



**Neudd y Cyngor  
Y Rhadyr  
Brynbuga  
NP15 1GA**

**County Hall  
Rhadyr  
Usk  
NP15 1GA**

**5 Tachwedd 2014**

**5<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Notice of meeting:  
Monmouthshire County Council**

***Hysbysiad o gyfarfod:  
Cyngor Sir Fynwy***

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014, at 2.00pm  
Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk**

***Dydd Iau 13 Tachwedd 2014, am 2.00yp  
Siambr y Cyngor, Neuadd y Cyngor, Y Rhadyr, Brynbuga,***

*Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 1.55pm. All members are welcome to join the Chairman for prayers should they wish to do.*

**AGENDA**

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

| <b>Item No</b> | <b>Item</b>  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>1.</b>      | <b>Apologies for absence.</b>  |
| <b>2.</b>      | <b>Chairman's report and receipt of petitions.</b>   |
| <b>3.</b>      | <b>To receive declarations of interest.</b>  |
| <b>4.</b>      | <b>To confirm and sign the minutes of the following meeting:<br/>(a) Council Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014<br/>(b) Extraordinary Council Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014</b> |
| <b>5.</b>      | <b>Public Forum items (none received).</b>   |

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| <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> | <p><b>To receive the minutes of the following meetings:</b><br/>(a) Internal Monitoring Board 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014</p> <p><b>Notices of motion</b></p> <p><b>(a) Submitted by County Councillor D. Batrouni</b><br/><i>‘That this Council immediately makes changes to its Post 16 SEN policy with the following amendments:</i></p> <p><i>(i) The college course is full time and follows on immediately from school attendance.</i></p> <p><i>(ii) The student is resident in Monmouthshire and under 19 years of age on 1st September prior to the start of the course.</i></p> <p><i>(iii) The college to be attended is more than 2 miles from home and it is the nearest establishment at which the Authority, through the Corporate Director LLL, is satisfied that an appropriate course can be offered</i></p> <p><i>(iv) The Authority is satisfied through staff assessment and supporting documentation that without the provision of specialised transport the student would be unable to access the course, considering the nature of their disability (as defined by A), and/or the nature of the journey. This decision to be taken by the Corporate Director for LLL.</i></p> <p><i>A. The Authority will define disability as written in the Equality Act which provides that a person has a disability if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• They have a physical or mental impairment.</i></li> <li><i>• The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to day activity.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>(v) Subject to the discretion of the Chief Officer, the Authority will normally only meet 50% of the costs involved in (iv) from the date of commencement of the course up to a maximum of £5000 and would expect the college providing the course to meet the remaining costs.</i></p> <p><i>(vi) The Authority will communicate the decision to parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s) regarding the exact reason for the successful or unsuccessful application. This will be done in a timely manner, no longer than 7 working days from the decision, to enable parents time to appeal and/or make other arrangements before term starts where possible and practicable.</i></p> <p><i>(vii) Still subject to (i), (ii) and (iii), once a child has been successful in their application, an annual application for transport for the continuation of the course will need to be made where the applicants process towards independence will be reviewed.’</i></p> <p><b>Report of the Chief Officer, Enterprise:</b><br/>Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy</p> <p><b>Report of the Head of Policy and Engagement:</b><br/>Feedback from the October Monmouthshire Engages Events and future engagement strategies</p> |
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| <b>10.</b> | <p><b>Members' questions</b></p> <p><b>(a) From County Councillor A. Easson to County Councillor P. Hobson (deferred from meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014)</b></p> <p><i>“At full Council on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2014, the decision to sanction Health and Safety works at Park Street School, prior to handing the property over to ACT was confirmed after an earlier call-in. The decision included the apportionment of £56,000 to the total cost of these works.</i></p> <p><i>Would Cllr Hobson provide a detailed update to Council, on works so far completed, works outstanding ,with timescale for their , the cost expended to date on these works. Does he expect there to be any overrun on costs, if so where will the funding come from.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, in anticipation of a successful conclusion to these works by Mon CC to make the building safe for hand-over, is he aware of any external grants providers that have given firm promises to further the ambitions of ACT.”</i></p> <p><b>(b) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor P. Murphy</b></p> <p><i>“Does the Council plan to increase the living wage for council staff as recently outlined by the Living Wage Foundation?”</i></p> |
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**Paul Matthews**

**Chief Executive**  
***Prif Weithredwr***

***I Gadeirydd ac Aelodau***  
***Cyngor Sir Fynwy***

**To the Chairman and Members of**  
**Monmouthshire County Council**

# Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

## Sustainable and Resilient Communities

### Outcomes we are working towards

#### **Nobody Is Left Behind**

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

#### **People Are Confident, Capable and Involved**

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

#### **Our County Thrives**

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

#### **Our priorities**

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation

#### **Our Values**

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

# Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

## Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

### Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

#### **Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl**

- Gall pobl hŷn fyw bywyd da
- Pobl â mynediad i dai addas a fforddiadwy
- Pobl â mynediad a symudedd da

#### **Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan**

- Camddefnyddio alcohol a chyffuriau ddim yn effeithio ar fywydau pobl
- Teuluoedd yn cael eu cefnogi
- Pobl yn teimlo'n ddiogel

#### **Ein sir yn ffynnu**

- Busnes a menter
- Pobl â mynediad i ddysgu ymarferol a hyblyg
- Pobl yn diogelu ac yn cyfoethogi'r amgylchedd

#### **Ein blaenoriaethau**

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi

#### **Ein gwerthoedd**

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.



## 16<sup>th</sup> September – 2<sup>nd</sup> November

|   |   |
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| Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> September<br>6.30 pm             | Dinner with Chinese Trade Delegation<br>Celtic Manor – Lodge Albert Matthews Suite  |
| Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> September<br>6 for 7 p.m.         | Gwent Best Kept Village Competition 2014<br>Chepstow Garden Centre  |
| Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> September<br>6.30 p.m.          | Abergavenny Food Festival (20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> )<br>The 2014 Festival Drinks Reception<br>The Terrace, The Angel Hotel, Abergavenny |
| Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> September<br>3 p.m.               | Blaenau Gwent Civic Service<br>Saron Chapel, Park Row, Tredegar   |
| Wednesday<br>24 <sup>th</sup> September, 7 pm             | Reserve Forces Cadet Association - meeting of the South Wales<br>Regional Forum - Tŷ Richard Wain VC, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff                      |
| Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> October<br>12 p.m.              | All Wales Change Step Launch<br>Pierhead, The National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay  |
| Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> October<br>1 – 4 pm                | MCC Chairman's Charity Event<br>Cream Tea & Tour of Humble by Nature  |
| Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October<br>11 a.m.                | Bee Friendly Monmouthshire<br>Humble by Nature  |
| Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October<br>2 p.m.                 | The Acorn Project FUN Kitchen Project<br>The Acorn Centre, Dewi View Primary School   |
| Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> October<br>6.15 p.m.              | Monmouthshire Business Awards<br>St Pierre Golf and Country Club, Chepstow  |
| Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> October                           | Monmouthshire Food Festival<br>Caldicot Castle  |
| Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> October<br>2 p.m.              | Photo Shoot – Community Covenant<br>Overmonnow Primary School   |
| Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> October<br>7 p.m.               | Charity Hog Roast – Vale of Glamorgan<br>St Athan Community Centre  |
| Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> October<br>11 a.m.                | BEM Awards<br>County Hall Usk   |
| Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> October<br>12 p.m.               | Launch of Centenary Fields<br>The Pierhead, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff   |
| <b>Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October<br/>6.30 for 7 pm</b> | <b>MCC Chairman's Dinner for Officials<br/>Shire Hall, Monmouth</b>   |
| Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October<br>1800 – 2030 hrs        | Reception and Capability Demonstration and Wales Poppy<br>Appeal Launch – Cardiff Bay   |
| Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> October<br>Lunch 12.45 for 1 pm | Lunch with the Lord Lieutenant at his home<br>Penpergwn Lodge – invite with details to follow   |
| Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> October<br>7 p.m.                | Abergavenny & Tourist Association AGM<br>Angel Hotel, Abergavenny   |
| Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> October<br>12.30 p.m.           | Lunch and Pass Off Parade of 1 <sup>st</sup> Rifles<br>Officers Mess, Beachley Barracks   |
| Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> October<br>7 p.m.               | AAODS – Performance of Cats<br>Borough Theatre, Abergavenny   |
| Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November<br>9.30 a.m.              | Commemorative Walk 'Marching off to War' of the Royal<br>Monmouthshire Engineers<br>Commencing – Castle Hill, Monmouth                              |

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held  
at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Agenda Item 4a

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

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough, G.C. Burrows, R.F. Chapman, P.R. Clarke, J.E. Crook, D.L.S. Dovey, G.L. Down, A. Easson, D.L. Edwards, R. Edwards, P.S. Farley, P.A. Fox, R. J. W. Greenland, L. Guppy, E. J. Hackett Pain, R.G. Harris, R.J.C. Hayward, M. Hickman, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S.G.M. Howarth, D.W.H. Hones, P. Jones, S. Jones, S.B. Jones, R.P. Jordan, J.I. Marshall, P. Murphy, M. Powell, J.L. Prosser, V.E. Smith, F. Taylor, P.A. Watts, S. White and A.M. Wintle.

### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Mr P. Matthews   | Chief Executive                                    |
| Mrs K. Beirne    | Chief Officer, Enterprise                          |
| Mr S. Burch      | Chief Officer, Social Care and Health              |
| Ms S. McGuinness | Chief Officer, Children and Young People           |
| Mr W. Mclean     | Head of Policy and Engagement.                     |
| Mrs J. Robson    | Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer                |
| Mr M. Howcroft   | Assistant Head of Finance                          |
| Mr R. Hoggins    | Head of Operations                                 |
| Mrs R. Jowitt    | Head of Waste & Street Services                    |
| Mr S. Kneafsey   | 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme Manager |
| Mr M. Gatehouse  | Policy Manager                                     |
| Mr A. Wathan     | Chief Internal Auditor                             |
| Mrs T. Harry     | Head of Democracy and Regulatory Service           |
| Mr M. Andrews    | Monitoring Officer                                 |
| Mrs S. King      | Senior Democratic Services Officer                 |

### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Mr S. Wyndham  | Wales Audit Office |
| Mr K. Mortlock | St Johns Cymru     |

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors D.J. Evans, R.J. Higginson, A.C. Watts and K.G. Williams.

The Chairman invited Councillor S.B. Jones to introduce the Waste and Recycling Team who had been recognised by APSE and presented with an award for public service excellence.



## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

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Councillor Jones highlighted that Monmouthshire County Council had been recognised by APSE for public service excellence for best waste team in UK. The award acknowledged increased recycling and reduced residual waste. Team element gave outline principle and approval for toughest restrictions on residual waste. The compliance of residents had been phenomenal and resulted in high recycling rates.

We thanked all staff within the team and commended the diligent work of waste and recycling crews.

The Head of Waste and Street Services was presented with the award.

The Chairman offered appreciation and acclamation to the team and service.

In addition, the Leader advised that Monmouthshire County Council had received an additional award in relation to RSPCA Community Animal Welfare Footprint. The Authority had secured a bronze award for contingency planning. The award is the only scheme in England and Wales, which recognised delivery of animal welfare services. The Leader and appropriate staff would be invited to Cardiff on 7<sup>th</sup> October.

Council recognised and commended the work of staff for emergency planning and trading standards. The award would be formally recognised within the chamber.

## **2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND RECEIPT OF PETITIONS**

We received and noted the Chairman's report. In doing so, the Chairman advised that he attended the Riverfront event as the Armed Forces Champion and not as Chairman.

There were no petitions presented.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

County Councillor D.L. Edwards declared a personal interest pursuant to the members' code of conduct in relation to item 15(a) Park Street School.

County Councillor S. White declared a personal interest pursuant to the members' code of conduct in relation to item 8, Monmouth Comprehensive pool, as a school governor.

## **4. MINUTES**

### **a) Extraordinary Council Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

It had been requested at the meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 that the minutes were re-drafted.

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Agenda Item 4a

### b) Council Meeting 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014.

## 5. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no public forum items received.

## 6. COMMITTEE MINUTES

We resolved that the following minutes be received:

- (a) Democratic Services Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014
- (b) Standards Committee 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014

## 7. NOTICES OF MOTION

### (a) Submitted by County Councillor D. Batrouni

*'That the Council requires all Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs to bring forward an Annual report in April of each year. Such reports should include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the previous year and the plans for the year ahead (i.e. the opportunities and threats) in relation to their delegated areas of responsibility.'*

During discussion the following points were noted:

- We recognised the importance of Cabinet Members and Chairs to be held to account, as well as the responsibilities for all members to be accountable.
- It was noted that the Local Government Measure provided guidance for arrangements to be made for members to produce annual reports and it was important that these were completed annually.

County Councillor Fox proposed an amendment which was duly seconded:

*'That the Council requires all Cabinet Members and all non executive members to bring forward an Annual report each year. Such reports should include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the previous year and the plans for the year ahead (i.e. the opportunities and threats) in relation to their delegated areas of responsibility.'*

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held  
at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

Agenda Item 4a

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

We voted on the substantive motion, which was carried.

**(b) Submitted by County Councillors J. Marshall and F. Taylor**

*“In the face of unprecedented cuts to public sector services, welfare reform and growing inequality this Council will begin to focus our services on citizens and their needs. This Council will work collaboratively across service areas and will avoid working in silos and adopting policies, practices and decision-making protocols which are easy and practical for the Authority but difficult and disempowering for residents. We will adopt citizen focussed approaches in particular to our priorities;*

- *Education*
- *Safeguarding vulnerable people*
- *Supporting enterprise, job creation and entrepreneurship creation”*

During discussion the following points were noted:

- A member highlighted that there was a requirement to consider how services would be delivered, from the perspective of the citizens.

County Councillor Crook proposed an amendment which was duly seconded:

*“In the face of unprecedented cuts to public sector services, welfare reform and growing inequality this Council will **continue** to focus our services on citizens and their needs. This Council will work collaboratively across service areas and will avoid working in silos and adopting policies, practices and decision-making protocols which are easy and practical for the Authority but difficult and disempowering for residents. We will adopt citizen focussed approaches in particular to our priorities;*

- *Education*
- *Safeguarding vulnerable people*
- *Supporting enterprise, job creation and entrepreneurship creation”*

In debating the amendment we noted the following:

- It was highlighted that consultation and engagement had been undertaken in relation to services in some areas, however, it was recognised that improvements were required in relation to some processes and procedures.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment was defeated.

Councillor Fox proposed an amendment which was duly seconded:

*‘In the face of unprecedented pressure on public services, this Council will continue to focus our services on citizens and their needs. This Council will continue to work collaboratively across all service areas. We will continue to adopt citizen focussed approaches wherever possible, with due regard to our three main priorities of:*

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- Schools;
- Protection of Vulnerable people;
- and Supporting Businesses and Job creation.'

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

We voted on the substantive motion, which was carried.

*County Councillor A. Easson left the meeting at 3.15pm.*

### **(c) Submitted by County Councillor F. Taylor**

*"This Council will take its statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010 seriously. This Council will ensure that in developing new budget proposals for 2015/16 or making changes to services and policies, analysis of adverse impact on protected groups will be conducted with rigour and with an open mind. This Council will carry out robust and good quality Equality Impact Assessments on policies, procedures, functions, service delivery and financial savings proposals. If adverse impacts are identified there must also be meaningful consultation and engagement with interested parties. Once adverse impacts have been identified, this authority will attempt to avoid that impact prior to fixing on a solution. In addition, this Authority will review decisions on a regular basis in line with its legal duties, such as those taken in the 2014/15 budget where adverse impacts have been identified and will report to full Council".*

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Councillor Taylor highlighted the importance of minimising impact on vulnerable people and taking account of impact of equality assessments. It was noted that a panel would be established to review Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) within reports.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the quality of some Equality Impact Assessments. There was a need for EQIAs to be robust and align with aims, values and priorities.
- The Cabinet Member informed Council that EQIAs had been challenged and this would be continued through the new panel.

