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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 12 April 2021

Notice of meeting

Children and Young People Select Committee

**Tuesday, 20th April, 2021 at 10.00 am,
Remote Meeting**

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Public Open Forum	
4.	Annual Report of the Chief Officer for Children and Young People: To scrutinise the performance of the work of the directorate over the past year and the forward direction	1 - 30
5.	Children and Young People Select Forward Work Plan	31 - 32
6.	Cabinet and Council Work Planner	33 - 48
7.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting	49 - 54
8.	To confirm the date and time of the next meeting as 27th May 2021	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

**MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY**

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Louise Brown	Shirenewton;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Lisa Dymock	The Elms;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt	Lansdown;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Laura Jones	Wyesham;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Malcolm Lane	Mardy;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell	Castle;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Frances Taylor	Mill;	Independent Group
County Councillor Tudor Thomas	Priory;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jo Watkins	Caldicot Castle;	Liberal Democrats

Added Members

Members voting on Education Issues Only

Vacant Seat (Roman Catholic Church)
Vacant Seat (Co-optee)
Elizabeth Thomas

Added Members

Non Voting

Fay Middleton (Trade Union)
Maggie Harris
Peter Strong NEU

Public Information

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Welsh Language

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Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Committee Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
 2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve?
 3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?
- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
 - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works?
6. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan?
7. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
8. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
9. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated.

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...
- (iii) Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

General Questions....

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?

Service Demands

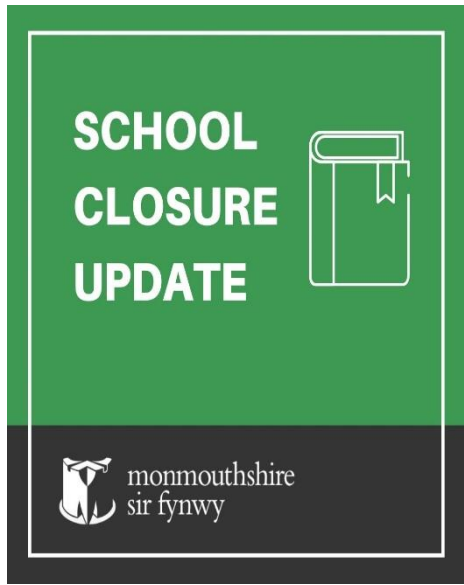
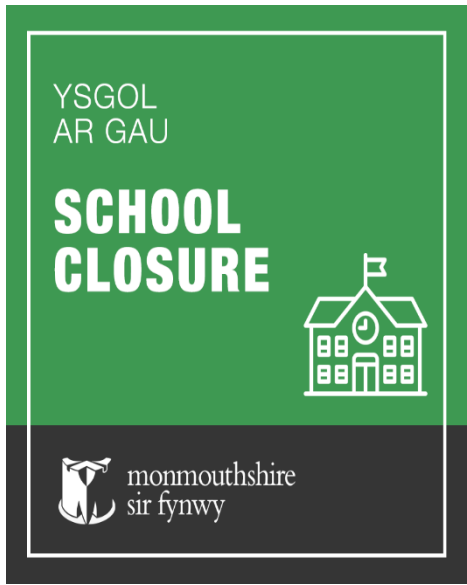
- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income? Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?



Draft Chief Officer's Report

Children and Young People Select Committee

Tuesday 20th April 2021



Contents



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- Student outcomes
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- Conclusions



Purpose

In any other year the purpose of my Chief Officer's report is to inform Council of the progress that the education system has made in the past twelve months. This year the report will be markedly different, the global COVID-19 pandemic left an indelible impact on education across the world and Monmouthshire did not escape.

This report includes the examination and assessment period that ended in August 2020. I set out in my report last year that the accountability framework in Wales had changed significantly; the pandemic and Government's efforts to ensure that schools were not overly burdened accelerated these changes.

There were no end of Key Stage Assessments for the Foundation Phase, KS2 and 3 this year. Furthermore, the outcomes for students at the end of Key Stage 4 and those sitting AS and A Levels were subject to a series of process and policy changes throughout the year. The eventually published Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) have not been compared with any previous years.

