

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held
at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 26th June 2014 at 2.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: County Councillor J. Prosser (Chairman)
County Councillor B. Strong (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, Mrs. D. Blakebrough, R.F. Chapman, P.R. Clarke, D.L.S. Dovey, G.L. Down, A. Easson, Mrs R.M. Edwards, D.J. Evans, P.S. Farley, P.A. Fox, R. J. W. Greenland, Mrs. E. J. Hacket Pain, R.G. Harris, R.J.C. Hayward, M. Hickman, R.J.Higginson, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.G.M. Howarth, D.W.H. Jones, Mrs. P. Jones, Ms. S. Jones, S.B. Jones, R.P. Jordan, P. Murphy, Mrs. M. Powell, Mrs. V.E. Smith, B. Strong, Mrs. F. Taylor, A.C. Watts, Mrs. A.E. Webb, Mrs S. White, K. Williams and A.M. Wintle.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr P. Matthews	Chief Executive
Mrs. T. Harry	Head of Democracy and Regulatory Services
Mr S. Burch	Chief Officer, Social Care and Health
Mr W. Mclean	Head of Policy and Engagement.
Mrs J. Robson	Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer
Miss R. Allen	Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator
Mr R. Tranter	Head of Legal Services
Mrs S. King	Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor J.E. Crook, D.L. Edwards, J. George and J. Marshall.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

We received and noted the Chairman's report.

There were no petitions presented.

The Chairman welcomed Chief inspector Mick Moyles, who introduced himself to members as the Chief Inspector for Monmouthshire. We thanked the Chief Inspector for attending.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were noted under the relevant agenda item.

4. MINUTES

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the following meetings:

A) ANNUAL MEETING 13TH MAY 2014

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2014, subject to the following amendments:

- Delete last paragraph page 1 (repetition).
- Header on page 2, delete *14th May 2013* and change to **13th May 2014**.

B) COUNCIL MEETING 15TH MAY 2014

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the meeting held on 15th May 2014, subject to the following amendments:

- Pg 29 addition: **Members raised a key point in that the report should contain more evaluative data.**
- Pg 13 Appointment of Leader and Cabinet Delegations: P. Murphy – delete *performance*.
- Pg 13 Delete *County Councillor S. Howarth* and insert **Chief Officer Social Care and Health**. Formal apologies were expressed to the individuals

C) EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 23RD MAY 2014

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 23rd May 2014, subject to the following amendments:

- Insert Councillor P. Jones as present.
- Insert Councillors G. Down and F. Taylor as apologies for absence.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no public forum items received.

6. COMMITTEE MINUTES

We resolved that the following minutes be received:

(a) Standards Committee 7th March 2014

It was noted that County Councillor P. Jordan was present.

(b) Internal Monitoring Board 19th April 2014

(c) Democratic Services Committee

7. NOTICES OF MOTION

a) Submitted by County Councillor A. Easson

Monmouthshire County Council has a policy prohibiting the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products in Council buildings and on Council property. This Council does not have a policy that applies to e- cigarettes. Therefore I move the following motion:

“That this Council takes appropriate advice and determines the prohibition or otherwise, the use of electronic nicotine aid devices (E-cigarettes), in and on Council property”.

Councillor P. Fox, Leader of the Council, advised that the appropriate advice would be sought regarding the motion.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

b) Submitted by County Councillor D. Blakebrough

“That this council signs up to achieving the White Ribbon Status Award. In doing so Monmouthshire County Council will demonstrate its commitment to the aims of the White Ribbon Campaign. It will be a proactive and timely response to the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Bill (Wales) out this month, which recommends that organisations show leadership and accountability in tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence through long term strategic action”.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- In presenting the motion, Councillor Blakebrough highlighted that the reason for motion was to sign up to white ribbon award, to demonstrate coordinated approach to issue and commitment for the long term.
- We welcomed the Domestic Abuse Coordinator who explained the purpose of the white ribbon status award. We were advised that the White Ribbon Status Award surrounds eliminating violence against women, the white ribbon is directly related to linking to violence against women campaign and the 25th November would be a dedicated day. There was an importance to ensure that men were also supported and Councillors were invited to sign up to support.
- There was a requirement for more education and awareness in terms of violence against women. Access to information and staff training was in place, to ensure that information was continually conveyed and awareness was raised around the campaign.
- The draft plan would be submitted at the end of June and it was anticipated that an award ceremony would be held at the end of July.
- Members recognised that funding for provision within the County was needed.
- Councillors Batrouni and Fox, welcomed the opportunity to become male ambassadors.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