County Councillor P. Hobson proposed an amendment which was duly seconded:

*'This Council will take its statutory duties under the Equalities Act 2010 seriously. This Council will ensure that in developing new budget proposals for 2015/16 or making changes to services and policies, analysis of adverse impact on protected groups will be conducted with rigour and with an open mind. This Council will carry out robust and good quality Equality Impact Assessments on policies, procedures, functions, service delivery and financial savings proposals. In addition, this Authority will review decisions on a regular basis in line with its legal duties, such as those taken in the 2014/15 budget where adverse impacts have been identified and will report to full Council.'*

In discussing the amendment we noted:

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- Some members felt that there was a need to consult with interested parties and welcomed the EQIA panel.

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

We voted on the substantive motion, which was carried.

### 8. MONMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE/LEISURE CENTRE SWIMMING POOL

We received a report, which set out the proposed options that have been developed to date, for the re-provision of Monmouth swimming pool. The emerging 'preferred option' - Option 4a – based upon the assessments and work undertaken thus far and to provide an early indication of financial implications, subject to confirmation of outstanding critical factors.

We noted recommendation as follows:

To agree the emergent preferred option, Option 4a, for the replacement of the existing pool facility at Monmouth Comprehensive School / Leisure Centre, subject to:

- Further detailed work on the financial analysis, to include design development and market testing and comparison;
- Confirmation from Welsh Government of their indicative funding position; and,
- Confirmation of the wider proposed funding package

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members thanked officers for the report and recognised the importance of the pool for Monmouth.
- It was noted that a 6 lane pool would be preferable and that this would be subject to funding becoming available.
- In relation to contributions from Welsh Government, we were advised that it had been established that the replacement pool would be an abnormal cost of building a new school.
- Further detail was requested regarding timescales and funding for the build.
- Members were reassured that the Council was in support of the provision of the new pool.

We resolved to agree recommendations:

To agree the emergent preferred option, Option 4a, for the replacement of the existing pool facility at Monmouth Comprehensive School / Leisure Centre, subject to:

- Further detailed work on the financial analysis, to include design development and market testing and comparison;
- Confirmation from Welsh Government of their indicative funding position; and,

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- Confirmation of the wider proposed funding package

*The meeting adjourned for 10 minutes and reconvened at 4.10pm*

### 9. ANNUAL REPORT – CHIEF OFFICER, ENTERPRISE

We received a report and presentation from the Chief Officer, Enterprise, on the Annual Report. The Chief Officer presented the first annual report and advised that Enterprise was a new department and challenges had occurred as many services were previously in other areas.

It was highlighted that the report presented a clear and compelling vision for an enterprising culture within the organisation, focusing on value creation and culture in order to create new solutions to problems and challenges.

During discussion we noted the following points:

- Members thanked the Chief Officer for the presentation and report.
- We were advised that engagement was ongoing with the Whole Place project. In terms of Community hubs, the vision would be to bring together frontline services and identify areas where businesses could obtain support. Assistance would also be provided online.
- The Chairman of the Economy and Development Select Committee welcomed the foresight to attract and invest in events. We welcomed early sight of strategies. The major events strategy would be considered by the committee on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
- There was a role, to ensure that wider funding and support options were considered, in relation to service provision in the future. The significant importance of assets within Monmouthshire was recognised.
- The team were commended in achievements over the past few months and it was highlighted that culture change was required to move forward.
- Members recognised the work that had gone into engagement with communities and moving forward to develop areas, through work of Whole Place.
- Further information was requested regarding advice and support offered to businesses. It was noted that the role would be an enabler and facilitator, to assist with creating business plans and accessing funding. Priority would be to assist with signposting through processes and procedures.

We resolved to receive the report.

### 10. REPORTS OF THE HEAD OF FINNANCE/S151 OFFICER

#### a) STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013/2014

*County Councillor G.L. Down left the meeting at 5pm.*

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

#### Agenda Item 4a

We received the Statement of Accounts 2013/2014, the purpose of which was to:

- Consider the final annual accounts for the Authority for 2013/2014  
Members are asked to note that, at the time of writing this covering report, the external auditors are still undertaking a payroll analytical review, a transactional analytical review and an examination of fixed assets, which may still introduce late changes to the Statement of Accounts.

The report had been submitted to audit on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 as draft and some small corrections were included within the ISA260.

The outturn reports identified a largely positive position, with a surplus of £877,000 reported at year end. This mainly resulted from underspends on treasury activity, improved recovery on council tax, a reduction in anticipated borrowing costs, underspends in corporate costs, Chief Executive office costs, and Reeneration & Culture Directorate costs offset by a net overspend on Social Care & Health and Children & Young People directorate service.

This under spend position has meant that a planned draw down from the Council Fund was not required. As a consequence the level of the Authority's reserves is felt to be adequate.

During discussion we noted the following:

- We were advised that the original budgets were included within the budget monitoring reports.
- Further information would be provided in relation to the cattle market and specific figures would be available within the capital monitoring report.

We resolved to agree the recommendation:

The final Monmouthshire County Council Statement of Accounts for 2013/2014, as reviewed by audit, be approved (Appendix 1).

#### **b) ISA 260 REPORT**

*County Councillor S. Jones left the meeting at 5.15pm.*

The Chairman welcomed the Wales Audit Office and we were presented with the ISA 260 report, which informed of the decision to have the accounts signed and certified in accordance with deadlines.

The Audit Committee had recommended approval and some amendments had been made to the draft accounts, but the key message was provided that the amendments did not impact on the bottom line. Errors had occurred on statement within the accounts, however, these had to be reported. It was noted that they were not material and would not have an impact.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

#### Agenda Item 4a

The Leader thanked the Wales Audit Office for the decision to be satisfied that the accounts be signed off. The Head of Finance and team were commended and quality of accounts was appreciated.

We resolve to agree to receive the report.

#### 11. STAGE 2 IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2014

We received a report which sought Council approval of the Stage 2 Improvement Plan for 2013/14.

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 provides the legal basis for the Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI). This places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions.

As part of the Wales Programme for Improvement councils must:

- Set Improvement Objectives at the beginning of each business year. These are reported as part of the stage 1 plan agreed by council in May.
- Collect evidence of progress made and outcomes achieved during the year and publish a report on that information. This is reported in the Stage 2 Improvement Plan published each October.

This Stage 2 Improvement Plan covers the period April 2013 to March 2014 and relates to objectives that members agreed in June 2013. The forward looking Stage 1 Plan for 2014/15 was agreed by council in May. Progress on that plan will be formally reported in October 2015 although select committees will have the opportunity to scrutinise progress throughout the year.

The Improvement Plan is a public document and should be accessible to a wide audience. The plan will be published on the council's website.

A public summary of the plan will be prepared. This will be made available through the one-stop-shops, reception areas and libraries and on the Council's website and must also be published no later than the end of October 2014.

*County Councillor P. Watts left the meeting at 5.25pm.*

During discussions we noted the following:

- Further clarification was requested regarding the percentage of Looked After Children with a personal education plan.
- Performance was being targeted within Key Stage levels and the Education Achievement Service would be involved in the process. Further work was being undertaken with young carers and crossroads, it was recognised that they were undertaking a difficult job and appropriate support and assessments were required. In response the Cabinet Member advised that more work was required in terms of how data was recorded.



## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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- Fly tipping, as a tonnage, had decreased, however, figures varied year on year and there had been benefit as a result of the systems review.

*County Councillor P. Clarke left the meeting at 5.35pm.*

We resolved to agree recommendation:

That the Stage 2 Improvement Plan 2013/14 be approved.

### **12. FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES**

We were presented with the Financial Procure rules and advised that the Council must have appropriate processes in place to ensure sound financial management in its undertakings.

Financial Procedure Rules provide the framework for managing the Authority's financial affairs, and are part of Monmouthshire Council's constitution. They apply to every member and officer of the Authority, and anyone acting on its behalf.

The purpose of the Financial Procedure Rules is to ensure that public accountability and high standards of financial integrity are exercised in the control of public funds that pass through the Authority. The Financial Procedure Rules govern the day to day operation of the Authority's financial administration. They are introduced both to protect the interests of the Authority, and all those who are involved with financial administration.

We resolved to agree recommendation:

That Council approve the revised financial regulations known as the Financial Procedure Rules, which will form part of the Council's Constitution.

### **13. REVISION OF PLANNING SCHEME OF DELEGATION AND CODE OF PRACTICE**

We were presented with a report to adopt a revised Planning Scheme of Delegation and Code of Practice.

We resolved to agree recommendation:

That the Council adopts the revised Planning Scheme of Delegation and Code of Practice attached to this report.

### **14. CONSTITUTION**

Council received the report to set out the Constitution, which was recently agreed by Council, typographical, formatting and other minor amendments had been included. The

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report considered further substantive changes and offered the opportunity for any further improvements to be considered.

The Monitoring Officer highlighted specific amendments, as follows:

- Planning scheme of delegation.
- Financial procedure rules.
- Requirement for the future, to deal with the issue of remote attendance. Important aspect for a rural authority.
- Adjudicator – urgent items (without call in) is chair of relevant select committee.
- Requirement to look at exercise of functions by councillors.
- Member/officer protocol.
- 5 clear days for meetings.
- Requirement to consider receipt of gifts/ hospitality, membership on outside bodies.
- Scrutiny procedure rules had been agreed.

Members thanked the Monitoring Officer, as this was his last meeting, and wished him well for the future.

We resolved to agree recommendations:

To approve and adopt the attached Constitution as required by s37 Local Government Act 2000 and in so doing:

1. To incorporate amendments to the Planning Scheme of Delegation reported elsewhere on this agenda (and included at pp.52-58 of the constitution).
2. To incorporate amendments to the Financial Procedure Rules, reported elsewhere on this agenda.
3. To agree amendments to the Scheme of Delegation (Part 3 Table 4 pp.51 – 92) to reflect changes to the management structure introduced earlier this year. In the absence of any further comment from officers, members may assume that the scheme reflects the current management structure and responsibilities.
4. To defer consideration of the issue of remote attendance until such time as officers are able to report on the logistical issues raised. (Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure at p.102 and Rule 1.9 of the Executive Procedure Rules at p.131)
5. That urgent decisions of the Executive not to be subject to call-in (p.141) will require the approval of the relevant Select Committee chair, to bring this provision into line with paragraphs 13 and 14 of the Access to Information Rules (pp.122-124)
6. To ask officers to bring forward an assessment of the application of section 56 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (Exercise of functions by councillors)

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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7. To agree the revised Member/Officer Protocol as recommended by Standards Committee earlier this year (p. 238) subject to approval of the Joint Advisory Group.

*County Councillors P. Jones and M. Powell left the meeting at 5.55pm.*

### **15. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

**(a) From County Councillor A. Easson to County Councillor P. Hobson (deferred from meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014)**

*"At full Council on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2014, the decision to sanction Health and Safety works at Park Street School, prior to handing the property over to ACT was confirmed after an earlier call-in. The decision included the apportionment of £56,000 to the total cost of these works. Would Cllr Hobson provide a detailed update to Council, on works so far completed, works outstanding, with timescale for their, the cost expended to date on these works. Does he expect there to be any overrun on costs, if so where will the funding come from.*

*Furthermore, in anticipation of a successful conclusion to these works by Mon CC to make the building safe for hand-over, is he aware of an external grants providers that have given firm promises to further the ambitions of ACT."*

In the absence of County Councillor Easson, it was agreed that the question would be deferred to a future meeting.

**(b) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor B. Jones**

*'A number of residents in my ward are concerned by grass not being picked up after being cut. Could the Council look into having grass cutters that pick up the grass?'*

*We carry out the collection of grass to MHA OAP sheltered complexes only as this was a directive by MHA.*

*The actual cutting and collecting of grass clippings takes approximately 2.5 times longer than the usual cut and leave process, this would have massive additional cost implications, not only is the actual cutting a longer process but once the grass has been collected it needs to be firstly loaded into a lorry and then transported to the transfer facility as green waste, this again has additional cost implications.*

*The cut and collect machinery we utilise within the Sheltered complexes is much smaller and versatile than the machines used to cut our open spaces, parks and verges.*

*To change the complete mowing fleet to accommodate cut and collect, again would have massive cost implications, the existing tractors/mowers are leased over a 7 year period and these leases are ongoing.'*

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### **(c) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor B. Jones**

*'I have received numerous complaints from residents in Bulwark about cars parking on grass verges. Is the Council considering enforcement measures to ensure people don't park on grass verges in Bulwark or more generally in the county?'*

In response, we noted:

*'We tend to look at each site and consider on an individual basis however unless the parking is causing a road safety hazard then it is unlikely that we would consider providing measures to restrict such occurrences and although it is possible for Gwent Police to enforce parking on the verge or pavement, then unless these areas are adjacent to on street parking restrictions then it is unlikely that they will take any further action.'*

*if the local member would like to provide highways with the detail and locations then they can be consider further on a case by case basis and, if possible, addressed where appropriate.'*

### **(d) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor G. Howard**

*'What is his assessment on the amount of burial space left in Undy/Magor Caldicot and Chepstow?'*

In response:

*'Thanks for the question. Just to remind members that the Council has maintenance responsibilities at closed, full or reserved locations in Monmouth, Abergavenny and Usk; and currently operates open cemeteries for new and existing graves in Llanfoist, Gilwern and Chepstow.'*

*Members will also recall that no single body has responsibility for providing the service and in parts of the County the burial authority and provision has been supplied by both the Church and at Town Councils, notably Caldicot and Usk. In addition, a private operator offers green burial at a site on the outskirts of Usk town.'*

*Future burial space is of concern, because whilst there are parts of the County where space, based on longstanding trends, is ample for up to 25 years plus, this is not the case elsewhere. In Chepstow, there are 806 burial plots which should be sufficient for 22 years, with 81 spaces for cremated remains. Likewise in Caldicot, the Town Council cemetery has plots sufficient for around 15 years and I am told that they are investigating testing other land. I understand that St. Mary's Churchyards at Magor and Undy, if not full already, soon will be.'*

*The provision of burial ground is a tricky issue. A quick trawl through the national media highlights that finding new sites, whether rural or urban in location, is not easy; and space is running out all around the UK. The procedure for extending the site at Llanelly*

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*Hill took several years and there are many factors that make finding a brand new site and operation very challenging.*

*For example, a convenient site close to town is one that will be of higher value because of future development potential, a more rural site is likely to have agricultural usage and be more difficult to access. On top of that there are land ownership, acquisition issues and requirements relating to the proximity to watercourses, so do you try to buy that land first or wait to see if it is suitable?*

*In either case there is a risk, for want of a better phrase, of being held to ransom or a change of mind. So then, if a site is secured, strict environmental legislation means expensive multi-stage testing must follow, which can amount to nothing more than a costly gamble – literally tens of thousands with nothing to show for it at the end. Furthermore, we know that the service runs at a deficit and as I have said before in a report to the Strong Communities Select Committee, to break even would require burial fees to be tripled.*

*On the 2<sup>nd</sup> July Cabinet decided not to pursue development of the site at Penallt. The second recommendation of the report, to ask the Strong Communities Select Committee to investigate options and future policy, was written by me and read “with regard to the principle of delivering future burial space, Cabinet acknowledges previous debates at Council, scrutiny and area committees; and concerns about long-term capacity. Cabinet therefore, asks that the Strong Communities Select Committee considers the Council’s options and ways forward for future cemetery provision”. This followed a discussion with the Simon as Chairman, because like colleagues, I recognise that we have to have a wider debate amongst members and plan a realistic way forward, and one that acknowledges the complexity of what we want to achieve. So I am grateful that Simon and the committee were willing to take this piece of work on and at this stage, have nothing further to add Mr Chairman.*

*The most recent full-year figures for 2011-12 demonstrate that MCC subsidised the cemetery service to the tune of £237,380. Although burial fees and other charges realised £112,126, these would have to be tripled to enable an overall break-even position. By far the largest charge can be attributed to grounds maintenance at £303,636. In effect this means that council taxpayers are subsidising each burial by approximately £1380.’*

### **(e) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor B. Greenland**

*‘Have any representatives from MCC been invited to the international investment conference taking place at the Celtic Manor in November?’*

In response:

*‘Invites had been issued and there was a requirement to evaluate the added value to the authority for representatives to attend.’*

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of Monmouthshire County Council held  
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**(f) From County Councillor D. Batrouni to County Councillor P. Hobson**

*'Is he able to supply the Council with the full details on the manning of Caldicot Fire station over the course of a normal week?'*

In response:

*'Information would be obtained and passed on.'*

**The meeting ended at 6.10 p.m.**

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of Monmouthshire County Council  
held in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Usk  
on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 at 2.00 p.m.**

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

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, G. Burrows, R.F. Chapman, D.L.S. Dovey, A. Easson, D.L. Edwards, R.M. Edwards, D.J. Evans, P.S. Farley, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, L. Guppy, E. J. Hackett Pain, R.G. Harris, R.J.Higginson, P.A.D. Hobson, S.G.M. Howarth, D.W.H. Jones, P. Jones, S. Jones, S.B. Jones, R.P. Jordan, P. Murphy, M. Powell, V.E. Smith, B. Strong, F. Taylor, A.C. Watts, P. Watts, A.E. Webb, S. White and K. Williams.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Mr P. Matthews    | Chief Executive                           |
| Ms. S. McGuinness | Head of Policy and Engagement.            |
| Mr W. Mclean      | Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer       |
| Mrs J. Robson     | Head of Legal Services                    |
| Mr R. Hoggins     | Head of Operations                        |
| Mrs T. Harry      | Head of Democracy and Regulatory Services |
| Mr R. Tranter     | Head of Legal                             |
| Mrs S. King       | Senior Democratic Services Officer        |

**A**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

These were received from County Councillors D. Blakebrough, P. Clarke, J.E. Crook, G.L. Down, R.J.C. Hayward, M. Hickman, G. Howard, J. Marshall and A. Wintle.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES (CHANGES)**

We were advised that a report had been agreed at Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2014, which endorsed changes to the EAS governance structure.

