

SUBJECT: Strategic Risk Assessment

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 25th June 2025

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet members review the strategic risk assessment and assess whether it provides a realistic and evidenced appraisal of the strategic risks facing the authority over the next three years.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The strategic risk management process ensures that strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority; Risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate; Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.
- 3.2 The Council's strategic risk management policy and guidance and risk assessment helps ensure strategic risks are identified and assessed robustly, risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate, and risks are supported by effective mitigations to ensure, as far as possible, risk reduction/risk management.
- 3.3 Strategic risks covered by the assessment are typically risks which could significantly jeopardise the council's ability to achieve its objectives, statutory plans and/or provide operational services as planned. The risk assessment only covers high and medium level strategic risks. Lower level or operational risks are not registered unless they are projected to escalate within the three years covered. The strategic risk assessment should continue to focus on medium term risks to service delivery.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 provides the latest strategic risk register for the council. The assessment is a detailed document. Any significant changes or updates made to each risk can be found in the 'key changes' column in the summary table at the start of the full register. The council continues to operate in a dynamic environment and has controls in place to assess, manage and mitigate, as far as possible, a variety of risks. The strategic risk register is a live document and is continually updated based on the latest evidence. This will include adjusting the focus, detail and risk levels of risks where necessary. Some key changes made in the last six months can be found below:
- Risk 4, related to workforce, has been reworded due to a change in the nature of the risk; this risk now focuses more on the council's own workforce planning challenges rather than external labour market changes.
 - The post-mitigation risk scores for risk 9a, related to school attendance, have reduced from high (12) to medium (8) to reflect progress made in implementing mitigating action and positive movement in primary attendance data.
 - Risk 11, related to climate, has been divided into two separate risks to better reflect differing causes and mitigation required. This also allows for separate assessment of risk levels and targets.
 - The risk relating to increased demand on council services due to the increased cost-of-living, previously risk 12, has been de-escalated from the strategic risk register to directorate risk registers to be managed. This reflects the mitigations put in place for the organisation to support and manage the demand. This recognises that pressures remain for families due to the increased cost of living, and this risk will continue to be managed on the directorate risk registers of those services still seeing more families requiring additional public service support as a result of the cost-of-living.

- The risk relating to the increased risk of legal challenge, previously risk 14, has been de-escalated from the strategic risk register. The inherent level of risk relating to legal challenge is carried and mitigated by the legal team.

3.5 Cabinet agreed an updated Strategic Risk Management Policy in June 2024, including the further definition of the council's risk appetite. A period of transition in implementing the policy was agreed to allow the council time to strengthen arrangements in line with the revised policy. Progress made so far in implementing the updated policy includes:

- Adapting and updating the format of the strategic risk register, including applying risk appetite levels and target risk scores.
- Developing directorate risk registers, in a phased approach, and embedding these in service planning arrangements.
- An assessment of the effectiveness of each of the risk control arrangements that integrate with strategic risk management policy, these are Health and Safety, Emergency Planning, Insurance, Finance, Internal Audit, Information Governance & Cyber Security. The outcome of this assessment was reported to Governance & Audit Committee, this included actions to strengthen these arrangements.

There remain some areas for development to strengthen arrangements, including:

- Developing the remaining directorate risk registers, to embed these in the risk management process.
- Strengthening risk management training and awareness for all officers.

3.6 As part of the current reporting round, target risk scores have been introduced. These indicate the optimal risk score the council has assessed it could achieve, following successful mitigation. This needs to be set in the context of available resource and the bearing the council's actions can have on reducing the likelihood and/or impact of the risk. In most cases, mitigating actions result in a change to the likelihood of the risk, rather than the potential consequences, as our actions are generally aimed at reducing the chance of a negative event occurring rather than lessening its impact. There will be exceptions depending on the risk. Some target risk scores may remain the same as post-mitigation risk scores; this indicates that risk scores are not able to be lowered further with available mitigation. Risk scores will be continuously reviewed to ensure they fairly reflect realistic ambition.

3.7 A risk radar has been developed in line with the revised policy commitments. This is included as appendix 2. The radar outlines some of the potential risks that Monmouthshire may face over coming years. This report draws on national and global emerging risks identified in a range of horizon scanning reports, including most prominently the World Economic Forum (WEF) global risks report, UK Government's National Risk Register and Welsh Government's Future Trends Report. Evidence from this will help inform risk management by highlighting the key uncertainties and challenges that may affect our organisation's objectives and operations. Consideration will be given to the annual Risk Radar Report when identifying and managing strategic risks and in the Council's wider service planning.

3.8 The strategic risk assessment was presented to Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee on the 3rd June 2025 to enable the committee to fulfil its role of scrutinising the risk assessment and responsibility holders to seek assurance that strategic risks have been appropriately identified and risk is being appropriately managed. An overview of the strategic risk register was also presented to Governance and Audit Committee on the 12th June 2025 to fulfil the committee's role of assessing the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements. The feedback from these committees has been considered in the continued update of the strategic risk register and implementation of the policy. Any key conclusions will be shared with Cabinet.

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

- 4.1 The purpose of the whole authority strategic risk assessment is to identify and assess risks robustly and ensure risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate. Any specific mitigating actions that have significant policy implications would need to be subject to a separate decision and a full impact assessment completed at that time.
- 4.2 The risk assessment specifically references risks around safeguarding and corporate parenting and how they are being mitigated. It also includes activity to mitigate risks relevant to the socio-economic duty and Future Generations.
- 4.3 An Integrated Impact Assessment was completed on the Council's revised strategic risk management policy.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

- 5.1 The Strategic Risk Assessment is updated based on the latest evidence available in line with the Council's strategic risk management policy. Risks that are identified as needing to be managed through the strategic risk register are included. The structure of the register has been developed based on information specified in the policy as being required. Updates to the strategic risk management policy and guidance consider feedback received and take account of the Council's current governance arrangements.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- 6.1 The strategic risk management policy sets the criteria that needs to be considered when identifying and mitigating strategic risks. Actions in the risk register set timescales and responsibility holders for delivery. The risk assessment will be subject to continuous review as part of the authority's performance management framework. An up-to-date risk register will be accessible to members on the council's intranet – The Hub. The risk management policy and guidance set the reporting requirements of the risk assessment to Governance and Audit Committee, Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
- 6.2 The risk management policy sets an assessment of the effectiveness of the risk management framework will be undertaken six monthly and any subsequent action identified implemented. The strategic risk policy and guidance will be reviewed annually and adapted if required, to address any external and internal changes. Any material changes will need to be agreed with the Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet.

7. REASONS:

- 7.1 To provide timely, relevant information on strategic risks and the strategic risk management process as part of the performance management framework for ensuring the authority is well run and able to contribute to achieving the Council's purpose.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 Resource implications are associated with some risks and in implementing actions to manage them. There are no additional resource implications as a result of implementing the strategic risk management process.

9. CONSULTTEES:

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire County Council Risk Policy and Guidance

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Monmouthshire County Council Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment

Ref	Potential Risk	Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation	Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation	Target risk score	Key changes
Risks to resources					
1	Potential risk that: Financial pressures and increased complexity of demand for services, impacts on delivering all of the council’s commitments in the Community and Corporate plan, leading to longer term outcomes for the county not being achieved	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 - High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 - Medium (8)	Medium (8)	A self-assessment of the council’s community and corporate plan objectives and review of the enabling strategies is being developed to assess progress in meeting objectives. This will be presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in July.
1b	Potential risk that: A lack of political majority makes it harder to ensure timely and appropriate decision making which results in delays and uncertainty in some projects	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 - High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (9) 2026/27 – Medium (9) 2027/28 - Medium (9)	Medium (9)	A number of special meetings continue to be held to ensure decisions are scrutinised in advance of Cabinet/Council decision.
2	Potential risk that: Some services will become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term in their current form due to increasing demand and continuing financial pressures	2025/26 – High (16) 2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 - High (16)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 - High (12)	High (12)	Work continues to shape the wider programme of service change that will include an ongoing assessment of key service pressures, the risks and modelling assumptions that sit alongside this, with the aim to establish a clear plan and approach to address the medium-term budget shortfalls forecast.
3	Potential risk that: The authority is unable to maintain key infrastructure and meet other identified pressures due to insufficient capital funding availability	2025/26 – High (16) 2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 – High (16)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	High (12)	The 2025/26 Capital Strategy was approved by Council in March 2025. The strategy sets out the longer-term context in which capital investment decisions are made.
4	Potential risk that: Difficulty recruiting for some posts that require specific skills or qualifications and continued wage inflation will impact the organisation’s retention and workforce planning which may affect the delivery of Council services	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8)	Medium (6)	The wording of this risk has been adjusted slightly to ensure focus on internal recruitment and workforce planning challenges rather than external labour market issues.
5	Potential risk that: Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 - Medium (8)	Medium (8)	A range of mitigating actions continue to be undertaken to mitigate this risk.
Risks to service delivery					
6	Potential risk that: Significant harm to a child or adult may occur due to a specific failure of safeguarding arrangements	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 - Medium (8)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 - Medium (8)	Medium (8)	The most recent Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to Council in October 2024. The report evaluates the progress of the Council’s key safeguarding priorities during 2023/24, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2024/25.
7	Potential risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable children due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (8)	A Placement Development Strategy update was presented to scrutiny in April – this outlines progress in meeting objectives including the development of four additional children’s homes/supported accommodation.
8	Potential risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to high demand and complexity of cases	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (8)	The annual report of the director of social services was presented to scrutiny in October. Key findings include the need to further develop early advice and assistance provided to prevent people waiting for assessments, and a focus on increasing the number of packages of reablement

