view of the internal control environment. The review also relies on work undertaken in year by both Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other Regulatory Bodies. Any area(s) that require further improvement will be considered for inclusion as a Significant Governance Issue or a Priority for Improvement. The document itself is collectively owned by the Strategic Leadership Team and presented to the Governance & Audit Committee for approval to be included within the Annual Statement of Accounts.

## 5. Approval and Ownership

- 4.1 The Code has been drafted by Chief Internal Auditor, reviewed by the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and other members of the Strategic Leadership Team. The Code is to be endorsed by the Governance & Audit Committee and approved by full Council for it to be incorporated into the Councils Constitution. The ownership of the Code itself remains with the Council and its Strategic Leadership Team
- 4.2 The Code is to be reviewed with minor updates as and when required. A full review will be completed at least every four years. This review process will be overseen by the Governance & Audit Committee, with input from senior officers, legal, finance and internal audit.
- 4.3 Factors that may prompt an immediate review of the Code of Corporate Governance can include:
- Significant changes in the maturity of the Councils governance, risk management, and control processes.
  - When a serious Governance failing has been identified or where the External Auditor is unable to certify the Statement of Accounts.
  - Significant changes in the Council's Constitution, policies and procedures or relevant laws and/or regulations.
  - Significant changes to members of the Council or senior management.
  - An unfavourable external assessment of a main Council function such as a whole Authority ESTYN or Social Care Wales inspection report.

**Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law**

The Council is accountable not only for how much it spends, but also for how we use the resources under our stewardship. This includes accountability for outputs, both positive and negative, and for the outcomes we have achieved. In addition, we have an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies. It is essential that, as a whole, we can demonstrate the appropriateness of all our actions and have mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and to respect the rule of law.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Behaving with integrity</b>	<p>A1 Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the Council</p> <p>A2 Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the Council and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)</p> <p>A3 Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions</p> <p>A4 Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively</p>
<b>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b>	<p>A5 Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the Council's ethical standards and performance</p> <p>A6 Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the Council's culture and operation</p> <p>A7 Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values</p>

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
	A8 Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the Council are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the Council.
<b>Respecting the rule of law</b>	A9 Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations
	A10 Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements
	A11 Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders
	A12 Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively
	A13 Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively

**Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**

Local government is run for the public good; organisations therefore should ensure openness in their activities. Clear, trusted channels of communication and consultation should be used to engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, such as individual citizens and service users, as well as institutional stakeholders.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Openness</b>	<p>B1 Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating our commitment to openness</p> <p>B2 Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided</p> <p>B3 Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear</p> <p>B4 Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action</p>
<b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b>	<p>B5 Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably</p> <p>B6 Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</p> <p>B7 Ensuring that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners and that the added value of partnership working is explicit</p>
<b>Engaging stakeholders effectively,</b>	<p>B8 A clear policy on the type of issues that the Council will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes</p>

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<p><b>including individual citizens and service users</b></p>	<p>B9 Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement</p>
	<p>B10 Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs</p>
	<p>B11 Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account</p>
	<p>B12 Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity</p>
	<p>B13 Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users</p>

**Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits**

The long-term nature and impact of many of local government's responsibilities mean that it should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the authority's purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders, including citizens, service users and institutional stakeholders, is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for the finite resources available

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<p><b>Defining Outcomes</b></p>	<p>C1 Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the Council's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the Council's overall strategy, planning and other decisions</p> <p>C2 Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer</p> <p>C3 Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available</p> <p>C4 Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</p> <p>C5 Managing service users' expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available</p>
<p><b>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b></p>	<p>C6 Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision</p> <p>C7 Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the Council's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints</p> <p>C8 Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs</p> <p>C9 Ensuring fair access to services</p>

**Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes**

Local government achieves its intended outcomes by providing a mixture of legal, regulatory and practical interventions. Determining the right mix of these courses of action is a critically important strategic choice that local government has to make to ensure intended outcomes are achieved. They need robust decision-making mechanisms to ensure that their defined outcomes can be achieved in a way that provides the best trade-off between the various types of resource input while still enabling effective and efficient operations. Decisions made need to be reviewed continually to ensure that achievement of outcomes is optimised

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Determining interventions</b>	D1 Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided
	D2 Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts
<b>Planning Interventions</b>	D3 Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets
	D4 Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered
	D5 Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks
	D6 Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances
	D7 Establishing appropriate local performance indicators (as well as relevant statutory or other national performance indicators) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured
	D8 Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly
	D9 Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
	D10 Informing medium and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy
<b>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</b>	D11 Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints  D12 Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term  D13 Ensuring the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage

**Principle E — Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.**

Local government needs appropriate structures and leadership, as well as people with the right skills, appropriate qualifications and mindset, to operate efficiently and effectively and achieve their intended outcomes within the specified periods. A local government organisation must ensure that it has both the capacity to fulfil its own mandate and to make certain that there are policies in place to guarantee that its management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. Because both individuals and the environment in which an authority operates will change over time, there will be a continuous need to develop its capacity as well as the skills and experience of the leadership of individual staff members. Leadership in local government entities is strengthened by the participation of people with many different types of backgrounds, reflecting the structure and diversity of communities

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Developing the entity's capacity</b>	E1 Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.
	E2 Reviewing operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness
	E3 Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the Council's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently
	E4 Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved
<b>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</b>	E5 Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained
	E6 Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body
	E7 Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure, whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority
	E8 Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the Council to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged,</li> <li>• ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and</li> </ul>

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
	<p>responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring personal, organisation and system-wide development through shared learning, including</li> <li>• lessons learnt from both internal and external governance weaknesses</li> </ul> <p>E9 Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation</p> <p>E10 Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections</p> <p>E11 Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs</p> <p>E12 Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental well being</p>

**Principle F — Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and string public financial management**

Local government needs to ensure that the organisations and governance structures that it oversees have implemented, and can sustain, an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Risk management and internal control are important and integral parts of a performance management system and crucial to the achievement of outcomes. Risk should be considered and addressed as part of all decision making activities. A strong system of financial management is essential for the implementation of policies and the achievement of intended outcomes, as it will ensure financial discipline, strategic allocation of resources, efficient service delivery and accountability. It is also essential that a culture and structure for scrutiny is in place as a key part of accountable decision making, policy making and review. A positive working culture that accepts, promotes and encourages constructive challenge is critical to successful scrutiny and successful delivery. Importantly, this culture does not happen automatically, it requires repeated public commitment from those in authority.

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Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Managing Risk</b>	F1 Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making
	F2 Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring they are working effectively
	F3 Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated
<b>Managing performance</b>	F4 Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning specification, execution and independent post-implementation review
	F5 Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the Council's financial, social and environmental position and outlook
	F6 Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made, thereby enhancing the Council's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible
	F7 Providing members and senior management with regular reports on progress towards outcome achievement
	F8 Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post-implementation reporting (eg financial statements)
<b>Robust internal control</b>	F9 Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
	<p>F10 Evaluating and monitoring risk management and internal control on a regular basis</p> <p>F11 Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place</p> <p>F12 Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor</p> <p>F13 Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment</li> <li>• that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon</li> </ul>
<b>Managing data</b>	<p>F14 Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data</p> <p>F15 Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies</p> <p>F16 Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring</p>
<b>Strong public financial management</b>	<p>F17 Ensuring financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance</p> <p>F18 Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls</p>

**Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability**

Accountability is about ensuring that those making decisions and delivering services are answerable for them. Effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed but also ensuring that stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the organisation plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. Both external and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
<b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b>	G1 Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate
	G2 Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand
<b>Implementing good practices in reporting</b>	G3 Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources
	G4 Ensuring owners and senior management own the result
	G5 Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)
	G6 Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate
	G7 Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations
<b>Assurance and effective accountability</b>	G8 Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon
	G9 Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon
	G10 Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations
	G11 Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement

Sub-Principles	The Council is committed to:
	G12 Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met

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# Integrated Impact Assessment document

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

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> Jan Furtek</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 01600 730521 <b>E-mail:</b> janfurtek@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>The proposal is to update the Council's Code of Corporate Governance so that it remains aligned with the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework and the 2025 Addendum. The Code sets out the responsibilities, processes, values and governance principles that underpin how the Council is directed and controlled, how decisions are made, how risk is managed and how accountability is maintained. It also provides the framework on which the Council's Annual Governance Statement is based and supports the ongoing review and strengthening of governance arrangements.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b> Internal Audit</p>	<p><b>Date</b> 01/06/26</p>

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

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 Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. By promoting integrity, ethical values, openness and the rule of law, it supports a fair governance framework that should benefit people of all ages.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.

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?
Disability	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. It supports inclusive and accountable governance and can have a positive indirect impact where information is made accessible to people with different needs.	The Code itself is not expected to have a direct negative impact. However, as a written governance document, accessibility may be reduced for people with visual impairments, learning difficulties or other communication needs if information is not made available in suitable formats.	Ensure the document, where required, is made available in accessible or alternative formats to support understanding.
Gender reassignment	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. By promoting fairness, accountability and respect for the rule of law, it supports a governance framework that should be applied consistently regardless of gender identity.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.
Marriage or civil partnership	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. It supports a consistent and accountable governance framework regardless of marital or civil partnership status.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.
Pregnancy or maternity	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. It supports a fair and transparent governance framework regardless of pregnancy or maternity status.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.

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?
Race	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. By promoting openness, accountability and fairness, it supports a governance framework that should be applied equally regardless of race or ethnic background.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.
Religion or Belief	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. It supports a fair and lawful governance framework that should be applied consistently regardless of religion or belief.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.
Sex	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. By promoting integrity, openness and accountability, it supports a governance framework that should be applied fairly regardless of sex.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.

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?
Sexual Orientation	The Code applies to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council. It supports a fair, transparent and accountable governance framework that should be applied consistently regardless of sexual orientation.	No negative impact identified.	No specific mitigation required. The Code will continue to be applied consistently across the Council's governance arrangements.

## 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.

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	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</b>	The Code has a positive indirect impact by promoting openness, accountability, ethical decision-making and effective governance across the Council. It supports fair and transparent decision-making and includes consideration of sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes, which can help the Council better understand and respond to socio-economic disadvantage.	No direct negative impact identified. As an overarching governance framework, the Code does not itself deliver services, but there is a risk that socio-economic impacts may be less visible if they are not actively considered within wider decision-making processes.	The Council will continue to apply the Code through its wider governance, risk management and decision-making arrangements so that social and economic impacts remain visible and are considered alongside other wellbeing outcomes.

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


How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favorably</p>	<p>The Code has a positive indirect impact by promoting openness, accountability and fair governance across the Council. Once translated and implemented bilingually, it will support the principle of treating Welsh no less favourably in the Council's governance framework.</p>	<p>At draft stage, the document is currently in English only, which may temporarily limit accessibility for Welsh speakers until the final bilingual version is issued.</p>	<p>The Code will be translated and made available bilingually as part of the approval and publication process, in line with the Council's Welsh Language Standards and wider governance arrangements.</p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</p>	<p>The Code may support staff awareness of governance responsibilities across the organisation, but it does not directly change recruitment or workforce training arrangements.</p>	<p>No direct negative impact identified.</p>	<p>Any communication or awareness material developed to support implementation should be made available in line with the Council's Welsh Language Standards where appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Service delivery</b></p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>The Code does not directly change front-line service delivery, but it supports a governance framework that promotes fairness, transparency and accountability across all Council services.</p>	<p>No direct negative impact identified.</p>	<p>The final approved Code should be published bilingually so that governance information is accessible and Welsh is treated no less favourably.</p>




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


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The Code supports a prosperous Wales by strengthening governance, transparency and accountability, and by helping the Council ensure public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively. It also supports continuous improvement in how functions are exercised.</p>	<p>The Code will be kept under review through the Annual Governance Statement process, with governance arrangements monitored regularly by the Strategic Leadership Team and strengthened where improvement needs are identified.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and land, river and coastal ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>No direct environmental impact is identified. However, the Code contributes indirectly by ensuring decisions are taken within a governance framework that considers sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural outcomes.</p>	<p>Environmental and sustainability considerations will continue to be reflected through the Council's wider decision-making, risk management and performance arrangements operating under the Code.</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>No direct health impact is identified. Indirectly, strong governance supports effective, accountable services and better decision-making, which helps the Council maintain services that contribute to community wellbeing.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to review governance arrangements annually and use findings from Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other regulators to strengthen the control environment where required.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> The document will be supported by clear summary material and, where required, information can be made available in accessible or alternative formats to support understanding.</p>	<p>The Code contributes positively by promoting openness, accountability and comprehensive stakeholder engagement, helping the Council lead and engage with communities in a transparent and responsible way.</p>	<p>The Strategic Leadership Team will continue to oversee implementation of the Code and monitor the Annual Governance Statement action plan, including a mid-year review.</p>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>The Code supports this goal by requiring decisions to be taken lawfully, ethically and with regard to sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits, helping the Council consider the wider impacts of its actions.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to apply the Code through its governance, risk management and reporting arrangements so that wider social, environmental and cultural impacts remain visible in decision-making.</p>

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?
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>The Code has a positive indirect impact by embedding openness, ethical values and accountability across the Council’s governance arrangements, which supports fair and transparent services for all communities. It does not include specific cultural or Welsh language measures itself.</p>	<p>No specific mitigation is required. Any wider impacts on culture or Welsh language will continue to be considered through separate policy and decision-making processes supported by the governance framework.</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>The Code contributes positively by applying to all members, officers and those acting on behalf of the Council, and by promoting integrity, ethical values, openness and the rule of law. This helps provide a fair governance framework that supports equal treatment and accountability.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to review the effectiveness of its governance arrangements through the Annual Governance Statement and address any identified weaknesses through improvement actions.</p>

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

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>Yes. The Code provides a long-term governance framework for how the Council is directed and controlled, while the Annual Governance Statement process ensures regular review and continuous improvement. This balances enduring governance arrangements with ongoing annual monitoring and refinement.</p>	<p>The Strategic Leadership Team will continue to monitor the Code through the Annual Governance Statement action plan, including a mid-year review and early review of the draft statement.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Yes. The Code has been developed with input from key officers and governance stakeholders, including the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director – Resources, the Monitoring Officer, the Strategic Leadership Team, the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Chair of Governance &amp; Audit Committee. It also promotes openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement as a core governance principle.</p>	<p>The Code will continue to be applied across the Council's governance arrangements and considered through the Governance &amp; Audit Committee and Full Council approval process.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>Yes. The Code emphasises openness, accountability and comprehensive stakeholder engagement. Its development included consultation with senior officers and governance stakeholders, and the governance framework is intended to help the Council engage with and account to the community.</p>	<p>No additional action identified beyond the ongoing annual review of governance arrangements and stakeholder input through the AGS process.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<p>Yes. The Code supports prevention by requiring proper arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control. It promotes strong public financial management, transparency, reporting and audit, helping the Council identify and address weaknesses before they become more significant issues.</p>	<p>Any areas of weakness identified through annual review, Internal Audit, Audit Wales or other regulators will be addressed through improvement actions and, where necessary, reflected in the AGS action plan.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>Yes. The Code has been developed around governance principles that include defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits. It therefore supports the Council in considering wider wellbeing impacts through decision-making, risk management, performance and accountability arrangements.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to review the effectiveness of governance arrangements annually and use the findings to strengthen how wider wellbeing considerations are reflected in practice.</p>

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

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	No direct positive impact is identified. Indirectly, the Code supports safeguarding by strengthening governance, accountability, risk management and internal control across the Council, helping services operate within a clear and robust framework.	No direct negative impact identified.	Safeguarding considerations will continue to be supported through the Council's wider governance, risk management and review arrangements operating under the Code.
Corporate Parenting	No direct positive impact is identified. Indirectly, the Code supports corporate parenting responsibilities by promoting integrity, accountability, transparency and effective oversight across the Council's decision-making framework.	No direct negative impact identified.	Corporate parenting considerations will continue to be supported through the Council's wider governance and accountability arrangements, with any issues identified through review processes addressed as part of ongoing improvement.

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

The development of the proposal has been informed by the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016) and the 2025 Addendum, which prompted the review and update of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. It has also been informed by the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, the Council's existing 2020 Code of Corporate Governance, CIPFA's Financial Management Code, and the agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy (2024-29) Delivery Plan. Evidence and assurance have also been drawn from the Annual Governance Statement process, Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other regulatory bodies. In addition, the draft Code has been developed with input from key consultees including the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director – Resources, Monitoring Officer, Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Chair of Governance & Audit Committee.

**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 main positive impact of the proposal is that it strengthens the Council's governance framework by promoting integrity, ethical values, openness, accountability, effective risk management and strong financial stewardship. This supports better decision-making, transparency and continuous improvement across the organisation. No significant negative impacts have been identified through this assessment, although the document itself has limited direct impacts in some areas such as health, environment and culture because it is an overarching governance framework rather than a service delivery proposal. The assessment has informed the development of the proposal by highlighting the importance of accessibility, stakeholder engagement, alignment with wider governance and wellbeing responsibilities, and the need for clear review arrangements. In future, the Code will continue to be monitored and reviewed through the Annual Governance Statement process, with input from the Strategic Leadership Team, Internal Audit, Audit Wales and other regulatory work, and any areas for improvement will be reflected in action planning where required.

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

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Not Applicable		

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

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Strategic Leadership Team	24/03/26	None
	Governance & Audit Committee	16/04/26	None

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**SUBJECT: WG SALIX LOAN FUNDING BID FOR ENERGY RETROFIT WORKS**

**MEETING: COUNCIL**

**DATE: 25th JUNE 2026**

**1. PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To seek financial approval to undertaken decarbonisation and energy efficiency works in Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) buildings using Welsh Government (WG) loan funding through the Salix Wales Funding Programme (WFP).

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**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To approve the installation of a second phase of energy conservation measures (ECMs) with a combined simple payback of 8 years across multiple MCC buildings at a budget cost of up to £1M, generating net savings to the Council and reducing operational carbon emissions.
- 2.2 To fund the installation of the ECMs via a low-interest Salix loan from the WG Wales Funding Programme (WFP) repayable over 10 years from the energy savings generated.
- 2.3 To allocate a capital budget of up to £100,000 to provide a contingency within the total budget cost of the project.
- 2.4 To agree a delegated approval process for future Salix WFP eligible projects as part of the capital programme.

### 3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 MCC has made a commitment to make significant reductions in carbon emissions from our operations by 2030. To continue and accelerate progress towards these commitments, investment in building retrofit projects is required beyond the limited scope of existing capital decarbonisation and property budgets.

3.1.1 Our Corporate and Community Plan and Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy states our commitment to reducing carbon emissions from our properties in line with WG ambition for a net zero public sector by 2030.

3.1.2 Although some progress has been made to date, developing and securing funding for specific carbon reduction projects is required to make further significant reductions.

3.2 The Wales Funding Programme (WFP) is funded by WG, administered by Salix, and offers low-interest loans to Welsh public sector organisations for eligible energy efficiency and decarbonisation projects.

3.2.1 To be eligible for funding, projects must be on the Salix approved list, have a maximum payback of 10 years, and a lifetime cost per tonne of carbon saved of £350.

3.2.2 Matched funding may be provided by an organisation to top-up projects and meet eligibility criteria and is required to cover contingencies.

3.2.3 MCC has previously used Salix funding to deliver solar PV, boiler and ventilation upgrades, and LED lighting upgrades for both buildings and street lighting.

3.3 A group of potential solar PV and LED lighting projects have been identified across 15 buildings and assessed for compliance against Salix eligibility criteria. (The list of buildings and projects can be found in Appendix A.)

3.3.1 Projects have been selected in consultation with officers from Decarbonisation, Property, Education, and MonLife and prioritised based on decarbonisation surveys, maintenance programmes, and service requirements.

- 3.3.2 It is intended that if this application is approved further phases will be developed across the rest of the estate through a similar process, likely expanded to align with and take advantage of arising opportunities and wider decarbonisation ambitions.
- 3.4 The project has a total indicative cost is £877,473 and is forecast to generate carbon savings of 115.79 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. and energy savings of £112,422 p.a. with a simple payback of 7.8 years. The indicative eligible Salix loan funding contribution is £799,435 , representing a payback of 7.11 years and lifetime cost of carbon of £281.37 tCO<sub>2</sub>e LT. Repayments on the Salix loan at an interest rate of 2.45% would be approximately £91,107 p.a. over 10 years covered by the energy savings.
- 3.5 The indicative Salix funding contribution is based on the eligible project costs including material, labour, and project management costs. The final figure may vary depending on the results of a mini-competition exercise for large LED lighting installations or any changes in the scope to accommodate arising opportunities.
- 3.5.1 A contingency cost of £78,038 has been included in the total project cost but may vary or not even be required. Contingency costs cannot be included in Salix funding application but could be met from existing capital budgets.
- 3.5.2 Although the Salix loan will be repaid over 10 years, the payback on the Salix eligible funding is 7.11 years and the predicted lifetime of the measures and the savings they will generate is over 20 years.
- 3.5.3 See Section 8 Resource Implications and Appendix B for further business case details.
- 3.6 A conditional application, pending Council approval, has been submitted to Salix early in May 2026 for technical assessment. It is expected that a decision would be confirmed by June 2026 with funding made available to draw down in the 2026/27 financial year. Works will commence from July 2026 onwards with an intended completion date in February 2027.
- 3.6.1 Salix and Welsh Government Energy Services (WGES) have been consulted throughout to advise on the application process and receive updates on timing of the submission. Responses have been positive with Salix and WGES keen to support projects.
- 3.6.2 An indicative programme has been developed with contractors to work around lead in times, available capacity, and holiday periods where works are being undertaken in school buildings. Although Salix allows two years to spend funding, it is intended to complete works in February 2027, although delays in approval processes may delay completion until summer 2027.