We received a report which recommended changes to the appointment to outside bodies, specifically the South East Wales Education Achievement Service (EAS).

The report contained recommendations as follows:

- 1) County Councillor R. Greenland replaces County Councillor P.A. Fox on the EAS Board and
- 2) Two members of the Children and Young People Select Committee are appointed as members of the Audit Committee.

We resolved to agree recommendations, as follows:

- 1) That County Councillor P.A. Fox would be replaced by County Councillor R. Greenland on the EAS Board.
- 2) That the Chair and Vice Chair of the Children and Young People Select Committee (Councillor Penny Jones and Councillor Peter Farley respectively), are appointed as members of the EAS Audit Committee

#### **4. REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER**

The Chief Executive presented a report which asked Council to consider Monmouthshire County Council's response to the Reforming Local Government White Paper issued by Wales Government and to its prospectus for Voluntary Merger.

Recommendations within the report were identified as follows:

2.1 That Council agrees a position on its approach to merger with another Council / Council (s). The options are:

- 2.1.1 To adopt the preferred Wales Government position and agree to merge with Newport City Council;
- 2.1.2 To seek to explore an 'exceptional arrangement' merger, with potential participants likely to be Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Torfaen County Borough Council;
- 2.1.3 If either 2.1.1 or 2.1.2 is the preferred position to determine whether to adopt the 'voluntary merger' approach set out below;
- 2.1.4 To resist a merger proposal and advocate a case for Monmouthshire remaining as a standalone County Council; and /or,
- 2.1.5 To resist a merger proposal and advocate the development of a 'combined authority' model.

2.2 If Council determines to explore merger or if Council is compelled by Wales Government at a future date to merge that delegated authority is given to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to engage with counterparts in initial discussions about merger.

All members contributed to discussion and main discussion highlighted points as follows:

- The importance of the special Council meeting was recognised as it was fundamental for Monmouthshire County Council going forward.



- The partnership felt that the area of Monmouthshire and wider South East Wales should be considered as a city region, it was believed that a merger with another local authority would not address specific issues pertinent to the County and further options required investigation. Some members preferred recommendation 2.1.5.
- There was a requirement to maintain value, but change to consider the wider vision and opportunities for building relationships. There had been successful examples of collaborative working and this should be continued.
- In supporting recommendations 2.1.5 there would be increased flexibility and opportunities to consider alternative options.
- The Labour group were strongly in favour of recommendation 2.1.3. It was felt that a South East Regional proposal would not suit Monmouthshire. Cross border possibilities should be investigated to maximise opportunities and introduce greater change.
- The Independent group stressed the importance of a preferred position which would be best for the authority and residents. However, it was noted that further details were required to make an informed decision.
- To clarify, the Chief Executive highlighted that the timescales had been following the Williams report and members were invited to reach a position and consider options, for further discussion.
- All members agreed that 'one size fits all' would not be suitable for Monmouthshire County Council and recognised the importance of maintaining locality, representing residents of Monmouthshire and continuing to ensure that a quality service was provided.
- Concerns were expressed regarding cost implications of a merger and further information was required regarding the aspect of budgetary issues.
- It was highlighted that further analysis of options was required.
- Members welcomed further dialogue with other local authorities in order to move forward.
- We highlighted that the minister should be made aware of the debate that had been held.
- In summary, the Chairman observed that Council had mixed support for recommendations 2.1.3 and 2.1.5, however, there was overall agreement that further information and dialogue was required.

County Councillor P.A. Fox proposed an amendment to 2.1.5 which was duly seconded:

*'To resist a merger proposal and seek further talks on the development of a 'combined authority' model.'*

In addition, County Councillor S. Howarth proposed an amendment to 2.2 which was duly seconded:

*'If Council determines to explore merger or if Council is compelled by Wales Government at a future date to merge that delegated authority is given to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to engage with counterparts in initial discussions about merger and then report back to Council with result report on discussions, at the earliest opportunity.'*

Members discussed the amendments, we noted the following:

- The wording of 'combined authority' (within recommendation 2.1.5) was ambiguous.

County Councillor P.A. Fox withdrew the original amendment and proposed a new amendment.

*The meeting adjourned for 10 minutes and reconvened at 4.30pm.*

County Councillor P.A. Fox proposed a new amendment to recommendation 2.1.5, which was duly seconded:

*'At this time, to resist a merger proposal and seek further talks around development of a model that sees authorities working together but maintaining local democracy and local accountability.'*

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

**2.1.5 At this time, to resist a merger proposal and seek further talks around development of a model that sees authorities working together but maintaining local democracy and local accountability.**

**2.2 If Council determines to explore merger or if Council is compelled by Wales Government at a future date to merge that delegated authority is given to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to engage with counterparts in initial discussions about merger and then report back to Council with result report on discussions, at the earliest opportunity.**

We agreed that updates would be conveyed through Political Leadership Group, full Council meetings and communications via the Chief Executive.

**Meeting ended 4.50 p.m.**

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board**  
**held at County Hall, Usk on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 at 9.00am**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor E.J. Hacket Pain (In the Chair)  
County Councillors: D. Batrouni, D.L. Edwards and P. Jones

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr. P. Matthews: Chief Executive  
Ms. S. McGuinness: Chief Officer, Children and Young People  
Ms. J. Rodgers: Safeguarding Service Manager  
Mr. R. Williams: Democratic Services Officer

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

County Councillors P.A. Fox and L. Guppy.

**2. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE**

We received a verbal update by the Safeguarding Service Manager on Safeguarding provision. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Three papers (Strategic Overview, Safeguarding Report Card and the Safeguarding Service Improvement Plan) have been written for the mid-point of the year in response to Estyn's criticisms. The three papers have been received by the Children and Young People Select Committee and will be presented to Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014. The reports outlined progress made in addressing Estyn's criticisms.
- A representative of the Monmouthshire Recovery Board will be present at the Cabinet Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014.
- The Monmouthshire Recovery Board will be expecting the quality of the paperwork to improve and for the Authority to demonstrate this.
- Feedback from the Monmouthshire Recovery Board - The general consensus was that performance had improved via the Children and Young People Select Committee and via the Children and Young People Department.
- The Monmouthshire Recovery Board will be providing full Council, in the near future, with an assessment of how the Authority is progressing.
- In response to a Member's question, the Chief Executive stated that the Children and Young People Select Committee had recently invited the Managing Director of the Education Achievement Service (EAS) for a return visit based on some uncertainties and some unanswered questions from the first visit. The EAS had been challenged by the Select Committee and had performed well in responding to questions. The Cabinet Member had also

**Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board  
Dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 continued**

been challenged in her Executive role and also the Chief Officer for Children and Young People.

- The Leader of the Authority had also been held to account as a Board member of the EAS.
- Nicola Allen and her team of Challenge Advisors were very credible, performing to a high standard.
- The quality of interaction at the Children and Young People Select Committee has steadily been improving.
- In response to a Member's question regarding the future of the Internal Monitoring Board, it was considered that this would be determined by the quality of the work undertaken by the Children and Young People Select Committee.

We resolved to receive the verbal update and noted its content.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **4. MINUTES**

We received and noted the minutes of the Internal Monitoring Board dated 13<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

### **5. TARGETS AND PERFORMANCE FOR ALL SCHOOLS 2015**

We received a report by the Education Achievement Service (EAS) regarding target setting for all schools for 2015.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- Currently in the early stages but from observations there appears to be a good level of consistency in schools. The challenge is consistently high.
- Some schools have experienced some difficulties in upgrading their systems, i.e., there has been a lack of SIMS in some classrooms. However, these issues were being addressed.
- Schools were responsible for undertaking upgradings.
- The categorisation of schools went hand in hand with the development of the national model for schools.
- Confirmation of stage 1 (Standards Categorisation) is awaited from Welsh Government.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board  
Dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 continued**

- At Key Stage 2, the proportion of schools above the median has decreased slightly for the Core Subject Indicators (CSI) and English in 2014 and is below 50%, but increased in mathematics at the expected L4+ and is above 50%.
- At the higher level 5+, benchmark performance is stronger with 68% of schools above the median in English and 55% in mathematics.
- At Key Stage 4, the proportion of schools above the median has increased since 2013 with three of schools now above the median for the Level 2 inclusive with one school in the first quartile. One school remains below the median but has moved from the 4<sup>th</sup> quartile in 2013 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile in 2014. Performance at the L2 threshold has also improved since 2013 with 50% of schools now above the median.
- Categorisation of schools allows schools to show a positive direction of travel.
- In response to a Member's question regarding four primary schools with higher levels of children receiving free school meals (FSM), the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that there was a need for further intervention. One of the schools had focussed on a broad curriculum that went beyond the school day.
- Pembroke Primary School has a Special Education Needs (SEN) Unit which comes under the Chepstow alliance. A shift in leadership at Pembroke Primary and at St. Mary's R.C. Primary School has led to positive results.
- In response to a Member's question regarding the EAS looking at FSM, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that the EAS had been commissioned to undertake work to improve not only FSM provision but also issues relating to gender and ethnicity.
- In response to a question raised, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that the Directorate can be more confident now regarding target accuracy. The EAS has been commissioned to undertake work at Year 9 with regard to this matter.
- The Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that the Minister had focussed on teacher training. From her visits to Monmouthshire schools, it was noted that Monmouthshire teachers performed well regarding teacher training. However, nationally, we needed to further improve.
- There was a need to focus on working with the primary and secondary sector together regarding teacher assessment training.
- Monmouthshire's primary children were performing well and officers were confident that the assessments were accurate.
- Correlation in Monmouthshire was good.
- Assessment work and clusters were raised during the stocktake that took place last year.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board  
Dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 continued**

- Having contacted the EAS, it was noted that teacher assessments were proactive but were teacher assessments the same in other authorities? This matter needed to be addressed.
- It was noted that the cluster approach was helping in consistency and standards and there were examples of good practice.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

## **6. THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS (ALN) STRATEGY AND POLICY**

We received an outline report of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Strategy and Policy on how the authority has judged its impact on pupils.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- A review of ALN provision has been undertaken. By 2017 there will be no further statementing of children.
- As part of the graduated response, the Authority has proposed the introduction of a School (or Early Years) Action Plus Resourced Agreement (S.A.P.R.A) to reduce the need for lengthy and costly statutory assessment processes.
- Pupils will still be supported after 2017.
- Schools will be responsible to know the needs of its pupils.
- Resources have now been devolved to schools with an added level of accountability.
- Funding for ALN will rest within schools' budgets. In response to a Member's question, details of ALN funding would be made available.
- Schools were required to demonstrate where ALN funding was being spent.
- Appendix 2 – Impact of ALN Policy and Strategy - Minor amendments required, i.e., shorter sentences to show the impact.
- ALN should be in a language of achievement.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

## **7. DRAFT SELF EVALUATION REPORT**

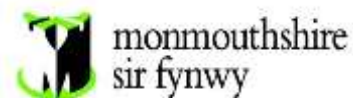
The Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that this document was a work in progress. The document will be a leaner, sharper document and will be completed by the end of December 2014.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board  
Dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 continued**

**8. CHILD POVERTY**

In response to a question raised regarding child poverty in Monmouthshire, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that the Authority was aware of this issue and was getting better at identifying the progress being made.

**The meeting ended at 10.42am.**



|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>SUBJECT:</b>                 | <b>MONMOUTHSHIRE BUSINESS GROWTH AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY</b> |
| <b>MEETING:</b>                 | <b>COUNCIL</b>   |
| <b>DATE:</b>                    | <b>13<sup>th</sup> November 2014</b>                         |
| <b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b> | <b>All</b>   |

**1. PURPOSE:**

1.1 Following a summer consultation period the draft Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy and appended Action Plan have now been updated and the finalised version is brought forward for approval.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To approve the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy.
- 2.2 To endorse and promote the appended Action Plan as a 'living' document to be updated and refined as further evidence of business need is established.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

3.1 One of Monmouthshire County Council's three core strategic priorities is 'Supporting Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation'. To progress Enterprise as one of its core strategic priorities, the Authority has established an Enterprise Directorate whose vision is *'to develop and promote an enterprising culture, which builds business resilience and creates excellent outcomes for our communities'*. Within this the specific mission for Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise, the Authority's economic development function, is *'to build enterprise capacity and reinvent our future'*.



3.2 The Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy builds on this vision, along with a situation analysis of the county and the vision of the Authority's [iCounty](#) Strategy for Monmouthshire to become '*one of the UK's most inspiring digital spaces*'.

3.3 This Strategy focuses on three strategic priorities:

- Supporting business growth
- Encouraging inward investment
- Growing Entrepreneurs

3.4 The strategy is complemented by the Vale of Usk Local Development Strategy that was presented in its draft form to Cabinet in [October](#), which brings forward resources to rural communities to facilitate pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains.

#### **4. REASONS:**

4.1 A draft Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy and accompanying draft Action Plan was released via [Individual Cabinet Member](#) decision on the 16th July as an engagement tool with partners and the business community to present how the Authority could address one of its three core strategic priorities 'Supporting Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation'.

4.2 Following a programme of consultation exercises throughout the summer of 2014 which included select committee scrutiny, one to one meetings, collective meetings, community consultations and an on-line consultation the strategy has been amended and finalised and is released for adoption by the Authority. The response to the consultation has been wholly positive with only slight changes having been made to the body of the strategy to reflect the results of the consultation.

4.3 As the strategy is a 'living' document the accompanying Action Plan will be updated and refined as further evidence of business need is established. The focus now will be on delivery of the action plan, with ongoing monitoring and evaluation through the service improvement planning process. Progress will also be subject to scrutiny via the Economy and Development Select Committee. Regular progress will be provided through the Authority's website, social media and through ongoing communication with the business community, Chambers of Commerce and other key business support partners.

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

5.1 There are no additional resource implications associated with this strategy at this stage, with all resource requirements in the interim being met from existing Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise budgets. Further to this the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise Team have

recently submitted the draft Local Development Strategy to WG for the next round of RDP funding (2014-2020) to start April 2015, which will create further opportunities for targeted funding for rural communities as referred to in 3.4 above.

- 5.2 Individual business cases will subsequently be developed for specific projects, ensuring that benefits and outcomes looking to be achieved are clearly aligned with the identified needs of businesses, and are subsequently being captured. Funding opportunities will be sourced through EU, WG and private funding streams and wherever possible, the Authority will look to align its limited resources with those of other key partners, to ensure that resources are being deployed in the most effective way.