					delivered to enable people to remain at home/in their communities.
9a	Potential risk that: Failure to return attendance figures to those seen before the pandemic, particularly among vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals, could lead to a worsening in educational attainment	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8)	Medium (8)	The previous risk 9 has been divided into two related, but separate, risks to better reflect and capture the breadth of mitigating action that is underway. The post-mitigation risk levels have decreased from high (12) to medium (8) to reflect improvements seen in overall attendance levels.
9b	Potential risk that: An increase in behaviours that challenge in schools which may lead to harm to a pupil or member of staff	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (8)	The previous risk 9 has been divided into two related, but separate, risks to better reflect and capture the breadth of mitigating action that is underway. A range of action is being undertaken to mitigate this risk, including the work of the Education Support Team which has enabled those learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) or of Permanent Exclusions (PEX) to receive support from specialist professionals.
Risks to policy priorities					
10	Potential risk that: The Council does not support the Replacement Local Development Plan, leading to delays in its adoption which restricts our ability to take forward key policy objective such as job creation, affordable housing development and the adoption of key policies to protect the environment and tackle climate change	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (8)	This Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan was endorsed by Council for consultation, which has been undertaken.
11a	Potential risk that: The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 because our resources are not commensurate with the scale and complexity of the challenge	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (9)	The previous risk 11 has been divided into two related, but separate, risks to better reflect differing causes and mitigations and allow for separate assessment of risk levels. Risk scores have been reassessed from high (16) to high (12) following division of risk to reflect change in impact of risk.
11b	Potential risk that: The Council is unable to deliver services as a result of the increasing frequency of climate-related emergencies such as floods or extreme heatwaves that increase the demand for emergency responses and can cause damage to infrastructure and the closure of facilities	2025/26 – High (16) 2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 – High (16)	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	Medium (8)	The previous risk 11 has been divided into two related, but separate, risks to better reflect differing causes and mitigations and allow for separate assessment of risk levels. Post-mitigation risk scores have been re-assessed from high (16) to high (12) following division of risk to reflect breadth of mitigation in place.
12	Potential risk that: Residents are unable to secure or retain suitable accommodation, leading to rising homelessness and outward migration as a result of failures in the housing market	2025/26 – High (12) 2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12)	2025/26 – Medium (8) 2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8)	Low (4)	Rapid rehousing is facilitating increased resource into homeless prevention, for example through additional staffing and the availability of the Homeless Prevention Fund. Accommodation has started to be acquired for temporary accommodation use and the first approval has been given to re-purpose a council owned agricultural property.

Risks to resources

Ref & Status	1	Risk	Potential Risk that: Financial pressures and increased complexity of demand for services, impacts on delivering all of the council’s commitments in the Community and Corporate plan, leading to longer term outcomes for the county not being achieved.											
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Paul Matthews (Chief Executive) and Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby (Leader)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee		All All		Risk category and appetite level		Strategic Cautious		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Treat	
Reason why Identified														
The council has an agreed Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28 that contains six well-being objectives which focus on the longer-term future of the county and aims to address complex challenges, in line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The objectives include a focus on equality, climate change, economy and skills, housing, care and support and learning. The Council is facing significant budget pressures and increasing complexity in demand for its services. The contemporary policy challenges that need to be addressed, working with communities, are complex and evolving. The immediate pressures the council is facing risks impacting on the ability and resources to deliver the longer-term objectives in the plan and meeting the requirements on the Act.														
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score				
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score					
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)				
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8					
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8					
Mitigating Actions														
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress									
Regularly review progress made in implementing the commitments of the community and corporate plan, ensuring resource is targeted in the most pertinent areas			Strategic Leadership Team Six Monthly (December 2024 & June 2025)		A six-month progress report on the delivery of the community and corporate plan was presented to Cabinet in December. This provides a regular review of progress made in implementing the commitments made in the plan and facilitates targeted activity and intervention in areas requiring further development. This also includes an update on measures contained within the revised measured framework, which was approved by Cabinet in September 2024, ensuring an increased focus on outcomes. A full review of progress made in achieving organisational objectives is completed annually in the form of a self-assessment report. This is developed based on a range of evidence from across the organisation. This assessment of progress made during 2024/25 will be presented for scrutiny in July ahead of Council in September.									
Review the progress of the Enabling Strategies which support delivery of the community and corporate plan to ensure alignment of resources with policy priorities			Enabling Strategy lead officers. July 2025		The enabling strategies which support the delivery of the community and corporate plan have now been updated. These include: the People Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Asset Management Strategy, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy and Digital and Data strategy. These will be subject to an annual review, as outlined in each strategy, to evaluate progress and ensure they continue to support delivery of the community and corporate plan. A composite report including the annual review of each strategy will be presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in July.									
Strengthen medium to long term strategic financial planning as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan and adapt to reflect the global uncertainty on public finances			Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing		The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in July 2024. This strategy provides the strategic framework for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and a set of key principles to guide medium term financial planning. These two together form the link between the council’s long-term policy objectives and its financial capacity. As part of the development of the strategy, a delivery plan has been established, which sets out clear timescales for completion; this is monitored regularly by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Given significant financial pressures modelled in the MTFP, a programme of change is being implemented that will include an ongoing assessment of key service pressures, the risks and modelling assumptions that sit alongside this, with the aim to establish a clear plan and approach to address the medium-term budget shortfalls forecast.									
Engage with communities to understand challenges and opportunities from their perspective including participation of residents and service users			Strategic Leadership Team Ongoing		The Council has undertaken a range of assessment and research to understand well-being in the county including the well-being assessment, population needs assessment, and research for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). These were used to inform the development of Community and Corporate Plan.									

resources due to ongoing labour market challenges which require the use of more costly temporary solutions; supply chain issues continue which require more costly alternative or expedited arrangements. This will be further exacerbated over the medium term by a weak growth forecast in the UK economy impacting on public sector spending, the destabilising effects on the UK economy of trade tariff imposed by the USA, and by heightened interest rates that will impact housing costs. All the aforementioned results in a growing need for supportive Council services, a reduced demand for income generating services, increased risks around debt recovery, and a continued high-cost operating environment.

Current modelling predicts a continuously increasing budget deficit, despite a higher than expected increase in Welsh Government funding, with a projected cumulative shortfall of £34.7m by 2028/29. The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and therefore any budget shortfalls will need to be met through a combination of pressures being mitigated, additional savings and income or reserve contributions. This will be particularly challenging set against the backdrop of an ambitious Corporate and Community Plan being implemented.

A continuation of challenges seen during the pandemic has meant that an increasing number of our schools are experiencing budget deficits. At 2022/23 year end, just 5 schools were in deficit; this increased to 16 by year-end 2023/24. This is projected to increase to 24 by year-end 2024/25, almost 70% of schools.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)

Mitigating Actions

Mitigating Action	Responsibility Holder & Timescale	Mitigation action progress
Ensure that services deliver within budget, deliver savings targets and continue to identify, review and challenge pressures	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing	A 24/25 revenue budget update presented to Cabinet in February notes an overall revenue budget deficit forecast of £1,593,000, a significant improvement of £2,760,000 since the previous update. This update also forecasts a 78.3% delivery rate of the £10,940,000 budgeted service savings required for the year. This results in a shortfall in savings of £2,376,000 that is included in the overall deficit. The ongoing financial position of the Social Care & Health directorate remains the key risk. The level and complexity of demand for both Adult’s and Children’s care continues to trend upwards and is outstripping the progress being made in the preventative agenda and through placement and practice change. The ongoing programme of reviewing existing adults care provision remains challenging due to pressures in managing new referrals and assessments. Given the significance of the adverse Social Care & Health budget position, and the impact this has on the Council’s overall financial position, it is essential that this service maintains financial discipline and mitigates further cost wherever possible. Despite the overall improvement in the budget deficit, there remains a significant challenge to close out the remaining deficit. It therefore remains essential that all services continue to engage in mitigation measures, including: maximising all grant income opportunities; vacancy management; bearing down on all non-essential expenditure; service reduction and efficiency.
Develop a set of budget proposals for 2025/26	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources March 2025	Final budget proposals were presented to Council in March 2025. These came following a consultation process which included over 650 people across 15 stakeholder sessions. Final proposals also take into account the final settlement received from Welsh Government, which introduced a 3.8% funding floor for all local authorities, of which Monmouthshire will benefit. Though budget proposals for 2025/26 have been agreed, many risks remain to be assessed and managed within the year. These include: high demand for council services; deliverability of budget saving proposals; pay awards; and employer’s national insurance contributions. Given the high number of remaining risks, the strengthened financial governance arrangements will continue through 2025/26 to provide assurance that robust arrangements are in place to respond to any circumstances where further budget pressures might require additional mitigation or savings to be brought forward.
Strengthen medium to long term strategic financial planning as part of the Medium-term financial plan, that is based on realistic evidence and planned scenarios, to guide our budget setting in line with agreed strategic objectives and responsiveness to challenges, such as the cost-of-living	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing	The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in July 2024. This strategy provides the strategic framework for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and a set of key principles to guide medium term financial planning. These two together form the link between the council’s long-term policy objectives and its financial capacity. As part of the development of the strategy, a delivery plan has been established, which sets out clear timescales for completion; this is monitored regularly by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee as part of six-monthly MTFP updates. The authority’s budget modelling assumptions are reviewed and updated regularly. Work continues to shape the wider programme of service change that will include an ongoing assessment of key service pressures, the risks and modelling assumptions that sit alongside this, with the aim to establish a clear plan and approach to address the medium-term budget shortfalls forecast. The next iteration of the Medium term financial plan will be considered early in 2025/26 and post the UK Government Spring budget.