My report this year will focus on two distinct elements; a backward review of the response to the pandemic by the schools and education services across Monmouthshire and a future focus on the work that the system will have to undertake to support learners in the aftermath of the pandemic and address the challenges of the ongoing reform agenda in Wales.

The performance report on last year's areas of focus will be reported to Children and Young People's Select Committee in the coming half term.



Introduction

My Chief Officer's Report is an annual 'state of the County' report that aims to reflect the progress that has been made across Monmouthshire. Since my first report in 2016 it has reflected some important measures about the nature and standard of provision we offer. These have typically included measures around student outcomes, inspection results, school categorisation results and a range of 'proxy' indicators for wellbeing such as school attendance and exclusions.

This year's report is very different. Nearly none of those measures are available to me. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic education in Monmouthshire has experienced a year unlike any other. We have seen the cancellation of end of key stage assessments, the majority of children learning from home, schools providing childcare and the wholesale movement to a new pedagogical approach of 'blended learning'. New terms such as 'synchronous and asynchronous' have become part and parcel of our language.

Our schools, their teachers, leaders and support staff have been asked to work differently and do different things. Primary schools have been forced to think about how a curriculum predicated on collective play and development can be delivered at home while our secondary schools have managed a whole new approach to assessment.

Monmouthshire's Children and Young People's Directorate has also had to change the way in which it works and where it focuses its energy. Supporting schools to operationalise their obligations to support learners during the pandemic has meant procuring thousands of pieces of IT kit, organising a new payment process for free school meals, increasing cleaning capacity and changing the way in which meals are provided to children in our schools. Some of these may sound trite but they have demonstrated that the ability to keep a school open and safe has been a huge effort by many people across many teams and is not limited to school based staff.

Ordinarily following a core Estyn Inspection (MCC was inspected in February 2020) an organisation would focus on meeting the report's recommendations. This year has inevitably been different but colleagues have continued to work in the background to further those areas. Draft ALN and FSM strategies have been taken to CYP Select and continue to be developed.

The other focus of a Chief Officer's report is the planning for the coming year. This year the report identifies four themes of work where we will develop further action plans. They are; Purpose, People, Place and Pedagogy. We have already seen areas where we know there is significant work to do. These include promoting wellbeing, understanding where are learners are and what skills they need to focus on and for our youngest learners, socialisation and taking their first steps in education with friends. There are also the themes that remain relevant from our Estyn inspection; pursuing excellence, creating an holistic vision and strategy for learners with additional learning needs, securing better outcomes for our learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) and improving the way we use data in our evaluations. We also continue to develop leadership across our schools and create better learning environments for all a our learners.



Engagement with Members

17.3.20

Annual CO Education Report – WM
Scrutiny of the performance report on school development outcomes (not sure who presented this)

6.5.20

Estyn Report presented to Cabinet

21.5.20

All members seminar on the Estyn Inspection

4.6.20

Annual CO Report to Full Council

9.7.20

Reflections on Monmouthshire Schools through Covid 19 lockdown and the return to school in the summer– WM
EAs Value for money study – DH
Preparation for the September 2020 return to school – DH, KB & WM

8.9.20

School examination performance Summer 2020 – WM
Return to School – WM

13.10.20

School based support for emotional wellbeing – MW & LD
Blended learning in schools – SRS (?)

8.12.20

Welsh Medium Education – SRS

21.1.21

All members' Seminar on Blended Learning

23.3.21

Feedback from Estyn's Thematic Review - WM



The shape of our place

Page 6



- # pupils
 - 6214 Primary (35 in Special Needs Resource Bases (SNRB))
 - 4879 Secondary (79 in SNRBs)
 - 0 Special. 85 in Out of County Special Schools.
 - 14 Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
- # schools
 - 30 Primary
 - 4 Secondary
 - 12 Maintained nurseries
 - 25 Non-maintained settings
 - 1 PRU
- # Staff
 - 76 (57.2 full time equivalents (fte)) CYP Staff
 - 1,571 (1064.4 fte) Primary/Secondary/PRS based staff