3.6.3 Assuming completion by February 2027, this will allow over a year's worth of energy savings to be accrued before loan repayments commence in February 2028. See Appendix B for business case modelling.

3.7 Key risks affecting the business case and delivery are summarised as follows: (See Appendix C for risk assessment drafted for Salix application.)

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Failure to secure Salix funding approval, or for WG to allocate funding following elections.	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salix engaged throughout project development with support from WGES and application submitted for technical assessment early May 2026.</li> <li>• Decarbonisation key UK and Welsh Government policy and loan funding fully expected to continue to aid delivery.</li> </ul>
Delays in approvals for Salix application (internal and external) impact delivery and completion dates or equipment and delivery costs.	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with MCC Finance, Chief Officer, and Salix / WGES to identify and reduce causes for further approval delays.</li> <li>• If delays due to further processes or application queries are encountered, sufficient flexibility within programme and two years to complete works.</li> <li>• Costs have been confirmed against delayed programme and will be monitored through the approval and delivery phases. Flexibility in the approval limit for the Salix funding bid would allow significant increase to be absorbed within the funding approval and eligibility criteria.</li> </ul>

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Identification of asbestos, structural, or other maintenance issues during works add costs and delays.	Medum	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sites selected in consultation with MCC Property.</li> <li>• Sufficient flexibility within programme to accommodate delays.</li> <li>• Provisional contingency costs and backlog / arising maintenance items to be covered from existing capital budgets. (See Section 8 Resource Implications.)</li> </ul>
Volatility of energy prices or performance of measures leads to variation/reduction in energy rates and actual savings achieved by energy reductions.	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salix eligibility criteria has been assessed based on 95% of predicated energy savings and 2026/27 energy prices. Latest forecasts estimate a 5% increase on electricity costs in April 2027.</li> <li>• M&amp;V reporting will confirm actual energy consumption savings that can be applied to latest contract rates as they change and built into energy budget forecasts.</li> <li>• As with Re:fit Phase 1, energy savings recovered will be ring-fenced to create a sinking fund so that increased savings when rates are higher offset lower savings when rates are lower.</li> </ul>

Table 1. Key risks and mitigations

3.8 Success will be completion by February 2027 within budget followed by demonstrable reduction in energy costs, expenditure, and carbon emissions and an increase in renewable energy capacity and generation.

3.8.1 Forecast carbon emissions reductions are 115.79 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, equivalent to approximately 7% of the site emissions or 2% of emissions from MCC buildings. Emissions savings will be monitored through annual Net Zero Reporting submitted to WG and reviewed internally.

3.8.2 Forecast energy savings are £112,422, equivalent to approximately 12% of the site energy costs, or 2.7% of MCC energy budgets. Energy savings will be monitored through quarterly recharges to recover savings and budget monitoring.

3.8.3 Forecast solar PV generation is 120,949 kWh p.a. from an additional 133.2 kWp of installed capacity.

3.9 It is intended that further phases of Salix WFP eligible projects are identified, and applications are submitted in parallel with delivery of this project. Agreeing a delegated process for approval of Salix funding projects will allow applications to be submitted rapidly to avoid delays that can impact costs, delivery, and external funding availability.

3.9.1 This process could involve delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Resources for loan funding applications and contingencies within specified funding eligibility criteria and a maximum value as part of the capital programme, while allowing flexibility in the sites, technologies, and inclusion of arising opportunities together with any procurement process.

3.9.2 A similar approach could be taken to wider decarbonisation projects and other funding streams, allowing more complex projects to be developed in advance with some certainty and approved quickly to secure arising funding and value for money following appropriate procurement processes.

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

4.1 The proposal does not have any negative Protected Characteristic, Socio-economic Duty, or Welsh Language implications.

4.2 The proposal contributes to the delivery of five of the seven well-being goals including:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A globally responsible Wales

4.3 The proposal demonstrates embedding and prioritising all five of the sustainable governance principles in its development.

4.4 The main positive impacts of the proposal are the reduction of energy costs and resulting carbon emissions, delivered through investment with local contractors to improve our built environment,

4.5 See Appendix D for the detailed Future Generations Evaluation.

## 5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 See Sections 3 and 7 for risks and resource implications respectively.

Option	Benefits	Risks
Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will not actively deliver targeted reductions in carbon emissions or increases in renewable energy capacity and generation.</li> <li>• Reputational damage of failing to deliver on decarbonisation commitments.</li> <li>• Added pressures on limited existing Property maintenance capital and revenue budgets to replace and upgrade lighting as it reaches end of life.</li> </ul>
Use capital and grant funding to deliver projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain 100% of revenue savings from projects.</li> <li>• Supplements existing Property maintenance budgets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant funding uncertain and covers more complicated projects that require speculative funding and external expertise to develop.</li> <li>• Additional capital likely to come from PWLB or similar funding requiring repayment at a higher interest rate (currently around 5.58%) than Salix funding (currently 2.45%).</li> </ul>

Option	Benefits	Risks
<p>Deliver via external service provider and private funding, e.g. via Re:fit service provider.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional expertise and capacity to deliver.</li> <li>• Potential to identify and develop more complex projects with greater carbon savings potential.</li> <li>• Options for alternative funding approaches, e.g. long-term power purchase agreements from renewables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery costs for a similar Re:fit Phase 2 proposal were far greater making a smaller scope of works unviable, and additional expertise not required for simple scope of measures proposed.</li> <li>• Cost of borrowing higher through private third-party funding.</li> <li>• Re:fit approach may be viable for larger more complex projects outside internal delivery capacity and expertise, but will likely require new appointment under latest LP framework.</li> </ul>
<p>Apply for Salix funding to deliver projects. (Proposed.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerated delivery of decarbonisation measures.</li> <li>• Reduction in future MCC Property maintenance capital expenditure for maintaining and replacing end of life lighting.</li> <li>• Lower delivery costs using existing capacity and in-house expertise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependent on securing external funding with strict eligibility criteria and timescales.</li> <li>• Identification of asbestos, structural, or other maintenance issues during works add costs and delays.</li> <li>• Failure to deliver anticipated savings required for loan repayment due to performance or energy price issues.</li> </ul> <p>(See Table 1 in Section 3 for key risks and mitigations.)</p>

Table 2. Options appraisal

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 Forecast reductions in carbon emissions of 115 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. will be monitored through annual Net Zero Reporting submitted to WG and reviewed internally.

- 6.1.1 Emissions are reported at an organisational level but include individual site level emissions.
- 6.2 Forecast energy savings of £112,422 p.a. will be monitored through quarterly recharges to recover savings and budget monitoring.
  - 6.2.1 Recovery of savings for the proposed project will be added to existing recharges undertaken to monitor and recover savings from previous Salix and solar PV projects as agreed with CYP, MonLife and other impacted directorates.
  - 6.2.2 Where any subsequent phase includes occupiers with more direct control over energy budgets, e.g. voluntary controlled schools, a formal agreement to recover savings throughout the repayment period will be put in place.
- 6.3 Final figures for absolute carbon reduction and energy savings may differ from forecasts for several reasons. Monitoring and verification (M&V) using data analysis techniques is required by Salix and allows evaluation of the quantifiable benefit delivered by individual interventions.
  - 6.3.1 Changes in occupation and operation of buildings, weather, energy rates, and emissions factors may all impact savings or cause increases against baseline emissions or expenditure.
  - 6.3.2 Analysis of metered energy consumption and solar PV generation is already undertaken by the Decarbonisation team to quantify savings and cost avoidance achieved by previous projects. This will be extended to the proposed project and provide evidence for recovery of savings from energy budgets.
- 6.4 Evaluation of approval for future Salix WFP phases would be made against the Salix WPF eligibility criteria and a business case that indicates a net revenue saving can be achieved throughout the lifetime of the project.
  - 6.4.1 Similar criteria could be established for approval of wider decarbonisation projects, although due to the increased complexity and costs these would need to be assessed against broader criteria such as alternative funding stream eligibility criteria or whole life and carbon costs.

## 7. REASONS:

- 7.1 MCC has made a commitment to make significant reductions in carbon emissions from our operations, including from our buildings, by 2030.
  - 7.1.1 In 2019 Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) declared a climate emergency and made a commitment to strive to reduce our own carbon emissions in line with WG ambition for a net zero public sector by 2030.
  - 7.1.2 The Green Place objective in our Corporate and Community Plan states that we will reduce carbon emissions from our properties and increase renewable energy generation capacity.
- 7.2 Although some progress has been made to reduce carbon emissions from buildings, investment in building retrofit projects is required to continue and accelerate progress in line with our decarbonisation commitments.
  - 7.2.1 Carbon emissions from MCC buildings reduced by 10% between 2019/20 and 2024/25, due in part to a previous Salix project of approximately £2M delivered between 2021 and 2023.
  - 7.2.2 Reductions in emissions from buildings between 2023/24 and 2024/25 were minimal, reflecting internal capacity and capability limitations and the need to consider allocating additional project development, matched funding, and building maintenance budgets to support decarbonisation projects.
- 7.3 Wider decarbonisation of MCC buildings will require development of complex whole building projects with significant capital and revenue implications beyond the scale of Salix funding criteria. The proposed project allows progress to be made towards decarbonisation targets while a wider investment plan is considered and larger projects are developed.
  - 7.3.1 Surveys undertaken to date indicate that 2,958 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. of carbon savings could be achieved from a full scope of measures across all of our buildings but would cost approximately £85M and would not provide payback on investment.
  - 7.3.2 Grant funding is uncertain, limited in amounts and timescales, and often applies to more complex projects that require development to advanced stages and a significant commitment of matched capital investment.
  - 7.3.3 Approval of the proposed project will deliver 115.79 tCO<sub>2</sub>e of carbon savings for a project with a simple payback of 7.8 years.

7.3.4 WGES have offered support to review and further develop feasibilities for wider decarbonisation at 5 key sites. Assuming WG continue to make funding available, this is expected to be completed early in 2026/27 and provide details to apply for matched development funding in the same year, potentially leading to capital funding bids for delivery of projects in 2027/28.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 The total indicative cost for the project is £877,473 based on quotations obtained from contractors, management fees and a contingency.

8.1.1 Quotations have been received from MCC Property framework contractors and equipment suppliers for equipment, materials, and labour costs totalling £695,161. A mini-competition has been undertaken for the larger lighting installations and the winning contractor has been notified resulting in savings on original budget quotes. Approval for an application up to £1M has been requested to allow for any cost increases due to approval delays or to take advantage of additional arising opportunities.

8.1.2 Project management costs have been estimated at 15% of the contractor costs, a figure of £104,274 to cover MCC officer time for project management, clerk of works, and health and safety (H&S) activities. Agreement will be made with Decarbonisation and Property teams to cap and share fees within this figure.

8.1.3 A contingency figure of £78,038 has been included based on 10% of the project costs.

8.2 The indicative eligible Salix funding contribution would be £799,435 at 2.45% interest repayable over 10 years at approximately £91,107 p.a.

8.2.1 The eligible Salix costs include materials, labour, and project management costs, but exclude any contingency costs.

8.2.2 The maximum Salix funding available for eligible costs based on the forecasted energy and carbon savings would be £994,430 with an 8.85 year payback, £350 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, and repayments of approximately £107,631 p.a. over 10 years.

8.3 An indicative contingency figure of £78,038 will need to be allocated to cover any arising costs that have not been identified to date.

8.3.1 The contingency is based on 10% of the project costs and would cover arising issues such as unidentified asbestos removal, structural issues, or similar costs outside the scope of the Salix funding. The final contingency expenditure will vary or may not be

required at all depending on issues arising during delivery. Any backlog maintenance issues identified during the works will be met from existing Property maintenance budgets.

8.3.2 Approval for a capital budget for contingency costs of up to £100,000 has been requested to allow for any increase in the final project costs and Salix application amount as per item 8.1.1.

8.3.3 Capital budget of £292,047 remains to support Re:fit programme delivery including covering retentions and M&V fees from Phase 1 totalling approximately £103,036 and capitalised forecast maintenance costs. However, it may be preferable to allocate a separate contingency budget for this phase.

8.3.4 It is suggested that the ability to allocate capital for a contingency fee of up to £100,000 in future financial years is included within any agreed delegated approval process for future Salix WFP phases.

8.4 Forecast energy savings of £112,422 p.a. would be used to cover loan repayments of approximately £91,107 p.a. over 10 years commencing in February 2028 based on a £799,435 loan.

8.4.1 Forecast energy savings are based on 95% of calculated kWh energy savings at 2026/27 contract rates. Savings for LED lighting upgrades have been calculated on a room-by-room basis from hours of use and kW ratings of light fitting. Savings for solar PV systems have been calculated from generation modelled against building energy demand.

8.4.2 Salix repayments are taken annually in February of each year following completion of the full project scope of works, although interest charges apply from when funding is drawn down. By programming completion for February 2027, this will allow over 12 months of savings to be accrued before making a repayment, thereby avoiding a revenue pressure in the first year. The final annual repayment figure will vary according to the final loan amount, draw down schedule, and resulting interest charges.

8.4.3 Recovered savings will be ring fenced into a sinking fund to avoid revenue pressures and account for variations in savings due to energy contract price changes or delays in completion. This will also allow any additional maintenance costs to be covered by the savings and potentially early repayment of the loan to reduce interest costs.

8.4.4 Although the loan will be repaid over 10 years, the predicted lifetime of the measures and the savings they will generate is over 20 years creating a net long-term revenue benefit.

- 8.5 Maintenance costs are assumed to be cost-neutral, with energy and lighting maintenance savings outweighing any additional solar PV maintenance costs.
- 8.5.1 Annual solar PV maintenance inspections have been quoted at £300 per site (£1,200 for the 4 installations planned) and existing installations have proved to be relatively low maintenance. Inverters may need to be replaced some time after 10 years, but could be funded from the long-term net revenue savings.
- 8.5.2 Additional maintenance savings are expected from not having to replace lamps due to longer life of LED lighting and transferring the cost of replacing end of life lighting from a future capital budget pressure an energy revenue saving.
- 8.6 Delivery of the project will be undertaken from existing MCC officer and Property maintenance framework resources.
- 8.6.1 MCC Decarbonisation team will provide project management, Salix funding administration, and M&V services, with one of the Decarbonisation Project Officers taking the lead as Project Manager. The appointment of the Energy Officer in January 2026 will provide additional capacity for identifying, delivering, and monitoring decarbonisation projects.
- 8.6.2 MCC Property officers will provide technical advice where needed, including clerk of works services and H&S support.
- 8.6.3 Contractors have been appointed through the existing Property maintenance framework, either via direct call-off for smaller schemes or following mini-competition for the sites over £50k.
- 8.7 See Appendix B for business case budget modelling

## 9. **CONSULTEES:**

- Chief Officer Infrastructure
- Landlord Services (Estates and Property)
- Education
- MonLife
- Procurement (Ardal)
- Finance
- Salix Finance

- Welsh Government Energy Services (WGES)

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Appendix A – Salix Compliance Tool

Appendix B – Business Case Modelling

Appendix C – Salix Project Risks and Mitigation

Appendix D – Integrated Impact Assessment

**11. AUTHOR:**

Ian Hoccom, Decarbonisation Manager

**12. CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Tel:** 01633 64 4448 / 07920 504695

**E-mail:** [IanHoccom@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:IanHoccom@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Organisation:	Monmouthshire County Council
Programme:	Wales Funding Programme

Salix Finance:  
Wales Compliance Tool V40.2  
© Salix Finance 2026

Compliance Criteria:	
Payback	10 years
£/tCO <sub>2</sub> e LT	£350



District Hosting Projects Only: Bespoke Carbon Factor kg/kWh	Start Date	Completion Date	Site Name	Remaining Site Life (yrs)	Project Description	Data Entry Check
	25/06/2026	28/02/2027	Multiple	25	LED and PV installations across 15 buildings.	OK

	Description of Work	Project Completion Date	Energy Type	Current p/kWh	Forecast p/kWh	Forecast % Change	Project Type	Technology - Work Type	Annual kWhs Pre-Project	Annual kWhs Post-Project	Annual kWh savings	% kWh savings	Project Value	Annual Financial Savings	Payback in Years	kgCO <sub>2</sub> /kWh	tCO <sub>2</sub> e pa	tCO <sub>2</sub> e LT	£/tCO <sub>2</sub> e LT	Data Entry Check
1	Abergavenny Youth Centre - PV	27/02/2027	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	Renewable energy	Solar PV	10,416	0	10,416	100%	£26,250.00	£2,297	11.43	0.225	2.35	52.81	497.04	OK
2	Llanfoist Primary School - PV	27/02/2027	Electricity	20.77	20.77	0%	Renewable energy	Solar PV	21,608	0	21,608	100%	£48,750.00	£4,488	10.86	0.225	4.87	109.56	444.96	OK
3	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin - PV	27/02/2027	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	Renewable energy	Solar PV	18,704	0	18,704	100%	£33,750.00	£4,124	8.18	0.225	4.21	94.84	355.88	OK
4	Caldicot Community Hub - LED	27/02/2027	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	25,406	7,826	17,580	69%	£42,964.62	£3,876	11.08	0.225	3.96	99.04	433.80	OK
5	Chepstow Community Hub - LED	24/07/2026	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	45,161	10,753	34,408	76%	£57,041.10	£7,587	7.52	0.225	7.75	193.85	294.26	OK
6	Kymin View Primary School - LED	16/08/2026	Electricity	21.08	21.08	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	53,444	12,792	40,652	76%	£74,984.27	£8,570	8.75	0.225	9.16	229.02	327.41	OK
7	Monmouth Library - LED	27/02/2027	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	14,701	6,522	8,179	56%	£49,135.07	£1,803	27.25	0.225	1.84	46.08	1,066.34	OK
8	Raglan Depot - LED	16/09/2026	Electricity	22.61	22.61	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	81,075	30,450	50,625	62%	£73,047.93	£11,447	6.38	0.225	11.41	285.21	256.12	OK
9	Rogiet Primary - LED	18/08/2026	Electricity	20.99	20.99	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	35,999	11,999	24,000	67%	£75,334.41	£5,038	14.95	0.225	5.41	135.21	557.16	OK
10	Shireston Primary - LED	30/10/2026	Electricity	21.48	21.48	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	34,925	9,392	25,533	73%	£44,869.88	£5,484	8.18	0.225	5.75	143.85	311.93	OK
11	Undy Primary - LED	30/10/2026	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	50,505	12,684	37,821	75%	£86,965.37	£8,339	10.43	0.225	8.52	213.08	408.14	OK
12	Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin Primary School - LED	27/02/2027	Electricity	22.05	22.05	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	30,651	9,447	21,204	69%	£42,721.67	£4,675	9.14	0.225	4.78	119.46	357.63	OK
13	County Hall Usk - LED	30/10/2026	Electricity	22.21	22.21	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	59,031	13,684	45,347	77%	£81,103.63	£10,072	8.05	0.225	10.22	255.47	317.47	OK
14	Llanfoist Primary School - LED	27/02/2027	Electricity	20.77	20.77	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	24,373	6,859	17,514	72%	£26,954.00	£3,637	7.41	0.225	3.95	98.67	273.17	OK
15	Caldicot Leisure Centre - LED	02/10/2026	Electricity	22.51	22.51	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	138,931	52,033	86,898	63%	£59,348.36	£19,563	3.03	0.225	19.58	489.56	121.23	OK
16	Monmouth Lesuire Centre - LED	27/02/2027	Electricity	21.60	21.60	0%	LED lighting	LED - new fitting	11,057	2,065	8,992	81%	£4,252.73	£1,943	2.19	0.225	2.03	50.66	83.95	OK
17	Abergavenny Leisure Centre - PV	27/02/2027	Electricity	21.38	21.38	0%	Renewable energy	Solar PV	44,350	0	44,350	100%	£50,000.00	£9,481	5.27	0.225	9.99	224.87	222.35	OK

	Total Salix Funding Requested	Total Project Value	Total Financial Savings	Payback in Years	Total kg/kWh	Total tCO <sub>2</sub> e pa	Total tCO <sub>2</sub> e LT	£/tCO <sub>2</sub> e LT	Compliance
ECMs	£799,434.58	£877,473.04	£112,422	7.11	0.225	115.79	2,841.23	281.37	Compliant
MMM		£0.00							
Total	£799,434.58	£877,473.04							

<b>Project cost:</b>	£	877,473		
<b>Est. savings:</b>	£	112,422		
<b>Simple payback:</b>		7.1		
<b>Energy inc p.a.:</b>		0.00%	CPI MAR-26: 3.3%	(For purpose of modelling, energy increase assumed as 0% due to volatile market.)
<b>RPI:</b>		4.10%	RPI MAR-26: 4.1%	(Applied to PV O&M and maintenance costs.)
<b>Lifetime (yrs):</b>		10		(Analysis period set to Salix loan period. Actual lifetime of equipment >20 years.)
	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Loan</b>	£ 799,435	2.45%	10	Salix loan funding at 2.45%
<b>Other</b>	£ 78,038			MCC capital contingency, vried from existing Re:fit capital budget
<b>MCC matched</b>	£ 78,038	5.58%	10	PWLB rate Apr-26
<b>Other</b>	-£ 78,038			

Year	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Expenditure:</b>	<b>£ 1,028,476</b>	£ 102,600	£ 102,649	£ 102,701	£ 102,754	£ 102,809	£ 102,867	£ 102,927	£ 102,990	£ 103,055	£ 103,123
Loan repayments	£ 911,065	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107	£ 91,107
MCC matched	£ 102,937	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294	£ 10,294
PV O&M	£ 14,474	£ 1,200	£ 1,249	£ 1,300	£ 1,354	£ 1,409	£ 1,467	£ 1,527	£ 1,590	£ 1,655	£ 1,723
Replace inverters	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Maintenance	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
<b>Savings:</b>	<b>-£ 1,109,730</b>	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973
Electricity:	-£ 1,109,730	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973	-£ 110,973
Gas:	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
<b>Net cost / svg p.a.</b>	<b>-£ 81,254</b>	-£ 8,373	-£ 8,324	-£ 8,272	-£ 8,219	-£ 8,164	-£ 8,106	-£ 8,046	-£ 7,983	-£ 7,918	-£ 7,850
<b>WLC 10 yrs</b>	<b>-£ 81,254</b>										

**Maintenance assumptions:**

PV maintenance costs offset by energy and LED maintenance savings

Whole life period based on main equipment lifetime, i.e. no replacement of major ECM components outside what might be expected as part of normal building maintenance.