Continue to work closely with schools to ensure their financial plans are as robust as possible to minimise any impact, whilst continuing to improve standards for our young people	Finance Manager – Children & Young People Ongoing	The overall level of school reserves is forecast to move further into deficit by £5,240,000 by the end of the 2024/25 financial year, to a collective deficit balance of £6,144,000, with twenty-four (69%) of thirty-five schools forecast to be in a deficit balance. Those schools forecasting to end the 2024/25 financial year in deficit balance have brought forward recovery plans that are being considered by officers and Cabinet. The legacy impact of the pandemic continues within the school environment, particularly in respect of attendance, behaviours and increased additional learning needs. This has required increased staff and specialist resources to tackle the issues presenting and increased overall costs of provision. It is clear from these budget recovery plans that it will take schools a considerable amount of time to fully recover deficit balances, and that in addition to the £1m further investment in schools within the 2025/26 budget, the Council will need to take assessment of this financial risk within medium term financial planning. Schools will continue to be supported to strengthen their financial planning.
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Ref & Status	3	Risk	Potential Risk that: The authority is unable to maintain key infrastructure and meet other identified pressures due to insufficient capital funding availability							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Peter Davies (Deputy Chief Executive) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service Delivery Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Treat	
Reason why Identified										
Underlying the Capital Strategy is the recognition that the financial resources available to meet council priorities are constrained by the level of one-off reserves and capital receipts that the Council holds and the level of capital grant funding from Welsh Government and other funding bodies, and the extent to which the Council is able to entertain further prudential borrowing. The core capital programme has been impacted in recent years in order to enable the Band A new schools programme to be funded, which has now successfully concluded. Subsequent to a Council decision having been secured the 3-19 school in Abergavenny has progressed into contract and is in its construction phase, supported under the Welsh Government Band B programme.										
There remain a considerable number of pressures that sit outside any potential to fund them within the Capital MTFP, and this has significant risk associated with it. These include property and highways infrastructure, DDA work, and public rights of way. In addition to this, there are various schemes/proposals (e.g. Monlife, tranche C Future schools, climate emergency response, any enhanced DFG spending etc.) that could also have a capital consequence, but in advance of quantifying those or having Member consideration of these items, they are also excluded from current capital MTFP. In the event of emergency pressures, resources will have to be diverted. Projects, such as the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, also require significant capital investment to realise the outcomes.										
The timing of capital receipts always remains uncertain due to market conditions. Future investment in capital schemes is in part dependent on future success of achieving capital receipts and there are risks attached to some receipts materialising. There is a risk associated with relying on the use of capital receipts in the same year that they come into the council and the potential for this to have significant revenue pressures should receipts be delayed and temporary borrowing be required. Significant further capital receipts are now not forecast and until such time as the outcome of the Replacement Local Development Plan is known and for which the Council has put forward a number of strategic sites in its ownership.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Regularly review assumptions as part of the capital MTFP taking account of any new information that is relevant and the consequential impact on the revenue MTFP			Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing		The Capital MTFP was updated as part of the development of the Capital Strategy. The capital MTFP and capital strategy seek to work towards a financially sustainable core capital programme, whilst balancing the need to deliver capital investment plans in line with policy commitment and need. The current capital MTFP does not cover all the capital budget pressures that have been identified. This shows that there is more demand for capital spending than the Council considers it can reasonably afford. This means that capital schemes will have to be ranked or the capital available has to be divided more widely than is ideal. The capital programme includes yearly investment for property maintenance, highways maintenance, relevant specific capital grants and the future schools programme. This will help to deal with the most urgent backlog issues, focussing on worst condition first and related risk. However, estate rationalisation programs, closure/disposal of assets, asset transfers and other capital projects to refurbish or replace operational properties will also be used to reduce the backlog funding needed. This will not solve the specific total backlog but is a way of targeting the main issues in a reasonable way.					

		The value of Capital receipts forecast after 2025/26 drops off quite considerably which is reflective of the replacement local development plan (RDLP) not proceeding as quickly as envisaged in the original delivery agreement. This will have an impact on the balance of receipts available to fund future capital investment demands in the near term. The Council has strengthened its scrutiny and challenge of the Capital Programme through the establishment of Capital and Asset Management working groups. The respective working groups look to ensure that projects are prudent, affordable and will deliver tangible benefits to core policy objectives over the long term.
Review and refresh the council's Capital Strategy	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources March 2025	The 2025/26 Capital Strategy was approved by Council in March 2025. The strategy sets out the longer-term context in which capital investment decisions are made and demonstrates that the Authority takes capital investment decisions that are in line with its Corporate priorities, and gives consideration to both risk, reward and impact.
Continue to monitor the Capital budget	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing	The latest 2024/25 budget update forecast a capital budget underspend of £243,000, alongside an indication of slippage in capital schemes of £13,199,000. The large number of schemes requiring slippage may point to more underlying issues in project planning, unrealistic profiling of budgets, and a lack of resourcing to manage the volume of schemes being planned. Finance teams will need to continue to work with budget holders to assess if any further amendment to project delivery plans are required given the impact that capital expenditure progress can have on the profiling of capital financing costs. Capital receipts are projected to be in surplus for the medium-term. Whilst the current balance is healthy, there remains a need for caution over committing any further receipts to either capital investment or increasing the level of capitalisation direction given the level of currently unbanked receipts contained within the forward projections.
Further refinement of priority assessments in the property and infrastructure budgets to ensure all pressures have been considered and ranked.	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	A regular programme of property condition surveys is underway, supported by routine compliance checks for all assets. This information as well as technical input from MCC's Landlord Services team, will continue to be used to inform prioritisation of planned capital maintenance spend. Independent condition assessments of key highways infrastructure are completed as required depending on condition. These inform prioritisation of available capital budget. A review of the pressures and associated risks is being undertaken to inform the capital budget process. A previous review in 20/21 had concluded that further feasibility studies and technical assessments needed to be undertaken on specific infrastructure assets, funded from existing highways infrastructure capital budgets. The results of these studies and assessments will inform the capital MTFP and pressures that will need to be accommodated and funded therein in future financial years. The Capital Working Groups and Asset Management Working Groups will contribute to decisions on the capital spend and MTFP.
Deliver the Asset Management Plan to manage the Council's land and property portfolio	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	The Asset Management Strategy has been adopted, introducing clearer alignment to the Community & Corporate Plan and establishing key principles which will inform strategic decision making for the council's land and property portfolio. The Asset Management Strategy is delivered via the associated Asset Management Plan, which is subject to regular monitoring and progress reporting. An annual review of the Asset Management Plan delivery will be presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in July as part of wider review of the enabling strategies.
Help sustain Council Services and enhance the asset base by investing in commercial property assets in order to increase the net rental income stream for the Council in line with the Asset Management Strategy	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	The Asset Management Strategy commits to maximising and commercialising assets wherever possible, including achieving income generation or revenue enhancement where opportunities are identified to do so. The core principle is achieved with acknowledgement of the council's policy objectives and ambition to achieve both financial and social returns. The performance of the council's commercial and investment portfolios are reported to Performance & Overview committee on six monthly cycles. The updates provided include an acknowledgement of the performance of the assets, their capital value and risk, market information and transaction updates. Officers provided recommendations and updates in accordance with the revised financial performance terms, as outlined in the Asset Management Strategy.