Age & Gender Population Profile

Page 7

**Due to the pandemic PLASC has been delayed until
XX/XX/XXXX
These figures will be added ahead of the presentation to
full Council**

Male

Female



ALN Population Profile

Page 8

Due to the pandemic PLASC has been delayed until
XX/XX/XXXX

These figures will be added ahead of the presentation to
full Council

DRAFT

Statement

School Action Plus

School Action

No Additional Need



Reflections on 2020/21

Initial response to the pandemic

The period leading up to the initial nationwide lockdown had been significant for Monmouthshire's Children and Young People Directorate. The Authority had just been through its core inspection by Estyn and had spent the intervening period preparing our response to the report's recommendations. However, as March progressed it became clear that we should be preparing for a very different approach to schooling. It started with a reminder to schools that they should review their business continuity plans and ended with a full closure of all schools for face to face learning and the development of 'blended learning' a term that meant little to many people in February 2020 but meant everything by April 2020.

The requirement to provide childcare for two cohorts of children became apparent very quickly; our vulnerable learners and the children of critical workers (NHS staff, blue light workers, a range of public servants and some identified private sector workers). Working with the schools nine hubs for childcare were established by Monday 23rd March 2020. By the middle of the summer term that provision would have been re-shaped and include the four secondary schools at our peak we operated 11 hubs and supported # children everyday. Schools staff opened the hubs from 8am until 6pm ensuring shifts could be completed.

The childcare hubs were supported by staff from schools within the relevant cluster, the local authority managed the registration and allocation of places. Over time the provision changed depending on take up in certain areas and after half term provision was extended to secondary schools.

The next significant stage was the announcement of the Check In, Catch Up and Prepare a three week window at the end of the summer term when children would return for face to face engagement with their teachers. However, the capacity of schools was limited to 30% and in many Monmouthshire schools the requirement to continue the provision for children of critical workers and vulnerable learners saw the majority of children only offered one session a week.

It was against this limited provision that the decision was made not to provide the additional week in the summer term that the Minister had originally envisaged. It was felt that sacrificing one day in July for five days additional learning opportunity in October was not a good investment.

If there was one theme that emerged very quickly in the early stages of the pandemic it was that of collaboration, a real willingness to work together to ensure that our learners' needs were being met. I will reflect on different aspects of this collaborative framework but initially the way clusters of schools supported the hubs in each town (and our 'rural' hub in Raglan), the way in that CYP staff supported schools with the registration and guidance processes for the Hubs and the collaborative approach developed by CYP and colleagues from social care to identify and support vulnerable learners stand out as excellent examples of a system responding at pace to unprecedented circumstances.

In Estyn's letter to the Authority as a part of their specific remit review of the response to the pandemic said:

'The authority's crisis management has been agile and responsive. Building on existing positive relations with schools and headteachers, senior officers have ensured effective communication and clear expectations. They have consistently sought the opinion of headteachers and worked to respond to their concerns and the needs of schools.'

The highest attendance we had was on Wednesday 24th June when there were a total of 401 pupils in our school hubs, this was made up of 329 key worker children and 72 vulnerable pupils.



Promoting a new approach to learning

As soon as the scale of change required by the pandemic became apparent schools, the local authority and our partners in the Education Achievement Service (EAS) looked quickly to understand how they could provide an effective ongoing education for learners. This would have to be in a hugely different way to that which all teachers had been educated, trained and learned their craft in. The traditional model of teaching face to face was in an instant changed and the challenge facing our schools was how could we support children learning at home.