(c) Submitted by County Councillor D. Batrouni

“That this Council wholeheartedly supports the Free School breakfast policy; thanks the Welsh Government for implementing it; recognises the tremendous positive impact it has had on families and children’s learning in the classroom; is disappointed the Conservative and Liberal groups want to introduce a charge for the childcare element of it; believes any charging associated with the policy is a retrograde step; and therefore asserts that this policy, or anything akin to it, is permanently dropped.”

During discussion the following points were noted:

- In presenting the motion, Councillor Batrouni highlighted that the free school breakfast policy was introduced as breakfast assisted in health wellbeing nutrition. improved learning and education, however, the policy would charge for the childcare element. It was felt that the move to charge would be a barrier to parents.
- Councillor F. Taylor expressed a personal non-prejudicial interest as her child attended a breakfast club.
- It was noted that Cabinet had made clear that further information was required regarding the policy and the relevant scrutiny committee would consider proposals further, it would be extremely important to understand the impact of those in need.
- Concerns were expressed that the latter part of the motion was inaccurate. However, it was recognised that eating breakfast assisted with learning.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the impact of charging on low income families.
- Members welcomed further scrutiny on the policy.
- A member felt that the information within the EQIA was inadequate and that a more robust equalities assessment was required across the authority.
- An amendment was proposed and duly seconded, to withdraw words within the motion which related to political groups:

“That this Council wholeheartedly supports the Free School breakfast policy; thanks the Welsh Government for implementing it; recognises the tremendous positive impact it has had on families and children’s learning in the classroom; believes any charging associated with the policy is a retrograde step; and therefore asserts that this policy, or anything akin to it, is permanently dropped.”

Upon being put to the vote the amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.

Upon being put to the vote the substantive motion was carried.

8. ANNUAL REPORT OF CHIEF OFFICER, SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

We were presented with the Annual Report of Chief Officer Social Care and Health, which provided Council with a copy of the Director’s Annual Report on the effectiveness of Social Care Services in 2013-14 and the priorities for the coming year.

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) is part of the regulatory framework for social services in Wales. It creates a statutory requirement to tell local citizens and key stakeholders how well we think the arrangements for delivering social care are working. It is the report of the Chief Officer (Statutory Director). Once approved by Council it becomes the authority's report.

The report stated that the service is in a period of intense activity as it strives to innovate and improve while continuing to deliver safe and high quality services. It went on to prioritise six specific areas of focus for 2014-15 which are a continuation of those set for the previous year. These were:

- A focus on families
- Doing what matters
- Finding integrated solutions
- Strengthening communities
- Building new safeguarding and protection systems
- Developing and supporting our people

During discussion we noted the following points:

- The Chairman of the Adults Select Committee thanked the Chief Officer for presenting the report. The officer was commended for addressing concerns expressed at meetings, regarding version control, status and next review.
- A query was raised regarding Performance Measure, relating to the accuracy of the figure 101 looked after children at 31 March. In response, we noted that this was a volatile measure and as cases had been reviewed, figures could increase or decrease quickly.
- Further information would be provided regarding the trend for number of adults who received a traditional service during the year.
- Members recognised that good initial progress was noted following the Estyn morning visit in February 2014 and that safeguarding had been appropriately prioritised.
- The officer thanked members for the support and highlighted that there was a need for a balanced report. In response to Estyn, it was a priority to ensure that it was right at the highest level and information would be presented to Cabinet in November regarding safeguarding in Monmouthshire.
- Progress on priority actions relating to A Focus on Families, progress was requested regarding figures for 2014/15 as 2013/14 were included within the report. In response, work was being undertaken, between education and social care directorate, in the Medium Term Financial plan. It was hoped that there had been significant progress at the time of writing, however, progress had not been as fast as anticipated. The area of respite for people with disabilities, was identified as more than satisfied and the service was moving forward with the agenda for support for children and adults.
- The Chief Officer and team were commended for maintaining quality whilst making significant changes. In the area of developing and supporting people, members welcomed that focus would be on recruiting permanent staff and

minimising agency work. New management systems would include appraisals and personal development.