Ref & Status	4	Risk	Potential Risk that: Difficulty recruiting for some posts that require specific skills or qualifications and continued wage inflation will impact the organisation's retention and workforce planning which may affect the delivery of Council services					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Matthew Gatehouse (Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service delivery, Governance Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat

Reason why Identified										
There is a global skills shortage, and the impact is being felt in several sectors that Monmouthshire County Council is either a part of or competes with for talent. Some services have identified challenges with recruitment; Social Care, Operations and Facilities are all facing difficulties, which is affecting service provision.										
There is a continuing risk that staff well-being could be in impacted by a range of factors from work related pressures, such as: staff in some areas facing considerably increased workloads to meet increasing demand and personal home-based factors such as financial strains due to the increased cost of living.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (6)
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Recruit and retain staff more effectively			Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships Ongoing		Recruitment issues are being reflected nationally within some sectors, and the council is not exempt from this. Positions within Social Care, Operations and Facilities, for example, have seen reductions in applicants, and this is impacting on service provision. Solutions for the national recruitment issues do not sit solely with local authorities. The People Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2024 and contains a specific objective, and actions, aimed at improving recruitment and retention. An e-recruitment system is being implemented to support the development of recruitment as a genuine talent acquisition process. This will benefit recruiting managers who want speed, simplicity and agility. The HR team are also utilising different social media channels to reach applicants. A new work experience and apprentices’ policy has been developed and will seek to increase the number of apprentice positions, creating a new pipeline of talent. People Leaders Workshops are supporting the sharing of information with service areas and promote networking and sharing ideas. HR staff sit on various local government groups and are collaborating with partner organisations to identify commonalities and information sharing. This is being fed into Welsh Government to inform their decision-making and to influence their response to the issue.					
Develop the support mechanisms to support staff wellbeing			Head of Organisation Workforce Development Ongoing		Staff well-being is affected by a range of factors, including additional work pressure and demand, personal factors and societal factors. Supporting the health and well-being of our colleagues is a key objective of the People Strategy. The use of networks and communication digitally, surveys and feedback loops to senior managers, has extended the reach of contact with the workforce. This has also created the conditions for a wider system of self-supportive networks sharing practice, ideas and support. An audit has been undertaken of our wellbeing offer and location of access allowing for consolidation and ease of access for all colleagues. We are exploring the opportunity to work with CASE UK funded by Welsh Government to provide physiotherapy, psychological and occupational therapy. We are also assessing options for providing support and guidance to colleagues in relation to financial wellbeing. The Digital ‘Cwtch’ continues, although less frequently. The people services team has developed a People Leaders Support Site which enables ‘live’ discussion/news feed, enabling direct support and a shared learning platform for managers and head-teachers. Colleague Conferences have also recently been held to bring staff together and allow colleagues to engage in meaningful discussions that will help us find innovative solutions to improve our operations and better serve our communities.					
Embed workforce planning to ensure the right skills, expertise and knowledge are available for future changes			Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships Ongoing		The new People Strategy has created a clear commitment to embed workforce planning across the organisation. This is aimed at addressing shortages and ensure career pathways are in place. New arrangements within the HR team will ensure that HR business partners can continue to play an active role in strategic discussions at Directorate Management Teams to ensure effective workforce planning. The People Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2024 and contains a clear commitment to ensuring we can retain the best people. Action includes promoting career development opportunities to ensure that we keep talent in local government. A new work					

		experience and apprentice policy has been developed to create a new pipeline of people being recruited and trained to supply the workforce of the future. The development and retention of existing staff is an essential component of workforce planning. A learning management system (Thinqi) has now been rolled out to all staff; this provides a centralised training and development area for officers, and includes a host of learning resources for staff as well as the opportunity to book face to face and digital/online training.
Adopt a qualitative approach to ensuring professional development, wellbeing and information flow is taking place for those that want or need it	Head of Organisation Workforce Development Ongoing	The colleague appraisal scheme has been redesigned to allow all colleagues to engage in performance discussions with their line manager. This process facilitates both a training needs and skills analysis. A Leader/Manager Developmental Pathway is being created. This pathway will comprise of a number of modules including meaningful staff/line manager engagement and communication. Colleagues need to be given the ‘right’ to seek meaningful 1-1s on a regular basis, and there needs to be a focus on improving the skills of line managers to enable a variety of different approaches to the process so that performance development is realistically achieved. The Colleague Survey provides feedback loops to ensure colleagues requirements are being met.

Ref & Status	5	Risk	Potential Risk that: Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Sian Hayward (Head of Information, Technology & Security) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Governance and Audit Committee		Risk category and appetite level	Information Governance, Service delivery Averse		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate
Reason why Identified										
There have been a number of high-profile cases across both public and private organisations where cyber-attacks and data breaches have compromised service delivery and financial loss. These attacks occur due to insecure infrastructure or staff who are not cyber literate and may inadvertently introduce attacks through their personal actions. Cyber security can also be compromised through a lack of structured governance arrangements, risk assessments and planning.										
Digital working has increased in recent years bringing an increase in the potential for loss of data through cyber incidents.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Ensure robust arrangements are in place to safeguard the organisation’s data and systems from cyber-attack			Cyber security service Ongoing		The Council recognises that total elimination of cyber-attack is not possible, but we will ensure robust arrangements are in place to safeguard data and systems from cyber-attack via: Physical barriers to the network, staff awareness, training and culture and structured governance, risk analysis and business continuity planning. Significant investments in ICT infrastructure and software have been undertaken, which will mitigate against the likelihood of a cyber-attack. An operational risk register, which is exempt from publication under the Data Protection Act, is maintained by the Information Security Team, the SRS Security Team and MCC. A cyber security report was taken to Governance and Audit Committee in February 2024 to provide assurance to the committee that the arrangements in place are robust.					

Risks to service delivery

Ref & Status	6	Risk	Potential Risk that: Significant harm to a child or adult may occur due to a specific failure of safeguarding arrangements											
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health) & Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee		A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level		Safeguarding Averse		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Tolerate	
Reason why Identified														
The Council and its partners must maintain a consistent focus on safeguarding vulnerable people in order to both prevent and reduce the likelihood of harm, and to respond effectively to reduce risks if harm occurs.														
The social care system is facing increased pressures with more complex presentations and increased vulnerability within communities. This demand pressure, alongside ongoing resource and workforce challenges, impacts on the council’s ability to protect children and adults who are at risk.														
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) continue to inspect and conduct assurance checks of our services. Recommended areas of improvement from reviews have been recognised by the council and inspection action plans developed.														
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score				
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score					
2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)				
2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8					
2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8					
Mitigating Actions														
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress									
Continually monitor and evaluate safeguarding processes and practice and ensure good accountability for safeguarding. Ensure that where actions are identified from self-evaluation processes that these are implemented.			Safeguarding & quality assurance service manager Ongoing, Annual Evaluation – September 2025		Progress against the council’s safeguarding priorities is evaluated annually and the priorities reflect the cornerstones for keeping people safe in Monmouthshire, as set out in the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The most recent Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to Council in October 2024. The report evaluates the progress of the Council’s key safeguarding priorities during 2023/24, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2024/25. The report evaluates the cornerstones of safeguarding in Monmouthshire - 3 areas of safeguarding arrangements are assessed as Level 5 Very Good– and 2 areas as Level 4 – Good. This evaluation report forms an integral part of the improvement of safeguarding practice across the Council and drives the work of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group.									
Drive the strategic agenda and the associated programme of activities for safeguarding through the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG).			Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding Ongoing, Annual Evaluation – September 2025		The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group [WASG] has continued to meet bi-monthly on a digital platform. The group ensures that corporate Safeguarding has oversight at a senior level, with membership from each directorate lead. These meetings identify safeguarding concerns and themes; share knowledge around safeguarding issues and, where required, promote a strategic and coordinated approach. A Core Data set has been agreed by WASG. Moving forward, this should provide increased opportunity to inform WASG members of safeguarding performance at a whole authority level. Despite resource pressures across directorates and capacity issues within the Safeguarding Unit, safeguarding has remained a priority for the Council with key strengths within directorates and across council relationships. The SAFE (Safeguarding Assessment Framework for Evaluation) process has continued to roll out across directorates and reviews have taken place in a timely manner. The Safeguarding Unit continues to be available to offer support and advice as well as being the conduit for new and developing safeguarding policy and guidance from the Regional Safeguarding Board. Issues raised within the previous SAFE assessment led to the strengthening of support in the safe recruitment process, specifically in risk management following DBS certifications.									
As a statutory partner of the regional safeguarding boards, continue to work with other statutory partners to ensure that there are effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, that			Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding Ongoing, Annual evaluation – September 2025		There continues to be full representation at all levels of the work of the regional safeguarding board. There is strong engagement in regional approaches to addressing the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation of children; Modern Day Slavery; Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse; Sexual Violence (VAWDASV); and Contest (PREVENT anti radicalisation).									