**6. SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

- 6.1 The sustainability and equality impacts have been assessed and are attached in appendix 1. There are no negative impacts anticipated from the introduction of this strategy and positive equality impacts, for those with protected characteristics wishing to start their own business, are highlighted in appendix 1.

**7. CONSULTEES:**

Senior Leadership Team  
Cabinet Members  
Economy and Development Select Committee Members  
Monmouthshire Business Community and Chambers of Trade and Commerce  
University of South Wales

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan

**9. AUTHORS:**

Peter Davies, Head of Commercial and People Development – [peterdavies@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:peterdavies@monmouthshire.gov.uk) (01633) 644294  
Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise – [cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk) (01633) 748316

**The “Equality Challenge” (Screening document)**

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Name of the Officer</b> completing “the Equality challenge”<br><br><b>Cath Fallon</b>                         |  | Please give a <b>brief description</b> of the <b>aims</b> proposed policy or service reconfiguration<br><br>The purpose of the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy is to provide strategic context for the activities of the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise team. |   |
| <b>Name</b> of the Division or service area<br><br>Enterprise Directorate/ Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise |  | <b>Date</b> “Challenge” form completed<br><br>21 <sup>st</sup> October 2014  |   |
| Protected characteristic affected  | <b>Negative impact</b><br><br><b>Please give details</b> | Neutral impact<br><br><b>Please give details</b>   | <b>Positive Impact</b><br><br><b>Please give details</b>  |
| Age  |  |  | The strategy is likely to have a positive impact as it targets entrepreneurs from all ages, encouraging mentors from the older age group whilst also encouraging young entrepreneurs. |
| Disability   |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact for those with disabilities who wish to start their own businesses.   |

|                              |  |  |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Marriage + Civil Partnership |  | The strategy is unlikely to impact in this area. |  |
| Pregnancy and maternity      |  | The strategy is unlikely to impact in this area. |  |
| Race                         |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact for those of any race wishing to start their own businesses.   |
| Religion or Belief           |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact for those of any religion or belief wishing to start their own businesses.                             |
| Sex (was Gender)             |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact for anyone, male or female, wishing to start their own business.                                       |
| Sexual Orientation           |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact for anyone regardless of the sexual orientation of the individual wishing to start their own business. |
| Transgender                  |  |  | Actions detailed in the Action Plan will have a positive impact on all individuals wishing to start their own business.  |

|                |  |  |   |
|----------------|--|--|---|
| Welsh Language |  |  | Where possible and appropriate information produced will be bilingual in the line with the Authorities Welsh Language Policy. |
|----------------|--|--|---|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| What are the potential negative Impacts?                                       | Ideas as to how we can look to <b>MITIGATE</b> the <b>negative impacts</b> (include any reasonable adjustments or engagement with affected parties). |
| ➤ <i>There are no potential negative impacts associated with this strategy</i> | ➤  |

**The next steps**

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **positive impact please give full details** below:

The Strategy is a positive step forward in providing a strategic framework for the activities being delivered by the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise Team. The strategy is a 'living' document with an Action Plan to be updated and refined as further evidence of business need is established.

- If you have assessed the proposal/s as having a **Negative Impact** could you please provide us with details of what you propose to do to mitigate the negative impact:

N/a

Signed Cath Fallon

Designation Head of Economy and Enterprise

Dated 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

|   |                         |                                       |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of policy or change to service (Proposal)</b> | <b>Directorate:</b>     | <b>Department:</b>                    |
| Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy | Enterprise              | Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise |
| <b>Policy author / service lead</b>                   | <b>Name of assessor</b> | <b>Date of assessment:</b>            |
| Peter Davies  | Cath Fallon             | 21 <sup>st</sup> October 2014         |

1. Have you completed the Equality Challenge form? **Yes / No.** If **No** please explain why

|     |
|-----|
| Yes |
|-----|

2. What is the **Aim/s** of the Policy or the proposed change to the policy or service (the proposal?)

|  |
|--|
| To provide a strategic framework for the activities being delivered by the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise Team. |
|--|

3. From your findings from the “Equality Challenge” form did you identify any people or groups of people with protected characteristics that this proposal was likely to affect in a **negative** way? Please tick appropriate boxes below.

|                     |  |                    |  |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Age                 |  | Race               |  |
| Disability          |  | Religion or Belief |  |
| Gender reassignment |  | Sex                |  |

|                               |  |                    |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Marriage or civil partnership |  | Sexual Orientation |  |
| Pregnancy and maternity       |  | Welsh Language     |  |

4. Please give details of any consultation(s) or engagement carried out in the development /re-development of this proposal.

The draft Strategy and accompanying draft Action Plan was released by Cabinet on the 16<sup>th</sup> July as an engagement tool with partners and the business community to present how the Authority could address one of its three core strategic priorities ‘Supporting Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation’. Following a programme of consultation exercises throughout the summer of 2014 which included one to one meetings, collective meetings, community consultations and an on-line consultation the strategy has been amended and finalised and is released for adoption by the Authority. As the strategy is a ‘living’ document the accompanying Action Plan will be updated and refined as further evidence of business need is established.

5. Please list the data that has been used for this proposal? E.g. Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service user data, Staff personnel data etc.

Welsh Government data, ONS data, anecdotal data from Monmouthshire’s business community and partner organisations, MCC service data.

6. As a result did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below.

As a result of the consultations the Strategy and appended Action Plan have been amended accordingly. It is also likely that further amendments will take place as further evidence of business need is established.

7. Final stage – What was decided?

**•No change made to proposal/s – please give details**

**•Slight changes made to proposal/s – please give details**

Slight changes have been made to the body of the Strategy to reflect the results of the consultation. In particular updates have been made to the foreword; details of the funding application to the Rural Development Programme (section 1); What could a future Monmouthshire look like? (section 4); Alignment with the Local Development Plan (LDP) indicators and an indication to work with major events (section 5.7); further details of the LDP and the pre-application planning process (section 5.11 & 5.12); Inclusion of Y Prentis apprenticeship scheme (section 5.16); a request that businesses seek advice from planning officers re proposed developments (section 6.2) slight updates to the Action Plan (appendix one).

**•Major changes made to the proposal/s to mitigate any significant negative impact – please give details**

**Signed**.....Cath Fallon.....**Designation**...Head of Economy and Enterprise ...**Dated**.....21<sup>st</sup> October 2014



# MONMOUTHSHIRE BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGY



2014 // 2020

*Our ambitions to support future business growth and  
build enterprise capacity*

# Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise: A Strategy for the future

## CABINET MEMBER FOREWORD

*I am excited to present our Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy which outlines our ambitions and ideas that will help support business growth and build the enterprise capacity in Monmouthshire, reinventing our county's future.*

*Following a summer period of consultation our draft Strategy was well received and comments have been considered and amendments made. We thank all those who have made the effort and contributed their own thoughts and aspirations for Business and Enterprise in the future. It pleases me to know that so many of you are as passionate about making business in Monmouthshire a success as I am.*

*At Monmouthshire County Council we wish to create an environment that is open for business, an environment that nurtures new start-ups and enables existing businesses to grow and flourish, an environment that takes the future of its entrepreneurs seriously whether they be school age or middle aged! However we cannot do this on our own, we need your help.*

*This strategy is the county's vision for Business and Enterprise in Monmouthshire - we very much look forward to working in partnership with you to help Monmouthshire thrive and not just survive but prosper long into the future.*

*Please keep talking to us; I promise you, we are listening!*

**Cllr Bob Greenland**  
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Enterprise





## FOREWORD FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

*Monmouthshire is quite simply a great place to live and work.*

*With the S. East and all major UK cities over-heating with costs rocketing and the quality of life under stress, even travelling just to work becomes a major source of frustration. Businesses are finding it increasingly hard to maintain costs and staff.*

*Monmouthshire, as one of the most beautiful counties in Britain, with excellent links to all major cities and airports is a wonderful place to relocate a business. An enthusiastic and educated workforce with easy access to top class universities provide the talent, a low cost business infrastructure and affordable housing in one of the most healthy environments in the UK is the setting for a 21st century business. Just add salmon rivers, easy access to the Brecon Beacons, a world class Opera Company on the doorstep, world class golf courses, a reputation for food and excellent schools ... and the list goes on.*

*It is clear from this strategy that the Authority is listening and responding to the needs of businesses in Monmouthshire. However this strategy is just a starting point, as a representative of Monmouthshire's business community, we really look forward to working with the Authority and other key partners, to take the actions in this strategy forward and make Monmouthshire simply the best place to do business.*

*So, if you're thinking about relocating your business or a new start-up, come and visit Monmouthshire - it's pretty hard to beat.*

Gwyn Thomas  
Independent Financial Advisor &  
former Chair of Abergavenny Business Club



# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Monmouthshire's Single Integrated Plan (2013-17) is the overarching strategy for the county, Monmouthshire County Council, its partners and Monmouthshire communities. It has, at its core, a vision to build 'Sustainable and Resilient Communities'. In working towards this vision, three themes are identified – 'Nobody is left behind', 'People are confident, capable and informed'; and 'Our county thrives'.



1.2 In line with the theme of 'Our County Thrives' there is an aspiration for Business and Enterprise to create a Monmouthshire where 'people benefit from an economy which is prosperous and supports enterprise and sustainable growth, where families shop locally and create a truly entrepreneurial spirit'.



1.3 This aspiration reflects the recently adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) which will have a key role in delivering the Council's vision for an enterprising and ambitious Monmouthshire by providing land allocations and a positive policy framework to support business growth over the period to 2021.

1.4 In 2011 a 'Big Deal' vision statement was produced by MCC with an ambition to 'position Monmouthshire as the 'Green and Connected Gateway to Wales', to:

- Create an environment in which an integrated but diverse and resilient economy can develop sustainability and enrich the unique local character'
- A county where 'Monmouthshire's exceptional quality of life is underpinned by a strong social and financial capital; high value jobs; creative energy and the civic mindedness of our people'

1.5 In 2012 the MCC was awarded status as a NESTA Creative Council. An element of the application included the development of 'Your County, Your Way' a vision in which the Council embarked on a journey with its communities to turn ideas into opportunities to enable Monmouthshire to thrive and prosper for years to come.



1.6 This is echoed in the new vision for the Authority's Enterprise Directorate which is to *"Develop and promote an enterprising culture, which builds business resilience and creates excellent outcomes for our communities."*

For Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise the mission is to

*"Build the enterprise capacity and reinvent our future".*

1.7 As a backdrop MCC's new "iCounty" strategy has recently been conceived as the Council's digital policy centre-piece and key means of ensuring technology contributes to the county-wide vision for building sustainable and resilient communities. In supporting the vision to become one of the UK's most inspiring digital spaces, there are three main strands to iCounty, two of which are particularly pertinent to Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise:

- Enabling inclusive and connected communities – recognising the relevance of technology to all, supporting jobs of the future and growing a skilled workforce
- Creating commercial products and assets - with a view to maximizing income generation opportunities as well as opportunities to create digital enterprise clusters.



1.8 Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise is now entering a time of opportunity, the current Rural Development Programme (RDP), which provides the majority of development funding for the county, ends in May 2015 and a new draft Local Development Strategy for the period 2014 – 2020 was submitted to Welsh Government in September 2014.

1.9 The purpose of the draft RDP Local Development Strategy is to detail the activities that will take place during the programme period. The Strategy will be governed by the Vale of Usk Local Action Group, an independent body of community representatives from the rural wards of Monmouthshire and Newport. It is the role of the Local Action Group to ensure that the RDP funds are spent in a way which maximises benefits to the rural communities, building on the historical investment in Monmouthshire's adventa programme to create sustainable impact.

1.10 The vision for the new RDP Programme is to develop *"A connected territory, in a beautiful landscape, focussed on fostering thriving communities and building resilient local economies whilst embracing the natural and cultural assets of the area"*.

1.11 Activities will therefore focus on five key areas: Adding value to local identity and natural and cultural resources; Facilitating pre-commercial development, business partnerships and short supply chains; Exploring new ways of providing non-statutory local services; Renewable energy at community level; and Exploitation of digital technology.

## 2. ENGAGEMENT CYCLE

2.1 In developing this strategy embarked on a series of consultation exercises with our partners in order to collate all the necessary information and evidence to inform the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy. This has involved a four stage process of engagement:

**Discovery:** Data analysis; one on one meetings with Chambers of Commerce and other partner organisations to identify current issues, challenges and joint working opportunities; wider business and community consultations also took place as part of Rural Development Programme (2014-2020) Local Development Strategy development;

**Define:** Findings were then collated and analysed to test what the data told us;

**Design:** Work was undertaken across MCC directorates and with partners to design solutions to meet the clearly defined needs. This revised strategy was then produced which identifies appropriate solutions to avoid duplication and offer added value services; and

**Delivery:** Working with partners we will deliver activities to meet the now clearly defined needs that will build Monmouthshire's enterprise capacity with a view to reinventing our future.



Finalised Monmouthshire Business Growth & Enterprise Strategy 2014



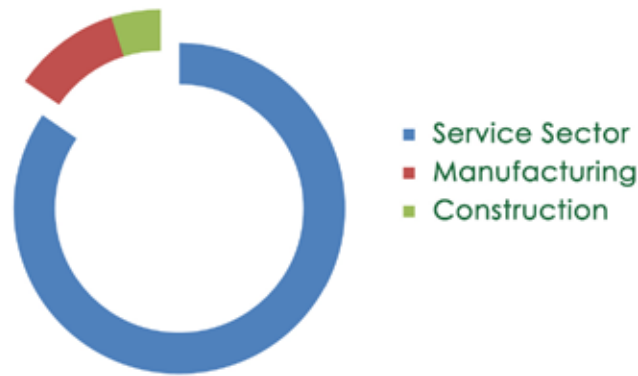
## 3. TODAY'S MONMOUTHSHIRE

3.1 In order to move forward we need a starting block. The appended **Business Growth and Enterprise Action Plan** (Appendix One) suggests how the activities of the Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise team can achieve the suggested vision within the implementation framework. However in order to set our enterprise ambitions for the future we first need to understand our current economic environment, the key barriers to growth and the critical issues that Monmouthshire is facing.

3.2 Monmouthshire is geographically the seventh largest county in Wales however it remains one of the least densely populated with 91,324 residents. In December 2013, 78.8% of the population aged between 16 and 64 were economically active which is above the Wales and UK average. In 2013 the average gross weekly full time earnings (by workplace) stood at £427.00. This figure indicated a third year reduction from £452.10 in 2011 and £438.30 in 2012 placing Monmouthshire the fifth lowest in Wales with only Blaenau Gwent, Gwynedd, Powys and Merthyr Tydfil on lower earnings. In 2011 the gross value added per head was £19,307 – third to Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. This indicates that although Monmouthshire is home to the most qualified population in Wales with those living in the county amongst the highest wage earners, those working in the county have some of the lowest earnings.



3.3 In 2012 Monmouthshire had 660 active businesses per 10,000 of its population, the second highest in Wales to Powys with over 80% of these being micro businesses employing few or no employees. In the recently published 2013 UK Competitiveness Index report Monmouthshire tops the Wales rankings with a competitiveness index of 97.4. In 2010 Monmouthshire's Index score was 97.3 indicating that although the county is resilient with activity predicated mainly in the service sector 83.6% (ranging from wholesale and retail (17.8%), public administration (34.6%), financial and business services (10.8%), accommodation and food (9.1%) and transport storage (4.3%) and Information and communication (2.3%), other services 4.4%) and manufacturing 10.5% and construction 4.8%.