PV O&M	£ 1,200	p.a. (annual inspection, remote monitoring / data fees)
Replace inverter	£ -	Outside analysis period
Inverter lifetime	13	Years (extendable warranties available)

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## 9. Project Risks & Mitigation

Describe any project risks and give details of measures designed to minimise or avoid them. This should cover:

- Any project dependencies, such as other projects being completed on time or coordination around organisational issues (e.g. exam periods and heating season).
- Risks to project delivery and details of the management structures in place to monitor.
- Detail other outstanding issues that need to be resolved before the project can proceed (e.g. finalising plant sizes or communication with stakeholders).
- The risks associated with the project failing to achieve the savings.
- Please attach a copy of your internal risk register.

Description of Risk	Level of Risk	How will the risk be managed and/or mitigated?
Asbestos present in buildings	Moderate	Review of asbestos surveys undertaken, anticipated issue in one building only. Contingency allowed for mitigating works, or measure(s) / site(s) could be removed from project and / or replaced.
Energy prices lower than forecast	Minor	Existing (2026/27) energy prices used with no uplift. April 2027 forecasts (5%) and longer term trends indicate price increases. Lifetime of ECMs and energy savings longer than Salix repayment period.
Lighting control (DALI) issues or wiring upgrades required	Minor	Contingency allowed and where a backlog maintenance issue could be funded by property maintenance budgets. (As per Phase 1.)
Roof structures unsuitable for PV installations	Moderate	Not anticipated to be an issue from initial surveys, but structural surveys included within ECM costs. If found unsuitable, remove / replace ECM / site. (As per Phase 1.)
Unsuccessful with grid applications for PV installations	Moderate	Not anticipated to be an issue from initial surveys, but DNO applications included within ECM costs. If rejected due to available export capacity, consider redesign (smaller, storage, export limit) or remove / replace ECM / site. (All as per Phase 1.)
Coordination issues with building users (e.g. schools during term time)	Moderate	Schedule works during holidays or low-occupancy periods; communicate plans well in advance with site managers. Early engagement with Procurement and contractors; clear timelines and responsibilities; regular progress reviews.
Energy savings (kWh) lower than forecast	Minor	Conservative estimates based on partial (95%) savings used; ensure high-quality installation and commissioning; monitor performance post-installation.

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# Integrated Impact Assessment Template

(incorporating Equalities, Socio-economic Duty, Future Generations, Welsh Language Measures, Corporate Parenting)

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation Ian Hoccom</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 01633 64 4448 / 07920 504695 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:IanHoccom@monmouthshire.gov.uk">IanHoccom@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>Install energy conservation measures across MCC buildings to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions, funded from the energy savings generated.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Decarbonisation</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p> <p>May 2026</p>

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

<p><b>Protected Characteristics</b></p>	<p><b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b></p>	<p><b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
<p><b>Age</b> <i>Consider the impact on our community in relation to age, e.g. how do we engage with older and younger people about our services, access issues etc. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	<p>Use of local contractors already working under the Property maintenance framework will increase demand and drive opportunities for employment and training.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>

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<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	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?
<p><b>Disability</b>  <i>Consider the impact and what issues there are around each of the disability needs groups e.g. access to buildings/services, how we provide services and the way we do this; producing information in alternative formats, employment issues etc.</i></p>	<p>Lighting upgrades in buildings may improve accessibility and safety for users with disabilities through improved lighting levels.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>
<p><b>Gender reassignment</b>  <i>Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>
<p><b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>  <i>Same-sex couples registered as civil partners have the same rights as married couples and must be provided with the same benefits, such as survivor pensions, flexible working, maternity/paternity pay and healthcare insurance. Consider the impact of your proposal on these rights.</i></p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>

<b><u>Protected Characteristics</u></b>	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<p><b>Pregnancy or maternity</b>  <i>A woman is protected from discrimination during her pregnancy, maternity leave and 26 weeks from the day she gives birth. Including the provision of services, goods and facilities and recreational or training facilities. Consider the impact of your proposal on these protections.</i></p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<p><b>Race</b>  <i>What will the proposal do to promote race equality with the aim of eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between different racial groups. Think about the potential to affect racial groups differently. Possible issues include providing translation/interpreting services, cultural issues and customs, access to services, issues relating to Asylum Seeker, Refugee, Gypsy &amp; Traveler, migrant communities and recording of racist incidents etc.</i></p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<p><b>Religion or Belief</b>  <i>Consider the impact e.g. dietary issues, religious holidays or days associated with religious observance, cultural issues and customs. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i></p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<b>Sex</b> <i>Consider what issues there are for men and women. Will this impact disproportionately on one group more than another e.g. equal pay, responsibilities for dependents, issues for carers, access to training, employment issues.</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> <i>Consider the provision of inclusive services for e.g. older and younger people from the Lesbia, Gay and Bi-sexual communities. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

## 2. The Socio-economic Duty

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.

*Socio-economic disadvantage can be defined as living in less favorable social and economic circumstances than others in society. It also includes social justice, which is about reducing inequalities by working towards more equal distribution of wealth and opportunities so everyone can achieve their full potential.*

**Consider how the proposal could affect the following vulnerable groups:**

*Armed Forces Community (including veterans)*

*Single parents*

*Vulnerable families*

*Single adult households*

*Carers*

*Students*

*People living in the most deprived areas*

*Pensioners*

*Homeless People*

*People misusing substances*

*People who have experienced the asylum system*

*People involved in the criminal justice system*

<u>Socio-economic Duty</u>	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering from socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts in relation to the Socio-economic disadvantage?
<i>Think of what evidence you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this proposal. Will it impact disproportionately on certain groups? Can the proposals be improved to reduce inequalities of outcome?</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

### 3.2 Policy making and the Welsh language

*What are the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated? Explain how you believe the proposals could be improved so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.*

<b>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the <a href="#">Council's Welsh Language Standards</a>:</b>	<b>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</b>	<b>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</b>	<b>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</b>
<b>Policy Making:</b> <i>Consider what impact this policy decision will have on the Welsh Language. This includes opportunities for people to use the language, opportunities to promote the language and treating the language no less favourably than the English language. Include any data and evidence e.g. WESP, Census Data, Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Language Strategy.</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<b>Operational:</b> <b>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</b> <i>Carefully consider whether vacant posts require Welsh language skills as a desirable or essential skill. This is especially pertinent with front line roles as more than 10 % of the population of Monmouthshire speak Welsh. Also, when assessing the need for Welsh language skills keep in mind the existing Welsh language skills within the workforce. In service areas where there is a current lack of Welsh language skills, posts should be advertised as Welsh language essential. Additionally, consider where further training may be needed to increase the number of staff who can speak Welsh and to enhance the skills of current Welsh speakers.</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<b>Service Delivery:</b> <b>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</b> <i>When advertising our services you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.			
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**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!




<u><a href="#">Well Being Goals</a></u>	<b>Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b>	<b>Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</b>	<b>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> <i>An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises global limits and uses resources efficiently (including acting on climate change); a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides jobs.</i>	<p>Will generate energy savings from Council revenue budgets of over £100,000 p.a. and reduce carbon emissions from our operations. Although these will be used to repay loan funding, the lifetime of the equipment and savings will exceed the payback.</p> <p>Opportunities for local contractors.</p>	No significant impacts	<p>The delivery programme will be timed to ensure loan repayments commence after energy savings are achieved to avoid revenue pressures</p> <p>95% of energy savings have been used to calculate paybacks and a loan repayment schedule longer than the paybacks will be requested in order to create a net revenue saving.</p>
<b>A resilient Wales</b> <i>Maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</i>	<p>Will reduce energy consumption from our buildings by over 500,000 kWh and resulting carbon emissions by 115 tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a., including those from non-renewable grid electricity generation that contributes to climate change.</p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<b>A healthier Wales</b> <i>People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that</i>	<p>The built environment in workplaces and public buildings will be improved through lighting upgrades, thereby contributing to</p>	No significant impacts	<p>Where existing negative environmental issues have been identified (e.g. light levels, thermal discomfort), the measures will be designed so as to maintain an</p>


<u>Well Being Goals</u>	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<i>benefit future health are understood.</i>	the physical and mental wellbeing of occupiers and visitors.		improved environment for building occupiers usersimpacts
<b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> <i>Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</i>	Lighting upgrades may improve the aesthetics of public buildings and bring emergency lighting requirements up to date.	No significant impacts	Site supervision and clerking will ensure they are installed safely.  Other building improvement works may be identified and undertaken while delivering measures.
Page 99 <b>A globally responsible Wales</b> <i>Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</i>	The project is forecast to result in carbon savings of 115 tCO <sub>2</sub> e p.a. or approximately 7% of the total carbon emissions from the buildings, or 2% of all emissions from MCC buildings.	Some sources of solar PV may have negative environmental and social impacts. Although the carbon impact is captured through supply chain emissions reporting, other impacts are more difficult to confirm and influence.	Lighting upgrades may in some cases include control modifications to further reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.  Solar PV designs may be adjusted to include battery storage and allow future expansion to maximise carbon savings.  Supply chain emissions are reported and work is ongoing to work with suppliers to encourage them to reduce their carbon emissions and use socially responsible sources.
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> <i>Promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and participation in the arts, and sports and recreation</i>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
<b>A more equal Wales</b>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

<u>Well Being Goals</u>	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><i>People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances. (This includes the protected characteristics listed in Section 1 above. You can add more detail there. Don't forget to think about the impacts on poverty)</i></p>			

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

<p>Page 97</p> <p><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></p>	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p><b>Long Term</b></p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> <p><i>We are required to look beyond the usual short term timescales for financial planning and political cycles and instead plan with the longer term in mind (guidance says at least 10 years, but preferably 25)</i></p>	<p>Measures will deliver net energy savings to reduce immediate budget pressures and contribute to existing PIs on carbon reduction.</p> <p>Measures will also reduce long-term revenue expenditure and maintenance budget, and deliver carbon savings over an extended period to deliver long-term climate emergency objectives of MCC operations becoming net zero carbon.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>

<p><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></p>	<p><b>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Opportunities have been identified in part from decarbonisation surveys commissioned by WLGA</p> <p>Contractors have been appointed from the collaborative property maintenance framework and the project will be funded by Welsh Government.</p> <p>The resulting carbon emissions will contribute towards WG ambition for a net zero public sector by 2030.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><i>Who are the stakeholders who will be affected by your proposal? Have they been involved? Do those people reflect the diversity of the area which is served?</i></p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>The proposal has been developed in consultation with internal teams and building occupiers, including Decarbonisation, Landlord Services (Estates and Property), Education, and MonLife.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<p>Investment in the LED lighting upgrades using low-interest loans repaid from the savings generated will replace aging lighting that would otherwise need to be funded from capital maintenance budgets.</p> <p>The energy savings generated will contribute to easing budget pressures and limiting exposure to any future increases in energy prices.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>

<p><b><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></b></p>	<p><b>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b></p>
 <p><b>Integration</b></p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p><i>Focus here on how you will better integrate the Wellbeing Goals impacts on people, economy and environment described above and balance any competing impacts. Think about impacts the proposal may have on other organisations</i></p>	<p>The measures proposed will contribute to delivering the overall carbon reduction targets and WBFGA goals of Welsh Government.</p>	<p>No significant impacts</p>

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b><u>Safeguarding</u></b>  <i>Safeguarding in this context applies to children (not yet reached 18th birthday) and adult at risk (identified as a person over the age of 18 and who (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.) Safeguarding is about ensuring that everything is in place to promote the well-being of children and adults at risk, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect.</i></p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts

<p><b><u>Corporate Parenting, Care Leavers and Care Experienced People</u></b></p> <p><i>This relates to those children who are 'looked after' by the Local Authority either through voluntary arrangements with their parents or through a Court Order. The Council has a corporate duty to consider 'children who are looked after especially and to promote their welfare (in a way, as though those children were their own). It also relates to care experienced people (people who have spent time in care when they were under 18 years old). The Council must consider how to help overcome the disadvantages and discrimination they experience.</i></p>	No significant impacts	No significant impacts	No significant impacts
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**7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

*This will include your baseline position, measures and studies that have informed your thinking and the recommendation you are making. It should allow you to identify whether any changes resulting from the implementation of the recommendation have had a positive or negative effect. Key strategies and documents that may help you include: Community and Corporate Plan, Asset Management Strategy, Digital and Data Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, People Strategy, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy: [Enabling Strategies](#) See Guidance for more examples.*

Data on emissions has been derived from energy data from utility bills and annual Net Zero reporting submitted to WG.

Designs and quotations have been obtained from contractors and suppliers for the LED lighting upgrades and solar PV installations. MCC officers have reviewed the proposals and used the equipment specification, occupancy hours, generation modelling, and existing energy tariffs to calculate energy savings.

Costs and savings have been entered into the Salix Wales Funding Programme assessment tool to confirm funding eligibility.

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

*This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee Report Template*

Positive impacts: The main impact of the proposal is a reduction in carbon savings contributing to a prosperous, resilient, and globally responsible Wales.

Based on energy use data for the 14 buildings in the proposal, carbon emissions in 2024/25 were 1,329 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and 2025/26 energy expenditure is forecast to be £824,775. The proposal is forecast to produce carbon savings of 115 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (7% of the emissions from the buildings) and revenue savings of £112,422 (12% of the expenditure), although the savings will be used to repay the low-interest loan used to fund the project.

Negative impacts: The proposal has very few negative impacts. The project will cost approximately £877,473 with £799,435 funding from a low-interest loan from WG via the Salix Wales Programme Fund repayable from energy savings. The Council would be committed to a £799,435 low-interest loan repayable over 10 years, although costs would be covered by the energy savings that would continue past the 10 year payback.

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**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?
Request approval to submit an application to Salix for loan funding.	June 2026	Ian Hoccom, Decarbonisation Manger.
Complete a mini-competition procurement exercise for larger value sites items within the proposal.	April 2026	Isobel Preece, Decarbonisation Project Officer.
Submit the funding application to Salix, pending internal approval to do so.	May 2026	Ian Hoccom, Decarbonisation Manger.

**10. VERSION CONTROL: The Integrated Impact Assessment 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 <i>e.g. budget mandate, DMT, SLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet etc</i>	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
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1.0	Council	June 2026	

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>25 June 2026</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>

## 1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide Council with the Panel Performance Assessment report and the authority's response to the recommendations.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council notes and accepts the findings of the Panel Performance Assessment report attached at appendix 1.
- 2.2 That Council approves the draft response to the recommendations attached as appendix 2.

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The council's unifying purpose is for Monmouthshire to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. This is set in the Community and Corporate Plan.
- 3.2 We have clear and established performance management framework in place to ensure we can deliver our agreed purpose and be held to account. These arrangements are overseen by the independently chaired Governance and Audit Committee with oversight from regulators including Audit Wales. The legislative basis for performance management in Welsh local authorities is set out in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. This establishes specific performance requirements. These include a duty to produce an annual self-assessment report and the requirement to commission an independent panel to conduct a statutory evaluation at least once per electoral cycle to examine how the council is meeting its performance requirements. This is known as Panel Performance Assessment or PPA.
- 3.3 In February 2026 the Council underwent its first panel performance assessment. The independent group of experts concluded that:

*“Monmouthshire is an ambitious, well-run Council with communities at its heart and a reach that transcends boundaries.”*

They also wrote that the council demonstrates strong ambition with the capability to become great. A copy of the full report is attached as appendix 1.

- 3.4 The panel was chaired by Bev Smith, a former local authority chief executive who has subsequently held several non-executive roles. The panel met with more than 120 people over the course of the week including: a politically balanced focus group of backbench councillors nominated by group leaders; focus groups of officers at all tiers of the organisation; volunteers; business leaders; town and community councillors; trade unions; leaders of other public sector organisations and most importantly focus groups of local people. They also considered the results of the 2025-26 residents' and staff surveys and digested a wide range of documents. [REDACTED]
- 3.5 The panel worked to a scope developed by Cabinet and approved at its meeting on 27th November 2025. The scope was:
- how well does the council align across directorates to optimise delivery of the priorities set out in the Community and Corporate Plan?
  - what opportunities are there to further develop the council's emerging person centred and preventative approaches to working with its communities, local businesses and other stakeholders, (including town and community councils)?
  - how well are we able to demonstrate the intended outcomes and emerging impacts of our Community and Corporate Plan and, how well do we communicate them to councillors, residents and other stakeholders, including town and community councils and local businesses?
- 3.6 The legislation that guides the assessment also requires the panel to assess the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements specified in the Act. Namely:
- exercising its functions effectively;
  - using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
  - having effective governance in place for securing the above.
- 3.7 The panel highlighted a number of strengths including good governance, effective resource management and a culture of collaboration. Staff were seen as loyal, committed, and integral to the council's culture and delivery model. In addition, they identified areas for development including the need to improve the measurement of impact and outcomes. These will be taken forward as part of the council's performance management arrangements.
- 3.8 The panel made the following recommendations:
- Prioritise major opportunities to deliver better outcomes for residents at lower costs.
  - Strengthen community resilience and shared understanding.
  - Complete the development of workforce and succession planning.
- 3.9 The authority cannot amend the panel's report but does get the opportunity, and is required to, produce a response to it. This must include:
- The extent to which it accepts the conclusions in the report;
  - The extent to which the council intends to follow any recommendations contained in the report; and

- Any actions it proposes to take to increase the extent to which it meets the performance requirements.

3.10 The draft response and actions are attached as appendix 2 to this report. They were presented to Governance and Audit Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> June to enable that committee to review the draft response and may make recommendations for changes. This is a statutory requirement placed on the committee. They were joined by members of the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Following extensive exploration of the report's findings, the committee did not make request any changes to the authority's response ahead of it being presented to Council.

3.11 The Panel Performance Assessment findings will inform the annual self-assessment process. These two processes enable councillors, residents, regulators to form a clear view of how the organisation is seeking to continuously improve and deliver the best possible outcomes for the residents and businesses of Monmouthshire.

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

4.1 A full impact assessment is not required for this decision. The Panel Performance Assessment is expected to have a positive impact by strengthening accountability and supporting better outcomes for all residents, including future generations.

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

5.1 Not conducting a Panel Performance Assessment was not an option as it is a statutory requirement. The process has identified recommendations which are shown above and led to a series of proposed actions, attached as an appendix to this report.

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

6.1 The effectiveness of For Purpose, On Purpose will be overseen by the Project Assurance Board Chaired by the Chief Executive. The board will oversee the development of a benefits realisation framework. This will include:

- Financial: Operational cost savings: Cost avoidance / liability reduction; Income generation / improved recovery
- Service & Customer Experience: Service performance; Accessibility & inclusion; Customer satisfaction & trust
- Environmental & Social Value: Environmental impact; Social/community impact  
Strategic: Regulatory and policy compliance; Operational and organisational resilience; Sustainable organisational capability; Positive effects on staff capacity and moral.

This will be considered by Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in September 2026.

6.2 The evaluation of the community resilience actions will initially form part of the measurement framework for F-POP. The evaluation of workforce and succession planning will form part of the evaluation of the People Strategy which is embedded in the whole authority self-assessment. This includes key metrics from the staff survey.

**7. REASONS:**

- 7.1 To provide independent assurance on the council's delivery, support continuous improvement, and meet the statutory requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

**8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

- 8.1 The costs associated with the panel were be met by The Welsh Local Government Association. There are no direct costs associated with the assessment

**9. CONSULTEES:**

Cabinet  
Strategic Leadership Team  
Governance and Audit Committee  
Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Following a wide-ranging debate at Governance and Audit Committee, with members of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in attendance, the response to the draft response to the recommendations was considered appropriate and no changes were requested ahead of Council. The committee requested more explicit referencing of the recommendations within the cover report to Council and this reflected in the key issues section of the report.