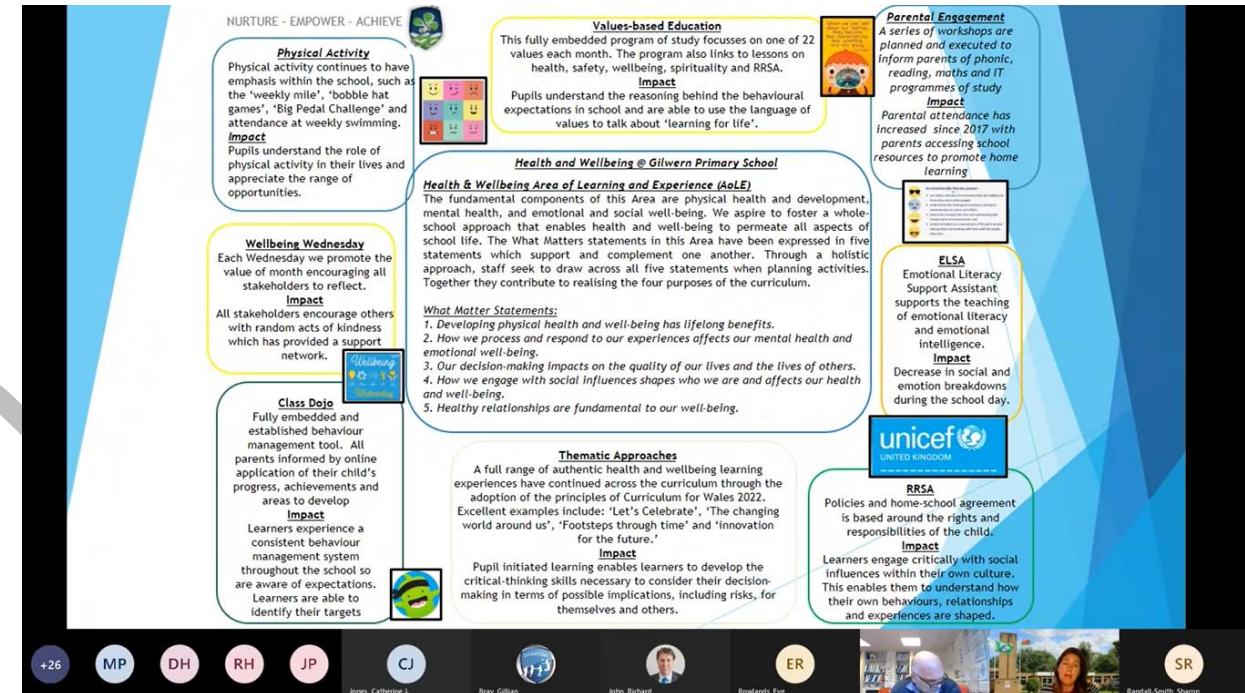
Previous Chief Officer Reports have highlighted the range of challenges that inequity amongst our learners presents in ensuring that all of our learners are able to fulfil their potential. The pandemic now shone a sharp light on this challenge. How did a school support learners who may not have their own suitable IT equipment or potentially connectivity beyond a mobile phone? How does a school legislate for family support. Indeed, the challenges in this regard were reflected in many different ways; some families may not be able to support their children in their learning and other families had parents who continued to work, often full time at home (interestingly often having to use a family's sole piece of IT equipment).

It was against this backdrop that the term 'blended learning' emerged. It has not become a full part of the educational lexicon in Wales. It would be entirely wrong to suggest that all schools were able to move to this new remote means of educating children easily but we were fortunate in being able to work closely with a number of schools who had made a rapid adaptation alongside our partners in the EAS. An immediate and widespread launch of professional learning and masterclasses saw the digital and pedagogical approaches improve across the County.

One of the key challenges of this change was that families and parents now saw the teaching of their children up close in a way that does not happen when children attend school everyday. A feature of the summer term 2020 was a number of concerns being raised about the quantity, quality and nature of the work being provided to learners (of all ages and stages). Schools worked hard to engage with parents to assure them that the developing curriculum was appropriate. In the spring term 2021 a number of Monmouthshire Schools have presented to County Councillors to demonstrate their new approaches to blended learning. This model of direct engagement by our schools was very successful and will be a part of the our engagement in the future.

There has been significant interest in the was in which learners accessed IT to enable their learning. During the course of the pandemic Monmouthshire and our schools have:

- Gathered information from households on their ability to connect to the internet, and to provide Mi-fi units (mobile broadband) where needed.
- Provided laptops to learners that need an internet enabled device to access HWB (the all Wales Education platform)
- Provided several thousand new devices across schools to support future blended learning requirements, with allocation based on FSM in the Comprehensive Schools
- Worked with teaching staff to ensure that they have access to technical support here needed



Supporting Schools

We maintained regular contact with headteachers throughout the last year to ensure that schools remained informed about policy changes and had an opportunity to identify the support they needed from officers to respond to the demands of the pandemic. The rapid deployment of Teams as a means of communication along with regular email updates provided an effective vehicle for the local authority to communicate.