3.4 Competiveness in Monmouthshire has only increased by 0.1 in three years, this would suggest that an economy dependent on a small number of sectors may be vulnerable to economic instability reflecting the need to build on a wider range of sectors to provide a wider variety of jobs and business opportunities. In a nutshell this illustrates that:

- Monmouthshire offers an unrivalled rural landscape enjoyed by both visitors and residents evidencing a strong tourism and agricultural/food sector. With over 1,000 miles of footpath over £2.1M people visit Monmouthshire every year contributing over £163M to our local economy. However 50% of the population live in communities with fewer than 2,500 residents and have limited access to Broadband;
- It is well located as the 'Gateway to Wales' within commutable distance of the large conurbations of Cardiff and Bristol and with easy access to airports thus attracting high salary earners and a significant number of manufacturing and logistics companies. Also presenting a new digital marketing opportunity as the 'Green and Connected Gateway to Wales' via a proposed new inward investment focussed business web portal;
- The county has a strong entrepreneurial spirit evidenced by the strong independent retail base in the five key towns of Monmouth, Abergavenny, Caldicot, Usk and Chepstow and the high number of 'lifestyle' micro enterprises which enable a resilient economy;
- This along with the large number of high level wage earners demonstrates a high skills base within the population; and
- Since its establishment in 2011 as part of the 'Big Deal' ambition, Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise has been strengthened through its involvement with the Monmouthshire Business Awards, which recognises, celebrates and promotes the success of local businesses. There are also emerging opportunities through the developing 'Monmouthshire Lottery' which has strong links with both entities.



## 4. TOMORROW'S MONMOUTHSHIRE

4.1 In looking to build a successful economy there is a need to consider five pillars to success to create an environment where:

- i.) *Ideas can flow;*
- ii.) *A workforce where the relevant skills exist;*
- iii.) *Capital investment can be raised;*
- iv.) *Relevant infrastructure is in place; and*
- v.) *There are opportunities for networking*



4.2 So taking the five pillars of success into account whilst building on the unique strengths and opportunities that exist in Monmouthshire, what could a Monmouthshire of the future look like?

- A Monmouthshire which retains its unrivalled landscape yet maximises its economic impact through high speed access to digital utilities, with the roll out of high speed broadband (Superfast Cymru) and exploiting new technologies – a '**Green and Connected Gateway to Wales**';
- A Monmouthshire that recognises itself as a key location served by excellent road and rail networks, two airports and close proximity to the UK's major conurbations such as Cardiff, Bristol, Birmingham and Swansea;
- A Monmouthshire where its young people don't need to leave home to work because they have the skills to work in future industries or indeed to set up their own businesses and generate employment for others;
- A Monmouthshire which embraces its entrepreneurial spirit by being home to new business clusters providing quality jobs which provide opportunities for Monmouthshire's young people;
- A Monmouthshire that courts and welcomes new investors from all over the world and works with partners to identify and capitalise on new funding streams;
- A Monmouthshire which capitalises on its quality education provision and its top class independent schools provision;
- A Monmouthshire attracting and supporting high salary earners, working in a vibrant and diversified economy, with an ability to work from home, surrounded by a stunning landscape, to maximise the return to the local economy;
- A Monmouthshire which capitalises on its digital community assets for example MonmouthpediA; and
- A networked Monmouthshire where businesses and communities support each other to be the best they can be.

## 5. THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

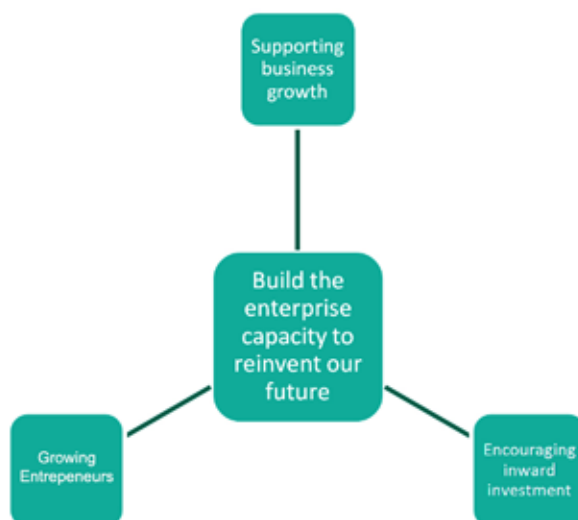
5.1 Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise have three key areas of support or strategic priorities that will enable them and Monmouthshire's business community and key business partners to move forward in partnership, to achieve the stated vision and aspirations.

5.2 In line with the aspiration to create a Monmouthshire where 'people benefit from an economy which is prosperous and supports enterprise and sustainable growth, where families shop locally and create a truly entrepreneurial spirit' these three strategic priorities are being suggested:

- i.) *Supporting Business Growth;*
- ii.) *Encouraging Inward Investment; and*
- iii.) *Growing Entrepreneurs*

5.3 Cross cutting themes weaved across all three priorities will embrace and capitalise on digital technology opportunities and raising skills levels, to meet the needs and aspirations of individuals and employers, with a view to creating high level employment opportunities and raise wage levels.

5.4 Together these three strategic priorities present a consolidated approach to the delivery and implementation of the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy:



## SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH

5.5 Supporting the development, growth and sustainability of Monmouthshire's Business and Enterprises is key to creating a strong economy and maximising economic impact for the county. Monmouthshire has a considerable number of active businesses per 10,000 of its population yet, 80% of these businesses are micro businesses employing few or no employees. The challenge therefore exists to sustain active businesses to enable them to increase their economic output by creating employment whilst also addressing issues such as access to networks, research and financial investment. At the same time there is also a need to address the challenge of attracting new and business and investment from outside the county.



5.6 A 2012 report by the Micro-Business Task and Finish Group set up to provide the Minister for Economy and Transport with advice and recommendations identified five primary priorities to sustain and grow micro-businesses in Wales. These priorities are access and awareness for business support services; access to finance; mentoring and coaching; public sector procurement and regulatory burdens. In embracing Monmouthshire's traditional sectors of agriculture, recreation, food and tourism there is a need to provide support to demonstrate the potential for diversification and growth, however there is also a need to future proof these sectors by linking them to the green and digital economies of the future for example growing local food supply chains through sustainable yet targeted food production, developing digital and eco-tourism, and so on. Given the 'iCounty' aspiration to 'digitally enable inclusive smart communities' there is also a need to engage local SME's with the current rollout of the Superfast Broadband initiative. A recent report by the **Broadband UK** emphasises the need for SMEs to capitalise on digital connectivity and unlock the commercial potential of on line activity and new technologies also recommending the need for government to assist local authorities with demand stimulation activities as a lever to economic growth.

5.7 The '*Supporting Business Growth*' priority addresses these issues and challenge through its suggested strategic outcome, and aims to capture how success will be measured using the headline indicators detailed below.



| <i>Strategic Priority</i>  | <i>Strategic Outcome</i>                                       | <i>Strategic Aims</i>   | <i>Headline Success Indicators</i>  |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Supporting Business Growth | Increased business & employment opportunities in Monmouthshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support existing businesses to grow and diversify to give them confidence to create new employment opportunities, including the county's major events</li> <li>Enhance access to investment</li> <li>Enable businesses to take advantage of training and skills opportunities to meet present and future needs</li> <li>Support and encourage use of physical and digital infrastructure</li> <li>Support and enhance existing business networks</li> <li>Aid and support e-commerce activities</li> <li>Aid &amp; support local procurement opportunities</li> <li>Improve business efficiency through the use of ICT</li> <li>Facilitate opportunities to access global networks and to aid research &amp; innovation</li> <li>Support development of LDP allocated employment sites</li> <li>Support the town centre retail economies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of business enquiries received</li> <li>No. of businesses assisted through support received</li> <li>No. of business start-ups supported</li> <li>Increase GVA</li> <li>Monitor take-up of Employment land at 1.9 ha per annum in accordance with the LDP</li> <li>Monitor town centre viability and vitality in accordance with LDP indicators</li> </ul> |

## ENCOURAGING INWARD INVESTMENT

5.8 Proactively encouraging inward investment into Monmouthshire is essential if we want Monmouthshire to be *the* place to do business. New inward investment can help us to grow the local economy and the average gross weekly earnings and to do this we need to attract high growth businesses such as technology and knowledge based companies. However to make ourselves attractive we don't just need to play on our looks and the lifestyle that we can offer through our unrivalled landscape, excellent location and road links we need to maximise our economic impact by offering suitable infrastructure and high speed access to digital utilities so our businesses can develop and exploit new technologies.

5.9 A recent 2013 University of Wales report commissioned by the South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration Board (SEWDERB) entitled: *Auditing the Cardiff City Region Economy: A Clusters-Based Approach* identifies five key growth sectors namely manufacturing; financial and professional services; life Sciences; energy and environment and ICCT. The report identifies where concentrations of activity currently exist and where opportunities exist to provide network space for relationships to build through the targeting and development of clusters and shared resources. In Monmouthshire these are specifically identified as energy related manufacturing building on the success of Mabey Bridge in Chepstow and ICT Hardware and Software where there is benefit to be gained from the high concentrations of activity in neighbouring Torfaen and further afield in Bristol and Cardiff where office rental is significantly higher.

5.10 Not forgetting however the opportunity to build on the clusters that exist in the food, tourism and creative industry sectors such as the successful *'Made in Monmouthshire'* cooperative by encouraging them to future proof and develop new synergies to add value to the existing offer.

5.11 The Local Development Plan team (pictured below) help provide the framework for positive investment in employment, retail and tourism sectors in particular. Since nearly all economic development proposals will require planning permission, the Council commits to an additional Development Management Protocol that will further ensure that acceptable business developments are given even greater priority than already exists.



5.12 When businesses are looking at a development proposals early contact with the Council's Planning Officers is advised as they can not only offer advice on the submission of planning applications but they also offer a **Pre-Application Advice Service**. This cost-effective service indicates the likely acceptability of a proposal without incurring the expenses of submitting a fully -detailed planning application. For further information contact [planning@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:planning@monmouthshire.gov.uk).



5.13 The 'Encouraging Inward Investment' priority addresses these issues and challenge through its suggested strategic outcome and aims – success will be measured using the headline indicators detailed below.

| <i>Strategic Priority</i>     | <i>Strategic Outcome</i>   | <i>Strategic Aims</i>   | <i>Headline Success Indicators</i>  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Encouraging Inward Investment | A clear and coordinated approach to inward investment that meets the needs of investors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enable businesses to start up and create employment opportunities</li> <li>• To proactively target specific high growth sectors to develop business clusters and shared networks</li> <li>• To improve broadband speed and coverage</li> <li>• To improve mobile phone coverage</li> <li>• To improve range and quality of employment land opportunities</li> <li>• To facilitate conversations between new businesses, statutory bodies and academic institutions to enable smooth progress</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of investments made in Monmouthshire as a direct result of Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise support</li> <li>• No. of business start-ups supported</li> <li>• No. of new jobs created</li> <li>• No. of investments made in Monmouthshire as a direct result of Monmouthshire Enterprise support</li> <li>• No. of business start-ups supported</li> <li>• No. of new jobs created</li> </ul> |

## GROWING ENTREPRENEURS

5.14 Whilst Monmouthshire benefits from the second highest GVA in Wales the average wage levels for those working in the county are among the lowest in Wales. This has an effect on the quality of life enjoyed by residents and on the wealth of the county. There is therefore a need not only to create high quality well paid employment which gives residents the means to stay in the county but it also presents an opportunity to raise awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities that exist. This awareness can be raised amongst those of the workforce age but also at an earlier stage in schools, as part of their everyday school curriculum.

5.15 Investigations with colleagues heading up the Authority's Future Schools Programme have shown that there is a growing recognition within the education sector of the need to include enterprise within the curriculum. This has been recognised by a fellow NESTA Creative Councils partner, Rotherham, who has embedded enterprise into their education curriculum and connected this with the business and wider local communities see [Rotherhamready](#) and [Readyunlimited](#). This also presents an opportunity to offer wider career opportunities for 14 -19 years old beyond the standard 'A' level/University path that is currently promoted by opening up opportunities for young people to gain future skills for future jobs and give them a sense of where employment opportunities are heading. Again this is strongly linked to the Digital agenda with the [2012 Booz Report](#) which recognises that in order to unlock the full digital potential of the UK there is a need not only to invest in digital infrastructure but to develop more on line services to bolster human capital, to promote internet usage by making sure people have the basic digital skills to engage with the digital world and to encourage the innovations of the private and not for profit sectors by creating new forms of value-adding enterprise.



5.16 By working with learning establishments and employers an opportunity exists to develop traineeships and apprenticeships that recognise these future job opportunities and offer viable alternatives to University whilst nurturing and attracting the best talent for quality jobs. Where appropriate the team will also work closely with Y Prentis, a Shared Apprenticeship Scheme currently offering apprenticeships in construction for young people in the South East Wales area. Y Prentis is jointly owned by CMC<sup>2</sup> (the Council's Community Interest Company) and Melin Homes.

| <i>Strategic Priority</i> | <i>Strategic Outcome</i>   | <i>Strategic Aims</i>   | <i>Success Indicators</i>   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Growing Entrepreneurs     | A well respected and coordinated programme of Enterprise activities that supports current and future local business needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To raise awareness of the wide range of employment opportunities</li> <li>• To create a gateway to self-employment opportunities</li> <li>• To improve connectivity between businesses and education to understand the future needs of businesses</li> <li>• To raise aspirations and encourage creativity and innovation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of schools engaged</li> <li>• No. of pupils engaged</li> <li>• No. of businesses engaged</li> <li>• No. of new business start-ups</li> </ul> |

## 6. DELIVERY

6.1 As resources are limited it is intended that the core delivery team for Monmouthshire and Business Enterprise will be small but efficient. It is likely however that the team will grow as EU funding streams such as the Rural Development Programme are determined and new programmes with associated delivery teams are established.



6.2 As mentioned in section 5 as nearly all business development proposals require planning permission we would advise businesses to contact the Council's Planning Officers at the earliest opportunity. The Council's planning service has a dedicated team of officers who can not only advise on planning applications but are also able to offer a pre-application advice service.



## 7. MONITORING & EVALUATION

7.1 The appended Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Action Plan has been placed onto a web-based project management application which provides an overview of the actions, expected impacts and detailed performance metrics that will chart the progress and delivery of the Monmouthshire Business Growth and Enterprise Strategy. This will be updated regularly with the results reported back through the Council's performance management framework including that related to the statutory LDP and via the Economy and Development Select Committee. Key achievements will also be shared with our delivery partners and the local business community, using the mechanisms as detailed, with a view to nurturing our partnerships, encouraging feedback and promoting a dialogue, which may lead to amendments to the delivery programme in the future.