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Statutory Guidance - <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/performance-governance-of-principal-councils.pdf>

**11. AUTHOR:**

Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships

**12. CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Tel:** 0778 555 6727

**E-mail:** matthewgatehouse@monmouthshire.gov.uk



monmouthshire  
sir fynwy

# Monmouthshire County Council Panel Performance Assessment (PPA)

February 2026



## 1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the performance duties under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Monmouthshire County Council (Cyngor Sir Fynwy) commissioned a Panel Performance Assessment (PPA) via the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).
- 1.2 The onsite assessment was completed over a four-day period concluding on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 with a feedback presentation provided to the Council outlining the key findings detailed within this report.
- 1.3 The assessment was undertaken based on the Council's agreed scoping document and the WLGA's PPA methodology, which was developed with the sector. The PPA methodology provides an overarching framework: the lines of enquiry are not prescriptive but provide guidance to the Panel on the areas that could be explored to meet the statutory duty. However, the extent to which the Panel explores those areas should be proportionate to the Council's scope but sufficient to enable the Panel to form a conclusion.
- 1.4 In accordance with the statutory guidance the PPA is not an audit or an inspection and does not seek to duplicate work undertaken by regulators and other bodies. Whilst the Panel has undertaken a corporate assessment, this assessment was not in-depth and should be considered alongside other sources of assurance such as the Council's own self-assessment, internal audit reviews, external audit, and regulatory reviews.
- 1.5 In preparing for the PPA, the Council scoped their requirements to maximise the value and impact of the assessment to the Council. The specific areas of focus identified by the Council are reflected in paragraph 3.2.
- 1.6 This report provides a summary overview of the conclusions of the Panel reported by exception.

## 2.0 Peer Team

- 2.1 The following Peers were commissioned by the WLGA to undertake the assessment. Selection of the Peers was agreed and at the discretion of the Council, based on suitability of skills and experience.
  - Independent Chair: Beverley (Bev) Smith, Former Chief Executive of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire and North West Leicestershire, former Chair of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru and current Chair of the Local Boundary Commission for England.
  - Senior Member Peer: Cllr Darren Price, serving Councillor and former Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council.
  - Serving Local Government Senior Officer: Louise Davies, Director of Community Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.
  - Peer from the wider public, private, voluntary sector: Chris Naylor, Consultant, Managing Director and former Chief Executive of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

2.2 The Panel was supported by, Cerith Thomas, Senior Policy Officer (Improvement – Democratic Services) and Sarah Evans, Senior Support Officer (Improvement) from the WLGA's Improvement Team.

### 3. Scope and Approach

3.1 The Panel is required to assess the extent to which the Council:

- Is exercising its functions effectively.
- Is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively; and
- Has effective governance in place for securing the above.

3.2 The Council identified the following three areas where peer insight would be valued as part of the Panel assessment:

- **Area of local Focus 1** - How well does the Council align across directorates to optimise delivery of the priorities set out in the Community and Corporate Plan.
- **Area of local Focus 2** - What opportunities are there to further develop the Council's emerging person-centred and preventative approaches to working with its communities, local businesses and other stakeholders, (including Town & Community Councils).
- **Area of local Focus 3** - How well is the Council able to demonstrate the intended outcomes and emerging impacts of its Community and Corporate Plan and, how well does it communicate them to Councillors, residents and other stakeholders, including Town and Community Councils and local businesses.

3.3 To prepare for the onsite assessment, the Panel first conducted a desktop review of Council documentation, data, external reports, and other relevant intelligence. The Peers also participated in preliminary online meetings.

3.4 The desktop review also included analysis of recent staff and resident survey results, which provided valuable insight into organisational culture, staff engagement and public perception. These positive survey findings offered an additional evidence base that complemented the document review and the views gathered through interviews and focus groups, further strengthening the triangulation of the Panel's assessment.

3.5 The Panel spent approximately 240 hours plus, during the onsite stage of the review involving a series of individual meetings and focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Leader of the Council
- Chief Executive Officer
- Combined Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet (Opening and Closing sessions)
- The Cabinet – Focus Group
- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
- Leader of the Opposition Group
- Group Leader, Green Independents

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- Group Leader, Independent
- Elected Members - non-executive – Focus Group
- Scrutiny Chairs – Focus Group
- Independent Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee
- Independent Chair of the Standards Committee
- Strategic Leadership Team – Focus Group
- Deputy Chief Executive & Strategic Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)
- Chief Officer - People, Performance and Partnership
- Chief Officer Place and Community Wellbeing
- Chief Officer Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)
- Chief Officer Infrastructure
- Strategic Director - Children, Learning, Skills & Economy
- Strategic Director - Social Care & Safeguarding
- Chief Internal Auditor
- Head of Customer, Communication & Engagement
- Head of Strategic Change, Partnerships & Procurement
- Local Democracy Manager
- Heads of Service - Staff Focus Group
- Middle Managers - Staff Focus Group
- Frontline/Operational staff – Focus Group
- Youth Council Representatives – Focus Group
- Chief Constable of Gwent Police
- Leader of neighbouring Local Authority – Torfaen County Borough Council
- Leader of neighbouring Local Authority – Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Leader of neighbouring Local Authority – Newport City Council
- Chief Executive Officer of neighbouring Local Authorities – Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Councils
- Chief Executive Officer of neighbouring Local Authority - Caerphilly County Borough Council
- Executive Director of Public Health and Strategic Partnership at Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and President of the Faculty of Public Health
- Town and Community Councils – Focus Group

- Trade Unions – Focus Group
- Business Community – Focus Group
- Voluntary Sector – Focus Group
- Older People - Stakeholder Focus Group
- Visit to Abergavenny Town Hall – Community Hub

#### **4. Overall Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Panel concluded that Monmouthshire is an ambitious, well-run Council with communities at its heart and a reach that transcends boundaries.
- 4.2 This conclusion is based on a comprehensive and triangulated assessment process, drawing on multiple sources of evidence. The Panel reviewed extensive documentation provided by the Council, including strategic plans, performance data, financial information and external audit findings, surveys, alongside insights gathered through the wide-ranging programme of interviews, focus groups and engagement sessions with internal and external stakeholders. This included elected members, senior officers, frontline staff, partners, community representatives, local businesses and Town and Community Councils. The breadth and consistency of feedback across these groups provided a robust foundation for the Panel's judgement and offered strong assurance of the reliability and validity of the findings.

#### **5. Local Context (Source: PPA Scoping Document)**

##### **Overview of Place**

- 5.1 Located in South-East Wales, Monmouthshire is strategically positioned between major centres in Wales and England. It covers around 880 km<sup>2</sup>, with only 3% classed as built on land. It borders several Welsh and English authorities and contains four primary settlements - Abergavenny, Monmouth, Caldicot and Chepstow - along with the towns of Usk and Magor with Undy. These settlements serve as historic market towns with strong links to their surrounding rural areas.
- 5.2 The county's population is 92,961, with an older age profile than the Welsh average. Around 26% of residents are over 65, and the proportion of older age groups is growing more quickly than across Wales. The demographic challenge of retaining and attracting younger people is a key issue identified in the replacement Local Development Plan.
- 5.3 Economically, Monmouthshire benefits from strong transport connections and proximity to Cardiff, Bristol and the Midlands. It has one of the most competitive economies in Wales, a highly qualified workforce, strong economic activity levels, and the highest rate of active enterprises per 10,000 population in Wales. Limited developed space for economic activity is a growing constraint.
- 5.4 Housing affordability is a significant local challenge, with some of the highest house prices in Wales - averaging 8.5 times local incomes. High costs drive outward migration, and more than 3,800 people are on the housing register, including over 2,000 identified as needing affordable housing.

## Political and Organisational Leadership

### Political Representation

- 5.5 Monmouthshire has 46 councillors representing 39 electoral divisions. The political representation is:
- Labour: 21
  - Conservative: 19
  - Independent Group: 4
  - Green Independent Group: 2 (one Green, one aligned independent)
- 5.6 The local government elections of May 2022 resulted in no political party having overall control of the Council. The Labour party was the largest party and formed a new cabinet without an overall majority. A coalition agreement was subsequently reached between the Labour group and the Green Councillor. This means some decisions at full Council may be decided by the chair's casting vote. The scrutiny call-in process ensures checks and balances in the democratic process and has been used a number of times during this electoral term.
- 5.7 The Council uses a Leader and Cabinet (Executive) governance model. The Council appoints the Leader of the Council annually. The Leader of the Council is Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, and the Deputy Leader is Councillor Paul Griffiths. The Leader decides the size and membership of the Cabinet i.e. the role of individual members of the Cabinet and arrangements for the exercise and delegation of Executive Functions. The Cabinet is comprised of 8 elected members, 7 Labour Group Councillors and 1 Green Independent Group councillor, who each have lead responsibility for an area of the Council's business, including the Leader. Cabinet members and their portfolios are:
- Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby – Council Leader
  - Cllr Paul Griffiths – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
  - Cllr Ben Callard - Cabinet Member for Resources
  - Cllr Laura Wright - Cabinet Member for Education
  - Cllr Ian Chandler - Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services
  - Cllr Catrin Maby - Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment
  - Cllr Angela Sandles - Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement
  - Cllr Sara Burch - Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism
- 5.8 The Cabinet have invested a tremendous amount of time in their own team development. Informal cabinet business meetings where things are shared openly and early take place every week, as do briefing sessions with the strategic leadership team. This ensures direct and appropriate conversations take place on a regular basis as part of an engaged and proactive political leadership model.
- 5.9 The Council has four main scrutiny committees:
- People Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Cllr Jackie Strong
  - Place Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Cllr Jane Lucas
  - Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Cllr Alistair Neill
  - Public Services Scrutiny Committee – Chair, Cllr Armand Watts

- 5.10 At the time of the assessment, more detailed information on Cabinet members and their areas of responsibility was available on the Council's website.
- 5.11 The Council determines the Authority's policy framework and budget and other constitutional functions. Below Cabinet and at Council level there are a number of committees and panels that fulfil various scrutiny, statutory oversight and regulatory functions.

#### **Officer Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)**

- 5.12 The Cabinet and elected members are supported by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), comprising 8 officers, which is led by the Chief Executive, Paul Mathews. The Deputy Chief Executive is Peter Davies. For management purposes the Council's operations are organised into service areas each of which is headed by a Strategic Director or Chief Officer reporting to the Chief Executive.

- Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director- Resources, Peter Davies
- Strategic Director- Social Care, Safeguarding and Health Jane, Rodgers
- Strategic Director – Children, Learning, Skills and Economy, Will McLean
- Chief Officer - Law and Governance, James Williams
- Chief Officer - People, Performance and Partnerships, Matthew Gatehouse
- Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Debra Hill-Howells
- Chief Officer - Place and Community Wellbeing, Craig O'Connor

- 5.13 Following the departure of the Chief Officer for Communities and Place in September 2024, a decision was made to introduce an interim officer leadership structure to ensure continuity whilst giving the Leader and Chief Executive time to reflect on the best configuration going forward. This coincided with the short-term medical absence of the Chief Executive and subsequent departure of the Chief Officer for Customer, Culture and Wellbeing in March 2025.
- 5.14 In June 2025 the Chief Executive set out a refreshed permanent Strategic Leadership Team design and organisation structure. This aims to improve the operational and delivery capability of the organisation through a clear, permanent design that aligns accountability and responsibility within balanced directorate portfolios that lend themselves well to officer development opportunity across the Council without compromising current delivery. All posts in the established structure have subsequently been filled.
- 5.15 At the time of the assessment more detailed information on the Council's organisational structure, including Cabinet and senior leadership arrangements, was available on the Council's website.

#### **Workforce**

- 5.16 The Council employs over 4,100 individuals (2,895 FTE), with payroll costs making up almost half of the revenue budget. People are the Council's most important asset. A healthy and effective organisational culture is essential for it to succeed in delivering their strategies and achieving their purpose.
- 5.17 The People Strategy was approved by Cabinet in May 2024 following engagement with the workforce on what they need to help them succeed in the workplace. This strategy recognises both where the Council wants to be but also the challenges, they face in recruiting new staff, retaining current staff and planning for the future. The results of the staff survey showed high levels of satisfaction and

engagement with 82% of colleagues saying they would recommend the Council as an employer to friends and family and 89% of people saying that they understand the authority's purpose and their contribution to it.

- 5.18 There are positive working relationships with trade unions, with a formal Joint Advisory Group playing a key role in involving the unions in workforce and wider matters. This relationship means the organisation is well placed to deliver the aspirations of the Social Partnership Duty.

## **6. Strengths and Areas of Innovation**

- 6.1 Monmouthshire County Council demonstrates strong, visible leadership with a clear passion for tackling inequality and improving outcomes for communities. The Council is viewed as ambitious, consistently looking beyond its boundaries to secure wider opportunities for residents and businesses. It has developed well established strategic partnerships, recognised regionally and nationally for their effectiveness and collaborative ambition. Elected members bring a diverse array of skills and experiences that, when fully utilised through scrutiny and executive roles, can further strengthen delivery. The county's communities show a strong sense of independence and willingness to work with the Council, presenting an opportunity for deeper collaboration. Staff are seen as loyal, committed, and integral to the Council's culture and delivery model. Staff also reflected on the high level of empowerment they experience, commenting "*I don't have to fit into a box - I am allowed to be different*" and "*we employ adults here!*" reflecting a culture built on trust, maturity and autonomy.
- 6.2 The Council has a deep understanding of its communities and uses this knowledge effectively. It takes a person-centred approach, with a strong commitment to prevention and early intervention, aligned with regional partners. Monmouthshire has in place the building blocks and ethos (For Purpose-On-Purpose, F-POP) needed to respond to future challenges and pivot organisationally as needed.
- 6.3 Staff are one of the Council's greatest assets, demonstrating loyalty and a strong sense of organisational identity. Staff consistently expressed a strong sense of organisational identity and belonging, with one colleague noting that "*we are part of something really special.*" Others highlighted the importance of values, describing it as "*rare to have kindness in values*" and emphasising that this ethos shapes how the organisation works with communities.
- 6.4 The Council also shows a clear commitment to effective communication and engagement with its communities.

## **7. Local and National Challenges**

### **7.1 Financial Overview – Summary**

- 7.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council ended 2024/25 with a small year-end revenue surplus, supported in part by Welsh Government funding. This positive position reflects the Council's continued focus on careful financial management during a challenging period for local government.
- 7.1.2 Like many councils across Wales, Monmouthshire continues to face pressures in key service areas such as Social Care, schools, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Waste, Transport and Homelessness. School budgets, in particular, are under strain, with overall deficits increasing. However, there is a strong and shared commitment across the Council

and schools to tackle these pressures and put plans in place that support long-term financial sustainability.

- 7.1.3 While the delivery of savings in 2024/25 fell short in some areas, important progress has been made through improved financial controls, increased external income, and careful use of capitalisation where appropriate. The 2025/26 budget had been set on a balanced footing, and in year monitoring shows encouraging signs of stability.
- 7.1.4 Looking ahead, the draft 2026/27 budget proposes targeted investment in essential services alongside responsible council tax planning. A funding gap remains, but the Council has a clear approach for addressing this as part of its ongoing medium-term financial planning.
- 7.1.5 The medium-term outlook continues to be challenging, with projected budget gaps through to 2029/30. However, the Council has strengthened its long-term planning, and Audit Wales has recognised the positive direction of travel. Work is already underway to accelerate improvement plans, sharpen financial modelling and ensure that decisions are informed by the best available evidence.
- 7.1.6 Reserves remain lower than average in Wales, which is a known risk. The Council is therefore taking a proactive approach to strengthening financial resilience wherever possible, supported by clear leadership and an organisation-wide commitment to managing resources well.
- 7.1.7 Overall, while significant challenges remain, the Council has shown real determination in stabilising its financial position and is taking purposeful steps to ensure services can continue to meet community needs in a sustainable way.
- 7.1.8 In 2024 Audit Wales highlighted improved long-term planning but a lack of identified solutions to close the funding gap. Recommendations focus on accelerating the Change & Improvement Plan (F-POP), strengthening modelling and reporting impacts more clearly.

## **7.2 Financial Performance – Against its 2024/25 Budget**

- 7.2.1 The Council marginally outperformed its 2024/25 revenue budget, achieving a £1.239m gross surplus and a £497k final surplus after reserve movements, largely supported by a one off £1.19m Welsh Government grant. Despite this positive outturn, significant structural pressures remain across Social Care, Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Waste, Passenger Transport and Homelessness, with combined service overspends of £4.6m. School finances continue to deteriorate, with reserves moving to a £4.09m deficit and 15 schools in deficit, reflecting ongoing structural budget challenges.
- 7.2.2 Savings delivery remained below target, with 81.6% of the £10.94m requirement achieved, continuing a multi-year pattern of partial delivery. This position was cushioned by £3.68m of eligible costs funded through capitalisation, staff vacancies, and increased external income.
- 7.2.3 For 2025/26, the Council set a balanced budget following a £5.1m increase in core funding, supported by a guaranteed 3.8% funding floor. Mid-year monitoring shows an improving position, shifting from a forecast overspend to a small £29k underspend, driven largely by maximising grant funding in Social Care. However, significant risks persist in high cost, demand-led services, and schools' reserves are forecast to worsen to a £7.06m deficit, with 18 schools in deficit.

7.2.4 Projected savings delivery in 2025/26 is stronger at 90.4%, though shortfalls remain in Social Care and Infrastructure. Service-specific pressures continue across Early Years, school transport, homelessness provision and Adult and Children's Social Care, reflecting demand volatility.

7.2.5 Overall, while short-term financial control has improved, the Council continues to face substantial underlying budget pressures requiring sustained recovery planning and strengthened longer-term financial management.

### **7.3 Medium Term Financial Strategy**

7.3.1 The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out a rolling four-year financial plan designed to respond to increasing service pressures, national economic conditions and uncertainty in future funding. The latest update forecasts a budget shortfall of £11.5m in 2026/27, rising to a cumulative £37.4m by 2029/30, despite improvements from previous projections.

7.3.2 These gaps are driven by rising pay and non-pay inflation, demand led- pressures in social care, and recurrent service cost increases. The Council recognises that its low level of usable reserves constrains financial resilience and limits flexibility in managing volatility. However, the MTFS and resultant budget strategies have allowed for a £1m contingency base budget to be established to allow for partial mitigation against financial and budgetary risks, along with outperformance of recent budgets allowing for modest and targeted replenishment of some reserves.

### **7.4 Financial Overview – Conclusions**

7.4.1 The Council's short-term financial management has stabilised, with improved in-year control and a surplus in 2024/25, but this position is significantly supported by one-off funding and does not address underlying structural pressures across Social Care, ALN, Waste, Passenger Transport and Homelessness.

7.4.2 Savings delivery is improving, rising from 81.6% in 2024/25 to a projected 90.4% in 2025/26, yet persistent under delivery continues to widen medium-term financial gaps. School finances remain a major and escalating risk, with deficits forecast to reach £7.06m in 2025/26 and nearly half of schools expected to be in deficit. School recovery planning and £1m of increased investment beyond pay related increases into school in 25/26 and 26/27 have allowed for the pace of increase in deficits to be reduced as recovery plans take effect.

7.4.3 The draft 2026/27 budget appropriately reflects major service pressures and realistic assumptions but retains a funding gap that must be closed before final approval. Medium-term forecasts show a cumulative shortfall of £37.4m by 2029/30, signalling the need for accelerated transformation, demand management and service redesign.

7.4.4 The Council's very low reserve levels constrain financial resilience, heightening exposure to risk. Audit Wales acknowledges improved strategic intent but stresses the need for faster implementation of the financial strategy, stronger modelling, and clearer reporting on the impact of financial decisions.

7.4.5 Overall, while short-term pressures are being managed, the Council faces significant medium to long-term challenges that require a shift from planning to delivery to secure sustainable financial stability.

## 8.0 Overview of Findings

This section outlines the three areas of local focus identified by the Council for the assessment, together with the Panel's accompanying findings, observations and insights.

### 8.1 Area of local Focus 1 – How well does the Council align across directorates to optimise delivery of the priorities set out in the Community and Corporate Plan.

#### Cross-Directorate Alignment and Collaborative Working

- 8.1.1 Monmouthshire County Council demonstrates a strong organisational ethos of networking, collaboration and shared accountability, supported by structures that promote cross-directorate working. This was reflected in staff feedback, and we heard, *“our networking is strong - it doesn't matter where I sit in the organisation.”* This reinforces the Panel's view that internal collaboration is a strength and is enabling more joined up practice. The Council has several examples where alignment is working effectively both conceptually and in practice - particularly in Children, Learning, Skills and Economy - helping to drive innovation and coherent strategic planning. New service alignments are improving the visibility of vulnerable groups and enhancing synergy across person-focused services.
- 8.1.2 The organisation is largely avoiding the pitfalls of silo working, with new ways of working enabling greater staff empowerment *“we employ adults here!”* and improved customer-centred approaches. The relocation of customer services is highlighted as a positive cultural signal, placing customers *“at the heart of the organisation.”* Cabinet thematic portfolios further reinforce cohesion and collective strategic focus.

#### Values, Workforce and Enablers for Delivery

- 8.1.3 The Council's values strongly underpin and support its delivery model, and the F-POP framework acts as a unifying mechanism for coherent cross-organisational working and change. Integration with community hubs provides a vital link to local communities, improving visibility and connections that support delivery.
- 8.1.4 The workforce is recognised as a critical enabler of organisational priorities, with the People Strategy providing a clear platform for strengthening capacity. Current work on identifying skills gaps will help shape future workforce capabilities and ensure the organisation remains resilient and adaptive. We heard a comment that *“it's rare to have kindness in values.”* The Panel emphasise that addressing workforce challenges now will:
- retain critical knowledge,
  - reduce single points of failure,
  - support innovation and skills growth, and
  - diversify leadership to maintain future resilience.