- Further information was required regarding the amount spent on agency staff, details of engagement in terms of My Day My Life work, how satisfaction figures were collated and progress on the integrated health pilot.
- The officer responded and advised that the team had struggled with staffing and did not have figures for agency staff, which was significant in children's services. Posts were out to advert at present and there were excellent examples of previous agency staff becoming permanent and building the county as a place where people want to work. Satisfaction figures were collated from confidential questionnaires. A member queried whether the questionnaire identified the level of satisfaction.
- Significant work had taken place regarding the integrated health pilot, would like to see it further developments, however, this would be dependent on how regional agenda is pushed forward.
- Information was requested regarding the improvements that had been made in foster carers, how many were recruited and costs, also what was the cost to the authority for the deficit and if there was any change in demographic. The officer confirmed that information could be provided in writing.
- Key issue would be to stabilise in house provision, the Chief Officer was generally pleased with direction and had received positive foster report, which would go to the appropriate select committee. The team had been more effective in promoting foster care, but there was a particular question around kinship fostering, which could result in a new burden from courts around that issue.
- Members welcomed the report and commended the Chief Officer and team. It was recognised that the Social Services budget was difficult to manage and that rapid changes could occur, which could affect funding.
- Within the spending diagram figures were displayed for 2013/14, it was noted that officers had amended the chart for the final version. The position would be clarified.

We resolved to endorse the report.

9. MONMOUTHSHIRE ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

We were presented with the Monmouthshire Engagement Framework, which sought Council's adoption of the Monmouthshire Local Service Board's Engagement framework, which provided a consistent approach to engagement by the partners working across the County.

Engagement was highlighted as a fundamental aspect of Monmouthshire County Council's response to both the financial and service delivery pressures that exist within Wales today. The work of the Local Service Board seeks to bring together the key public service delivery partners to address the most significant challenges facing the communities within the County.

The framework would develop, complement and enhance what is currently being Done and there was a requirement to build on past practice that has been developed. The framework would enable people to speak and contribute to

processes. Partner agencies had been involved in developments, an example was ageing well, where relevant groups had been engaged.

The report was offered as the framework, which would be constantly reviewed and could result in learning. Further work would be undertaken with colleagues to look at the way Monmouthshire engages is strengthened and supplemented, by what we do today.

During discussion we noted the following points:

- County Councillor F. Taylor declared a personal interest as the Aneurin Bevan Health Board independent community member.
- The Leader of the Council thanked the officer and team. It was highlighted that engagement was fundamental in how Monmouthshire operates, the framework would make it more meaningful and is a significant step forward. We noted that the Minister had recognised the good work of Monmouthshire County Council and had been pleased with developments in the engagement strategy.
- Members welcomed the evaluation and recognised that the authority was fundamentally going in right direction, however, origination of the report was unclear. A query was raised why town and community councils were not included.
- We were informed that groups could be a route into communities, and partner information was analysed and used. The report surrounded engagement with communities outside democratic bodies, therefore, town and community councils were not included. A compact agreement was in place with town councils, which will be strengthened to ensure that it was delivered on both sides.
- We welcomed further detail to be included in the report which would identify the place of members of the public.
- Clarification was required regarding the statement regarding consultation, concerns were expressed that consultation was used just to obtain views. Further engagement was required outside the democratic process as it was perceived that some people felt they were being excluded and that sometimes people lacked confidence in addressing and challenging the Council.
- Members welcomed that training, guidance and support would be provided to enable all participants to engage effectively. It was noted that there were different channels available to enable challenge and for people to voice opinions.
- Officers noted member questions and we were informed that the structure for engagement with town and community councils is different to that of public. A fundamental piece of work was around confidence, supporting framework are toolkits, one would be with Monmouthshire County Council and partners.
- A fundamental part was to do things differently at right time in process and identify opportunity to influence, to make sure that engagement is appropriately used and actively considered at right stage.
- Communication was essential and working with colleagues to work with communities and promoting the partnership arena.