We were in the fortunate position of being able to deploy Monmouthshire's healthy schools team and local authority educational psychologists produced specific advice and guidance to support pupils and families during lockdown. This resource was further supplemented by 'playlists' produced by the EAS. This new way of sharing large amounts of information in a structured ways has been greeted positively by school leaders.

Working with colleagues across social services safeguarding remained a key area of attention. In order to support staff and other stakeholders it was agreed that safeguarding training would be delivered online. This was a significant development from previous practice.

In recognising the likelihood that the pandemic may well go on for an extended period of time Monmouthshire determined that schools should not be required to provide childcare for vulnerable learners and children of critical workers through the Easter holidays. MonLife were commissioned to deliver two weeks of provision across the existing school hubs. This was well received by children and school staff alike. It also meant that schools were prepared to offer the childcare provision through the May half term.

School leadership is challenging at all times and this period has exacerbated this and inevitably led to pressure on the Headteacher cadre. In order to mitigate this we provided HR support but also recruited a recently retired Headteacher who was available to act as a sounding board for Leaders. This was an intervention short of some of the more formal interventions that are offered.

A consistent area of focus for MCC throughout the pandemic was to alleviate as many burdens on the schools as we could to allow schools to focus on their blended learning offer and supporting their learners. This included supporting them in their risk assessments and interpretation of the operational guidance.

Working with our partners in the EAS we have continued to support schools in particular those who were in a group of requiring additional support. This has not been in the sense of accountability but rather greater support and wellbeing contact. We continued to work with schools, the EAS and Welsh Government to understand the way in which grants can be allocated and spent – this was particularly relevant to the 'Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards' grant stream.

We worked closely with the EAS to promote a wide range of professional learning (CPD) opportunities to staff at all levels. Consequently, nearly all schools in the local authority have accessed online professional learning provided by the EAS.

Our ongoing focus on learners ensured a continual emphasis on supporting schools to establish pupils' wellbeing, including that of our vulnerable learners.

Item	Unit	No. Issued
Dust Mask Disposable (Flat Folded)	Each	1100
Face Mask Organic Vapour Respirator	Each	150
Medical Mask	Each	28855
Gloves Disposable	Box (100)	875
Kwik Wipes	Tub	508
Hand Sanitiser (47ml)	Each	493
Hand Sanitiser (1L)	Each	334
Hand Sanitiser (5L)	Each	221
Reusable Masks Black/Blue	Each	9440
Virucidal Spray (750ml)	Each	278
Virucidal Spray (5L)	Each	19
Unisafe Spray (750ml)	Each	197
Monmouthshire Masks	Each	20
Woven Cloths	Roll	49
Disposable Apron	Each	28800
Blue Rolls	Each	456
Visors	Each	228

Vulnerable Learners

Throughout the pandemic there has been a sharp focus on supporting those learners who we understood to be vulnerable. This was not driven by set a defined criteria but through a professional discussion with Headteachers and social services colleagues that had a very simple threshold at its heart – anybody who was safer in school, should be in school.

The children who were supported by being in school ranged from those with additional learning needs through to those children who school leaders felt would be better served in school. All of our Special Needs Resources Bases (SNRBs) were open throughout the pandemic. Not all families who were offered places in school chose to take them up. It is a reminder that the pandemic did not affect our communities equally and each family took their own decisions about how their children should be supported.

In a further example of collaboration early help teams in social services worked closely with Education Welfare Officers and the Education Psychology team to prepare specific wellbeing support for vulnerable learners. Many of these interventions were presented to the CYP Select Committee on the 13th October 2020.

There was extensive phone contact with referred vulnerable families on a regular basis. Where necessary visits were made to families and where there were concerns referrals were made to Early Help Panel, women’s aid, young carers or formal MARFS were submitted to social care.