# APPENDIX ONE: Monmouthshire Business Growth & Enterprise Action Plan

## KEY THEME ONE: Supporting Business Growth

| Action  | Expected Impact   | Timescale |           |              | Funding  | Performance Indicator   |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|--------------|--|---|
|   |   | 1-2 years | 2-5 years | 5 – 10 years |  |   |
| Continued delivery of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support package assisting pre start and existing business in Monmouthshire.   | To increase business and employment opportunities in Monmouthshire in the private and third sector by raising awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and access to finance. | ✓         | ✓         | ✓            | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing resources)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of business enquiries received</li> <li>No. of businesses assisted through support received</li> <li>No. of business start-ups supported</li> <li>No. of jobs created</li> <li>Percentage of customers expressing satisfaction in post support survey</li> </ul> |
| Development of a Web Portal to include publication of a downloadable business toolkit   | To increase business and employment opportunities in Monmouthshire and raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service.  | ✓         |           |              | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing resources)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of unique website visitors</li> <li>No. of downloads</li> </ul>  |
| Development of a 'Sell Monmouthshire' e-commerce portal as a component of the web portal. Businesses who register will need to complete an entry in the on-line business directory. | To increase business to business trading locally and raise awareness of public sector procurement opportunities.  | ✓         |           |              | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing resources) plus contribution from Procurement services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of unique website visitors</li> <li>No. of downloads</li> <li>No. of businesses registered on business database</li> <li>No. of MCC contracts let to local contractors</li> <li>No. of supply chain consortia established</li> </ul>                             |
| Development of a virtual Apprenticeship Hub as part of  | To encourage local businesses to take part in the 'Growing  | ✓         |           |              | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of unique website visitors</li> </ul>  |

|  |  |   |   |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| the web portal to encourage businesses to participate in the apprenticeship programmes   | Entrepreneurs' programme by offering advice on apprentice recruitment.   |   |   |   | resources) plus contribution from Y Prentis and other apprenticeship providers  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of downloads</li> <li>No. of enquiries received</li> </ul>  |
| Development of a public private sector forum to include annual business conference   | To break down barriers between business and public sector, address regulatory issues and encourage mentoring and coaching on a business to business basis. | ✓ |   |   | MCC existing resources with potential to extract contribution from future RDP if sector specific                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of events held</li> <li>No. of businesses attending</li> <li>No. of e-newsletters produced</li> <li>No. of businesses registered on business database</li> <li>No. of networks and/or collaborations established as a result</li> </ul> |
| Offer opportunities to businesses to access international business networks and partnerships e.g. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. | Encourage business innovation and the development of new products  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Facilitation only. Businesses to finance with potential contribute from Welsh Government                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of businesses participating in network visits</li> <li>No. of new products developed as a result</li> </ul>   |
| Recognise local business success through local Business Awards   | To raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and encourage business networking.   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Continued facilitation only by Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise team. Financial support from MCC CEO department. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of businesses attending</li> <li>No. of business referrals</li> <li>No. of businesses assisted</li> <li>Increase in number of business entrants</li> </ul>  |
| Digitally enable local business community through demand stimulation activities to support and encourage e-commerce activities.          | To increase digital access and skills  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Short term facilitation. Medium and long term delivery via new RDP project in conjunction with CMC <sup>2</sup> .     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of businesses gaining additional skills</li> <li>No. of digital marketing activities undertaken</li> <li>No. of digital partnerships developed</li> </ul>   |
| Continued development of   | To raise awareness of the  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Enterprise  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of networks participated</li> </ul>   |

|  |  |   |   |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| networks within Wales and the wider UK e.g. Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Newport and Cardiff  | Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and encourage peer to peer networking.                       |   |   |   | Budget (existing resources)                | in.   |
| Continued Support for the Whole Place initiatives in Abergavenny and Caldicot specifically leading on the Business Improvement District being developed in Abergavenny     | To raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and encourage business networking. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BID developed</li> </ul>   |
| Support for the development of a Monmouthshire Lottery with a view to proceeds being used to offer interest free loans to businesses and community groups wishing to grow. | To raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and encourage business networking. | ✓ |   |   | MCC Enterprise Budget (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch of the Monmouthshire Lottery</li> <li>No. of players</li> <li>No. of loans to businesses</li> </ul> |

## KEY THEME TWO: Encouraging Inward Investments

| Action   | Expected Impact  | Timescale |             |              | Funding   | Performance Indicator                |   |
|--|--|-----------|-------------|--------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
|  |  | 1-2 years | 2 - 5 years | 5 - 10 years |   |                                      |   |
| Production of the Local Development Strategy document as a mechanism to draw down Rural Development Programme Funds  | To increase business and employment opportunities in Monmouthshire.  | ✓         |             |              | MCC Budget (existing resources) and access to WG funding  | Enterprise (existing) and WG funding | • Local Development Strategy produced   |
| Identify under-explored funding streams for the Enterprise Directorate   | To build a strong internal presence  | ✓         | ✓           | ✓            | MCC Budget (existing resources)   | Enterprise (existing)                | • No. of funding applications submitted   |
| Development of Web Portal to include publication of a downloadable business toolkit designed to target specific sectors for inward investment and to raise awareness of local brand leaders e.g. Abergavenny Food Festival and quality of life opportunities e.g. local festivals. Also opportunity to promote event management services with a view to maximising economic opportunities. | To increase business and employment opportunities in Monmouthshire and raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service. | ✓         |             |              | MCC Budget (existing resources)   | Enterprise (existing)                | • No. of unique website visitors<br>• No. of downloads                              |
| Support expansion of current digital and mobile phone infrastructure   | To increase access to digital and mobile infrastructure  | ✓         | ✓           | ✓            | Short term facilitation. Medium and long term delivery via local partnerships, BT and Welsh Government. |                                      | • No. of businesses on line<br>• No. of new sites in the LDP with broadband access. |
| Work with the MCC Accommodation Board to   | To increase business and employment opportunities and  | ✓         |             |              | MCC Budget (existing)   | Enterprise (existing)                | • No. of investments made in Monmouthshire as a direct                              |

|  |   |   |   |   |  |   |  |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| Identify appropriate space to develop Business Hubs to encourage set up of specific clusters e.g. Energy Manufacturing, ICT Hardware and Software, Creative industries and food sector/tourism sector. | raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service. |   |   |   |  | resources) private/public sector partners e.g. Alacrity | result of Monmouthshire Enterprise support<br>• No. of new business start ups                      |
| To provide access to structured business support for start-up businesses   | To increase the long term viability of start-up businesses.               |   | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Budget (existing resources)  | Enterprise (existing)                                   | • No. of hatchery businesses assisted  |
| Work with academic institutions to identify opportunities to develop research bases within the county.   | Encourage business innovation and the development of new products         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Budget (existing resources)  | Enterprise (existing)                                   | • No. of initiatives undertaken  |
| Encourage trade development to support export of Monmouthshire products and encourage inward investment  | Encourage business innovation and the development of new products         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Facilitation only. Businesses to finance with potential contribute from Welsh Government |   | • No. of businesses participating in network visits<br>• No. of new products developed as a result |

## KEY THEME THREE: Cultivating Entrepreneurs

| Action  | Expected Impact   | Timescale   |             |              | Funding  | Performance Indicator  |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|--------------|--|--|
|   |   | 1 - 2 years | 2 - 5 years | 5 - 10 years |  |  |
| To work closely with the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Schools team to identify opportunities to engage schools with the local business sector to provide inspirational talks and create local employment opportunities. | To offer wider career choices to students and stimulate interest in entrepreneurship  | ✓           | ✓           |              | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources)                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of talks facilitated by Monmouthshire Enterprise</li> </ul>   |
| To build the current database of CRB checked business mentors   | To raise awareness of mentoring opportunities and engage employers and establish effective education/business partnerships  | ✓           |             |              | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources)                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of entries on business mentor database</li> </ul>   |
| To investigate funding opportunities to implement a 'Rotherhamready' type model   | <p>To:</p> <p>Establish a ladder of learning opportunities for all children and young people aged 4-19, in collaboration with local employers</p> <p>Establish and train an Enterprise Champion in every school and college</p> | ✓           |             |              | Medium and long term delivery via new RDP project initially piloted in rural areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of schools engaged</li> <li>No. of pupils engaged</li> <li>No. of Enterprise Champions trained</li> <li>No. of businesses engaged</li> <li>No. of business start ups</li> </ul> |

|   |  |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
|   | <p>Maximise initiatives which promote employer engagement</p> <p>Embed enterprise skills into schools and colleges</p> <p>Improve employment skills</p> <p>Encourage more young entrepreneurs and business start-ups</p> |   |   |   |   |  |
| To work with the four High Schools to develop 'Enterprise Zones' within schools where students can learn the basic principles of running their own business         | To provide business advice and support to students considering starting their own businesses   | ✓ |   |   | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources)                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. Enterprise Zones established</li> </ul>                 |
| To provide free desk space in business hubs to young people wishing to start their own businesses   | To raise awareness of entrepreneurship amongst young people  | ✓ |   |   | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources)                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of new business start-ups by 14-30 year olds</li> </ul> |
| 'To gain a better understanding of the needs of 'homepreneurs' in order to provide practical support to enable them to grow and maximise their economic potential'. | Provide business advice and support to homepreneurs wishing to either start or develop their own businesses.   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of new homepreneur business start ups</li> </ul>        |
| To establish an evidence base to identify local employment opportunities and skills requirements to enable students to meet the needs of local employers            | To raise awareness of mentoring opportunities and engage employers and establish effective education/business partnerships   | ✓ | ✓ |   | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources) whilst working with Whole Place teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of entries on database</li> </ul>                       |

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| To recognise the need to support entrepreneurs both young and old and provide cross generational support  | To raise awareness of entrepreneurship amongst all people, young and old and provide support to turn ideas into reality. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of new business start-ups by 14-30 year olds</li> <li>No. of new business start-ups 50+</li> </ul> |
| Recognise young people by continued support for the Young Entrepreneur element of the local Business Awards   | To raise awareness of entrepreneurship amongst young people  | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in number of young entrepreneur entrants</li> </ul>   |
| Support for the development of a Monmouthshire Lottery with a view to proceeds being used to offer interest free loans to young entrepreneurs wishing to start their own businesses | To raise awareness of the Monmouthshire Enterprise business support service and encourage business networking.           | ✓ |   |   | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of loans to young entrepreneurs</li> </ul>   |
| To support CMC <sup>2</sup> in the delivery of the current Y Prentis apprenticeship programme and look to expand where appropriate  | To offer wider career choices to students  | ✓ |   |   | MCC Budget<br>Enterprise (existing resources) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of Monmouthshire residents on Y Prentis programme</li> </ul>                                       |



**SUBJECT: Feedback from the October MonmouthshireEngages Events and future engagement strategies**

**MEETING: COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DATE: 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**1. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to the Council from the recent round of MonmouthshireEngages and to identify the strategies that will be used to ensure that future engagement and consultations are effective in meeting their legal requirements as well as Monmouthshire’s aspiration of being a listening organisation that will work with Communities to become sustainable and resilient.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Council:

- i) Receives the feedback from the MonmouthshireEngages events;
- ii) Considers the initial feedback from the Community Survey; and
- iii) Considers the appropriateness of future engagement and consultation activity

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

Engagement and community participation are at the heart of the approaches that Monmouthshire County Council have taken to meet the challenges of reducing budgets and public service reform. Most notably the MonmouthshireEngages moniker has become synonymous with our approach to engaging with the public to explain the challenges that recent financial settlements have presented and to seek the community’s help in finding new solutions.

Whilst this course of action has had some successes it has not been a panacea and the Council has still had to take difficult decisions regarding its allocation and use of financial resources. In these circumstances consultation with affected groups is vital to ensure that information is shared in a timely, appropriate way and that our obligations in law to consult properly have been met.

Successfully engaging with our communities, be they of interest, place or hidden populations, is a critical part of the way in which Monmouthshire is responding to the challenges it faces. It is a key part of the purpose of the organisation to be close to our communities, to understand what is important to them and to work with them to build communities that are sustainable and resilient. The sustainability of our communities is of fundamental importance as we move into an era when the sustainability of some Council provided services is reduced.

MonmouthshireEngages was built around the budget process again this year. It had two distinct elements; the roadshows – which took place during the working day in each of the five County towns and Magor on a Saturday to coincide with an existing community event; and the Engagement events - which took place over five evenings.



## Agenda Item 9

The events were designed to be aligned with the Monmouthshire Engagement Framework and the underlying National Principles for Engagement.

An additional aspect included in this year's activity was a short, simple survey of people who live in Monmouthshire and their experiences of using council services and which services they felt should be prioritised. People found the question 'How important do you think the following services are?' difficult to answer many people felt that all of the service areas were very important. People also felt that some of the areas were difficult to rank as they were grouped such as 'Trading Standards and environmental health' however after much deliberating they made their choices. The three areas of council services ranked as the most important by our communities were:

- Keeping Children Safe (65%)
- Education and Skills (63%)
- Support for older people and people with disabilities (61%)

The three areas that were seen as the least important were:

- Highways and Street Lighting (28%)
- Trading Standards and Environmental Health (25%)
- Planning and Building Control (25%)

With regards to the experience that users have of our services the three most highly regarded were:

- Support for older people and people with disabilities (19%)
- Leisure, Culture and Libraries (17%)
- Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning (16%)

The three areas where users had not experienced a positive experience were:

- Planning and Building Control (5%)
- Community Safety and Crime Prevention (5%)
- Attracting and Retaining Jobs (3%)

There were varying responses across the five areas where the survey was undertaken and this analysis can be made available to members if they wish. Some of these results may simply be because only a small part of the population has had the need to engage with certain services and additional engagement work may have been undertaken in these areas. For instance, there has also been additional work undertaken around the *MonmouthshireEngages Business* to support the development of the Business and Enterprise Strategy which saw high levels of participation from interested stakeholders.

One notable development from last year was the partnership approach to the engagement. At four of the roadshows Council staff were joined by colleagues from the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board who were undertaking a review of GP services across the County and colleagues from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner attended the evening events to begin their consultation on areas of local concern for the local policing plan. These agencies were joined by Melin Homes, Monmouthshire Housing Association and Gwent Police in attending sessions. This initial collaborative approach to engagement and consultation will be strengthened in the future and is a key area of development as identified by the Local Service Board.

Both of these phases were designed to support the first three aspects of the engagement cycle.



These events allowed the Council to **inform** the community of the scale of challenge faced in particular the challenges of protecting the two largest elements of the budget i.e. education and social services. We factored in opportunities to **listen** to their concerns and ideas and for these to be shared in a broader context. The events also allowed for some initial (and unscientific or representative) **consultation** of ideas with the audience.

Efforts were made to ensure that the publicity for the events was more effective than last year and this included providing notice to all members and the public of the dates for events in late August – five to six weeks in advance of the events themselves. Alongside the awareness raising roadshow events fliers and posters were placed in all four one stop shops and all libraries as well as local shops. A decision was also taken to place advertisements in locally focused publications that are delivered to each household in a specific area. These traditional channels were supported by extensive use of social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook – this took place before, during and after the event.

Despite these endeavours across all of the events participation rates were markedly lower than last year. The events were attended by a total of 150 people across the five settings:

- Monmouth – 20
- Caldicot – 30
- Abergavenny – 30
- Usk – 20
- Chepstow – 50

This attendance was, in many respects, disappointing given the severity of the message that had to be shared and the range of channels that had been used to publicise the events. The decision to engage before the publication of the budget mandates meant that some of the areas which would potentially draw significant public

interest (such as the proposals around the reform of Usk Library last year) were not in the public domain. This was a calculated decision to ensure that the community was listened to without the risk of them assuming that any shared proposals were, in fact a *fait accompli*.

During the roadshows it was noticeable that there was a much more accepting public attitude to the prospect of future budgets reductions to the local council and consequently the service that communities use. The public concern, and at times anger, regarding the potential changes that was so evident in discussions last year in venues such as Abergavenny and Usk was simply not there. Whilst commentators refer in other settings to '*Austerity Fatigue*' which presents itself as a resistance to further fiscal constraint this simply did not present itself in Monmouthshire at this stage. Of course this will now be subject to greater scrutiny given the emergence of the budget proposals for 2015/16.

### **Reflections for the next stage**

New and alternative methods and channels will have to be developed to ensure that the messages are shared as widely as possible and that a full and legally compliant consultation exercise is undertaken. The recent judicial judgements (notably those for Leicester City Council and against the London Borough of Haringey) regarding proper consideration and full and appropriate consultation in taking decisions to reduce services are pertinent reminders of what is expected of the council when taking these decisions.

### **Ideas generated in the engagement events**

Some of the ideas that emerged during the engagement process were already being considered in the proposals considered by Cabinet on the 5<sup>th</sup> November. For instance there was a regularly stated view that community facilities i.e. libraries and one stop shops, should be collocated and that the continued provision of free recycling and waste bags was not necessary. Other ideas will require further investigation to establish if they are feasible for future years. There is a full collation of the ideas and comments made during the discussions included in Appendix A.

### **Monmouthshire Made Open**

In order to promote community engagement and community animation this budget process saw the launch of an online digital platform 'Monmouthshire Made Open' that will allow for the continuation of the dialogue with communities beyond traditional engagement events. This platform will allow members of community to work together (with council staff if appropriate) to overcome local challenges and issues or promote community events and solutions. The platform has received considerable interest and recognition from a wide range of quarters; from the Wales Audit Office, the WLGA and the Consultation Unit in Whitehall. The initial usage of the platform that started during the events has continued to grow.

- Users have increased from 64 on 7 Oct to 102 today
- Challenges increased from 24 on 7 Oct to 30 today
- Ideas added increased from 85 on 7 Oct to 130 today

### **Where next for the consultation and engagement activity**



Following the Cabinet meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014 the council moves into the second stage of its engagement and consultation around the budget. Given the range of proposals to meet the budget gap in 2015/16 a more tailored approach to engagement and consultation is being undertaken. At the heart of this is a four stage process.



