

# Monmouthshire County Council: Public Services Select Committee

Title: Gwent and Monmouthshire Wellbeing Assessment

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Officer: Richard Jones and Sharran Lloyd

# Background

In July 2021, Public Services Select Committee were informed of the intention to move from local Public Service Board arrangements to a regional Public Service Board for Gwent

As of September 2021, the Monmouthshire Local Public Service Board was disbanded and the Gwent Public Service Board was formed

In line with this, work also commenced to develop a Wellbeing Assessment for Gwent, comprising of 5 x Local Authority Area assessments, with a view to establishing shared Gwent level priorities, that will inform a Gwent Wellbeing Plan by May 2023

Local Wellbeing Plans remain in place in each of the five Local Authority Areas until the new Gwent plan comes into place in 2023



# What has happened so far....

- ▶ Legislative timeframes of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, dictated that updated WBAs were due to be completed by May 2022
- ▶ Each local authority area had responsibility for undertaking their local community area assessment that integrates with the regional Gwent assessment
- ▶ Engagement with the community was undertaken in August and September of 2021 across all five counties, to establish the view of 'what matters' to the residents across the five counties
- ▶ Currently consulting with professionals to 'sense check' the data in both the Gwent and Monmouthshire assessments
- ▶ Seeking the views from Scrutiny to feed into this process
- ▶ Not all issues identified will sit at a Gwent level, but will also inform local priorities

# Monmouthshire Local Level Assessment

- ▶ In addition to the Gwent WBA, a Monmouthshire specific wellbeing assessment has also been undertaken at a county level
- ▶ In comparison to other areas across Gwent, Monmouthshire is geographically large with semi-rural communities and headline statistics can fail to highlight the challenges specific to Monmouthshire
- ▶ Data has been assessed across the five main towns and surrounding areas; Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk & Raglan, Caldicot and Chepstow; engagement responses form part of this (summary in appendix 3 of report)
- ▶ Some data is only available at a county level and can't easily be broken down into the five main towns and surrounding areas
- ▶ Consultation is currently underway on the Monmouthshire Local Area Wellbeing Assessment



# Key Findings: (Appendix 2 in report)

## Social:

- ▶ There is a lack of affordable housing in the county, likely to be exacerbated by the National Development Framework
- ▶ There are significant income inequalities within communities with wealth sitting alongside relative poverty on a scale not seen in other parts of Wales
- ▶ Monmouthshire enjoys high levels of social capital. Large numbers of people volunteer which helps build connections and is a major contributor to well-being
- ▶ Both adult and children's social care are facing acute pressures with escalating demand, with increasing complexity and workforce shortages
- ▶ One in four adults and one in ten children experiencing mental health issues
- ▶ There are significant differences in life expectancy and action is required to address health inequalities
- ▶ We are seeing increasing levels of crime, VAWDASV and anti-social behaviour in the county and concerns about the level of substance misuse amongst younger people

# Key Findings continued....(Appendix 2 in report)

## Environmental:

- ▶ Monmouthshire has a high carbon footprint per head of population
- ▶ The rural nature of Monmouthshire means that transport is a significant contributor to the county's carbon emissions with some areas also experiencing poor air quality
- ▶ The impacts of climate change are becoming apparent in Monmouthshire, particularly flooding which has impacted many communities in recent years.
- ▶ Tree disease is a significant threat to the landscape and biodiversity of Monmouthshire, with large areas of ash and larch having to be felled meaning many more trees need to be planted to sequester carbon
- ▶ Like elsewhere in Wales, biodiversity is declining due to threats and pressures on species and habitats

# Key Finding continued... (appendix 2 in report)

## Economic:

- ▶ Monmouthshire has a competitive economy with excellent potential for growth. There is however, a low rate of business start-ups compared to the capital region and Wales as a whole
- ▶ There is a slow uptake of employment sites in the county alongside issues of poor broadband speed which could be interconnected with the low rates of business start-ups
- ▶ The below-average wages on offer in the county, coupled with high property prices, make it difficult for young people and future generations to live and work locally
- ▶ We are seeing an outward of migration of young people, driven by employment and higher education opportunities elsewhere, which are not available in the county

## Key Findings continued....(Appendix 2 in report)

### Cultural:

- ▶ The county has good levels of sports participation compared to other parts of Wales but still levels of exercise are still too low and obesity is increasing which has implications for health
- ▶ There is an increasing opportunity to use Monmouthshire's culture, heritage and landscape to capitalise on potential of UK holiday market with less people travelling abroad
- ▶ The pandemic has reduced visits to cultural attractions which play an important role in well-being, such as museums and theatres which will impact on their viability



# Next Steps

- ▶ Following consultation; the WBA will be updated and signed off by the Gwent PSB in March ready for publication in May 22
- ▶ The PSB will establish its key findings, which will inform the Gwent priorities and move into the response analysis stage of creating the WBP for Gwent
- ▶ Consideration of the Population Needs Assessment will also inform this process
- ▶ Monmouthshire will also establish priorities which are of equal importance within the county, but will be unique to Monmouthshire and therefore may not be addressed as part of the Gwent wellbeing plan
- ▶ The current local Wellbeing Plan for the county will remain in-place and active until 2023 - it is anticipated this will transition to meet the Gwent Wellbeing Plan as well as addressing local level priorities unique to the county
- ▶ On-going consultation with the public and professionals will form part of the next stage

# Public Services Select Considerations:

## Gwent WBA

The Gwent WBA is seeking to establish an evidence base that illustrates the challenges that need to sit at a Gwent level for the PSB to take steps to address

## Monmouthshire WBA

The Local WBA aims to provide an evidence base of the challenges that may sit at a Gwent level in addition to local challenges that will be unique to Monmouthshire, which the Monmouthshire Programme Board will take steps to address

## Alignment of regional and local:

The Gwent level assessment should reflect the local to regional priorities, where scalability can assist in meeting complex challenges common across the region



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future of  
Monmouthshire*



Thank you for listening