### 8.2 Area of local Focus 2 – What opportunities are there to further develop the Council's emerging person-centred and preventative approaches to working with its communities, local businesses and other stakeholders, (including Town & Community Councils).

#### Embedding Prevention across the organisation

- 8.2.1 Monmouthshire County Council has a clear and coherent strategic intent for its person-centred and preventative ambitions, grounded in both regional alignment and strong local relevance. The Council's values driven approach was also evident in staff perspectives,

with comments such as *“we are able to apply kindness to our communities,”* highlighting how the prevention ethos translates into day-to-day practice

The Council’s Living Well Strategy provides a well-articulated framework that recognises prevention as a long-term continuum and as a “point in time” document there is commitment to ensure this strategic intent continues to evolve, reflecting emerging learning and community insight. This is consistent with the Panel’s finding that the strategy is evidence-informed, shaped by environmental and cultural factors, and supported by strong regional partnerships.

- 8.2.2 Prevention is firmly embedded within the Council’s organisational ethos and is seen internally as giving “legitimacy and power” to a whole Council focus on early intervention. This is supported by emerging but sound cross-directorate governance arrangements, which demonstrate strong organisational commitment to systemwide delivery approaches. The Council’s focus on targeted populations, underpinned by a more data-driven approach, will build on shared needs assessments across Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) partners and the wider regional footprint. This provides a strong platform for further development.
- 8.2.3 A significant opportunity relates to the wider research and intelligence capacity available through strategic partners. The Panel heard consistently that partners - across public health, local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and others - are “ready and willing” to support Monmouthshire with research, evaluative capacity and insight. The strength of relationships across the region places the Council in a strong position to maximise this support more systematically, complementing its emerging internal analytical strengths.

#### **Community resilience and primary prevention**

- 8.2.4 The Council’s approach to prevention would be further strengthened by ensuring that community resilience work is developed in parallel with targeted population level interventions. It is important to recognise that populations are not homogenous the Council should ensure it understands the characteristics of different groups of people, including age and gender, and targets its prevention work taking these differences into account. While the current Living Well strategy acknowledges the role of community resilience, the Panel considers that it must be recognised by the whole organisation as a foundational layer of primary prevention. This means articulating more clearly what community resilience means in the Monmouthshire context and developing a shared baseline to enable progress to be understood over time, the absence of which is currently a limitation. Emerging national research can assist, but this work will need to be co-developed with communities and local stakeholders to ensure legitimacy and relevance.

#### **Engagement, co-production and social capital**

- 8.2.5 Stakeholders - including Town and Community Councils, local businesses, voluntary groups and residents - expressed strong willingness to be more involved in prevention, and the Council already benefits from substantial social capital across its communities. However, feedback also highlighted mixed experiences with engagement, with some groups finding it difficult to understand how to contribute to or influence the Council’s work. The Panel suggests that Monmouthshire’s traditionally outward facing partnership strengths should now be more deliberately channelled inward, ensuring co-production becomes the default approach where appropriate.

### **Place-based opportunities and equity considerations**

- 8.2.6 The Council's placemaking plans, developed through co-production, are strong and supported by clear delivery structures. There is recognised opportunity to extend place-based approaches across both rural and urban communities, ensuring that implementation aligns with the Council's equity ambitions. Many communities face barriers to accessing services and balancing the placemaking programme with these equity considerations will be essential to ensuring that benefits are distributed fairly and effectively.
- 8.2.7 Finally, while stakeholders identified significant opportunities to do things differently, the Panel emphasises the importance of ensuring that approaches intended to "create the right environment," enable "organic" community development or adopt a facilitative role are sufficiently purposeful to drive meaningful change. Given capacity constraints, the Council must channel all available talent - internally and externally - into clearly prioritised, intentional interventions that can deliver the equity and prevention outcomes it seeks.

### **8.3 Area of local Focus 3 - How well is the Council able to demonstrate the intended outcomes and emerging impacts of its Community and Corporate Plan and, how well does it communicate them to Councillors, residents and other stakeholders, including Town and Community Councils and local businesses.**

#### **Outcomes Framework, Long-Term Focus and Communicating Strategic Intent**

- 8.3.1 Monmouthshire County Council has developed a refined and clearer measurement framework that strengthens the alignment between strategic priorities, key outcome measures and the delivery of the Community and Corporate Plan. This sharpening of focus is important given the breadth of commitments within the Plan and the need to concentrate organisational attention on what matters most. Evidence from Education and Social Care demonstrates strong impacts and outcomes, with findings supported by external audit commentary.
- 8.3.2 A major strength is the Council's long-term focus, shared with regional partners, which frames how progress and impact should be understood. While long-term outcomes are well defined, the Panel recognises that evidence for short and medium-term progress remains more challenging. There are known system level issues with some national and regional metrics, which are outside the Council's direct control. In this context, the Panel encourages the Council to carefully consider the use of proxy measures and their limitations, and to complement quantitative performance data with qualitative evidence, including lived experience and case studies, to help illustrate the "so what" of interventions. This should form part of the Council's wider commitment to evidence-based practice and its openness to learning from others.
- #### **Articulating strategic intent**
- 8.3.3 The Panel considers that clearer articulation of the Council's strategic intent - whether in relation to economy, community or prevention - would strengthen both internal and external understanding of the outcomes the Council is trying to achieve. Staff fed back that, at times, it can be difficult to "*see the wood from the trees.*" The recent organisational realignment is helping the Strategic Leadership Team identify cross-cutting themes that could be drawn together into stronger strategic narratives, but further clarification will assist stakeholders and communities in understanding the rationale and the impacts and outcomes the council is seeking to deliver.

### **Stakeholder involvement and co-production in understanding impact**

- 8.3.4 Stakeholders, including communities, businesses, voluntary sector partners and Town and Community Councils, should be involved earlier and more consistently in helping shape the Council's approach to evaluating impact. Their insight can strengthen the continuing development of the measurement framework and help ensure that outcomes reflect what matters most to residents. The Panel highlights the importance of co-production as a principle and the need to make full use of the significant social capital that exists across the county. Ensuring clarity on shared ambitions with key partners will support the Council's preventative ambitions and its wider community resilience work.

### **Capturing the story of progress**

- 8.3.5 While purposeful storytelling is recognised within the Council, its use remains inconsistent, with stronger practice more evident in areas such as social care. The Panel encourages the Council to embed a more systematic, organisation wide approach to capturing the journey towards long-term outcomes. This should maximise the use of lived experience, case studies and qualitative evidence, aligning storytelling with the Council's change programme, strategic priorities and what matters to residents and stakeholders. Strengthening this approach will help provide assurance that the Council is on the right trajectory and enable more compelling communication of progress and impact.

### **Communication, Engagement and Advocacy**

- 8.3.6 The Council's response to Storm Claudia demonstrated exemplary crisis communication practice, marked by clear, timely and proactive public messaging. The coordination between political leadership, operational teams and communications staff enabled residents to receive accurate updates quickly, while the organisation showed strong capacity for rapid organisational learning during and after the event. One comment captured this approach by describing the Council's style as "*chatting not talking*," reflecting a communication method that is conversational, accessible and grounded in trust.

## **9 Statutory performance requirements considered by the Panel.**

The following section examines the three statutory performance areas that form the core of the Panel's duty under the legislation. For each area, the Panel sets out its findings, observations and insights, offering an evidence-based assessment of how well the Council is discharging its statutory responsibilities.

### **9.1 The extent to which the Council is exercising its functions effectively**

#### **Strategic Leadership, Planning and Vision**

- 9.1.1 The Council demonstrates strong ambition with the capability to become "great," a view reinforced by external regulators. Corporate and service planning reflect key national frameworks, including the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Welsh Government Net Zero 2030 commitments, supported by a (Replacement) Local Development Plan and a cohesive, values driven leadership team that prioritises tackling inequality. The Chief Executive and Leader maintain an effective, honest working relationship, fostering a culture of collaboration and delivery across the strategic leadership team.

#### **Member - Officer Relations and External Insights**

- 9.1.2 Relationships between elected members and officers are described as effective, with members bringing diverse backgrounds and adapting well to their roles. The organisation is characterised as a "family," where individuals' journeys are recognised and valued.

However, businesses expressed a desire for improved engagement and raised concerns about the local planning process, citing it as a barrier to economic growth due to issues with communication, timeliness and customer care during planning interactions.

### **Performance Management, Workforce and Communication**

- 9.1.3 The Council has robust mechanisms for managing and monitoring service performance, including dashboards, trend analysis and RAG ratings accessible to staff and members. However, performance measures relating to outcomes and impact are less mature, and staff and members do not consistently understand how to use available performance information effectively.
- 9.1.4 The Council has invested significantly in staff communication and engagement, contributing to strong staff morale - *“Staff love working here!”* - and constructive trade union relationships. A People Strategy is in place, though the completion of the workforce plan remains an outstanding requirement.
- 9.1.5 There is also recognition of the need to enhance the use of storytelling and multimedia approaches to communicate outcomes more clearly to all communities particularly young people, building on existing positive shifts in communication and engagement practice. Several focus groups also highlighted the need for a clearer feedback loop, noting that while communication with the Council is regular and constructive, it is not always evident what actions are taken in response.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

- 9.1.6 Monmouthshire County Council has collaboration and partnership working embedded in its organisational culture, described as part of the Council’s “DNA”. Successive administrations have consistently valued and developed strong strategic partnerships to benefit Monmouthshire’s communities. The Leader and Chief Executive are respected for bringing intellectual rigour, constructive challenge, and a strong advocacy role across regional forums.
- 9.1.7 The Council works effectively with neighbouring authorities and plays leading roles in key partnerships such as the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) and the Marches Forward Partnership, the latter focusing on cross-border connectivity, food, and the rural economy. Partnerships are built on shared values, and Monmouthshire is seen as a partner others want to work with. While the Council’s ethos has been to *“offer more than we ask,”* the Panel highlights that now is the time to build on this investment and begin realising tangible returns, supported by sensitive and valued leadership.

### **Reputation, Credibility and Forward Momentum**

- 9.1.8 Monmouthshire is regarded by partners as credible, creative, innovative, agile and pragmatic in how it engages with joint working arrangements. There is a strong mutual understanding between the Council and its partners around the challenges each faces, alongside respect for Monmouthshire’s collaborative approach.
- 9.1.9 The Council is now at a point where it must bring greater pace and focus to partnership activity to ensure that the strong foundations already established deliver greater benefits, impact and measurable outcomes for communities. Doing so will require sufficient capacity and sustained organisational focus to convert well-regarded partnerships into greater practical value for Monmouthshire residents.

## **9.2 The extent to which the Council is using its resources economically, efficiently, and Effectively**

### **Financial Context, Stability and Stewardship**

9.2.1 Monmouthshire County Council operates within the same challenging financial context faced by local government nationally, but has responded with a clear Medium-Term Financial Strategy, strong engagement across the organisation, and a shared understanding of both pressures and opportunities. The Council has a proven track record of delivering efficiencies, stabilising reserves, and strengthening financial discipline, including focused recovery plans for school deficits. Senior officers, including the Section 151 Officer and Children, Learning, Skills and Economy Leads, demonstrate a strong grasp of areas of financial concern.

### **Governance, Oversight and Data-led Decision-Making**

9.2.2 The Council benefits from robust committee oversight, particularly through the Performance and Overview Committee and the Governance and Audit Committee, both of which provide constructive challenge. There is an established approach to benefits realisation and return on investment assessments, supporting more rigorous decision making. The organisation recognises the importance of data and intelligence and is developing its work to quantify preventative spend. Budget development is increasingly treated as a continuous process, improving strategic alignment and organisational responsiveness.

### **Digital Enablement and Change Management:**

9.2.3 The Council has made good progress against its digital roadmap and strategy, using digital transformation as a key enabler for innovation and improved service delivery. However, there is a need for strong alignment between digital work and the wider change programme, ensuring consistent evaluation, effective project management, and adequate capacity and capability to deliver organisational change at the required scale.

### **Ambition, Opportunity and Organisational Capability**

9.2.4 Monmouthshire is ambitious about seizing opportunities to deliver better outcomes at lower cost, drawing on external best practice and building on what already works well locally. Senior officers have a comprehensive grasp of their operational and financial pressures, supporting sound decision-making. This reflects a wider organisational confidence in its ability to identify and act upon opportunities for improvement.

### **For Purpose On Purpose - F-POP as an Organisational Framework for Improvement**

9.2.5 The Council's F-POP approach provides a strong foundation for identifying improvement opportunities and establishing the conditions required to deliver them. The framework empowers leaders and teams to:

- Identify and scope opportunities
- Build and leverage the right internal and external relationships
- Work within a light-touch, proportionate Project Monitoring Office (PMO), avoiding duplication
- Draw on enabling services such as Shared Resource Service (SRS), Estates and HR

9.2.5.1 This creates a “can-do,” cross organisational culture that supports collaboration, ownership of change, and effective delivery. Senior officers again demonstrate strong understanding of key areas of risk, including in finance and education.

#### Opportunity Framework and Risks

9.2.5.2 The Council fosters a “can-do” culture that supports cross-organisation working, builds consensus, and avoids unnecessary “transformation theatre.” However, the intended end state for delivering major opportunities is unclear, and the process for determining this remains insufficiently defined, creating risks of sub-optimal outcomes.

#### Opportunity, Time and Capacity

9.2.5.3 The panel reinforce the message that the Council has significant opportunities to improve outcomes and efficiency, but that realising these opportunities will require time, organisational focus, and expanded capacity. There is a need to reinforce the theme of needing more intent and pace to deliver change.

#### Scale of Opportunity

9.2.5.4 The Panel noted that while there is significant potential for organisational improvement, any early estimates of scale are illustrative at this stage. A more detailed and evidence-based assessment will be needed to determine the realistic benefits that can be achieved. The Council must quantify, prioritise and plan the opportunities rigorously to unlock their value.

#### Refining Opportunity Estimates

9.2.5.5 To realise the potential for significant opportunities, the Council will need structured methods to turn broad, high-level estimates into actionable programmes supported by evidence-based projections of financial and outcome benefits.

#### Opportunity Pipeline and Delivery Stages

9.2.5.6 While the path from idea to delivery can vary it typically involves a progression through discovery, prioritisation, and design. Integrating case development and return on Investment analysis into this journey ensures that the implementation is backed by a robust strategic rationale.

9.2.5.7 These stages of the Improvement Framework highlight the need for a disciplined, structured approach to realising opportunities at scale. There is a strong understanding of key risks held by all accountable officers.

#### Timescales and Ambition

9.2.5.8 Indicative timelines illustrated to the Council during the feedback presentation underline that the transformation required is a long-term commitment, with full benefits likely to emerge towards 2029/30. However, the Panel emphasises that meaningful progress depends on the Council putting the necessary foundations in place now. Early measures introduced during 2026/27 will be critical in initiating the change process and positioning the organisation to sustain momentum. These timelines reinforce both the scale of the ambition and the level of organisational commitment needed to deliver transformation over multiple years.

#### Continued Emphasis on Long-Term Delivery

9.2.5.9 The Panel emphasises the importance of maintaining a long-term focus in planning and decision making. Achieving the scale of change identified will require sustained organisational commitment, clear sequencing, and ongoing horizon scanning to ensure the Council remains prepared for future challenges and opportunities.

### Aligning End-State Ambition with Organisational Reality

9.2.5.10 Delivering meaningful long-term change requires clarity about the desired end-state, realistic pacing, and an honest assessment of organisational capacity. Without a clearly defined destination and the conditions needed for success, opportunities may not translate into sustainable improvements.

#### Key Questions for Change

9.2.5.11 To support effective long-term transformation, the Council will benefit from exploring the core themes of purpose, delivery, and impact. This involves considering the rationale for change, the conditions required for success, and, critically, what the future state will look like for both residents and staff.

9.2.5.12 These questions highlight the need for a coherent narrative, clear design principles, and robust evaluation frameworks to support whole-system transformation.

## **9.3 The extent to which the Council has effective Governance in place.**

### **Effective Governance & Member Development**

9.3.1 The Panel were assured that effective governance arrangements are in place, as evidenced through regulatory reports, the Annual Governance Statement and confirmed during the onsite interviews. The Panel also consider that there remains scope to further strengthen aspects of the existing framework, and these areas for improvement are set out in the sections that follow, reflecting opportunities to build on a strong foundation and enhance the Council's overall governance effectiveness.

### **Strengths in Governance and Leadership**

9.3.2 Monmouthshire County Council demonstrates strong and effective leadership, with clear understanding of respective member and officer roles and a culture of transparency and accountability across the organisation. Members are described as well-connected to their communities, responsive, and valued for their insight, while scrutiny chairs and non-executive members show strong commitment and passion for contributing to the Council's work. Committees are characterised as inclusive and well chaired, supporting constructive democratic governance.

### **Scrutiny Arrangements**

9.3.3 Scrutiny work programmes are in place and there is good use of pre-decision scrutiny, helping strengthen informed decision-making. However, members report that scrutiny views are not always sufficiently valued, with limited feedback following reports to Cabinet. The timeliness of the Cabinet forward plan can also hinder scrutiny's effectiveness. There is a lack of clarity around how members can deploy "deep dive" approaches within task and finish methodologies, suggesting further support and clearer frameworks are needed.

### **Full Council Effectiveness and Use of Time**

9.3.4 Full Council meetings are described as well-informed with robust debate, reflecting active democratic engagement. However, the lengthy duration of meetings is unusual, consideration should be given whether the constitution best enables councillors to focus time on the most strategic issues. The structure of meetings should be reviewed to better utilise the wide range of skills and experience that members bring.

**Member Development, Training and Support Tools**

9.3.5 A comprehensive Member Training Programme is in place, including a strong induction offer for new members and ongoing improvements led by the Democratic Services Committee. E-learning enhances flexibility and accessibility. However, individual Personal Development Plans (PDPs) are not yet in place, limiting tailored development. The “My Monmouthshire” system provides a platform for managing casework, though members report functionality limitations that affect usability and create frustration.

**10 Opportunities for Improvement – Recommendations.**

10.1 We have carefully considered the three required performance areas and the additional three areas identified by the Council for local consideration as part of the assessment process. This report contains a number of observations and comments about the Council’s performance in each of these areas. They should be considered along with the summary of recommendations set out in the table below.

**10.2 Table 1 - Summary of recommendations.**

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Prioritising major opportunities to deliver better outcomes for residents at lower costs.</b></p> <p>The Panel recommends that the Council focus and prioritise major opportunities that will deliver better outcomes for residents at a lower cost. The Council must establish a clear mechanism to identify, assess and exploit these opportunities, supported by a structured plan to be completed by the end of 2026/27.</p> <p>The plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A robust assessment of the investment required;</li> <li>• Consideration of organisational capacity to deliver;</li> <li>• Expected returns, including both financial savings and improved outcomes;</li> <li>• Alignment with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).</li> </ul> <p>Realising these opportunities requires discipline, sequencing and a strong organisational narrative linking change to outcomes and financial resilience.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Strengthening Community Resilience and Shared Understanding.</b></p> <p>The Panel recommends that the Council works with communities and partners to develop a shared understanding of “community resilience” within the Monmouthshire context. This shared definition will enable better measurement of impact and help clarify the difference the Council and its partners aim to make.</p> <p>Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using community insight to understand impact and well-being outcomes;</li> <li>• Ensuring prevention plans maximise social capital, which stakeholders identified as a major strength;</li> <li>• Strengthening purposeful communication and engagement with communities, drawing on the placemaking model;</li> <li>• Ensuring all communities - particularly in a geographically large county - have a voice in shaping local priorities.</li> </ul> <p>Stakeholders are ready and willing to work with the Council and that co-design is essential for meaningful progress.</p>

<b>3</b>	<b>Workforce and Succession Planning</b> <p>The Panel recommends that the Council complete the development and implementation of its workforce and succession plan to underpin future delivery and organisational resilience.</p> <p>The emphasis is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring the Council has the skills and capabilities required for future challenges;</li><li>• Addressing identified workforce gaps;</li><li>• Supporting leadership development and retention of critical knowledge;</li><li>• Strengthening organisational capacity to deliver its priorities.</li></ul> <p>Workforce planning is essential to sustaining improvement, reducing single points of failure, and supporting innovation.</p>
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10.3 Collectively, these recommendations set out the priority areas for strengthening performance and governance and provide a basis for the Council's ongoing improvement journey.

## **11 Improvement Support**

If you would like to discuss any further improvement support, please contact Jo Hendy, WLGA Chief Officer Improvement

## **12 Acknowledgements**

The Panel and the WLGA would like to extend their thanks to the Council for its engagement throughout the PPA and we especially appreciate the support and openness from the Leader, Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby and Chief Executive, Paul Matthews. Our thanks and appreciation also go to Matthew Gatehouse - Chief Officer - People, Performance and Partnerships, Carly Rogers, Hannah Carter and Richard Jones for their invaluable support in coordinating documentation requests, responding to queries, arranging meetings and workshops, and providing onsite assistance.

## Monmouthshire County Council response to Panel Performance Assessment Report February 2026

The statutory guidance under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires the council to complete a response to the panel performance assessment report. In its response, the council is required to state:-

- the extent to which it accepts the conclusions in the report;
- the extent to which the council intends to follow any recommendations contained in the report; and
- any actions it proposes to take to increase the extent to which it meets the performance requirements.