Following an initial review of the outputs of this process an early decision will be taken as to whether the localised, general consultation events will be held. The key considerations to this will be whether a generalist community meeting (however carefully structured and facilitated) will allow the council to meet its full consultative requirements. In common with the approach undertaken in 2014/15 existing groups and meetings will be used wherever possible and this worked particularly well to engage with those groups with protected characteristics.

There are two additional stanzas of work that have been commissioned. *MonmouthshireEngages Staff* and *MonmouthshireEngages Schools* will both roll out in the next period. The staff engagement will start with a full staff conference on the 12<sup>th</sup> November and the schools engagement will be orchestrated through a series of special assemblies and then follow up through school councils and E2C. This will be augmented by the youth service in a range of other settings.

It should be remembered that the engagement around the budget is a part of our engagement work rather than the whole of it. The continued development of Community Coordination and Whole Place are key structures that will allow the council to become closer to its communities and promote greater community led developments.

#### 4. REASONS:

Public engagement and consultation are critical aspects of the Council's approach to both setting a balanced budget and to meeting its broader community leadership aspirations of creating a county of 'sustainable and resilient communities'. The feedback contained within this report as to the benefits of the first stage of *MonmouthshireEngages 2015* is important for Council to consider as it consults on its budgetary proposals and also, critically, as the select function prepares to undertake an informed scrutiny of those proposals.

Members of the Communication and Engagement Team are currently working through the design process for the next stage and members' consideration at this juncture will allow for an informed process to be designed and delivered.

#### 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The resource requirements to ensure that the next stages of *MonmouthshireEngages* and the necessary consultative activities around the budget process are conducted appropriately are within existing budgets.

**6. SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUALITIES:**

The equality impact assessment is appended in Appendix 2. There are no negative impacts identified and at this stage the feedback report does not require a sustainability test.

**7. CONSULTEES:**

Senior Leadership Team  
Cabinet

**8. AUTHOR:**

Will McLean, Head of Policy and Partnerships

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## **Monmouthshire Engages**

The themes have been used to collate the information from the meetings. It provided the public with areas of interest and enabled them to make comments and ideas the themes that were important to them.

### **Education**

- **Ring Fenced Funding**
- **New Schools**
- **Post 16 – Further Education**

### **Leisure and Culture**

- **Leisure Centre**
- **How can we increase revenue in leisure Centres**
- **Library**

### **Home and Communities**

- **Town and Community Councils**
- **Community Coordination – making older people better connected**
- **One Stop Shops**

### **Health and Care**

- **Positive outlook on working in partnership to make services better.**
- **My Day My life**

### **Transport and Access**

- **School Transport**
- **Community Transport**
- **Roads and highways**

### **Business and Enterprise**

- **Encourage new and small businesses to stay in Monmouthshire**
- **How we can improve our towns**

### **Community Safety**

- **Street Lights**
- **Increased Police Presence**

### **Environment, Energy and Climate**

- **Working in Partnership**
- **Recycling**
- **Green ways to save money**

## Education

### Ring Fenced Funding

- There used to be classes of 30 with no need for T.A.'s, education shouldn't be ring-fenced
- Ring-fenced before any cuts that may have been put in place this year without our knowledge
- Councillor Murphy voiced up on a sentence 'education is supposed to be ring-fenced' which implies this may not be the case
- Does education have to be ring-fenced?
- How can education be seen to be ring-fenced? (This time around education will have to work differently to make savings whilst save money e.g. cluster working – Phil Murphy)
- Is ring-fencing set in stone; could schools not share heads?
- Is funding on education ring-fenced or not? Education is protected but it is only protected 1% above the adjustment to the overall budget. Potentially the education budget could be reduced by 3.3%. We've already protected it by more than we're required to do. The media say it is protected so are you saying it's not? It is protected, but only by the 1%
- Education is sacrosanct and should not be cut. These are cuts from education expected. Is the spending on ring-fenced or not? And given the austerity why are we spending £31 million on two schools?
- Very strong feelings that education should be protected
- We were discussing education and unanimously decided that education is a priority
- King Henry VIII School – What are the plans for the refurbishment? What will happen to further education in Monmouthshire?
- How much control do you have on schools?
- What other services should also be ring-fenced? What SEN 16+ isn't protected in any way by the Welsh assembly? These children need to be able to integrate into society and not investing in this creates problems further along the line which will impact on social care. This should be a priority.

### New Schools

- Why are we spending £31 million on two new schools? We have replaced the majority of our primary schools but our secondary schools are in desperate need of repair and the revenue cost of keeping them standing is huge. There was a pot of money from the Welsh government available for investment in new schools; this has reduced to 50% of the cost instead of the 75% initially promised. Tonight we're talking about the revenue budget and this funding comes from capital funding. Far

better education provision and facilities will be provided by these new schools.  
Longer term.

- Merge 4 comprehensive schools to 1 saving £350k
- School rebuilding 2 with larger campus not 4
- Education: we are spending money to build new schools, the finish of the new schools the schools have had finish the work – such as IT things that should have already been done in the capital costs
- Is the new school being funded by Asda?
- What is the strategic plan for the rebuild? What is the cost of the rebuild of King Henry VIII School? Is it going to have as much spent on it in comparison to other areas?
- Don't spend £31 million on two new schools? That's capital and has no connection to the budgets that we have spoken about this evening. Debate that this is a waste as building a new school is a positive.
- Why are we spending £31 million on new schools?
- How many primary schools do we have in Chepstow? We seem to have some sort of 'mullion' of services which is concerning. We can expect more demand as new residential areas are built and do we have suitable facilities to cope with this demand.
- Marvellous that there is funding being spent on education and schools in other areas but should we be looking at increasing the education provision in Chepstow?

#### **Post 16 Further Education**

- Where is the vision to encourage young people, what is there after school? ( other than Uni?)
- What would it look like if they did provide the support? Since year 7 they haven't had any school trips and there are no options to have any. Few people who were able to go on the French trip but you have to have the money right there and then attend and it was only if you had high enough school attendance (i.e. above 80%)
- Didn't have enough work as needed, so wasn't allowed to go on trip.
- As you go from year 9 to year 10 you should have options earlier on so you can really find out if you like the options you have chosen before you commit to them. More career option support, perhaps taster days. In year 9 they choose their option blocks for year 10. There is now a three week period to explore these options that these girls haven't been able to benefit from as they're older but the question is what support can we give them now.
- Do you think enough support is given to you to achieve all that you need to in school? No

- Walls for alt (?) installation rigging companies light mapped
- How can specialist providers get better access to schools to enhance learning of learning of young people encourage centenary WW1 – March, Wales 8th April – Wales remember DFES £1,000 specialist providers.
- Communication in schools need to be better and value what is out there for young people. Show them what they can do and what they need. E.g. the arts and creative subjects are not only classroom book based subjects.
- Further education also needs to promote skills better, carpentry is not just building houses, fixing things. We need to promote the other areas where skills can be used. Make things sexy!
- How can specialist providers such as poets get into schools so that the pupils can get a personal and specialised learning experience? How can we get better at this?
- Education is hugely important. In Chepstow we haven't got the equipment we need. The leisure centre and the school should be working better together (like for dance studio's). There are more options available now than there used to be (dance media), but there still aren't enough options. There is funding for college courses that young people would like to access whilst in school. Hair & beauty/engineering courses – number of people who wanted to do college courses through the school but the funding wasn't available as it may have been in other schools.
- Educational achievement will be achieved by providing the young people with the facilities and tools they need to have the best educational standards. The options offered by the councillors tonight are based on reports from OFSTED and the effect that improvements in school facilities can have on young people's achievement levels. These schools need replacement based on the amounts they cost to run due to the unfit state that they are in. How our young people are going to be able to compete in future economies if we don't provide our children with the best training facilities possible?
- There are people employed to make decisions for education within the council but they're putting the responsibility of this onto outside agencies? There's a secretary for education so why aren't people like that the ones thinking about solving these problems and coming up with solutions when that's what they are paid to do. They also need to ask the people who work within the schools as they're likely to be able to help come up with the solutions they need
- Education is a priority, but could outside agencies be approached for the services we are losing, not everyone has computers, what funds do you have for other agencies

## SEN and Post 16

- CAIR at every meeting we are discussing cuts for adults with disabilities or cuts to education for young people post 16. The cuts are affecting people who are severely disabled. PM – it will get worse.
- What about special educational needs? We have two facilities, the Priory and Mounon House School, as much as they applaud the work the people do in these schools, there is very little integration for those children outside of the school environment. It is very difficult for those children to associate with children in the area and more should be done to support this.

### **Basic Skills**

- Adult education – already seen stream-lining , something that is particularly important if we want to get people off the dole and into jobs. Basic literacy skills at least should be invested in.
- Schools are already struggling so how can we expect them to cope with further funding cuts. People who work in the school are already so committed but when you're restricted by funding there's only so much they can do. They're expecting standards to keep getting higher but not giving the schools the tools to do this. Having all the facts and research to back up what is being said at events such as this is key.
- Education 90% teachers wages social services discretionary spending wages, etc. Need to focus in on the drive(?) vulnerability.

### **Council Merger**

- Concerns about Newport having all the money, as Monmouthshire will be seen as affluent. Want to see what is in Monmouthshire staying in Monmouthshire. Need money for repairs to King Henry VIII School.
- Concern over Newport having all the money, as Monmouthshire will be seen as affluent, Want to see Monmouthshire staying in Monmouthshire money for schools.
- Refurbishment of the school – we need to ensure this will happen and won't get swallowed into Newport. Not a lot that stops it being a good school.

### **£' Per Pupil**

- £5266 spending per pupil at Chepstow School. Children who live in Monmouthshire should not be going outside to other schools outside the authority, as this has a financial impact on us. Could it be clarified what impact this has? If you live in Monmouthshire you should support schools in the area.

### **Investing In Services**

- Investing in the services for the young is non-negotiable, as they're our future, our future work force and residents

### **Leisure and Culture**

- **Library** – Integrate services Library/One Stop Shop
- Even if you had volunteer running library – it would still cost
- 70% volunteer & 30% paid?
- What other outside agency/businesses could be approached to help pay for the services without losing the substance of the service. We do not want to lose the libraries. They are a source of education for the community. What are you doing as an authority to investigate other funding?
- Libraries – why are they in schools, when the books are not being used? King Henry VIII School – day to day management issues of school library. What has happened to all the resources now that the library has closed? Why have two libraries? Town and school
- Move forward with the library; create a new hub building, retail, council offices, community spaces, etc. It could be an Abergavenny Hub. Abergavenny does not have to keep up with development.
- Leisure Centres should be hub-libraries, community spaces. Need to be able to go to one thing. The library with the school – keep the library in the town centre.
- More facilities under one roof? The facilities need the correct buildings to house these services if they're under one roof. Still need the knowledgeable.
- Abergavenny library and One Stop Shop could both be housed in a bigger more suitable building like the old Richards
- Library is the key issue, Richards (old shop) £40,000 a year to rent for 25 years, do-able as long as MCC will fund and not expect town council to fund.
- Ideas for relocating library to Richards?
- Utilising existing facilities
- Library in the old Farmfoods/Richards shops would be better housed there; cheaper, current library is too small and increased use of library volunteers since last year.
- Library is key issue, current library too small, need to look at alternatives i.e. Farmfoods/Richards building. Richards is owned by Alun Griffiths who would rent it to MCC for £40,000 a year. There has been an increased use of library volunteers since last year.
- Peppercorn rent for Richards MCC need to retain ownership of libraries, as opposed to town council.
- Could public services merge CAB and library?
- Feedback on future of library services please.
- Library decision will enable other things to follow
- Really excited about 'Community Hub' idea following last year's engagement with the library. Proper all inclusive but ideas put forward including potential funding point blank refused or written off with exploration. Also no mention of other intentions to base services there and limiting space for use.
- Usk doesn't have many facilities just for them – library at risk, Usk residents don't see where cuts can be made extra



- What other sources of funding is available for the other services? Community investment, as per examples in Wye Valley where people are putting in their own electric generators?

## Leisure Centres

### Increase Revenue

- Float off leisure centres into trust companies
- Why aren't leisure services run as businesses and every opportunity taken to make income
- Leisure centres need to pay their own way, more activities for young people
- Leisure & Culture points – If Monmouthshire put these types of building into trust. They guzzle money but you are looking at them in the wrong way, Parkwood leisure takes £10,500 on a Saturday, major companies put into action a structure about more staff on peak time.
- It doesn't need a large amount of staff to start it off – you can do trusts
- Generating income out of our outdoor spaces, keep outdoor spaces being used. Action group about spaces being used to generate income. Money stayed in Abergavenny and was reinvested. Mixture of prices.
- Whilst we see how much it costs to run a leisure centre, we're not showing the income we generate and what the leisure centre brings to the town. It is an investment
- Put fairs and events in leisure centres e.g. antique, collector, specialist interests.
- Pools have water aerobics and water disco's for kids
- Having a unique service

### General Comments

- Drop in leisure centres
- Why do the leisure centres no longer run events like triathlons?
- Can volunteers distribute leaflets around the town, so many people don't know what is going on around the town and area
- Use the leisure hall at a discounted rate for young people at the Zone Youth Centre for any young people
- Making sure that the leisure centres stay open – no huge savings in them closing
- What % of time are leisure centre facilities not used i.e. sports halls, etc. can we make better use of this time?
- One of the difficulties is that the biggest client of the leisure centres is schools, which still comes under the MCC budget.
- A little more support you could make a difference

- Young families use leisure facilities and are aware of the effect the recession has had on the economy, but what effect will the cuts have on young children in the long term if leisure facilities continue to be cut
- What are we going to do for our young children in the area who could be potentially losing their leisure facilities and outside spaces if the funding is cut? They are our future
- What will young people do if there are no leisure/park facilities with cuts?
- NHS will take the burden of people not taking exercise at our leisure centres
- Employees see the massive budget on paper to run the leisure centres, but don't see the return
- Sport is something that isn't done enough in this country; a lot could be done by local authority to promote people to play sport, health authorities involved to promote it.

### **Ideas**

- Improve it through your swimming coordinator
- Facilities such as spinning machines with music
- Increase offer of swimming pool
- If you are going to build a pool in Monmouth, don't let an architect design it, talk to aquatic governing bodies that use it. It should be 25 Or 50 m long and has to be 8 lane's wide, with a minimum of 5,000 seats on the balcony you can gross your profit £10,000 a year. Monmouth is on the border, if it meets with these standards, swimming bodies could use it to host gala's/border competitions. Should be north facing. Lesson – talk to the experts who use it when developing services.
- What matters most, play in Llangybi, and keep it well maintained, along with the paths

### **Sports Grounds Maintenance**

- Question of sports grounds and leisure considering what has been happening in Newport cutting sports facilities. Mow your own green inappropriate for elderly people. We are concerned about cuts in bowling greens and huge prices with bowling greens, they won't go on.
- Bowling greens are run by professional grounds' maintenance; Monmouthshire does look after some greens in Newport and charges them accordingly.
- Bowling has good health benefits for keeping fit and socialising, this should be taken into consideration
- Challenge in recruiting – I'd like some more realism about the costs of maintaining a bowling green

### **Culture**

- Would local people actually mind being charged to go to our museums?

- Could 'Hogging the Bridge' be brought back into the town centre?
- What about the castle? Ice skating winter wonderland, breakout festival in the castle
- Glastonbury type of event at the castle
- Tourist information is too expensive by the castle; couldn't it be moved into the library
- Local solution to local problems – wouldn't moving the TIC into the Castle (the biggest tourist attractions in the town) rather than in the library.