EWOS provided families with information on food banks and how to access them. Individual EWOS liaised with relevant agencies, and one liaised with the third sector and delivered donated work packs to vulnerable pupils who were identified by schools.

This development of on-line training for Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators and school staff (by ALN Transformation Team) increased participation and supported improving knowledge and skills of school staff in preparation for ALN reform changes.

Furthermore, the Education Psychology Service’s (EPS) new training platform was also developed with a high take up. This development allowed the EPS to establish that their role was more than providing cognitive assessments. It particularly helped ‘showcase’ their well-being responsibilities and has helped shaped future provision in this area.

However, in some regards, lockdown was a significant distraction with regard to the level of preparation, training, interaction that we had hoped to establish with Headteachers in preparation for the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Reform. Whilst work around this carried on at an ALNCo level there remain concerns that not all school leaders are as engaged as they should be.

Within our understanding of vulnerable learners were those children who were potentially at greater risk to harm through being at home for an extended period of time. An inability to have ‘eyes on’ those children caused concern amongst all professionals. As the pandemic progressed it became apparent that whilst the level of referrals from schools had understandably fallen community referrals took their place.

Schools undertook a significant range of engagement activities, many calling all pupils regularly and calling other students on a daily basis. As the pandemic progressed changes in the guidance from the Welsh Government allowed greater use of synchronous (live) lessons. This development allowed teachers and support staff to have far more frequent contact with their children and learners.

Hub	Number Identified	Provision Secured for	Taken up	Not taken up		
				Children Isolating	Refused	Not Needed
Deri View	13	13	10	0	1	2
Dewstow	18	18	12	0	6	0
Llanfoist	6	6	4	0	0	2
Overmon now	12	12	6	0	6	0
Raglan	2	2	0	0	2	0
Rogiet	9	9	6	0	3	0
Thornwell	6	6	6	0	0	0
PRU	6	6	4	0	2	0
Early Years	11	11	9	0	2	0
Caldicot	2	2	1	0	0	1
Total	85	85	58	0	22	5
	100%	100%	68.23%	0%	25.9%	5.89%

Number of FSM pupils at start of pandemic 1355

Number of FSM pupils March 2021 1662

We have made 55,000 payments to parents with a total value of £1.2m

Working with partners

It has hopefully been clear throughout the report to this point that the response to the pandemic has been driven by partners working together in an accelerated and innovative way. Whilst I would always have hoped that the relationships with our partners (schools, MCC support services, Welsh Government, other regional authorities (including Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB)) and the EAS) was strong the pandemic has proven to me that these are robust and highly effective relationships.

Headteachers have responded excellently to the challenges of the pandemic and the need to work closely with the Authority has further developed already good existing relationships. As Estyn said in their most recent letter to the Authority:

Overall collaboration and sharing of information have been effective. The local authority has used technology well to ensure clear communication, collaboration and sharing of information with and between schools. For example, regular headteacher meetings held via Microsoft Teams have helped to ensure that schools remained informed about policy changes and able to express their views on the support they require from officers.

A further area of positive development was working across MCC's own directorates. The work under taken in the Enterprise Directorate to ensure that schools were cleaned, children provided with meals and transport arranged in a timely manner gave schools greater confidence. There were challenges of course, such as the difficulty to recruit new cleaning staff to meet the additional requirements of the Schools' Operational Guidance.

One unexpected benefit of the pandemic was that it brought to sharper focus the differentiation in the roles of the EAS and the local authority. This clarity meant that schools did not receive duplicated messages of support structures. Estyn noted:

Collaboration with EAS has been beneficial in supporting schools to develop their support for distance learning and the delivery of the Welsh Government's Continuity of Learning Plan. Headteachers across the local authority have been positive about this support and engaged well with professional learning opportunities. In addition to virtual headteacher meetings, the Regional Headteacher and Governor Strategy Group continued to meet monthly and chairs of governing bodies met collaboratively on a six-weekly basis. Challenge advisors maintained supportive contact with schools and regional networks continues, such as the Professional Learning Schools and Deputy Headteacher Network.