- It was recognised that there was a communication aspect to engagement and a requirement for critical information to be shared. In April a restructure report was submitted to Cabinet, which brought together engagement and communication teams, the closer links should encourage more response.
- Some members felt that the engagement process for the budget did not fulfil purpose to shape and influence policy. Further information was requested regarding the members role and ideas could be contributed.
- We were advised that ongoing discussions would be held with communities and tranches of engagement would be held around the budget.
- Any interested members would be welcome to get involved. A link would be available to access the toolkit.
- It was noted that the recent engagement events were substantially better attended than previous budget meetings. Each venue was evaluated and information was sent to members. A member's seminar was specifically arranged to provide responses and progress.
- It was a wish that informative updates were produced by the Community Health Council, quarterly or 6 monthly.

We resolved to adopt the Monmouthshire Engagement Framework and commissioned an initial evaluation of the approach for consideration at Council in January 2015.

10. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF IMPROVEMENT AND DEMOCRACY

(a) Appointment of Audit Committee

We received a report to appoint the Audit Committee, together with terms of reference and membership.

It was noted that the membership of the committee comprise 11 members of the Council, to be appointed in accordance with political balance, plus one lay member.

Upon being put to the vote we resolved to agree recommendations as follows:

1. That the Audit Committee be appointed, with the terms of reference.
2. That the membership of the Committee comprise 11 members of the Council, to be appointed in accordance with political balance, plus one lay member.
3. That it be noted that the Chair of the Audit Committee will be appointed by the Committee.

(b) Member Review and Development

We received a report on Individual Member Review and Development, which sought councils endorsement of the Individual Member Review and Development scheme.

During discussion we noted the following:

- It was highlighted that this would be an opportunity for one to ones for members. A system for individual reviews would be introduced and members could develop confidence and skills.

- Members recognised the importance and opportunity for training and it was suggested that delivery needs to be reviewed, by suitable qualified person. Information could be fed into annual training programmes. It was requested that dates were included in the diaries as soon as possible.
- The aim of the review would be to identify skills and needs. It was suggested that different learning needs to be considered.

We resolved to adopt the Individual Member Review and development scheme.

11. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Council is required to review at, or as soon as practicable after, the Council's annual meeting, the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments. Council did not appoint the Audit Committee at its Annual Meeting but has now done so. Pursuant to the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act this committee must be politically balanced and a review is therefore necessary.

We resolved to accept the report (and appendices) as a review under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and to appoint the ordinary committees with the numbers and adjustments as indicated below.

Committee	Cons	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind
Select (x4) (9)	17	9	2	8
Licensing & Regulatory (12)	5	3	1	3
Planning (16)	7	4	1	4
Democratic Services (12)	5	3	1	3
Audit (11 elected members)	5	3	1	2
Aggregate Entitlement (87)	39	22	6	20

12. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE

We resolved that County Councillors Mrs L. Guppy and B. Strong be appointed as Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

County Councillor Easson left the meeting 4.25pm.

13. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(a) From County Councillor P. Farley to County Councillor P. Fox

Are the Leader and members of the Cabinet aware that the rates of people diagnosed with malignant melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, are now five times higher than 40 years ago, according to figures recently announced by

Cancer Research UK? More than 13,000 people are now developing the disease every year compared with around 1,800 in 1975. The latest incidence rates show around 17 people in every 100,000 are diagnosed with malignant melanoma in Great Britain every year. This is compared to just over 3 per 100,000 in the mid 1970's. The dramatic rise is partly down to an explosion in package holidays to Europe dating from the late 60s and the increasing popularity of the "must-have" tan often achieved only after damaging sunburn. The boom in sunbed use has also helped to fuel the increase in skin cancer.