### Welsh language

- Abergavenny Eisteddfod – I would like to know what Monmouthshire is doing to promote the use of the Welsh language, and welcome people in advance of the Eisteddfod.
- MCC could help by encouraging people to learn greetings in Welsh

### Tourist Information

- Tourist information is too expensive by the castle; couldn't it be moved into the library?
- Local solution to local problems – wouldn't moving the TIC into the castle (the biggest tourist attraction in town) rather than the library
- Why people move here and not bring money in, but in itself don't make much money e.g. museums, leisure and tourism.
- Chepstow Town Council were approached to fund the TIC but they weren't prepared to fund them further as local businesses who benefit from this should be assisting to fund this. Look at how TIC's and museums are funded and look at the contribution that local businesses are made.
- Looking at priorities, there are people that may shoot me down, but one area that I would consider expendable in a way is TIC. Subsidiary. We wouldn't like our libraries to be diminished in any way as the services they provide are vital. Self-educating occurring in the libraries, which is vital.

### Home and Communities

#### Town and Community Councils

- **'Ask community councils to do it cheaper' ( Usk)**
- Many comments were made about **Community Councils** taking on services however some comments mentioned **'frustration'** of community councils taking on services such as **Road Repair, Grass Cutting**.
- However some people felt that by taking on services they would have ownership.

- ‘Why isn’t the community council in charge of its own lighting? Involving/ engaging people is impossible; it would be good if community councils take on more of these local things. People are interested in their specific areas, so give them more responsibility for it. Eg Grass Cutting, Street lights ect. – This would leave the council to run things that are nice to have.’
- Town councils were also mentioned ‘Devolve assets to Community and Town Councils’ should little things be taken on by Town Councils e.g wild flower planting.’

### **One Stop Shops**

- People feel that they are a valuable service and **welcomed a joined up** approach to working in a **‘hub’** style: ‘Close One Stop Shops and Library and together on a primary high street location (Caldicot).
- ‘Could multiple local community services be combined into a single shared space one stop shop – possibly mobile outreach?’
- **Valued Service**
- ‘One Stop Shops are good for signposting to right places good advice’
- ‘All the services in one place, staff multi - tasking’

### **What do Communities Really Want – Need to Ask Them?**

- ‘Community Funding for Whole Place and other decision making. This could be pooled budgets for Whole Place and involving communities in deciding where money will be spent’.
- ‘The council should ask specific groups in the community what services they need and where they would best be placed.’

### **Town Teams**

- People who attended the Caldicot and Abergavenny Meetings were aware of the Town Team.
- Need more information about the Town Team: Who sits on the steering group (Abergavenny) , better signage and advertise the team better ( Caldicot).
- One comment referred to funding that the Town Team has – how do we promote this and enable people to be helped by the Team?

### **Community Coordination – making older people better connected.**

- Some people were aware of the projects in both Abergavenny and Caldicot
- There were positive comments and some ideas about what services are available but again they asked for better promotion of the projects and how people can access the services.
- ‘Community Coordinator- great idea, challenging role. Need better links between health and social services.’
- ‘Can Abergavenny have a third sector project to befriend older socially isolated people similar to Monmouth and Chepstow’ this refers to the befriending project

Community Connectors a funded project. The Community Coordination project which is now in Abergavenny and Caldicot could compliment this need.

- **Digital Inclusion** : ‘ Digital inclusion for the elderly is a great way of connecting people in rural Monmouthshire Communities 2.0 have funding for tutors.

### **Youth Services**

- Central Kaff ( Chepstow) is like a second home to us – if it was shut we would be hanging out on the streets ..If Central Kaff was taken away young people wouldn’t have anything to do. There is nothing else for young people to do in Chepstow.’
- ‘ Youth clubs are valuable to community safety keeping young people off the streets’

### **Volunteering**

- People were aware of the importance of volunteers in the future. However they questioned who would volunteer. ‘We all live busy lives and we can’t all volunteer as we would like to and the same faces turn up. Where are the thousands of volunteers going to come from?’
- ‘Volunteering it’s not straightforward and tends to be the same people especially in a small area like Usk- danger of undoing the good work that has already taken place.’
- We need to facilitate and engage ‘hearts and minds’ with the community and encourage the community to take control of their own environment’

### **Health and Care**

#### **Positive outlook on working in partnership to make services better.**

- ‘Potential for **hub style** solutions similar to Cardiff – using one building for many services. Some core health care services should fall back to NHS so funding is protected’
- ‘Health/ Social Services integrated elsewhere, need ways for health, social services to work together’
- ‘Partnership between Council and NHS would make this early prevention work and save money’.
- ‘How much influence with ABHB does the council have?’
- ‘Social Services – so, so difficult to plan need better links between people and social services debate about funding.’

#### **Ideas for working differently in collaboration....**

- ‘Age Cymru in hospital, make better use of voluntary services, care and repair are an important service. Need consistency of care for older people.’
- ‘Better role for GP’
- ‘Rehabilitation should be embedded into healthcare rather than social care’.

### **My Day My Life**

- Many comments stating that My Day My Life should be the norm and not just a one off. 'Need Better links between health and social services, stop debates about funding responsibilities.'
- My Day My Life is a good example of best practice- should become the norm.

#### **Prevention work would save money:**

- 'Investing in the prevention of sight loss over the long term would save money'

#### **Commissioning of Services**

- 'When we commission our services how much do we commission out? 75% of our social services is in collaboration with private service providers.'

#### **Children's Services**

- No specific healthcare provision for 16-17yr olds, they are classed as neither children nor adults. This age group can fall between two stools and be left without adequate services.

#### **Protection of services-**

- 'Education, health – any funding touched in this area and there would be uproar.'

#### **General comments about Health Services**

- 'Personal experience of social care in Monmouthshire has been very good and excellent service is provided at Nevil Hall.'
- 'What are the options for sheltered housing for elderly patient near the daughter moving patient from Torfaen to Monmouthshire'

#### **Transport and Access**

##### **Transport and Access**

#### **School Transport**

- 'School transport services since taken on by MCC is expensive compared to employing private sector; can school transport be made more efficient? £5milliona budget offers opportunities for saving! Comp and junior school transport could share buses?'
- 'Observations suggest that there maybe opportunities for improvements in the efficiency of school transport service by maximising driver hours and combing pick up for different schools to allow savings to be made from the £5million budget.'

#### **Value for money?**

- 'Are we getting the best services for the money we spend?'
- 'Can the school transport system be made cheaper and more efficient/. Rationalisation of routes is being looked at hard'

#### **How could we save money?**

- ‘Parents start to make a contribution for post 16 transport when their children are in year 7, if they never get to use it, they get their money back’.

### **SEN transport**

- ‘SEN transport – do decision makers understand why they can’t work independently’
- ‘Has any consideration been given to support young people to travel, particularly vulnerable young people with needs’.

### **Community Transport**

#### **How could Grassroutes be remodelled to improve the service for the wider community?**

- We need to make better uses of community transport
- ‘Provide a scheduled service instead’
- Community schemes: could neighbours help run appointments to hospital appointments.
- Improve access and transport for vulnerable people ( elderly, disabled)
- A helpline to arrange transport to evening meetings.

#### **Coordination and Promotion of all Transport Options**

- ‘Transport in Monmouthshire could be a lot better there is a lot of duplication and lack of coordination. A website listing the various transport options for residents could increase efficiency and release potential / capacity’
- ‘Bus Coordination : break down the bureaucracy’

### **Roads and highways**

#### **Abergavenny**

- Abergavenny: many comments about the road from Red Square in Abergavenny surface need to be replaced.
- Access in Abergavenny, needs to be improved for disabled people. The kerbs were lowered and tarmac out down as ramps for the cycling but when the cycling was over this made it more difficult for disabled people to get about. People in wheelchairs are afraid of falling out of their wheelchairs as the kerbs are high.

#### **Caldicot**

- ‘No one from the business community is ever consulted by the council when new infrastructure is put in. Bus Stops overhang zebra crossing and on the other side it obscures the police station. The crossing should be by the Town Council to make sure it is safe to cross for the schools.’
- Planning For Real : Consultation exercise, this was a bit of a joke and nothing has happened since no feedback.

### **Blue Badges**

- Comments about reassessing the blue badges.
- ‘Reassess the blue badge outlets, to assess true need, what is the definition of this, they think it is a right forever – people’s circumstances change, be aware of this.’
- ‘How much does it cost to reassess the blue badge scheme?’

#### **Car Parking revenue**

- ‘Whole place approach – could car parking fees be released for these issues locally centralisation not good for communities.’

#### **General taxes and fines**

- ‘Value of unpaid vehicle fines? Particularly EU regulated vehicles and impact on budget when collected.’

#### **Business and Enterprise**

The majority of comments at Abergavenny and Usk were ideas to encourage new and small businesses to stay in Monmouthshire.

- **‘How can we support self – employed people? – Make spaces affordable for start up’s or existing small enterprises.’**
- ‘Rent a desk for SME’s i.e use LA assets’

#### **Procurement: local businesses need support**

- ‘Businesses need to be made aware of the method of getting on to a procurement list for a council or a large organisation’

#### **Support from MCC**

- ‘Are there any groups / organisations that could step in and help commercial forms, but they have increased costs’.
- ‘Can we include all services in looking to support / attract business/ enterprise into Monmouthshire?!! Is there a group?’
- ‘How to expand, how to employ, how to market, what are the rules, are there any grants. Too many rules and regulation. Too much regulation..assistance from MCC to cut through the red tape.’

#### **Income generation**

- Promote opportunities for businesses to bring income via sponsorship, on roundabouts, sponsor roundabouts see advertising space.
- ‘Is Monmouthshire fully engaging with local businesses to see what they can deliver together?’
- ‘There are funds available externally that could be accessed to run the services differently. We should be investigating this.’
- ‘Assets such as Market Hall and Borough Theatre are they exploited enough? Like they would be in private hands.’



**Why are businesses not coming into our towns?**

- 'High business rate prevent people starting up'
- 'Private landlords charge too much for business rents'
- 'Planning /economic rubberstamping, no vision or direction'
- 'Trying to get hold of departments within the council is really difficult'.

**What do people want from our towns?****Abergavenny:**

- 'Abergavenny would benefit from a large chain store, Tuesday used to be the day where everyone got together, charity shops get subsidies, there appears to be a lack of interest form business club and political infighting'
- More shops
- Make the environment more pleasant
- More accessible for disabled people and people whi use mobility scooters.
- 'Why are the kerbs dropped for the cycle race and then built back up? When they are dropped it makes it easier for people in wheelchairs and mobility scooters'.

**Caldicot**

- More food outlets
- Night club
- No more pubs
- 'Lack of retail space- or lack of people to use them'
- 'Economic Development need to use planning powers more wisely'
- The public made comments about the Town Team
- 'What money does the Town Team have to develop the town centre and why has it not happened at the same time as the building of Asda?'
- 'Is it true that 8 million has been ring fenced from the building if Asda, if so., what are you planning to do with the money?'

**Use of Consultants**

- 'Significant amount spent on consultants helping the MCC'
- 'Suggest using groups like Probus who might have the expertise. Used retired professionals'
- 'We need someone in Usk to look at the best shops to keep them open'.

**Community Safety****Street lights**

- 'Why are we turning lights out yet they are on in the day?'
- 'Argument for lighting to be managed by the Town / Community Council'

- ‘I don’t feel safe with no street lights, couldn’t we have solar/ sensor power?’

#### **Police presence**

- ‘Not enough police presence’
- ‘Not enough police in the centre of town’

#### **Caldicot Town**

- Many problems with the parking, roads are so narrow that people park on the pavements.

### **Environment, Energy and Climate**

#### **Working in Partnership**

- People have access to personal and sound capital. Need to find a way to encourage people to invest – get a return. People could buy shoddy shops in town and get an income from them. (A)
- Brecon Beacons are looking to export energy (A)
- Need to get people to work together – countryside alliance interested parties to invest money to generate income (A)
- Chepstow Gardening Club – Transition Chepstow, there is space where the allotments on Strongbow Road, by the park. There is a cycle track right through the middle of the allotments, the park is fenced off. There are 45 people on the waiting list MCC should be charging £25 a year for allotment holders and making some money. There are bees on site, health and safety has to be adhered to, there must be rules i.e. people neglecting their site. At present the grass is just cut there (Reported to Tim Bradshaw 13/10/14)

#### **Recycling**

- Recycling fortnightly in rural areas
- Pay for our recycling
- Reduce recycling rounds
- Recycling – Pay for coloured bags and penalise people who are not recycling. One collection a week for all rubbish – not several a week.
- People who can afford it pay for it, yes to stop providing grey bags
- Stopping grey bags – people didn’t object to buying black bags for their selves. If you charge for red/purple bags, they will not use then and all will go into black bag.
- Evidence that shows waste in town hall
- Green bags – introduction resulted in savings
- Wales is quite small, why isn’t there a universal policy for such things as bin collections?
- Weigh rubbish to encourage recycling, penalise if too heavy.

- Recycling – further efficiencies could be made i.e. fortnightly glass/plastic collections. LED lighting a good idea but on 24 hours a day?
- Household waste: why not put out bags only when full since observations show that most bags are only partly full

#### **Green / Alternative Ideas**

- Schools could have solar power installed – reduce running costs
- Wind farms/solar panels should be encouraged
- Two wind farms given planning in Caldicot, have to strengthen a bridge in Rogiet in first place – is this cost effective
- Two wind farms have been given permission to be built even though the bridge accessing their site will need to be strengthened
- Natural Resources – could be making better use of own resources, lots of flowing water in Abergavenny, could be making use of this to produce energy. Don't have to make dams – do something on a smaller scale
- Green waste should be dealt with locally not transported elsewhere i. e. community recycling/composting
- Green energies – offering communities to help with schemes. Village halls could reduce their costs.
- Could young people have solar powered lights on castle grounds for football?


## The “Equality Initial Challenge”

| Name: Will McLean<br>Service area: Policy and Partnerships<br>Date completed: 5 <sup>th</sup> November 2014 |   | Please give a <b>brief description</b> of what you are aiming to do.<br><br>Provide feedback on the recent MonmouthshireEngages community engagement and consultation events. |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Protected characteristic  | Potential <b>Negative</b> impact<br>Please give details | Potential <b>Neutral</b> impact<br>Please give details  | Potential <b>Positive</b> Impact<br>Please give details   |
| Age   |   |   | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Disability  |   |   | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Marriage + Civil Partnership  |   |   | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Pregnancy and maternity   |   |   | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be  |

|                    |  |  |   |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
|                    |  |  | designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation.  |
| Race               |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Religion or Belief |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Sex (was Gender)   |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Sexual Orientation |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |
| Transgender        |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements  |

|                |  |  |   |
|----------------|--|--|---|
|                |  |  | of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation.  |
| Welsh Language |  |  | The report recognizes that specific new channels and means of engagement will need to be designed to meet the requirements of consultation legislation in the next phase of consultation. |

| Please give details about any potential <b>negative Impacts</b> . | How do you propose to <b>MITIGATE</b> these <b>negative impacts</b> |
|---|---|
| ➤   | ➤   |
| ➤   | ➤   |
| ➤   | ➤   |
| ➤   | ➤   |

**Signed**   
**Designation** **Head of Policy and Partnerships**  
**Dated** **5<sup>th</sup> November 2014**



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>What are you impact assessing</b>  | <b>Service area</b>              |
| The impact of the learning from the first stage of the MonmouthshireEngages process | Policy and Partnerships          |
| <b>Policy author / service lead</b>   | <b>Name of assessor and date</b> |
| Will McLean   | Will McLean                      |

### 1. What are you proposing to do?

Provide feedback to Council from the recent MonmouthshireEngages community engagement events.

2. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics in a **negative** way? If **YES** please tick appropriate boxes below.

|                               |  |                    |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Age                           |  | Race               |  |
| Disability                    |  | Religion or Belief |  |
| Gender reassignment           |  | Sex                |  |
| Marriage or civil partnership |  | Sexual Orientation |  |
| Pregnancy and maternity       |  | Welsh Language     |  |

3. Please give details of the negative impact

None

4. Did you take any actions to mitigate your proposal? Please give details below including any consultation or engagement.

None required

5. Please list the data that has been used to develop this proposal? eg Household survey data, Welsh Govt data, ONS data, MCC service user data, Staff personnel data etc..

The outcomes from the process itself.

Signed...



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Designation...Head of Policy and Partnerships

Dated.....5<sup>th</sup> November 2014.....