Colleagues noted improved access to health colleagues in terms of their availability to meet via Teams rather than travelling to venues and being able to meet in a more timely way has helped to resolve issues more effectively and built better working relationships. Positively we understand that health will be building and developing their virtual platform.

Further developments with ABUHB has been the development of an on-line training offer by therapy services including Q&A sessions this was very well received by schools and it has changed the way health services interact with school staff and positively impacted on interventions for children. This will positively support their responsibilities under the new Act.

However, there is still a need to have a more formal and face to face 'relationship' with health services, particularly in relation to more complex children in SNRBs.

Working with our schools on the ALN agenda has been accelerated through the pandemic and the SNRB network group has made more progress in the 3 /4 months of the first lockdown than I had in the previous year



An enhanced focus on wellbeing

The last year has seen Wales public services respond to a public health crisis. Monmouthshire has experienced the worst of the pandemic, families have lost members and we have seen infections and hospitalisations of members of our community, however when compared to other parts of Wales it is undeniable that the impact has been relatively lower than other parts of Wales.

Despite this, the emergence of wellbeing needs across Monmouthshire has been clear to all professionals. How do we make sure that all of the impact of social distancing, of societal lockdowns, of restricted human contact do not disproportionately impact on learners and their learning.

There are a few areas in the 2020 School Health Research Network (SHRN) survey where students reported that their health behaviours have worsened since the last survey in 2018 and where improvement is required, these include; student levels of life satisfaction, respectful relationships, body image, alcohol misuse and sex and relationships. There have, however, been positive improvements in other areas of student health behaviours such as learner voice, a reduction in the number of students who share sexually explicit images, a reduction in the number of students who have tried e-cigarettes and a reduction in the number of students who have taken part in bullying and who have been bullied.

The Wellbeing Subgroup has an action plan that aims to improve these outcomes through working collaboratively with key LA officers and all four secondary schools. Actions include improving communication, access to targeted support, signposting to services, CPD for school and LA staff, working with schools to improve curriculum provision and promotion of active travel. This group now includes representation from all four secondary schools and primary representation is being explored as the SHRN project extends into working with primary schools.

The Subgroup continues to work on the Action Plan shaped largely by SHRN data aiming to contribute towards the broader MCC wellbeing agenda of:

- Working to ensure that schools and services for children focus on well-being,
- Supporting the resilience of children and young people in relation to their mental health and emotional well-being,
- Developing networks for all ages that support people's well-being in their local communities.

In 2021 the Welsh Government published a new statutory Framework for LAs and schools on Embedding a Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-Being (WSAMH). The guidance aims to address the emotional and mental wellbeing needs of all children and young people, as well as school staff as part of the whole school community. Emma Taylor (MCC's Healthy Schools' Lead) is the new Whole School Approach Regional Implementation Lead and this work will now be supported through the Wellbeing Subgroup.

The cross directorate Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) project continues with the EPS receiving WG Wellbeing Grant money from last year to produce the guidance and training to be delivered during the summer term to schools and other MCC partners. This aims to improve awareness, consistency and pathways in this area.



Outcomes at Key Stage 4 & 5

In response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, the Welsh Government cancelled all statutory data collections that would have been due to take place in Summer 2020.

This was initially announced in the Minister for Education's written statements of 18 March 2020 and 3 July 2020 and enacted in the Relaxation of School Reporting Requirements (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

The last update was the School Performance Reporting Arrangements Important Update (10 August 2020).

The Summer's examination results were subject to a number of differing approaches across the United Kingdom and this was a hugely unsettling time for all learners especially those whose next steps were dependant upon 'examination' outcomes.



