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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held
on Thursday, 29th February, 2024 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor Meirion Howells (Chair)
County Councillor Su McConnel (Vice Chair)

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jonathan Davies	Head of Finance
Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Peter Davies	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Resources
Jane Rodgers	Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Will McLean	Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Frances O'Brien	Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Matthew Gatehouse	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships.
Ian Saunders	Chief Officer Customer, Culture and Wellbeing.
Ruth Donovan	Assistant Head of Finance
James Williams	Chief Officer Law & Governance

1. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor Jayne McKenna declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 12.1.

County Councillor Jane Lucas declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 12.1.

County Councillor Rachel Buckler declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 12.1.

County Councillor Ann Webb declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 12.1.

County Councillor Tony Kear declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in relation to item 12.1.

2. Chair's Announcement

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Noted.

Council observed a moment of silence as a mark of respect and to reflect on the passing of former County Councillor, Pauline Watts.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th January 2024

Council resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2024 as an accurate record.

4. STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024-28

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report to seek approval of the authority's Strategic Equality Plan and objectives for the period 2024-28.

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

That Council approve the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=941>

5. 2023/24 MRP POLICY REVISION, 2024/25 CAPITAL STRATEGY, 2024/25 TREASURY STRATEGY

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report to seek approval of a revision to the Council's MRP policy for 2023/24, and to approve the Council's 2024/25 Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.

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

That Council approves the revision to the 2023/24 Minimum Revenue Provision policy relating to supported borrowing as outlined in Appendix 1.

That Council approves the Capital strategy for 2024/25 as found at Appendix 2.

That Council approves the Treasury management strategy for 2024/25 as found at Appendix 3, including the:

- 2024/25 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement
- 2024/25 Investment & Borrowing Strategies

That Council agrees that Governance & Audit Committee should continue to review the Council's treasury activities for 2024/25 on behalf of the Council by receiving and considering quarterly treasury update reports and a year-end report.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=1634>

6. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the Council Tax Resolution Report in order to comply with specific timescales for Council Tax setting and to make certain defined resolutions.

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The recommended resolutions also draw together the Council Tax implications of precepts proposed by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent and Town and Community Councils, thereby enabling the County Council to establish its headline Council Tax levels at the various property bands within each Town or Community area.

Upon being put to a recorded vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations as set out in the report.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=2417>

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

7. DIARY OF MEETINGS FOR 2024/25

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The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report in order for Council to approve the diary of meetings for 2024/25.

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

That the diary of meetings for 2024/25, as attached, be approved.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=9386>

8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBER

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report to confirm the appointment of a Community Council member to the Council's Standards Committee.

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

Council approves the appointment of Mr Michael John as a Community Council Member of the Council's Standards Committee

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=9859>

9. APPOINTMENT OF MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report in order to appoint members of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for the next 3-year period.

Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations, noting the amendments highlighted:

That the applicants set out in Appendix 1 be appointed as members of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for the next 3-year period, with the exception of Mr Barry who has withdrawn his application. Together with the Council's appointed member that provides a forum of 17 members.

That Councillor Sara Burch be appointed as the Council's member.

That following discussion with the forum at its first meeting to identify any under-represented interests, the appointment panel make further recommendations on additional appointments up to the statutory maximum of 22 members.

That the retiring members of the Forum be thanked for their valuable contribution.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=9942>

10. TO AGREE THE NAME OF THE WELSH MEDIUM SEEDLING PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MONMOUTH

The Leader presented the report in order for Council to agree the name of the new Welsh Medium Seedling Primary School in Monmouth which is due to open in September 2024.

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

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That the school should be named Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, translated as Monmouth Welsh School.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=10246>

11. **MOTIONS TO COUNCIL:**

12. **Submitted by County Councillor Lisa Dymock**

Monmouthshire is proud of its heritage and considers food and farming to be of huge importance now and in the future. Everyone here will be more than aware of the pressures on our farmers from various policies from TB to NVZ regulations and the most recent is causing an immeasurable amount of worry is the SFS - the criteria farmers will need to meet is unachievable and will add an astronomical amount of pressure on our farmers.

I ask this council to call on WG to pause the current consultation and work with farmers, farmers unions and other stakeholders to find a way forward that works for everyone and does not penalise our farmers and their communities but supports them.

We understand the importance of protecting our environment and this must be equally considered but without risking our food security from farmers being pushed out of the industry.

Seconded by County Councillor Rachel Buckler

The following County Councillors declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest:

Jayne McKenna; Jane Lucas; Rachel Buckler; Ann Webb; Tony Kear; David Jones; Su McConnel.

Upon being put to a recorded vote the motion was carried.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=11028>

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

13. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

14. From County Councillor Richard John to County Councillor Angela Sandles , Cabinet Member for for Equalities and Engagement

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What engagement did the council undertake with leisure centre users during the 24-25 budget consultation?

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=17864>

15. From County Councillor Fay Bromfield to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

Can the Cabinet Member please advise of any planned repairs to Usk Road, especially the section from Llanybi to Usk.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=18162>

16. From County Councillor Richard John to County Councillor Martyn Groucutt, Cabinet Member for Education

How will the Council be supporting vulnerable school pupils in the financial year 24-25?

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=18290>

17. From County Councillor Jane Lucas to County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development, Deputy Leader

What steps is the Council taking to support town centre businesses in Monmouth during the current disruption?

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=18874>

18. From County Councillor Tony Kear to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

In light of the flooding seen last Winter and again since the New Year period, can I ask the Cabinet Member what forward thinking and proactive actions are being taken to tackle rural / localised flooding in Monmouthshire.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=17051>

19. From County Councillor Tony Kear to County Councillor Martyn Groucutt, Cabinet Member for Education

Given the proposed cuts to school budgets for 24/25, what reassurances can the Cabinet Member give the pupils and their parents in Usk Church In Wales Primary School, which is situated in my Ward, that the quality of the children's lunch time meal and portion sizes will not be affected?

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=17441>

20. PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT AS REQUIRED BY THE LOCALISM ACT

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The Cabinet Member for Resources presented to the report in order for Council to approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.

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

That Council approves the Pay Policy for the year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

<https://www.youtube.com/live/dFN0Us-dKdA?feature=shared&t=19373>

The meeting ended at 7.30 pm

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