What measures are Cabinet members taking, within their portfolios and in partnership with other organisations, to reduce the risk of malignant melanoma for the residents of Monmouthshire of all ages and the Council's employees and can members be assured specifically that the Council is taking active steps to enforce The Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 (Wales)?

In response we noted:

It was recognised that this was an important subject evidenced through the question and to protect residents against sun exposure, general advice would be provided by public health Wales. Initiatives would be embraced as they come forward.

Staff working outdoors would be provided with clear guidance in terms of sun care. The Health and safety working group were reviewing policy for adequacy and would be monitored to check on compliance.

Sun safety is part of health schools scheme and the sun bed regulation act had been enforced, resulting in a reduction of 10 businesses.

Proactive actions had been taken in the community and wider to staff and people in care.

(b) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor E. Hackett

Can she give Council an update on the SEN transport budget saving proposal?

In response we noted:

The element of SEN transport did not go through Cabinet as further advice was required from the advisory group. Increased fuel and maintenance of vehicles, also had to be considered within transport across the County. It was highlighted that it was a difficult issue, which possibly could be dealt with as a tripartite process. Further work was ongoing and there were no policy changes.

Following a supplementary request for time frame details, an approximate time of September was provided.

(c) From County Councillor R. Hayward to County Councillor B. Jones

On 30th May all Councillors received an e mail from Roger Hoggins concerning revised bus services in Chepstow and Monmouth. In the text was the statement ' There are some alterations to times but the level of service remains largely intact at

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no extra cost'. This was good news and the fact that I could not open the attachments was no problem.

Following complaints about rumours circulating of severe cuts in the W4 service to Osbaston I have obtained a copy of the new timetable and am appalled that the frequency of service to Osbaston has been reduced from 11 trips a day to 7 trips a day. In addition the first bus from Osbaston does not leave until 9.07 in the morning (instead of 8.07) which means that schoolchildren or people going to work now have no public transport option available to them. There is also a two hour gap in the middle of the day with no service at all.

The level of service has not largely remained intact and is disadvantaging a large part of the population of Monmouth particularly the elderly who rely on this service. Will you please take this problem up with officers and restore the service to the levels that have existed for some time.

In response we noted:

Some services were carrying a very small number of passengers and there was no further funding available to sustain current service level. Existing services were utilised for new timetables, which kept most journeys in place without too much disruption. If changes had not been made then services would have terminated at the start of July.

As a supplementary, a request was made to the Cabinet member that when the timetable was introduced, services and responses were monitored and if necessary, further engagement was required with the public.

The Cabinet member advised that the service would be monitored.

The meeting ended at 4.35 p.m.

ACTION LIST
MEETING OF MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
26th JUNE 2014

MINUTE NUMBER AND SUBJECT	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	TO BE ACTIONED BY	PROGRESS
<p>4. NOTICES OF MOTION</p> <p><i>Monmouthshire County Council has a policy prohibiting the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products in Council buildings and on Council property .This Council does not have a policy that applies to e- cigarettes. Therefore I move the following motion: “That this Council takes appropriate advice and determines the prohibition or otherwise, the use of electronic nicotine aid devices (E-cigarettes), in and on Council property”.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor P. Fox, Leader of the Council, advised that the appropriate advice would be sought regarding the motion. 	<p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information passed to relevant officers (HR and Public Health)
<p>ANNUAL REPORT, CHIEF OFFICER, SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information would be provided regarding the trend for number of adults who received a traditional service during the year. • Information was requested regarding the improvements that had been made in foster carers, how many 	<p>Chief Officer Social Care and Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed.

were recruited and costs, also what was the cost to the authority for the deficit and if there was any change in demographic. The officer confirmed that information could be provided in writing.

- Within the spending diagram figures were displayed for 2013/14, it was noted that officers had amended the chart for the final version. The position would be clarified.