they are working well, share learning and implement any recommendations.		The priorities set in in the regional board’s annual plan are reflected in the priority work of the Council’s Safeguarding Unit. The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group continues to receive, review, and implement developments in safeguarding flowing from regional and national policy. The Council’s safeguarding unit supports quarterly safeguarding learning networks to share learning and developments in safeguarding across agencies. The Council is represented in numerous operational multi-agencies safeguarding forums, including The Monmouthshire Exploitation Group (MEG).
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Ref & Status	7	Risk	Potential Risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable children due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases											
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee		A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level		Safeguarding Averse		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Treat	
Reason why Identified														
The number of contacts into the ‘front-door’ of children’s services has increased in recent years and remains high. The council is supporting 190 children who are looked after (March 2025). The number has stabilised in recent years, although it remains higher than the average number of children who are looked after across Wales. The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) being looked after by the local authority is currently 14.														
The 2024/25 budget for Children’s Services is forecast to overspend by £2.5 million at February 2025. This is mainly as a result of increased demand for very high-cost placements for children who are looked after. The workforce position within children’s services also remains challenging, with reliance on agency workers and short-term grant funded posts, which can affect continuity of social work relationships for children.														
There is an insufficiency of placements for children who are looked after at a local, regional and national level, particularly those with complex needs or disabilities. Because of this, there is a risk that we may need to place children in unregistered provision in emergency situations. There is considerable instability within the placement provider market, against the backdrop of the Welsh Government’s policy commitment to eliminate profit from the care of looked after children. This creates an on-going risk for the council that is difficult to fully mitigate at present.														
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score				
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score					
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)				
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12					
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12					
Mitigating Actions														
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress									
Continue to strengthen the preventative offer to support children living safely at home, with their families and communities, and continue to review and monitor the Children Looked after population in line with Welsh Government expectations around reduction			Head of Children’s services Ongoing		The council is supporting 190 children who are looked after (March 2025). The number has stabilised in recent years, although it remains higher than the average number of children who are looked after across Wales. In recent years, the number of contacts into the ‘front-door’ of children’s services has increased and remains high. The focus is on keeping children safe, which can mean there has been less time for strength-based engagement with parents and children. An analysis of referral activity is helping us to consider the best way of intervening. There is a coherent approach to early help and prevention to support families. This allows families to receive support at the right level of intensity to enable parents to provide their children with the safety, nurture and care they need. Services are in place to support the rehabilitation of children following periods of being looked after e.g. Families Re-connect; to provide medium-term holistic support to families making sustainable change e.g. Achieving Change Together Team; and to provide a therapeutic response to parents and carers in supporting children with trauma presentations e.g. MyST. Family support has been further strengthened to provide intensive community supervision and support to children. The focus remains on practice development and working with families to support strengths, manage risks and achieve good outcomes, reducing the need for children to be looked. An additional focus is to increase resilience within Child Protection services to work with increased levels of risk and vulnerability within the community.									

Develop and expand the Children’s Services Commissioning Strategy in response to the intention to eliminate profit from children’s social care	Head of Children’s services Ongoing	A commissioning and placement strategy has been developed, with a specific emphasis on the development of in-county residential and support living accommodation. This is aligned with Welsh Government’s ambition to eliminate profit from children’s care. One supported accommodation property has opened in Caldicot for up to 5 young people (16+), and one children’s home in Monmouth is currently under development, with a target of June 2025 to complete refurbishment. A further two properties, one children’s home and one 16+ supported accommodation, are also planned to be developed, with completion targets of December 2025 and January 2026, respectively. Two therapeutic children’s homes continue to operate, with expansion opportunities being explored. Children’s services continue to search for appropriate properties for one further children’s residential home, particularly in the North of the county, however this has proven challenging due to factors such as cost, registration requirements and community facilities. The service area continues to review the demand of placements against the work undertaken by the service in line with their Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy and Placement Commissioning Strategy. Children Services continue to plan for each child and a “horizon” list is kept to identify children who may need, at some point, to be accommodated. Predicting demand, however, remains a challenging and dynamic process, complicated by uncertainty within the care market nationwide.
Continue to implement the fostering strategy on the recruitment, retention and skills development of in house fostering.	Head of Children’s Services Ongoing	The recruitment and retention of foster carers remains an area of significant challenge. There is an insufficiency of in-house carers in Monmouthshire, particularly carers who are able to provide more specialist care or look after sibling groups. Over recent years progress in increasing the number of in-house foster carers has stalled despite considerable effort and attention. This creates an over-reliance on private and independent providers, where the right placement for a child cannot be assured. In March 2025 a decision was passed to improve the offer to Monmouthshire foster carers, including increasing the allowance paid, to ensure foster carers are supported.

Ref & Status	8	Risk	Potential Risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to high demand and complexity of cases							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Safeguarding Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Treat	
Reason why Identified										
The longer-term impact of the pandemic, together with the aging demographic has increased the complexity of referrals into Adult Services. As a result, services are under considerable pressure, particularly given the added challenges of the Council’s financial situation and the pressures within partner agencies, particularly health. There are waiting lists in place for social care assessments and some people are having to wait for services they need, including for reablement, care at home and mental capacity act assessments. There has also been an increase in the number of residential care placements due to the complexity of people’s needs.										
The availability of workforce in some key posts remains a risk - specifically mental health practitioners, direct carers and therapies. There is insufficient capacity within the current core workforce structure to meet the demand pressures, particularly at times of peak demand associated with hospital discharge (for example). The current financial context for both health and social care places restrictions on the ways in which services can respond to need. In 2024/25 the Adult Services budget is forecasting an overspend of just over £2 million at February 2025, with pressures due to increases in external residential care home placements and increased demand for care at home.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Work with Welsh Government to recruit and retain care staff			Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Ongoing		Ensuring that there is a sufficient workforce has been a risk for some time, particularly in key posts around direct care, mental health, team leader posts and occupational therapy. The perceptions of working in social care tend to be negative; recruitment is focussed on counteracting these negative perceptions and demonstrate the opportunities, career progression, work life balance and job satisfaction that people experience who work within the sector. Generally, the workforce in Adults social care remains stable, however attraction					

		and recruitment of people into the social care sector, particularly in some roles, continues to be a challenge. Workforce planning remains a priority within the service to ensure that scarce resources are utilised in the best way possible.
Work to address the difficulties in the health and social care system through the Regional Partnership Board and its sub-groups.	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health and Head of Adult Services Ongoing	There are on- going regional and local partnership meetings to identify and address difficulties across health and social care. These include Gwent Adult Service Partnership, and at a local level the Integrated Services Partnership Board. At a local and regional level, grant money received via the Regional Partnership Board is used to best effect to meet population needs and respond to demand pressure in particular within hospital discharge; supporting people with frailty to remain well at home, and ensuring the development of effective early help and preventative services via the Integrated Wellbeing Network. Establishing targeted early help and ensuring there are good pathways between social care and community based wellbeing support is central to trying to mitigate demand pressures over time.
Rebalance reablement and long-term care within our in-house care at home service.	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Ongoing	There is increased capacity to provide reablement service to those who would benefit from it. While this is good progress the aim is to improve this further. In line with the aims of the commissioning strategy the focus is on further increasing the availability of in-house home care to support reablement as opposed to providing long term care, and to increase the number of people accessing the opportunities that reablement provides. Over time this should help to mitigate demand pressures.
Monitor requests for services to ensure demand is being met and delays are minimised	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Ongoing	On-going pressure across the social care and health system, together with workforce shortages in some areas, has meant that there are continued challenges in being able to respond to people’s care and support needs as timely as we would want. All referrals are triaged at point of referral to ensure that those in most need are prioritised for assessment and intervention. Case reviews are being undertaken, applying the principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act to ensure a strengths-based approach looking at individual, family and community based support where appropriate. Access to care and support is not always timely; however, overall there is increased capacity across home care which has assisted in supporting 96% of demand in the last year. Action is being undertaken to ensure that home care runs, both in-house and provider services, are coordinated as efficiently as possible. The commissioning strategy is being implemented to strengthen locality based provision of home care and increase capacity into rural areas.
Implement a ‘place-based’ approach to create sustainability in care at home services	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health – As per commissioning strategy	The Council remains committed to developing a more sustainable care at home sector for the future. A comprehensive strategy for commissioning homecare through increased block purchasing has been developed. The first procurement exercise under the new strategy has commenced in the south of the county. The micro-care project within Monmouthshire continues to support the self-employed carers to develop their businesses. This is increasing care and support capacity across the county and allowing people increased choice and control over how they receive support.
Ensure the long-term sustainability of social care providers	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health & Head of Public Protection Ongoing	It is vital that social care providers are able to provide care and support and as such the council has a role in ensuring their financial sustainability through fair fee negotiations and supporting with recruitment and training. The Council has built positive relationships with local providers and intervenes and provide support where difficulties emerge. There is effective contract monitoring in place, based on partnership approaches. The position in Monmouthshire, whilst challenging, has seen very few providers withdraw their services and most have managed to weather the difficulties around recruitment and retention with the social care sector. Positively home care services have increased and there has been a reduction in the number of people waiting and the average length of wait time. The increasing numbers of residential placements and costs of residential care has had a big impact the budget in Adult Social Care. The main pressure on the budget during 2024/25 was down to provider fees. At the beginning of the year the cost of the care that commissioned was calculated at a higher rate than was able to be accommodated within the budget set. Through extensive fair fee negotiations with provider agencies this was reduced; however, not to the extent that this delivered within the financial envelope agreed within the budget.

Ref & Status	9a	Risk	Potential Risk that: Failure to return attendance figures to those seen before the pandemic, particularly among vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals, could lead to a worsening in educational attainment					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Laura Wright (Cabinet member for Education)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All People Scrutiny Committee, Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat

Reason why Identified

The pandemic caused widespread disruption to learning, with a significant effect on both teachers and learners. Longer-term effects of the pandemic on pupil well-being and attendance have emerged. There is a risk that our schooling system struggles to adjust to the new patterns of need amongst our children and young people in the post-pandemic period. Meeting the needs of vulnerable learners remains a priority and the gap in attainment between those not eligible and those eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM) remains a concern. There is variation in eFSM learner progress and outcomes across schools. Leadership, management, capacity and performance has been identified as in need of improvement in some schools.