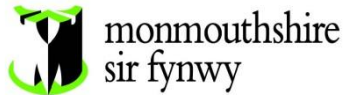
This action plan sets out the council's response to each of the recommendations in the Monmouthshire County Council Panel Performance Assessment Report February 2026. It has been presented to, and accepted by, the Governance and Audit Committee at their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

Ref	PPA Recommendation	Council response & action	Timescale & responsibility holder
1.	<p><b>Prioritising major opportunities to deliver better outcomes for residents at lower costs.</b></p> <p>The Panel recommends that the Council focus and prioritise major opportunities that will deliver better outcomes for residents at a lower cost. The Council must establish a clear mechanism to identify, assess and exploit these opportunities, supported by a structured plan to be completed by the end of 2026/27.</p> <p>The plan should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A robust assessment of the investment required;</li> <li>• Consideration of organisational capacity to deliver;</li> <li>• Expected returns, including both financial savings and improved outcomes;</li> <li>• Alignment with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).</li> </ul> <p>Realising these opportunities requires discipline, sequencing and a strong organisational narrative linking change to outcomes and financial resilience</p>	<p><u>Context</u></p> <p>For Purpose, on Purpose (F-POP) provides the council's clear mechanism to identify, assess, prioritise and govern major change opportunities to deliver better outcomes and/or lower costs.</p> <p>The Programme Assurance Board oversees the whole change portfolio ensuring it is aligned with our purpose. This includes: identifying and scoping challenges and opportunities, developing business cases, managing risks and dependencies, ensuring organisational readiness, monitoring benefits/value realisation, and ensuring alignment with the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).</p> <p>A structured delivery plan has been developed and is overseen by the Programme Assurance Board.</p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain a single, live change portfolio within FPOP (including major opportunities), with clear entry criteria, stage-</li> </ul>	Chief Executive

		<p>gates and decision papers routed via the Programme Assurance Board (PAB).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the FPOP Benefits and Value Framework to assess investment required, organisational capacity, expected returns (financial and non-financial) and delivery confidence; use this to prioritise opportunities and sequence delivery.</li> <li>• Strengthen programme management discipline through the FPOP Programme Management Office (PMO), including consistent templates, reporting, risk management and a portfolio dashboard to support early intervention where delivery is off-track.</li> <li>• Ensure opportunities that require Member decisions progress through existing approval routes (Cabinet/Council) with clear business cases and benefits realisation expectations.</li> </ul>	<p>Short Term: now – September 2026</p> <p>Short Term: now – September 2026</p> <p>Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027</p> <p>Long Term: April 2027 – December 2027</p>
2.	<p><b>Strengthening Community Resilience and Shared Understanding.</b></p> <p>The Panel recommends that the Council works with communities and partners to develop a shared understanding of “community resilience” within the Monmouthshire context. This shared definition will enable better measurement of impact and help clarify the difference the Council and its partners aim to make.</p> <p>Key points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using community insight to understand impact and well-being outcomes;</li> <li>• Ensuring prevention plans maximise social capital, which stakeholders identified as a major strength;</li> <li>• Strengthening purposeful communication and engagement with communities, drawing on the placemaking model;</li> <li>• Ensuring all communities - particularly in a large rural county - have a voice in shaping local priorities.</li> </ul> <p>Stakeholders are ready and willing to work with the Council and that co-design is essential for meaningful progress.</p>	<p><u>Context</u></p> <p>We will adopt Resilient Communities as a single, consistent framing for this work. This provides a shared and strengths-based narrative aligned to the council’s values and responds directly to the PPA’s call for a clear, Monmouthshire specific understanding of community resilience.</p> <p>The approach complements the Living Well Strategy by providing the community level conditions that support prevention, early help and independence.</p> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-produce a clear, practical definition of Resilient Communities with communities, partners, Town and Community Councils and frontline officers, with equity embedded throughout the process.</li> <li>• Undertake proportionate mapping of existing community assets, networks and activity, focusing on strengths and gaps that matter for prevention. This will include a digital community</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement.</p> <p>Short Term: now – September 2026</p>

		<p>asset map, supported by local points of contact for residents who are less digitally enabled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move from broad engagement to targeted action by identifying a small number of priority places and/or themes where strengthening Resilient Communities can deliver the greatest preventative and equity benefit.</li> <li>• Establish a Resilient Communities Network to support alignment, shared learning and reduced duplication across the Council, partners, health, the voluntary sector and Town &amp; Community Councils.</li> <li>• Use a proportionate mix of lived experience, qualitative insight and proxy measures to demonstrate progress, reflecting the PPA's expectations for meaningful short and medium term evidence.</li> </ul> <p><u>FPOP linkage</u> Where the Resilient Communities approach translates into specific change projects (e.g., digital community asset map, priority place-based interventions), these will be captured within the FPOP change portfolio so progress, risks and benefits can be tracked consistently through corporate governance.</p>	<p>Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027</p> <p>Long Term: April 2027 – December 2027</p>
3.	<p><b>Workforce and Succession Planning</b> The Panel recommends that the Council complete the development and implementation of its workforce and succession plan to underpin future delivery and organisational resilience.</p> <p>The emphasis is on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the Council has the skills and capabilities required for future challenges;</li> <li>• Addressing identified workforce gaps;</li> <li>• Supporting leadership development and retention of critical knowledge;</li> </ul>	<p><u>Context</u> We established a commitment to embed workforce planning across the organisation in the People Strategy and accompanying action plan approved by Cabinet in June 2024. The actions relating to workforce development were scheduled to commence once other building blocks has been put in place. These include: the development and launch of a new employee review and development scheme, conducting a training needs analysis and establishing a training budget. With these now in place, or in the process of being rolled out, work has commenced on workforce planning, which is</p>	<p>Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships. December 2026</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening organisational capacity to deliver its priorities.</li> </ul> <p>Workforce planning is essential to sustaining improvement, reducing single points of failure, and supporting innovation.</p>	<p>being taken forward under the heading of a Future Focused Workforce.</p> <p><b>Actions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run a development session for managers on succession planning with the LGA</li> <li>Upskill HR Business Partners in strategic workforce planning'</li> <li>Produce a workforce development plan to sit underneath the People Strategy to provide clarity on the steps that need to be taken to ensure a future focused workforce</li> <li>Implement the workforce of the future through expanding talent entry points, including work experience, apprenticeships, traineeships and graduate opportunities</li> <li>Develop a training pathway for all job roles to ensure existing staff are developed to maximise their capability</li> <li>Undertake research to understand the future skill requirements across the authority and develop or commission training to future proof our workforce</li> </ul> <p><u>FPOP linkage</u></p> <p>Workforce and succession planning will be treated as a core organisational readiness enabler within the FPOP change portfolio, supporting delivery capacity, reducing single points of failure and strengthening the Council's ability to deliver its priorities. Progress will be tracked through the same programme reporting discipline.</p>	<p>Short Term: now – September 2026</p> <p>Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027</p>
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**SUBJECT: CALDICOT LEISURE CENTRE - FIRST FLOOR FITNESS SUITE INVESTMENT**

**MEETING: COUNCIL**

**DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2026**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## **1. PURPOSE:**

To seek Councils approval for the proposed refurbishment and reconfiguration of the Fitness Suite and associated first floor areas at Caldicot Leisure Centre, and for the associated funding arrangements to enable the scheme to progress through the UK Leisure Framework, subject to final affordability and cost certainty. The purpose of the investment is to modernise facilities, improve customer experience, increase capacity, and protect and grow fitness memberships.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To approve the proposed refurbishment and reconfiguration of the Fitness Suite and associated first floor areas at Caldicot Leisure Centre, as set out in this report.
- 2.2 To approve the proposed allocation of £300,000 of capital match funding and £301,429 of borrowing to support delivery of the scheme, with borrowing costs to be supported through additional income generated within leisure services.
- 2.3 To approve the progression of the RIBA Stage 4 development work and the proposals set out in this report, including delivery of the refurbishment scheme through the UK Leisure Framework, subject to final affordability and cost certainty.

## **3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 The proposed investment aligns with the Corporate and Community Plan, which highlights the need for improvements at Caldicot Leisure Centre, this facility has received comparatively less investment compared to the other fitness offer across Monmouthshire. Caldicot Leisure Centre is a key leisure asset within the MonLife Active portfolio, which supports a healthy and active Monmouthshire where

loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded.

- 3.2 The existing gym and first floor fitness areas are dated and no longer reflect modern customer expectations, limiting the centre's ability to compete with private sector providers and leisure trusts. The fitness equipment at Caldicot Leisure Centre is over 18 years old and no longer fit for purpose. There is a clear need for investment in the facility, which remains necessary to address the condition of the site and to support its longer-term sustainability and service offer.
- 3.3 The Council has previously submitted two Levelling Up Fund bids to support the comprehensive refurbishment of the site, reflecting the longstanding recognition of the importance of investment at Caldicot Leisure Centre. Failure to invest in the fitness suite presents a risk to service sustainability. Outdated facilities impact on member retention, limit growth in fitness memberships, and increase the likelihood of customers choosing alternative private or trust run facilities. Given that fitness memberships represent a significant proportion of leisure income, this presents a direct financial risk to the service.
- 3.4 Evidence of demand is supported by regular monitoring of membership trends and customer feedback. Membership cancellations and engagement with users consistently identify dissatisfaction with the outdated fitness offer, with customers highlighting ageing and unreliable equipment compared to other sites. Wider engagement indicates that a modernised facility would support both improved retention and growth in membership.
- 3.5 Alliance Leisure Services Ltd has undertaken a feasibility assessment for the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the main gym and first floor fitness areas. The proposed scheme includes the creation of a modern 40-station fitness suite, reconfiguration of specialist fitness areas, refurbishment of studios, circulation spaces and toilets, and improvements to mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.
- 3.6 The scope of works includes: (*Appendix 1*)
- Refurbishment and reconfiguration of the main gym to deliver a 40-station fitness suite.
  - Refurbishment of a smaller gym area (Bio Circuit Strength/Easyline).
  - Refurbishment of first floor studios, multipurpose areas and circulation spaces.
  - Full refurbishment of male, female and accessible toilets.
  - Upgraded flooring, lighting, power, data and decoration throughout.
- 3.7 A high-level indicative capital cost of £601,429 has been identified. This figure will be refined through pre-construction design, surveys and cost planning to provide cost

certainty prior to entering into a construction contract. Identified risks include the presence of asbestos and ageing electrical infrastructure, which have been reflected through specific contingencies.

- 3.8 The scheme includes improvements to accessibility beyond compliance, including increased space between equipment, provision of inclusive and adaptable equipment, and layout changes to support wheelchair users and those with mobility needs. Trained staff and tailored programmes will be available to support inclusive use of the facility.
- 3.9 From a financial perspective, the proposal is intended to protect existing leisure income and generate additional recurring income to support the borrowing required. However, the current estimate remains indicative, and the financial case is dependent on the achievement of projected membership growth following completion of the works.
- 3.10 The affordability case should therefore be read on the basis that the income assumption will continue to be tested through the next stage of the project. Prior to any final commitment to construction, updated costs, borrowing implications and the latest assessment of membership growth, retention and wider income performance will need to be reviewed. If the projected income uplift is expected to be delayed or lower than forecast, mitigating actions would need to be identified and managed within the Leisure and Wellbeing service or brought back for further consideration as part of the final decision-making process.
- 3.11 The proposal aligns with the Council's strategic objectives around promoting healthier communities, protecting income streams, and ensuring leisure facilities remain fit for purpose, attractive and financially sustainable.
- 3.12 This investment would complement the site's existing outdoor facility improvements, including the replacement Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), a new 3G facility, sports pitch LED lighting, the spin studio, alternative chemical dosing systems and swimming pool covers, and upgrades to the entrance and reception area, £500,000 of which was funded through an external grant.
- 3.13 The investment would also support a wider package of works proposed for Caldicot, including a replacement skate park, a replacement water recovery system, and completion of the multi-user route through the country park, alongside work with Caldicot Town Council as part of the development of the new placemaking plan, including proposals for quick-win public realm improvements in the town centre to test ideas and address issues identified by local stakeholders and communities.
- 3.14 The proposed investment plan would improve the facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre and promotes healthy and active lifestyles for residents and visitors in accordance with the objectives and actions in the Community and Corporate Plan.

### 3.15 **People Scrutiny 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

People Scrutiny considered the proposals on 29 May 2026 and raised questions on demand and consultation, local competitiveness, inclusivity, attracting new users, financial viability and risk, accessibility, the wider strategic fit across leisure centres, digital inclusion, and specific design and community equity issues. Officers advised that demand is evidenced through user feedback and membership trends, with dissatisfaction linked to outdated facilities; that modernisation would improve competitiveness and increase footfall, drawing on comparable schemes; and that the scheme is intended to benefit a broad and diverse user base through accessible equipment and improved layouts. Concerns about funding and affordability were addressed by confirming that capital funding would be secured, subject to Cabinet approval, with contingencies and income projections supporting the borrowing case. Accessibility concerns were met with legislation and a fully inclusive design approach, alongside staff support. Issues relating to promotion, digital exclusion, and strategic positioning were addressed through a blended engagement and marketing approach, together with an emphasis on the centre’s wider offer. Full minutes of the People Scrutiny discussion are included at Appendix 2.

## 4. **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING): INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**, (includes equality, future generations, social justice, safeguarding and corporate parenting).

4.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the development of this proposal. The project supports a Healthier Wales by improving access to modern fitness facilities, a More Equal Wales through inclusive design including accessible toilet provision, and a Prosperous Wales by protecting and growing income that supports service sustainability. (Appendix 3)

## 5. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Do Nothing</b>	None	Retaining the existing facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• would increase the risk of declining memberships</li> <li>• loss of income,</li> <li>• reputational damage and would not address the ageing condition of the fitness areas.</li> </ul>	Does not progress the ambitions set out in the corporate and community plan and may result in reduction of membership and customer dissatisfaction.

<b>Limited Refurbishment – Equipment only</b>	Provides some improvement through replacement equipment and may extend the life of the existing gym offer in the short term.	Would not address the wider condition, layout and customer experience issues and therefore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may limit the impact on membership growth and retention</li> <li>• could require further investment in the short to medium term</li> <li>• would leave ageing infrastructure and associated maintenance risks largely unchanged.</li> </ul>	May offer a lower initial cost, but it would not deliver the full service, income and customer experience benefits required.
<b>Preferred Option –Full Refurbishment and Reconfiguration</b>	Delivers a modern, competitive and accessible fitness offer, improves customer experience, supports membership growth and retention, and protects future income.	Key risks include cost pressures identified through detailed design and surveys, temporary service disruption during the works, and the need to achieve projected income growth to support borrowing costs.	<b>PREFFERED OPTION</b>  The investment would deliver the greatest alignment with the corporate and community plan and support Caldicot Leisure Centres longer-term sustainability and service offer to the benefit of customers.

- **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

6.1 The success of the investment will be monitored through:

- Fitness membership growth and retention to increase income performance sufficient to support the financing costs, with mitigating actions identified where performance is below forecast
- Usage levels of the gym and studios
- Customer satisfaction
- Delivery of the project within the approved capital budget

- **REASONS:**

7.1 To modernise Caldicot Leisure Centre's fitness facilities to attract and encourage, protect and grow income, improve customer experience, and ensure the long-term sustainability of leisure services in the south of the county.

• **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

8.1 The indicative capital cost of the project is £601,429, subject to refinement through pre-construction work, surveys, design development and finalisation of RIBA Stage 4 cost certainty. The current estimate includes allowance for identified risks and contingencies, including asbestos and ageing electrical infrastructure, but this will need to be validated through the next stage of the project before any construction commitment is made.

8.2 The current funding proposal is to allocate £300,000 of capital match funding in 2026/27, together with £301,429 of borrowing. The expectation is that the borrowing costs would be supported through increased income generated within the Leisure and Wellbeing division. From a finance perspective, this requires a prudent assessment not only of the scale of the projected income increase, but also of the timing of delivery, the extent to which it represents net additional income, and the service's ability to manage any shortfall should performance not materialise as forecast.

8.3 The £301,429 borrowing would be repaid over a 10-year period, with estimated annual repayment costs of £40,000. The current modelling assumes that an additional 100 memberships across all facilities would generate approximately £41,400 of income per annum. Whilst review of previous membership trends following facility investment indicates that this level of growth may be achievable within 12 months of project completion, this remains a planning assumption rather than a guaranteed outcome. The final decision-making stage should therefore include an updated assessment of affordability, including sensitivity to lower or slower membership growth, clarification of whether the estimated income represents a gross or net contribution, and confirmation of the mitigating actions available if the forecast income uplift is not achieved in full. (Appendix 2)

8.4 Funding arrangements will be confirmed as part of the next stage of the project once RIBA Stage 4 cost certainty has been completed. No decision to proceed to construction should be taken until affordability, funding, projected revenue implications and the approach to managing any downside income risk are fully confirmed. Should final costs increase materially, or the income case weaken, the proposal should be brought back for further consideration before any contractual commitment is entered into.

- **CONSULTEES:**

- People Scrutiny
- Chief Officer for Place and Community Wellbeing
- Head of Service Leisure and Wellbeing
- Performance, Finance and Resources Manager
- Health, Fitness and GP Referral Manager
- HR Business Partner
- S151 Officer
- Head of Finance
- Strategic Leadership Team
- Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1	Caldicot LC Fee Proposal and outline designs <a href="#">Appendix 1 - Caldicot Project Fee Proposal .docx</a>
Appendix 2	Membership and Fitness Numbers across all facilities <a href="#">Appendix 2 Leisure Memberships.xlsx</a>
Appendix 3	Integrated Impact Assessment <a href="#">IIA Caldicot Leisure Centre Investment .docx</a>
Appendix 4	People Scrutiny Meeting Minutes <a href="#">People minutes 28th May 26.docx</a>

- **AUTHOR:**

**Stacey Jones** (Performance, Finance and Resources Manager)

- **CONTACT DETAILS:**

**Email:** [staceyjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:staceyjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

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# Fee Proposal

## CALDICOT LEISURE CENTRE

### Gym & Fitness Refurbishment

Monmouthshire County Council

Cost Certainty (RIBA 3-4)

# 1. Concept Design

# Concept Design.

## 3.1 Areas & Proposed Works

### Main Gym:

- Flooring for main gym to supply and fit wood affect sheet vinyl. Gym office and storeroom.
- Weights area 40mm rubber flooring .
- Mirrors 1500mm x 2000mm supply and fit x 8. Checker plate to weights area.
- Painting and decorating
- Ceiling tiles 220m2 white washable. AHU Face plate to be powered coated white.
- All electric works including power and data, upgrading lighting, to part M regulations

### Area 1:

Painting and decorating including new skirting boards. All electrical work.

### Area 2:

Flooring, Lighting, Power & Data (as per new gym layout TG), Ceiling Tiles, Painting & Decoration

### Area 3:

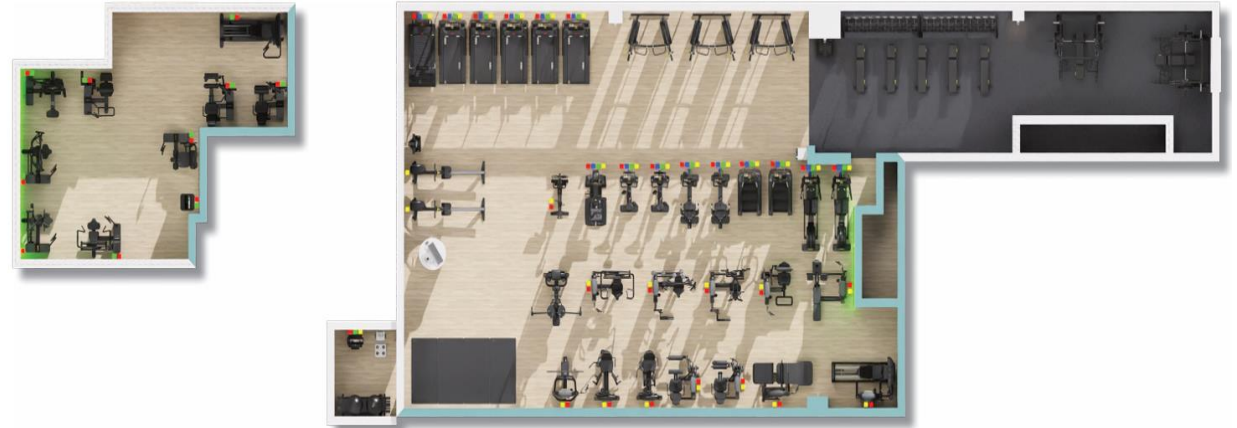
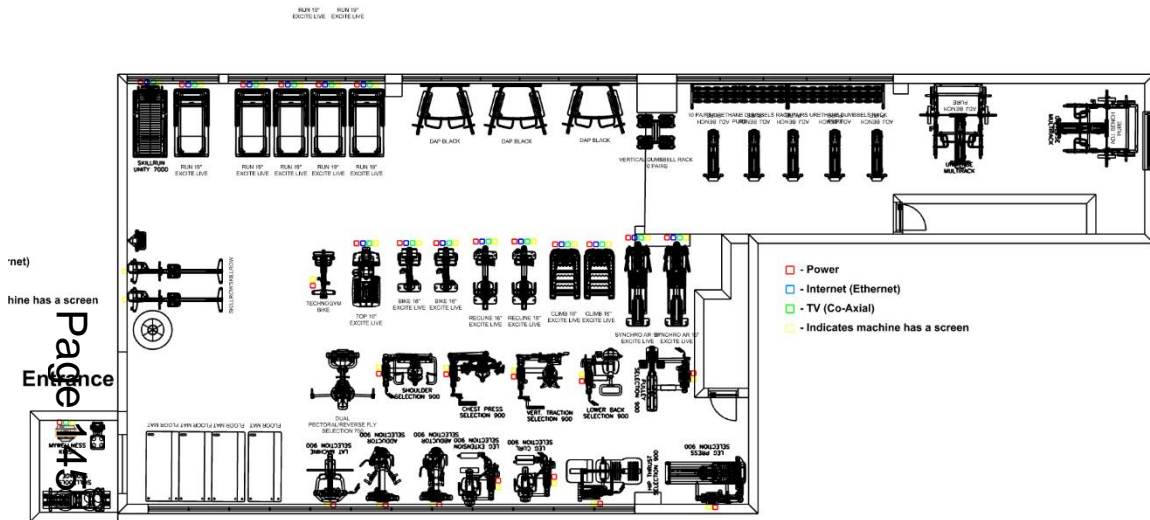
- Flooring to be sanded and revarnished. Replace all ceiling tiles and new ceiling grid Painting and decorating including new skirting boards.
- All old wall covering to be removed and replaced with plasterboard taped and jointed.
- 20 new LED lighting panels and five emergency packs .





# Concept Design.

## 3.2 Proposed Gym Layouts (Technogym)





# 2. Project Budget Costs & Fee Proposal

# Project Budget Costs.

## 3.2 Estimated Budget

Enclosed is an early-stage indicative budget cost that Alliance Leisure working with the wider team have provided to allow an assessment of the viability of the Main Gym and First Floor Refurbishment project.

The enclosed figures are based on a contract being awarded to a single main contractor to undertake a design and build approach to completing the gym extensions.

The early-stage indicative budget costs detailed show the breakdown with construction costs at **£219,640** . Management fees for Alliance, Project Management and CDM of **£26,964** and a client contingency of **£20,000**. UK Leisure Framework Fee of 0.95% at **£5,560**.

If the client contingency is not utilised in the project this would not be invoiced.

**Asbestos:** Please note that there is a history of chrysotile asbestos throughout the centre (unless this has recently been removed), in the vinyl tiles and adhesive; ACM boards in the ceiling voids etc, so a specific £10k contingency is highlighted

**Electrical:** Please note there is a history that much of the electrical infrastructure and cabling is old and not to current regulations so there is a further £20k contingency highlighted for this

*All costs excluding VAT.*

## CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY - Caldicot LC Refurb

### High Level RIBA 0 Indicative Costs

#### CONSTRUCTION COST PLAN

Gym Refurb	£	51,024
Smaller Fitness Studio (Area 1)	£	9,880
Easyline Gym (area 2)	£	14,027
Large Fitness Studio (area 3)	£	23,296
Multipurpose/ Café/ lounge (area 4)	£	11,089
First Floor Circulation Area (Area 5)	£	19,175
Male Changing (Area 6)	£	30,000
Female Changing (Area 7)	£	30,000
Disabled Toilet (Area 8)	£	14,000
Prelims (6%)	£	12,149
Contractor Design (Including MEP)	£	5,000

**CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL** £ **219,640**

#### FIXTURES and FITTINGS (FFE not in Contractor Proposals)

TG Gym Equip Main Gym - Client Direct Quote	£	210,943
TG Equipment (Small Gym) - Client Direct Quote	£	73,222
Signage Allowance (Prov Sum)	£	15,000

**EQUIPMENT TOTAL** £ **299,165**

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT and DELIVERY FEES

Project Management Fees (inc. Contract Administrator and QS)	£	11,982
Principal Designer Fee - CDM	£	3,000
Alliance Delivery Fee	£	11,982

**PROJECT DELIVERY FEES TOTAL** £ **26,964**

CLIENT CONTINGENCY - Client Held	£	20,000
RISK CONTINGENCY - Asbestos (Provisional Sum)	£	10,000
RISK CONTINGENCY - Electrical (Provisional Sum)	£	20,000

**RISK TOTAL** £ **50,000**

UK LEISURE FRAMEWORK (UKLF) - Access Fee £ 5,660

**TOTAL PROJECT COSTS** £ **601,429**



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**Detail**

	Monmouth LC	Abergavenny LC	Chepstow LC	Caldicot LC	
Annual Adult	172	145	200	64	
Annual Junior	19	14	29	22	
Annual Senior	140	133	102	61	
Toning Annual (Monmouth Only)	41	-	-	-	
Committed Adult DD	546	388	489	261	
Committed Senior DD	207	174	123	100	
Corporate DD	125	185	146	95	
Fit4Life DD	186	267	492	331	
Flexible Adult DD	118	69	85	37	
Flexible Junior DD	240	138	190	200	
Flexible Senior DD	22	13	13	6	
Passport to Leisure (PTL) DD	71	76	67	50	
Staff DD	88	89	42	44	
Student	37	14	9	11	
Toning DD (Monmouth Only)	209	-	-	4	
Foster Carer		7	7	10	
<b>Total Fitness Memberships</b>	<b>2,221</b>	<b>1,712</b>	<b>1,994</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>7,223</b>
Aqua Adult DD	92	48	60	60	
Aqua Junior DD	804	746	607	710	
Aqua Senior DD	57	34	12	16	
<b>Total Aqua Membership</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>3,246</b>

**Summary**

	Monmouth LC	Abergavenny LC	Chepstow LC	Caldicot LC	Total Memberships
<b>Total Fitness</b>	2,221	1,712	1,994	1,296	<b>7,223</b>
<b>Total Fitness %</b>	31%	24%	28%	18%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Aqua</b>	953	828	679	786	<b>3,246</b>
<b>Total Aqua %</b>	29%	26%	21%	24%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total Memberships</b>					<b>10,469</b>

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<u>Membership Summary</u>			
	22-23	Current	Increase
Abergavenny Leisure Centre	1282	2540	1258
Monmouth Leisure Centre	1513	3174	1661
Chepstow Leisure Centre	1215	2673	1458
Caldicot Leisure Centre	872	2082	1210
<b>Total</b>	<b>4882</b>	<b>10469</b>	<b>5587</b>

- Since 2022–23, we have increased membership retention from 19 months to 23 months, representing a 21% improvement and outperforming the industry standard of 14 months.
  - 52% increase in members joining Chepstow leisure centre since the investment and opening of the outside gym.

Chepstow Leisure Centre Investment

	No
Number of Active Members prior to investment	1,762
Current Number of Active Members	2,673
% Increase in Members	52%

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## People Scrutiny 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Jackie Strong, John Crook, Martyn Groucutt, Jan Butler, Christopher Edwards, Penny Jones, Sue Riley, Maria Stevens, Angela Sandles

Stacey Jones, Craig O'Connor, Robert McGowan

The meeting closed at 11:09.

### **1. Election of Chair.**

Jackie Strong was proposed by John Crook, seconded by Maria Stevens. There were no other nominations and the vote was carried.

### **2. Appointment of Vice Chair.**

John Crook was proposed by Martyn Groucutt, seconded by Maria Stevens. There were no other nominations and the vote was carried. It was clarified that Councillor Crook is now a permanent member of the committee, replacing Councillor Riley.

### **3. Apologies for Absence.**

Maureen Powell (recovering from operation). Simon Howarth, Sue Riley as substitute.

### **4. Declarations of Interest.**

None.

### **5. Public Open Forum.**

None.

### **6. Investment Package for Caldicot Leisure Centre: Consideration of proposed investment to improve facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre.**

Cabinet Member Angela Sandles introduced the report:

The report sets out a proposed investment in Caldicot Leisure Centre to ensure it remains a key strategic leisure asset for the south of the county. The investment aligns with wider council objectives, including healthier communities, improved wellbeing, sustainable services, and modern community infrastructure. The need for investment has been recognised for some time, with previous attempts to secure Levelling Up Fund support unsuccessful.

The proposal represents a shift in approach: instead of waiting for external funding, the Council is looking to deliver achievable improvements using its own resources. It is presented as a practical and deliverable step forward, ensuring progress is not delayed by lack of grant funding. The investment would complement other recent improvements in Caldicot, supporting a more coordinated approach across the site.

Overall, the proposal aims to modernise facilities, improve customer experience, protect the centre's role within the MonLife portfolio, and support long-term sustainability. The report is framed as an opportunity to move from aspiration to action, delivering realistic and meaningful improvements.

Stacey Jones delivered a presentation, covering the following points:

The purpose of the proposal is to invest in and refurbish the first-floor fitness suite at Caldicot Leisure Centre. The scheme is intended to modernise the existing facility, improve the overall customer experience, increase capacity, and support growth in membership. It is positioned as a necessary intervention to protect the long-term sustainability of the Council's leisure service by ensuring that the offer remains relevant and attractive to users.

The rationale for investment is based on the current condition of the facilities, which are dated and no longer meet modern expectations. The existing fitness equipment is over 18 years old and is no longer considered fit for purpose. Without investment, there is a recognised risk to the sustainability of the service, as customer retention and growth may decline. This presents a direct financial risk, given that fitness memberships represent a significant source of income for the leisure service.

The scope of the scheme includes the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the main gym and first-floor areas, with the creation of a modern 40-station fitness suite. Improvements will also be made to smaller gym areas, studios, multi-purpose spaces, and circulation areas to enhance usability and flow. The project includes a full refurbishment of toilet facilities (male, female, and accessible), as well as upgrades to core infrastructure such as flooring, lighting, power, data, and decoration. In addition, there will be a full replacement of fitness equipment, supported by a significant investment in new, modern equipment.

The funding approach combines capital funding of approximately £300,000 with borrowing of just over £300,000. The borrowing element will be repaid over a 10-year period, with annual repayments of around £40,000. These repayments are expected to be met through increased income generated by additional memberships as a result of the improved facilities.

Income assumptions underlying the proposal indicate that an increase of around 100 additional memberships would generate approximately £41,000 per year, which would be sufficient to cover the borrowing costs. Confidence in these projections is based on evidence from other sites where similar investment has led to measurable growth in membership.

A number of key risks have been identified. These include cost uncertainty until final design work and surveys are completed, as well as the potential for issues related to asbestos or ageing infrastructure. There is also a risk of service disruption during the works, which are estimated to take between 12 and 15 weeks, with alternative provision to be explored during this period. In addition, there is an income risk if membership growth is slower or lower than anticipated.

In conclusion, the proposal is presented as a targeted and deliverable investment aimed at modernising an under-invested asset, protecting income streams, and supporting healthier communities. It forms part of a wider package of improvements at Caldicot Leisure Centre, contributing to a coordinated and comprehensive enhancement of the site.

## **Questions**

Stacey Jones answered the members' questions with Craig O'Connor:

*What evidence is there that there is sufficient demand for the upgraded facilities? Has there been meaningful consultation with users and residents?*

There is clear evidence of demand for upgraded facilities, informed by ongoing engagement with the existing customer base and regular monitoring of membership patterns. Membership cancellations are routinely reviewed, and feedback consistently identifies dissatisfaction with the current upstairs fitness offer. Users report that the existing provision is outdated, with ageing and unreliable equipment that is no longer fit for purpose, particularly when compared to other sites where members pay the same fee but receive a more modern experience.

In addition to this ongoing customer feedback, wider engagement with users and the community indicates that demand would increase if the facility were modernised. This engagement demonstrates that the condition and quality of the fitness offer is a key factor affecting both retention and potential growth in membership.

*Will the leisure centre be competitive compared to other local facilities?*

At present, the leisure centre is not fully competitive with other local facilities, primarily due to the outdated nature of its fitness provision. The ageing equipment and lack of modern facilities place it at a disadvantage compared to alternative providers offering more up-to-date environments for the same or similar cost. Investment in upgraded facilities would address these issues and bring the site in line with current expectations of leisure users. Evidence from comparable sites shows that improvements to facilities typically lead to increased membership levels and higher usage. As such, modernisation is expected to significantly enhance the centre's competitiveness within the local market.

*Who will benefit most from the upgraded facilities (e.g. families, schools, older residents, disabled users)?*

The upgraded facilities are intended to be inclusive and accessible, benefiting a broad range of user groups across the community. The design and equipment will support school pupils, including through lunchtime and after-school use, as well as families and general community users seeking improved fitness and leisure opportunities. In addition, the upgrades will accommodate users who require accessible facilities, ensuring that the centre can be used by individuals with a wide range of needs. Overall, the improvements are designed to provide a modern, inclusive offer that is usable and beneficial to all sections of the community rather than targeting a single user group.

*How will the investment attract new users, and how will it be promoted?*

The investment is expected to attract new users by delivering a modernised facility that aligns with current expectations and demand for fitness services. The planned opening date of January 2027 has been deliberately selected to coincide with the peak period for new memberships, when demand for health and fitness services is typically at its highest.

A comprehensive promotional approach will be implemented to maximise engagement. This will include digital promotion and the use of QR codes at sites, alongside direct engagement through schools and communication channels with parents. The council's marketing and leisure teams will play a central role in promoting the upgraded offer, supported by promotion across other council services and venues.

In addition, collaboration with town councils and sports development teams will help extend reach into the wider community. This combined approach brings together existing customer engagement

with broader outreach activity, ensuring that awareness of the upgraded facilities reaches both current users and potential new customers.

*Is the funding already in place, or will the project be put on hold until funding is guaranteed?*

The funding required for the project is already in place, with a capital match funding pot having been earmarked for the Council. This funding is available for the 2026–27 financial year and can be drawn down if the scheme receives approval. As the funding has already been set aside, there is no anticipated delay in accessing it, and the project would not need to be put on hold pending confirmation of funding.

*Is the borrowing subject to affordability, and what happens if the refurbishment goes over budget? Is there a contingency?*

Borrowing for the project is subject to affordability; however, analysis undertaken to date indicates that the scheme is affordable within current projections. Leisure service income is performing above forecast, which supports confidence in the overall funding model and its sustainability.

In terms of managing financial risk, a 10% contingency has been built into the project costs, providing a buffer against unforeseen expenditure. In addition, further risk allowances—such as approximately £30,000 for potential issues including asbestos or electrical works—have been incorporated. While there is flexibility to review affordability and borrowing requirements if costs change, the project is currently considered deliverable within the agreed financial envelope.

*Is the £300k for equipment a separate amount, or part of the overall cost?*

The £300,000 allocated for equipment forms part of the overall project funding envelope and is not an additional or separate amount. The total scheme cost is broadly divided between building and refurbishment works and investment in new equipment, with both elements included within the same overall budget.

*How will the scheme ensure accessibility, particularly for an ageing population and people with disabilities?*

The scheme will ensure accessibility by incorporating a range of gym equipment designed to be inclusive and suitable for users of all abilities. The internal layout will be reconfigured to improve accessibility, including increased space between equipment to support ease of movement. This will enable better access for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility needs. Overall, the approach is to provide the most flexible and inclusive equipment and layout possible within the constraints of the existing building, ensuring that the facility can accommodate a wide range of users, including an ageing population and those with disabilities.

*Will the upgrades to toilets and facilities comply with current legal requirements, including recent guidance on single-sex provision?*

All refurbishment works will take account of current legislation and any recent changes in guidance to ensure full compliance. The upgraded toilet and facility provision will meet applicable legal requirements and recognised standards, including those relating to single-sex provision where relevant. Furthermore, the design and delivery of the scheme will remain responsive to any new or emerging legal requirements, ensuring that compliance is maintained throughout the project.

*Does the scheme risk focusing too much on accessible toilets rather than ensuring full accessibility of the gym equipment and wider facility?*

The scheme does not focus solely on accessible toilets but instead seeks to improve accessibility across the entire fitness provision. The current facility does not adequately meet accessibility expectations, particularly in relation to equipment and layout. In response, the proposed improvements will introduce modern, more user-friendly equipment designed to support a wider range of users. In addition, the layout will be redesigned to provide greater space and flexibility, enabling improved access for wheelchair users and others with mobility needs. The overall intention is to ensure that users are able to actively participate in fitness activities, rather than simply observe, within the constraints of the existing building.

*Will there be sufficient staff and support available to ensure accessible use of the facility (e.g. assistance with equipment and considerate use of space)?*

There will be trained staff and fitness coaches available to support users in accessing and using the facilities. This includes the provision of dedicated programmes that can be tailored to individual needs, ensuring that users are able to engage effectively with the equipment. Staff-led support, including referral-based programmes, will help to promote inclusive use of the facility and ensure that individuals who require additional assistance are able to participate fully.

*Has there been an assessment of private fitness facilities in the area, and how confident are we that the new development can compete? What is the unique selling point (USP)?*

The proposed leisure centre offer is not intended to compete directly on a like-for-like basis with private gyms, as it provides a broader and more integrated range of services. The centre combines gym facilities with a swimming pool, outdoor provision, and wider leisure activities, which private operators do not typically offer. This integrated approach is considered particularly attractive to families and users with varied needs, for example those who may wish to combine swimming lessons with gym use. In addition, the new equipment will be modern, premium-quality equipment comparable to that found in private gyms, ensuring that the fitness offer remains competitive despite the spatial constraints of the existing building.

*How confident are we that the investment will improve footfall?*

There is a strong level of confidence that the investment will lead to increased footfall, supported by evidence from other sites where similar improvements have been undertaken. For example, recent investment at Chepstow has resulted in significant growth in memberships. It is also recognised that modern, lighter, and more attractive environments encourage higher levels of usage. The proposed improvements extend beyond physical infrastructure to include enhancements in customer experience, digital systems, and overall service delivery, all of which are expected to contribute to increased engagement. On this basis, the target for additional memberships is considered achievable across the wider leisure portfolio.

*During the transition period (while works are underway), have arrangements been explored with private providers to support service continuation?*

The transcript does not record a direct response to the question of whether private facilities will be utilised during the transition period. However, it is noted elsewhere that alternative provision will be

explored to mitigate the impact of temporary disruption to services while works are underway, although no specific reference is made to formal arrangements with private providers.

*Will the refurbished facility address the current appearance (e.g. dark and dated interior)?*

The refurbishment scheme is intended to deliver a modern, lighter, and more visually appealing environment. Improvements to the layout, interior design, and overall presentation are expected to transform the current appearance of the facility, addressing concerns about its dark and dated character. These changes are also anticipated to enhance the overall customer experience and increase the attractiveness of the centre to both existing and potential users.

*Has there been any indication from the new Welsh Government of increased funding for leisure facilities?*

It was noted that it was still very early following the recent Senedd election, and as such no clear funding position had yet been established by the new Welsh Government. The Council had begun engaging with newly appointed Cabinet Secretaries to explore potential funding opportunities; however, no confirmed additional funding was currently known. The proposal therefore reflected a decision to proceed without waiting for external funding, recognising the need to act in a timely manner. The investment package was also designed to be flexible, with equipment that could be relocated in the future should further funding or redevelopment opportunities arise.

*What lessons have been learned from similar leisure centre improvement projects elsewhere in Monmouthshire?*

A number of key lessons had been identified from previous leisure centre improvement projects. These included the importance of ensuring adequate space between equipment, rather than maximising capacity at the expense of usability and user experience. There was also an emphasis on selecting equipment that met user needs, informed by ongoing feedback and input from both fitness managers and users.

In addition, the Council had drawn on wider sector experience through its partners, including organisations such as Alliance Leisure and equipment providers. It was recognised that investment in high-quality equipment is a critical driver of membership growth. However, improvements were not limited to equipment alone; the creation of modern, bright environments and the delivery of a high-quality customer experience were also identified as essential components in achieving successful outcomes.

*How often does the Council review underused facilities?*

Facilities were monitored on a monthly basis using live data from systems that track membership trends, usage levels, and the capacity of activities and classes. This regular monitoring enabled performance to be reviewed consistently and trends in both use and underuse to be identified.

Where facilities were found to be underused and could not immediately be improved, efforts were made to maximise the use of other areas, for example by expanding swimming provision. In addition, at a management level, there were monthly directorate reviews of assets, which considered factors such as income performance, viability, and resource use and capacity. This approach provided ongoing oversight and the ability to adapt services as required.

*How will the scheme avoid excluding people who are unable to use digital systems or apps when accessing leisure services?*

The scheme will ensure that access to leisure services is not limited to digital platforms by maintaining a range of non-digital alternatives alongside digital promotion. Information and promotional campaigns will be made available through posters and on-site materials, ensuring that users can access key details without needing to rely on digital tools. In addition, face-to-face support will be provided by reception staff and other site staff, who will be available to assist users directly.

The approach will also include in-person engagement through sports development teams and wider community outreach activity, allowing information to be shared through established local networks such as schools, clubs, and other community channels. For users who may require additional support with digital systems, staff will be able to assist directly, including through the use of devices such as tablets at reception. Overall, this blended approach is intended to ensure that individuals without access to, or confidence in using, digital systems can still receive information and fully access services.

*Will there still be a community suite and viewing area on the first floor after the refurbishment?*

The viewing area will be retained as part of the refurbishment and will continue to be available for use following completion of the works. This ensures that users will still be able to access a designated space for viewing activities within the facility.