Attendance levels have been particularly affected. Though attendance at a primary level has returned to pre-pandemic levels, attendance in our secondary schools remains below levels seen before the pandemic and an area for concern. Attendance of those eligible for free schools meals remains below pre-pandemic levels and below those of their peers not eligible for free school meals. The low attendance of those eFSM has been identified by Estyn as an area for concern in one of our secondary schools. We need to increase attendance for those eFSM to ensure no pupil is left behind.

Ensuring pupils return to school, and understanding the barriers to prevent them doing so, will be key to ensuring our learners are achieving their potential.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Implement the new Attendance and Engagement Policy and processes			Head of Attainment Ongoing		The Local Authority Attendance and Engagement Policy has been updated to encompass all aspects of the Engaging, Belonging and Participating guidance issued by Welsh Government in October 2023. This has now been rolled out to all schools. Alongside the policy, the team have created a handbook for schools to summarise the roles and responsibilities in the new policy, the graduated response for attendance, model policy and the local code for fixed penalty notices and prosecutions. The Education Welfare Service have also prepared training for governors as they implement the new policy.					
Work with Education Welfare Services to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are able to access excellent teaching and learning			Head of Attainment Ongoing		The Education Welfare Service (EWS) team continue to work collaboratively with external supporting services to provide a holistic approach to supporting families to overcome barriers to school attendance. This year, EWS has reviewed processes for closing cases where attendance has improved, there has been a change in provision, or a pupil has relocated to another area. As a result, 50 cases were closed during the year, which has released additional time for Education Welfare Officers to focus on the increasing number of complex cases involving a wide range of agencies.					
Work with schools and partners to better understand drivers of low attendance			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The team have developed their awareness of drivers of low school attendance through engagement in programmes such as Community Focused Schools (which focuses on the way in which families work with schools), Trauma Informed Schools and emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) approaches. This means that the team consistently reinforce the expectations and approaches used in other teams within the directorate. EWS are also working closely with the Inspire Outreach Team who offer support to secondary pupils with attendance below 50% through a reintegration and qualification approach for pupils who may be dis-engaged or have reasons for non-attendance such as Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). For the first time a team of Family Liaison Officers has been working with schools and families to build relationships, overcome barriers to attendance and support pupils back into school. This means pupils and families are receiving support earlier, and Education Welfare Officers have more time to deal with increasing numbers of complex cases and support schools to review systems and processes to secure high levels of attendance for all pupils. However, during the year, the capacity of the service has been reduced for periods.					
Support pupils’ wellbeing and address barriers to learning			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being has been implemented. Which helps schools to understand how they are best placed to promote well-being. This has been introduced in a phased approach and increased the number of schools engaged in the approach from 43% to 74%. This is increasing the support available for the well-being needs of pupils and has a significant effect on children’s attendance and achievement in school. All schools and settings are engaged with Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs), and there are currently 67 practicing ELSAs who access regular supervision, operating across all but one school in the county, making a positive impact on the emotional literacy of pupils. Schools are also engaged in professional learning related to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); Trauma Informed Approaches; and Autism; currently 79% of schools are engaged.					

Ref & Status	9b	Risk	Potential Risk that: An increase in behaviours that challenge in schools which may lead to harm to a pupil or member of staff								
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Laura Wright (Cabinet member for Education)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee		All People Scrutiny Committee, Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level		Safeguarding, Health and Safety Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat
Reason why Identified											
Monmouthshire is currently experiencing exceptionally high levels of both Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) and Permanent Exclusions (PEx) and this presents a risk to the positive engagement and outcomes for children / young people and increasing pressure on local authority services and provisions.											
Permanent Exclusion (PEx) and Fixed Term exclusions (FTE) have both increased over the past year. Local authorities across Wales and England have experienced similar trends post covid. The reasons for this are complex and not easily resolved. As of the end of the 2023/24 academic year there were 22 upheld PEx. The number and rate of PEx and FTE is higher than the South East Wales consortia overall rate. Of concern is that the data shows clear rises in the issue of FTE for reasons linked to violent or aggressive behaviour, this can be verbal or physical against another student or an adult.											
Increased levels of exclusions increase the pressure on the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) which currently does not have the capacity to accept any new learners unless they have been permanently excluded. This means that even where a graduated response has been applied within a school, and where behaviours and risk assessments indicate the learner may merit a PRS intervention, there is limited capacity to access this.											
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score	
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score		
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12		
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12		
Mitigating Actions											
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress						
Support learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions or of Permanent exclusions through the Education Support Team (EST)			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The Education Support Team was created in March 2023 and has enabled those learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) or of Permanent Exclusions (PEx) to receive support from specialist professionals. This team have experience in responding to behaviours of concern/ challenge, an enhanced understanding of social emotional and mental health needs and additional learning needs (ALN) in a way that is trauma informed and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) aware. This supportive team has enabled learners to maintain their current placement by reducing the risk of PEx by stabilising behaviours and thus reducing risk, they have supported learners to integrate into other schools via managed moves to prevent PEx and supported in year transfers of learners with prior FTE.						
Implement the outcomes of the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) review			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The Pupil Referral Service has been reviewed. This has helped understand the current demand, while considering the future role and function of the PRS. The findings of this review will now be implemented including increasing the capacity of the PRS to provide preventative intervention for pupils at risk of PEx and enhanced support for learners to reintegrate into mainstream having had a period of support in the PRS.						
Work with officers in community partnerships to secure Home Office grant funding to support the reduction of violence in schools			Vulnerable Learners Lead Ongoing		The Vulnerable Learner Lead worked with officers in community partnerships to secure Home Office grant funding to support the reduction of violence in schools and to reduce exclusions (both FTE and PEx) associated with this. This funding enabled several learners at risk of PEx to avoid this outcome, including learners in their final year of school, who were able to complete their exams in school. Further multi agency work has also been undertaken to consider how to reduce FTE and PEx linked to aggression and violence amongst both pupils and towards staff. Focused efforts are underway to improve representation at multi agency meetings in schools and with focused consideration of learners who have been excluded for these reasons in the intervening periods between each meeting.						
Continue to roll out training for all staff in all school and settings (i.e. ACEs and Trauma Informed practice) to increase the understanding of the impact on learner behaviours, strategies and approaches to deescalate and ensure safety and wellbeing.			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		A key part of our approach to reducing exclusions is to improve an understanding of the drivers for children’s behaviours. Trauma Informed approaches form part of a universal, whole-school, preventative approach supporting school communities to become trauma informed and mentally healthy places for all. Being Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) aware and trauma-informed is recognised by the Welsh Government in guidance and reflects the evidence base that it is important to build relational practice to improve positive outcomes for all learners. Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) and relational practice approaches are being developed and embedded. A multi-agency TIS Steering Group, including colleagues from health and social care, has been established to achieve this, led by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), and a tiered training programme has been developed.						

Risks to policy priorities

Ref & Status	10	Risk	Potential Risk that: The Council does not support the Replacement Local Development Plan, leading to delays in its adoption which restricts our ability to take forward key policy objective such as job creation, affordable housing development and the adoption of key policies to protect the environment and tackle climate change							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Craig O’Connor (Chief Officer Place) and Cllr Paul Griffiths (Cabinet member for Planning and Economic Development)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Thriving and Ambitious Place A Safe Place to Live Place Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Governance, Strategic Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Tolerate	
Reason why Identified										
The current Local Development Plan ran until 31st December 2021; it will remain the principal development plan for decision-making purposes until the adoption of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). This does not change the urgent need for the council to make timely progress on its RLDP and to adopt it as soon as realistically possible to address key issues and challenges, including rebalancing our demography and responding to the climate emergency, and to meet the future needs of the county. Factors contributing to the delays include challenge from Welsh Government, which resulted in the need for a new Preferred Strategy, high phosphate levels in the rivers Usk and Wye which resulted in restrictions on developments, and delays in agreeing appropriate Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites.										
The Council is now proceeding with a new Preferred Strategy that responds to the Welsh Government objection and unresolved water quality constraint in the upper River Wye catchment. A revised Delivery Agreement has therefore been prepared which sets out an amended timetable for Plan preparation. The revised timetable shows that the adoption of the RLDP is anticipated in Summer 2025. This unavoidable delay will impact on the Council’s ability to address the identified issues and objectives until the RLDP is adopted and puts pressure on the deliverability of the housing and employment figures over the Plan period, with more reliance on delivery towards the end of the Plan.										
There are a range of issues and challenges the RLDP will need to address: • The delivery of affordable housing continues to be a concern. There are a significant number of households on the Councils waiting list, and there are limited remaining opportunities within the current LDP to deliver affordable homes because most strategic sites have been delivered and the remaining few cannot currently proceed due to phosphates. • There is a recognised lack of suitable employment land in the northern part of the County (Abergavenny and Monmouth in particular). Delays to the RLDP mean that new allocations to attract investors or retain growing businesses will not be available. There may be some scope for employment sites to come forward adjacent to settlement boundaries outside of the current LDP allocations but in parts of the county these are affected by phosphate restrictions. • The RLDP will identify areas with potential for renewable energy. A delay to the RLDP will have limited impact in this regard because renewable energy schemes such as solar farms can come forward for consideration via the existing LDP and under national planning policy. • There is a need to ensure the RLDP’s growth ambition is matched by infrastructure delivery, much of which is delivered by other bodies. This alignment is required to ensure sustainable development to support future economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Prepare a replacement Local Development Plan to address the county’s issues/challenges, including in relation to the provision of housing (market and affordable) and employment opportunities, and to facilitate the identification and allocation of additional housing land and appropriate employment land, with associated infrastructure.			Chief Officer Place Spring 2026		The RLDP Preferred Strategy was endorsed by Council in October 2023. This has formed the basis of the Deposit Plan, which was endorsed by Council for a detailed public consultation in October 2024. The Deposit Plan sets the ambition for development within the county. This plan also addresses a number of key issues and align with the priorities of the organisation; it has allocated 50% affordable housing on each new development and is introducing enabling policies which will allow for further affordable housing developments to come forward. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county which is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness. All homes developed under this plan will also be net zero carbon. Council will consider the results of the consultation in Summer 2025, following which the RLDP will be subject to public examination.					
Work with partner organisations to identify and implement solutions to phosphate pollution in the Rivers Usk and Wye			Chief Officer Place Ongoing		In May, Cabinet approved the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy. This includes an action plan on how we will work in partnership to improve the health of our rivers and oceans. Progress will be monitored regularly by the Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group. Over the last few years there has been significant work in this area and there is planned strategic phosphate mitigation work in the form of phosphate stripping being installed in Llanfoist (Abergavenny) and Monmouth to serve their settlements. This will enable appropriate development to be permitted within these settlement areas. There has also been a comprehensive review of the Environmental Permits of wastewater treatments across Monmouthshire and, where there is capacity, appropriate development					

		proposals will be permitted. The candidate sites proposed within the Deposit Plan will not have an adverse impact on water quality within the River Wye or Usk.
Ensure RLDP growth ambition is met by essential infrastructure	Chief Officer Place	Close working is being undertaken on the infrastructure requirements and the delivery between the Local Planning Authority and colleagues in the Local Education Authority, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Highways Authority, Passenger Transport Unit, Active Travel Team, SUDs Approval Body and Green Infrastructure team. The Infrastructure Plan will be published alongside the Deposit Plan.

Ref & Status	11a	Risk	Potential Risk that: The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 because our resources are not commensurate with the scale and complexity of the challenge							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Debra Hill-Howells (Chief Officer Infrastructure) & Cllr Catrin Maby (Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Green Place to Live Place Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic Minimalist		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Tolerate
Reason why Identified										
Tackling climate change and moving to a low carbon economy is one of the biggest challenges facing our society. Rising temperatures and more extreme weather events bring increased risks to our communities and are causing long-term and potentially irreversible damage to our planet’s eco-systems, with significant local impacts such as flooding and loss of species. If we are to stand a chance of slowing the rise in the Earth’s temperature, we need to act now. In 2019, councillors were unanimous in declaring a climate emergency. The council will strive to reduce its own emissions and work with communities and local businesses to help them reduce their emissions. This will require engagement, community involvement and commitments from third parties.										
Despite a nation-wide climate emergency declaration and a common recognition of the importance of reducing carbon emissions, the resources provided to tackle this issue have consistently not met the scale of the challenge. A significant investment in public funding would be required if net zero 2030 is to be met.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2025/26	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	Medium (9)
2026/27	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2026/27	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	
2027/28	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2027/28	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Deliver the Monmouthshire County Council Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy			Strategic Leadership Team Timescales as per strategy		The Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy was approved by Cabinet in May 2024. This strategy is underpinned by four action plans to better reflect the breadth of work that is taking place: Internal decarbonisation, Biodiversity and Nature Recovery, Rivers and Oceans and Community climate change. Progress in implementing the strategy is regularly monitored by the Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group. Work is underway as part of this strategy to better understand the scale of the challenge we face in striving to collectively become net zero. A costed decarbonisation plan and survey for our built estate has been commissioned to ensure a sound understanding of the funding needed to implement change. Without significant increases in public funding, it is unlikely we will meet the collective target of net zero by 2030. Support is being provide to communities to reduce their carbon emissions through circular economy projects such as Benthg library of things and reuse shops. Grant funding has been obtained to employ two officers to help expand this offering. The Monmouthshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) continues to share best practice and resources. This partnership developed the Monmouthshire Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP); the public consultation of this action plan was launched in September. The action plan provides practical and achievable actions to help reverse the decline in biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in the county. The council is a member of the Wye Nutrient Management Board Technical Advice Group which is identifying and analysing options for delivering improvements in water quality. The council also has continued involvement in the Wye Catchment Partnership to protect water quality, water quantity and biodiversity. An Usk Catchment Partnership Core Group has been established and has agreed its priorities for the draft Integrated Catchment Plan.					

Ref & Status	11b	Risk	Potential Risk that: The Council is unable to deliver services as a result of the increasing frequency of climate-related emergencies such as floods or extreme heatwaves that increase the demand for emergency responses and can cause damage to infrastructure and the closure of facilities												
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible		Strategic Leadership Team & Cllr Catrin Maby (Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment)		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee		All Place Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level		Environmental. Service Delivery Minimalist		Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate		Treat	
Reason why Identified															
Tackling climate change and moving to a low carbon economy is one of the biggest challenges facing our society. Rising temperatures and more extreme weather events bring increased risks to our communities and are causing long-term and potentially irreversible damage to our planet’s eco-systems, with significant local impacts such as flooding and loss of species. If we are to stand a chance of slowing the rise in the Earth’s temperature, we need to act now. In 2019, councillors were unanimous in declaring a climate emergency. The council will strive to reduce its own emissions and work with communities and local businesses to help them reduce their emissions. This will require engagement, community involvement and commitments from third parties.															
When considering climate change, it is important to consider both how Monmouthshire is contributing to climate change, but also how resilient the county is to the likely impacts of climate change. Extreme weather, such as flooding and record high temperatures, can impact significantly on infrastructure, homes and businesses, along with disruption to community life and public services, particularly critical public services people rely on such as care services.															
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score					
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score						
2025/26	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)					
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12						
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12						
Mitigating Actions															
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale			Mitigation action progress									
Prepare and adapt for the impact of climate change			Strategic Leadership Team Ongoing			In recent years, council services have considered what the potential risks to their services are, in order to start thinking about how to adapt to these risks. In 2021, some services updated these Climate Change Risk Assessments to allow service areas to better understand their necessary adaptation requirements. Discussion are also taking place with Welsh Government to better understand their expectations around climate adaptation. The council is also part of broader assessments of climate risk being carried out by the Cardiff Capital Region as part of their Carbon Disclosure Project commitments. The Replacement Local Development Plan has a key role to play in making sure our communities are sustainable and resilient to the impacts of climate change. Changes to national planning policy on flooding are still awaited, but officers intend to take a precautionary approach, avoiding all built development on greenfield sites at known flood risk. Welsh Government has produced The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales, and in response, Monmouthshire is currently developing an updated Flood Risk Management Strategy. Much of the work to coordinate emergency responses is organised through the Gwent Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The council continues to work with partners on the LRF to make sure that we are prepared for severe weather events. As part the reworking of the Climate Emergency Strategy, climate adaptation, which includes preparing and adapting for the impact of climate change, has been embedded across each of the 4 action plans. Some of the actions within this include developing the management of green infrastructure to improve climate resilience; increasing urban tree canopy, including new street trees and in car parks to provide a cooling effect; and continuing to promote and support council services with business continuity and emergency response strategies.									