*Will the lift be refurbished or upgraded, given concerns about accessibility?*

The lift is not included within the scope of this particular refurbishment package. However, lifts across the authority have been separately identified and surveyed by property services, and there is a dedicated budget in place for lift repairs and replacements. These works are prioritised based on the condition of individual lifts. At present, no specific timetable has been confirmed for works to this lift.

*Are there many private gyms in the Severnside area, and how does this affect the need for the facility?*

There is limited private gym provision within the Severnside area, resulting in the Council's leisure centre offer being relatively distinctive and important within the local context. This lack of extensive private competition supports the expectation that the facility will continue to be well used by local residents and reinforces the need for a modernised, accessible public leisure offer.

*How can rural communities, such as Raglan, access similar funding and support for leisure and community facilities, given the apparent lack of provision and limited investment compared to towns? Funding appears to favour towns over rural areas, despite these issues having been raised over many years. Can there be more immediate and tangible action?*

There are a number of potential funding routes available to support rural communities, including the use of Section 106 contributions linked to new developments. The Council is able to work collaboratively with community councils to identify and pursue appropriate funding opportunities. This includes providing support to help identify external funding sources and to develop and submit funding applications. Engagement with the new Welsh Government may present additional funding

opportunities in the future, although these are not yet defined. The overall approach is to work jointly with local communities to explore available options and progress suitable proposals.

*Why was an Integrated Impact Assessment not provided with the report?*

An Integrated Impact Assessment had been prepared but was not included within the Scrutiny report papers. The assessment would instead be included as part of the Cabinet report and would be shared with Members in advance of Cabinet, providing an opportunity for review and comment. We apologise for the omission of the assessment at the Scrutiny stage. We would emphasise that the scheme is intended to deliver significant improvements in accessibility and inclusivity. This includes the incorporation of a range of accessible equipment and an improved layout, designed to support users of all ages and needs.

*A member recalled that previous proposals had been made to relocate or replace the leisure centre, including commitments linked to development of nearby land. She noted that these proposals did not materialise, leaving the community with the existing ageing facility. She highlighted that residents are now looking forward to improvements, even if this is a refurbishment rather than a new build. She reflected a positive but cautious community perspective, recognising past unmet expectations but expressing support for the current proposal.*

#### **Chair's Summary:**

Thank you for the report – this work is certainly needed. We need to ensure that residents know about how to access facilities if they are moved elsewhere. Members have noted that there is an ongoing pattern about the absence of IIAs, or insufficient ones, so that needs to be addressed going forward. Thank you again to the Cabinet Member and officers.

#### **7. People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan.**

A query was raised regarding items that had been agreed by the committee at the last meeting but are not on the forward work programme. It was clarified that these matters had been raised as questions to the Cabinet Member through the Public Open Forum item, rather than as formal additions to the work programme. As such, they remain pending a response from the Cabinet Member, after which it may be appropriate to incorporate specific items into the scrutiny work programme. Officers will chase that response – **ACTION**

There is a duplication error in the forward plan, with the Youth Service item now coming to the September meeting.

It was confirmed that a future item on homelessness legislation, scheduled for the July meeting, would include specific consideration of the impacts on care leavers, particularly those placed out of county. In addition, it was agreed that issues raised through the Corporate Parenting Panel should be fed into the scrutiny work programme to ensure that relevant concerns are properly considered. –

#### **ACTION**

A suggestion was made to incorporate lived experience input into future scrutiny discussions, for example through short contributions from individuals directly affected by homelessness legislation. It was agreed that this approach would add value and should be utilised where appropriate to inform and strengthen scrutiny.

It was noted that a letter to the Health Board regarding assistive technology had previously been discussed, but there remained some uncertainty as to whether this had been progressed. It was agreed that this should be followed up. In addition, a suggestion was made to invite representatives from the Health Board to attend a future meeting to explain their role in relation to assistive technology and provide further clarification to the committee. – **ACTIONS**

The Chair noted that members wish to avoid meetings being scheduled in half term in the future.

**8. Council and Cabinet Forward Work Programme.**

Noted.

**9. To approve the following minutes:**

- **9a. People Scrutiny Committee – 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026.**
- **9b. Special Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2026.**

The minutes were confirmed.

**10. Next Meeting: Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 10.00am.**

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# Integrated Impact Assessment document

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

<p><b>Name of the Officer:</b> Stacey Jones</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 01633 644608 <b>E-mail:</b> staceyjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>To invest in and refurbish the first-floor fitness suite at Caldicot Leisure Centre, modernising the facility, improving customer experience, increasing capacity and supporting membership growth while protecting the long-term sustainability of the leisure service.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area:</b></p> <p>Leisure and Wellbeing</p>	<p><b>Date:</b> May 2026</p>

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

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	A modernised fitness suite will benefit a wide age range by providing updated equipment, a brighter environment and more flexible spaces for younger adults, working age residents and older people. Improved accessibility and a more	There may be temporary disruption to fitness provision during refurbishment works, which could particularly affect users who rely on the centre for regular activity and wellbeing.	Alternative provision and clear communication will be explored during the works period. Equipment selection and layout design will continue to take account of the needs of older users and different ability levels.

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?
	welcoming layout should also make it easier for older residents to remain active.		
Disability	The investment will improve accessibility by creating more space between equipment, providing a more user-friendly layout and introducing inclusive equipment suitable for a wider range of users, including wheelchair users and people with mobility needs.	The lift is not part of this refurbishment package, so access to the first floor will remain dependent on the existing lift infrastructure until any separate improvement works are undertaken. The development is limited to the existing footprint of the facility so there will be limitations on some equipment needs.	The internal design will maximise accessibility within the existing building. Staff support, tailored programmes and wider corporate lift maintenance arrangements will help mitigate this risk while broader accessibility is improved through equipment and layout changes.
Gender reassignment	The proposal supports inclusive access to a modern public leisure facility for all users.	No specific negative impact identified.	Facilities will be refurbished in line with current legal requirements and operational policies to support inclusive use.
Marriage or civil partnership	No specific impact identified.	No specific negative impact identified.	No additional mitigation required
Pregnancy or maternity	Improved circulation space, refurbished toilets and a more accessible layout should make the facility easier to use for people who are pregnant.	No specific negative impact identified.	Detailed design will continue to consider ease of movement, toilet provision and inclusive access throughout the refurbished areas.
Race	The investment supports equal access to improved leisure facilities for all local residents and users.	No specific negative impact identified.	Standard equality policies and inclusive service delivery will continue to apply.
Religion or Belief	No specific impact identified.	No specific negative impact identified.	No additional mitigation required

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sex	The proposal is intended to provide equal benefit to people of all sexes through improved leisure facilities, refreshed toilets and a more modern customer environment.	No specific negative impact identified.	Refurbishment of male, female and accessible toilets will be delivered in line with current standards and requirements.
Sexual Orientation	No specific impact identified.	No specific negative impact identified.	No additional mitigation required

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

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

**Socio-economic  
Duty and Social  
Justice**

The investment will improve access to a modern public fitness offer in Caldicot, supporting healthier lifestyles and community wellbeing in an area where affordable, accessible leisure provision remains important. A stronger local offer may also reduce the need for residents to travel elsewhere to access comparable facilities. There is limited availability of other fitness suite provisions within the local area.

There is a short-term risk from temporary disruption during refurbishment works.

The service will continue to consider affordability, inclusive programming and promotion across the wider leisure offer. Communication about the refurbishment period and any alternative arrangements will help reduce the impact of temporary disruption.

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

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p><b>Policy Making</b></p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favorably</p>	<p>The refurbished fitness suite will continue to operate in line with the Council's Welsh Language Standards. Signage, customer information and promotional materials relating to the improved facility can be provided bilingually, helping to ensure that Welsh is treated no less favorably than English.</p>	<p>No specific negative impacts have been identified</p>	<p>Bilingual signage, information and customer communications will be maintained throughout delivery and operation of the refurbished facility.</p>
<p><b>Operational</b></p> <p>Recruitment &amp; Training of workforce</p>	<p>No specific operational impact identified</p>	<p>No specific negative impact identified.</p>	<p>Existing workforce practices and standards will continue to apply.</p>
<p><b>Service delivery</b></p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Users who wish to access information or communicate in Welsh will continue to be able to do so through the Council's established bilingual service arrangements, including on site, by phone, email and online.</p>	<p>No specific negative impact identified.</p>	<p>The refurbished facility will continue to use bilingual materials and customer contact channels.</p>


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**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?
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The investment supports the long-term financial sustainability of the leisure service by protecting a key income stream and creating the conditions for membership growth. A more competitive local leisure offer also supports the local economy by retaining spend within Monmouthshire.</p>	<p>Project costs, contingency and borrowing affordability will continue to be monitored closely. Income performance assumptions will be reviewed as part of ongoing financial management.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and land, river and coastal ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>The proposal makes better use of an existing public asset by refurbishing and upgrading current space rather than requiring new build development. A stronger local leisure offer may also reduce the need for residents to travel elsewhere to access fitness facilities.</p>	<p>Detailed design and procurement will seek durable, efficient solutions within the approved budget and scope.</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>This is a strong positive contribution. The improved fitness suite will provide a modern, attractive environment that supports physical activity, healthier lifestyles and improved wellbeing for existing and new users.</p>	<p>Accessibility, inclusive programming and promotional activity will be used to maximise uptake across different user groups.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>The investment will strengthen Caldicot Leisure Centre as a key community asset in the south of the county, helping to maintain an attractive and viable public facility for residents.</p>	<p>Communication and temporary service arrangements during the refurbishment period will help maintain community confidence and continuity of access where possible.</p>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>By improving a local facility that serves a broad catchment, the proposal can help reduce travel to more distant private or public gyms and support sustainable use of existing community infrastructure.</p>	<p>Delivery will continue to use the existing building footprint and will consider efficient design and operational choices where possible.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	The proposal supports participation in sport and recreation through a better quality public leisure offer. Bilingual signage and communications will continue to support the Welsh language within the service.	The service will maintain bilingual communications and promote participation across the community.
<b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	The redesign aims to improve accessibility, inclusivity and the customer experience for a broad range of users, including disabled people, older residents and those who may currently be deterred by the dated condition of the facility.	Equipment selection, layout design and staff support will continue to focus on inclusive use and practical accessibility.

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

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> <p><b>Long Term</b></p>	<p>Yes. The proposal responds to an immediate need to replace ageing equipment and improve the customer environment while also protecting the long-term sustainability of a key leisure asset and income stream. Borrowing terms have been aligned to future aspiration to safeguard future development plans.</p>	<p>Financial performance and membership growth will be monitored to ensure the investment continues to meet long-term objectives.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>Yes. Working with external specialists including design and equipment partners to deliver our key objectives.</p>	<p>Partnership working will continue through detailed design, procurement and delivery to ensure accessibility, quality and value for money.</p>
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>Yes. The proposal has been informed by ongoing customer feedback, membership patterns, cancellation reasons and operational experience across the leisure service. User feedback has consistently highlighted the dated nature of the current upstairs fitness offer.</p>	<p>Engagement with users and staff will continue as the detailed design is finalised and the refurbished offer is promoted.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<p>Yes. The investment is preventative because it addresses ageing equipment and a dated environment before further decline undermines customer retention, competitiveness and service sustainability.</p>	<p>Programme management, contingency planning and alternative provision during works will help reduce the risk of disruption and protect benefits.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>  <p>Integration</p>	<p>Yes. The proposal contributes across health, equality, community cohesion, service sustainability and wider place-based objectives by modernising an important community facility in Caldicot.</p>	<p>Monitoring of usage, customer feedback, income and accessibility outcomes will help assess the realised benefits after delivery.</p>

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

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Safeguarding	A modern, well-maintained facility can support safer use of the gym environment for all customers.	No specific negative safeguarding impact identified.	Existing safeguarding policies, trained staff supervision and health and safety procedures will continue to apply.
Corporate Parenting	Improved leisure provision may support wider wellbeing opportunities for care experienced young people and families who use the centre.	No specific negative corporate parenting impact identified.	Inclusive programming and standard concessionary access arrangements will continue to support participation where applicable.

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

- Current condition of the Caldicot Leisure Centre fitness suite, including the age and suitability of existing equipment
- Customer feedback, membership patterns and cancellation reasons across the leisure service
- Evidence from comparable investment at other leisure sites, including membership growth following improvement works
- Cost estimates, income projections, contingency allowances and affordability assessments developed for the scheme
- LUF Grant Bid

**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?**

**Positive Impacts**

- The proposal will modernise an under-invested leisure asset and improve the customer experience at Caldicot Leisure Centre.
- It will support healthier communities, improved accessibility and broader participation in physical activity.
- It will help protect an important income stream and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the leisure service.

**Negative Impacts**

- There will be temporary disruption to services during refurbishment works.
- There remains delivery and affordability risk if final costs rise or income growth is lower than forecast.
- Accessibility constraints associated with the existing building, including the current lift provision, are not fully resolved within this scheme.

These impacts have informed the design approach by placing emphasis on inclusive layout, modern equipment, contingency planning and careful management of disruption during delivery.

**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
Complete detailed design, final surveys and procurement arrangements for the Caldicot Leisure Centre fitness suite refurbishment.	RIBA 4 Cost Certainty and Project design – June 2026	Head of Leisure and Wellbeing
Plan and deliver communications, temporary service arrangements and the relaunch of the refurbished fitness suite to maximise awareness and membership growth.	During delivery and in advance of reopening	Performance, Finance and Resources Manager

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

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	People Scrutiny	28/05/2026	Integrated Impact Assessment updated to reflect the proposed investment in the Caldicot Leisure Centre fitness suite and issues raised through scrutiny.
2	Cabinet	May 2026	Awaiting Cabinet consideration of the proposed investment package for Caldicot Leisure Centre fitness suite refurbishment.

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## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

**SUBJECT: REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS - REVIEW**  
**MEETING: COUNCIL**  
**DATE: 25 June 2026**  
**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

### 1. PURPOSE

For the Council to review the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council approves the report as a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to allocate ordinary committees with the numbers as indicated below representing political balance.

Committee	Welsh Labour	Welsh Conservatives	Independent Group	Green Independent Group
Scrutiny (9) *(x4)	15	15	4	2
Licensing & Regulatory (12)	6	5	1	0
Planning (16)	7	7	1	1
Democratic Services (12)	5	5	1	1
Governance & Audit (8) (excluding lay members)	4	3	1	0
Appointments (5)	2	2	1	0
Aggregate Entitlement (89)	39	37	9	4

### 3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council must determine the allocation to the different political groups of all the seats to be filled by appointment by the Council and exercise its power of appointment to the body concerned to give effect to such wishes about who is to be appointed to the seats on that body which are allocated to a particular group as are expressed by that group.
- 3.2 Following the receipt of notice by the proper officer that a member of the Council wished to join a political group and following a notice requesting a review under s.15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 by that member and the leader of that political group, the Council is required to conduct such a review pursuant to Regulation 17 The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

- 3.3 Sections 15 to 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the 1989 Act”) and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (“the 1990 Regulations”) lay down requirements designed to ensure that there is political balance on Committees. The rules apply to all ordinary committees, advisory committees, scrutiny committees, the Democratic Services Committee, and other bodies where the Council appoints three or more seats.
- 3.4 Following receipt of the notice referred to above, the Council is now required to review the political make up of its Committees, and determine the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the principles set out in Section 15 of 1989 Act, namely:
- a. not all seats on a Committee should be allocated to the same political group;
  - b. the majority group on the Council should form the majority on a Committee;
  - c. subject to (a) and (b), that the proportion of seats allocated to each political group on the total of all Committees should be the same as the proportion of Council Members who belong to that group; and
  - d. subject to (a)–(c), that the proportion of seats allocated to each political group on each Committee should be the same as the proportion of Council Members who belong to that group.
- 3.5 In certain cases the Council/committee does not have to comply with the statutory requirements. The exceptions are as follows:
- (a) alternative arrangements approved by the Council following notice of the proposed arrangement being included in the agenda for the relevant meeting of Council and without any member of the Council/committee voting against the proposal (s17 and Reg. 20).
  - (b) the committee or sub-committee is established exclusively to discharge functions or to advise in respect of part of the area of the authority and where that area of that part does not exceed one-half of the total area of the authority or the population of that part does not exceed one-half of the total population of the area. In addition, that part must consist of one or more electoral divisions and all the members of the authority who are elected for that electoral division (or those electoral divisions) (and only those members) are entitled to be members of the area committee or sub-committee.
- 3.6 In accordance with s.70 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the appointment of Scrutiny Committee Chairs will be done in accordance with the political balance of the Local Authority (rounded to the nearest whole number).

#### **4. REASONS**

To comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 as amended.

#### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

#### **6. CONSULTEES**

Chief Executive  
SLT  
Local Democracy Manager

**7. AUTHOR:**

James Williams  
Chief Officer Law & Governance  
Monitoring Officer  
[jameswilliams@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:jameswilliams@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Appendices:

Appendix A - Methodology applied to calculate political balance  
Appendix B - Appointments by Council

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## APPENDIX A

### Methodology applied to allocations

1. The legislative requirements in relation to political balance are set out within the main report.
2. Appointments by the Council

The principles are considered separately for ordinary committees, advisory committees and for other bodies to which appointments must be made. Ordinary committees are committees that make decisions on behalf of the Council. The other form of committee, the advisory committee, is one appointed to advise the Council on any matter relating to the discharge of its functions

(a) Ordinary Committees

According to the draft circular issued in 1990, a suitable sequence for applying the principles will be:

- (i) calculate the total seats with votes on all the ordinary committees;
- (ii) calculate the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the authority (and that membership does not include a chairman who is no longer a councillor but remains a member of the Council by virtue of section 26 of the 1972 Act); the “total membership of the authority” does, however, include vacant seats;
- (iii) apply those proportions to the total number of ordinary committee seats to give the aggregate entitlement of each group; the requirement (here as elsewhere) to apply the proportions “so far as reasonably practicable” can be met by rounding up entitlements of a half or more; if this results in a greater aggregate than the number of seats available, the fractional entitlement(s) closest to a half should be rounded in the other direction until entitlements balance the available seats;
- (iv) apply the proportions to the number of members on each ordinary committee to give a provisional entitlement to seats on that committee;
- (v) where the provisional entitlement gives only one group the seats on the committee, adjust the entitlement so that the next largest group has a seat;
- (vi) where one group has a majority of the membership of the Council, but does not have a majority on any committee as a result of the provisional entitlement, increase its share on that committee so that it does have a majority;

- (vii) finally, adjust the seats on each committee so that the total allocated to each group is as near as possible to their aggregate entitlement, while preserving the results reached at steps (v) and (vi)

This sequence of steps has been adopted in this report.

(b) Advisory Committees

The intention of the provision is to ensure that those seats to be filled by councillors are (in the absence of unanimous agreement to the contrary) shared fairly between the political groups.

It is, therefore, necessary for the Council first to decide how many of the seats on each advisory committee are to be filled by members of the Council; the statutory requirements then only apply to those seats; the allocation of those seats can conveniently be made by following steps (ii), (iv), (v) and (vi) above.

(c) Other Bodies

The intention is to ensure a fair distribution of the available seats among the political groups, as a majority group would reasonably be entitled to all the seats where the authority makes only one or two appointments, the duty to allocate seats to political groups only applies where the Council appoints to three or more seats.

The allocation can be made by following steps (ii), (iv), (v) and (vi) above.

3. Appointments by Committees

Where an ordinary committee appoints a sub-committee with executive powers, the allocation can be carried out by following steps (ii), (iv), (v) and (vi) above.

When an advisory sub-committee is appointed, the committee will first need to determine how many seats are to be filled by members of the Council (not just members of the committee). The duty to allocate to political groups then applies only to those seats. The same steps can be followed.

## APPENDIX B

### Appointments by Council

1. The following committees are appointed by the Council with the number of seats shown:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Planning	16
Licensing and Regulatory	12
Governance and Audit (excluding 4 lay members)	8
Place Scrutiny	9
People Scrutiny	9
Performance and Overview Scrutiny	9
Public Services Scrutiny	9
Democratic Services	12
Appointments	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>

Notes:

- (i) Member/Officer Working Groups are not Committees or Sub-Committees;
  - (ii) the Standards Committee is not subject to the political balance rules;
  - (iii) the Joint Advisory Group (Teachers/LGE) is a Cabinet advisory committee;
  - (iv) political balance rules do not apply to Area Committees;
  - (v) SAC will be allocated in accordance with the Constitution.
2. The rest of this appendix deals with the appointment of committees only.
- (a) Total number of members for the purpose of political balance - 46
    - Labour 20
    - Conservative 19
    - Independent Group 5
    - Green Independent Group 2
  - (b) Provisional statutory entitlement multiplier (i.e. the relevant number of members divided by 46):
    - Labour 0.434
    - Conservative 0.413
    - Independent Group 0.108
    - Green Independent Group 0.043

(c) Aggregate entitlement of seats (i.e. 89 multiplied by the relevant figure in paragraph (b) above):

Labour	38.626
Conservative	36.757
Independent Group	9.612
Green Independent Group	3.827

Rounding up/down gives:

Labour	39
Conservative	37
Independent Group	9
Green Independent Group	4

Where the Council makes appointments of three seats or more to other bodies, the political balance rules apply, and appointments will be made in accordance with paragraph 3.3 of the main report, taking into account the methodology in Appendix A and applying ratios above.