Ref & Status	12	Risk	Potential Risk that: Residents are unable to secure or retain suitable accommodation, leading to rising homelessness and outward migration as a result of failures in the housing market						
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Cath Fallon (Head of Rural Development, Housing and Partnerships), Matthew Gatehouse (Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships) & Cllr Sara		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Safe Place to Live A Fair Place to Live People Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level	Service Delivery Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat

	Burch (Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism) and Cllr Angela Sandles (Cabinet member for Equalities and Engagement)									
Reason why Identified										
The Council is currently experiencing significant challenges and risks in relation to homelessness. Initially due to the pandemic, Welsh Government required Councils to avoid people sleeping rough, then made the subsequent decision to transition homeless services with the aim of homelessness becoming rare, brief and unrepeatd, together with an improvement in the quality of homeless accommodation. Welsh Government homeless policy changes, initially through the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Support and then subsequently more recently Rapid Rehousing Guidance, whilst positive, have created challenges largely relating to lack of accommodation and support needs. Although homeless presentations have remained broadly consistent, the impact of Welsh Government policy has seen a significant increase in demand for homeless accommodation. This in turn has impacted significantly on the Housing Options Team operationally in respect of the need to identify alternative accommodation, which largely has relied on B&B accommodation, re-housing households, housing management and placement break downs. This has also created placement and staffing challenges. There are challenges regarding the availability of temporary, supported and permanent accommodation, the type, quality and location of accommodation and the range of housing support available necessary to meet current and emerging homeless need. Further challenges are also being experienced in respect of acquiring existing accommodation and repurposing properties due to the buoyant market in Monmouthshire and constraints relating to funding eligibility and planning. There are also delays in the construction of new homes due to delays in implementing the RLDP. The Renting Homes Act, which came into force from 1 December 2022, has made significant changes to the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties. There is a risk this could impact on the private rented sector in the County and reduce the availability of rental properties, further decreasing housing availability and increasing accommodation challenges in the County, although the current anecdotal evidence suggests the impact has not been too disruptive to date. Whilst the Council has made positive progress with homeless delivery evidenced by reductions in homeless presentations and the need to provide homeless accommodation due to a more positive performance in respect of homeless prevention, identification of additional homeless accommodation and move-on to social housing, risks remain. Monmouthshire welcomed large numbers of refugees from Ukraine. Local residents have opened their homes and all these refugees will need alternative accommodation when these temporary arrangements come to an end. In addition, many of those who have come through the Welsh Government Super Sponsor Scheme have found jobs and settled locally. All local authorities also need to find accommodation for Afghans arriving in the UK under the Afghan Resettlement Programme. A shortage of suitable and affordable accommodation, along with the challenges associated with our rurality, will affect our ability to provide suitable long-term accommodation. The widening of asylum dispersal from 2022 could place further pressure on the housing market as the council plays its part in assisting the Home Office to find short term accommodation for asylum seekers in line with UK Government policy and our aspirations for Monmouthshire to become an accredited county of sanctuary.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2025/26	Likely	Major	High	12	2025/26	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Low (4)
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Prevent homelessness through Rapid Rehousing			Head of Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform		The Rapid Re-Housing Transition plan was adopted by Cabinet in April 2023. This sets out the Council’s five-year plan to prevent homelessness, increase accommodation and focus support, and includes active buy-in from wider agencies involving homelessness, for example, the role of Health and Social Care is extremely important in homeless prevention and helping people (such as young people and those with mental health issues) maintain their existing accommodation.					
			As per Homeless Transition Plan		Rapid rehousing is facilitating increased resource into homeless prevention, for example through additional staffing and the availability of the Homeless Prevention Fund. The council is working with partner agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Shared Benefit Service to support more people at risk of homelessness, granting awards to households to help tackle arrears/debt and households experiencing homelessness to enable them to remain in their current accommodation or access alternatives.					
			The Housing Support service has been remodelled to include dedicated substance misuse support, temporary accommodation support and re-settlement support. This also includes dedicated support for young people with higher need through the recent expansion of the Housing First scheme with Pobl and the introduction of MoYo – dedicated housing floating support for young people. These initiatives have contributed to the increase in the percentage of homeless applications who are successfully prevented from becoming homeless to 71%. There is collaboration across council services to prevent care leavers from becoming homeless. A Corporate Parenting Panel is regularly held with a range of teams from across the organisation that coordinate and provide support to care leavers. Further							

		opportunity has arisen to refresh the current Housing Support Grant programme to increase effectiveness. There is a need to reduce the number of projects to improve contract monitoring and re-specify and re-package requirements to increase resilience, flexibility and increase the focus on quality. This is a priority to start in 2025.
Develop suitable accommodation for homeless people, including long-term housing for all those accommodated in temporary housing and specialist provision for those with additional needs	Head of Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform As per Homeless Transition Plan	The RLDP was recently approved by Council for public consultation. Council will consider findings of this consultation in Summer 2025. The delivery of the RLDP will be key to increasing the availability of housing in the county; the plan has allocated 50% affordable housing on each site and is introducing enabling policies which will allow for further affordable housing developments to come forward. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county which is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness The availability of both temporary and settled homes for homeless households is being increased through a range of means including partnerships with private landlords through Monmouthshire Lettings and more homes through new build developments and acquisitions. The Council has also started to acquire accommodation for temporary accommodation. We have worked with housing association partners to make additional general needs social housing available for homeless households; for 24/25 63% of general need social housing had been allocated to homeless households. There is a need to determine how much scope there is to allocate further social housing to homeless applicants without being overly detrimental to other housing need groups. The increased support for those at risk of homelessness, combined with the increase in availability of both temporary and settled accommodation, have contributed to the reduced use of bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. As part of the focus to reduce the use of unsuitable and costly B & B, a key initiative has been to repurpose Severn View, a former residential home, to temporary homeless accommodation with dedicated support. This will help mitigate against the need to use B & B. The general homeless position is enabling a review of Monmouthshire Lettings during the summer of 2025, with a view to reducing the stock whilst also reconfiguring the portfolio in terms of quality, location and type.
Prepare an RLDP to address the county's issues/challenges, including in relation to the provision of housing (market and affordable) and employment opportunities, and to facilitate the identification and allocation of additional housing land and appropriate employment land, with associated infrastructure.	Chief Officer Place Head of Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform Ongoing	Detailed update contained in risk 10.
Work with partners including Welsh Government, UK Government, local sponsors and landlords to identify a range of accommodation to accommodate Ukrainian refugees and those arriving from Afghanistan.	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships Ongoing	The authority has been successful helping those fleeing the war in Ukraine to find properties in the area. Residents participating in the Homes for Ukraine Scheme have gone above and beyond what was initially asked of them. We have exceeded the 'population share' of refugees identified by Welsh Government. Recognising the challenges faced by this community, we have a specialised team comprising of two homeless prevention workers, complemented by dedicated translation and administration support. Our approach involves close collaboration with local landlords to cultivate strong local networks and access to properties, addressing concerns related to affordability and financial assessments. We have also begun to work in collaboration with other rural authorities and the Strategic Migration Partnership and the WLGA to develop solutions suited to rural authorities.
Work with national providers and the Home Office to identify suitable accommodation for those fleeing persecution and ensure that appropriate support services, including trauma informed support, are available.	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships Ongoing	The Home Office has made all local authorities Asylum Dispersal Areas. This has broadened the responsibility for accommodating asylum seekers in Wales which had previously been shouldered by a small number of authorities. The Home Office's continues to struggle to find suitable affordable properties in Monmouthshire. Officers continue to meet with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and Home Office and indications are that some a small number of properties. The small number of properties we had expected to come forward in 2024-25 are now anticipated in the first half of 2025-26.

Appendix 2 – Risk Radar

In line with Strategic Risk Management Policy, the Council has developed a risk radar. The radar outlines some of the potential risks that Monmouthshire may face over the coming years. This report draws on national and global emerging risks identified in a range of horizon scanning reports, including most prominently the World Economic Forum (WEF) global risks report, UK Government's National Risk Register and Welsh Government's Future Trends Report. Evidence from this will help inform risk management by highlighting the key uncertainties and challenges that may affect our organisation's objectives and operations. Consideration will be given to the annual Risk Radar Report when identifying and managing strategic risks and in the Council's wider service planning.

A range of evidence is collated to inform the radar. An overview of risks identified on the radar can be seen below. Risks have been categorised by a main factor and timescale, some will impact across multiple factor categories and varying timescales.



Appendix 3: Strategic Risk Management – Summary

Risk Management is the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and determining the most effective methods of controlling them or responding to them. Strategic risks are those which affect the Council as a whole. Typically these will be key risks which could significantly jeopardise the Council's ability to achieve its objectives, statutory plans and/or provide operational services as planned.

The Council is committed to the effective management of risk. As a large public sector organisation, it is exposed to a wide range of risks and threats in delivering key services to communities. Within the Council the purpose of risk management is to:

- preserve and protect the Council's assets, reputation and staff
- promote corporate governance and aid good management in controlling and managing risks
- support successful delivery of strategic aims, objectives and outcomes
- improve business performance and better anticipate calculated risks where these are likely in delivering improvements
- avoid unnecessary liabilities, costs and failures

The Council seeks to ensure that risk management is effective from strategic to individual services and employees. Therefore, all employees and councillors are responsible for ensuring there are good levels of internal control and risk management throughout the Council in order that the Council's specified outcomes are achieved.

The Council uses a 'traffic light' system of Red/Amber/Green associated with High/Medium/Low to categorise risk levels. This is determined using the risk matrix below.

High risk	The risk is highly likely to occur and the impact will be major. Management action/control evaluation and improvement is required coupled with continued pro-active monitoring
Medium risk	The risk is unlikely to result in a major issue, however, if it did the impact would be significant or serious . This risk is relatively less significant than a High risk however it needs to be closely monitored within timely management action/controls to ensure it does not escalate.
Low risk	The risk is very unlikely to occur and the impact will be minor or moderate at worst. Risk will be managed by seeking control improvements where practical and / or monitoring and reviewing at regular intervals

Risks are also given a score. Scores of 1-4 are low risks, scores of 6-9 are medium risks and scores 12-16 are high risk. Providing a score as well as a risk level allows the variations within risk levels to be more clearly stated.

Major (4)	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (16)
Substantial (3)	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)
Moderate (2)	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)
Minor (1)	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)
	Unlikely (1)	Possible (2)	Likely (3)	Almost certain (4)