The National Picture

Figure 7.2: National GCSE summer cumulative C/4 results 2010-2020¹⁾⁽²⁾

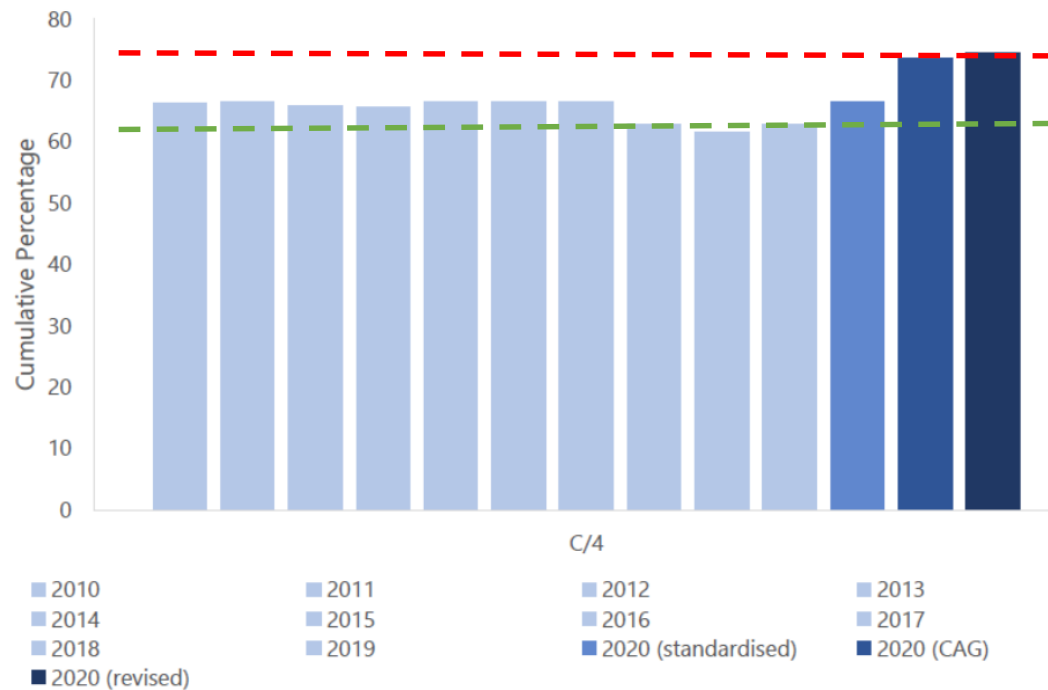
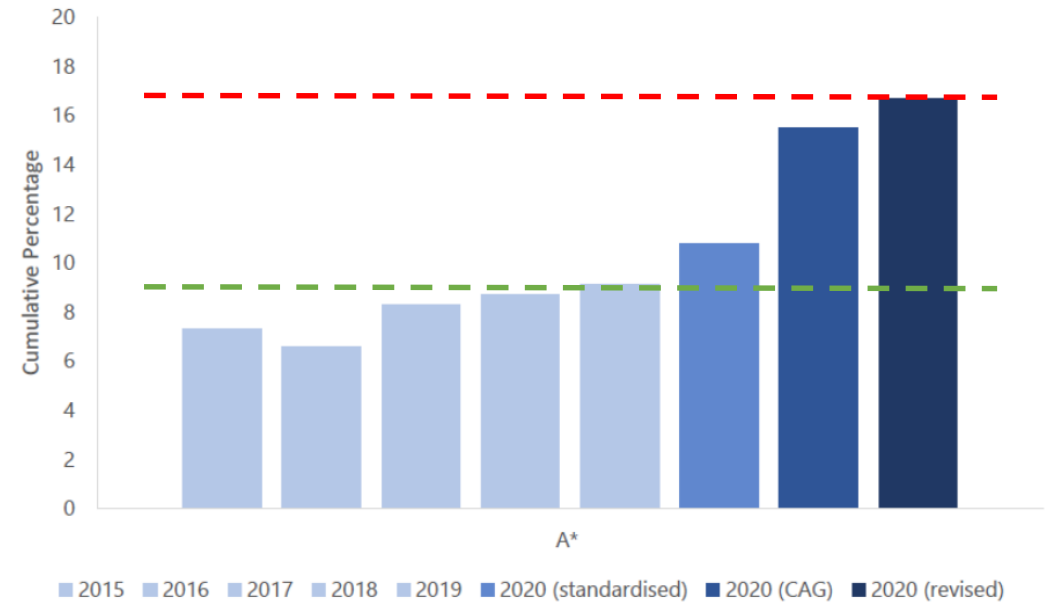


Figure 5.1: National A level summer A* results 2015-2020



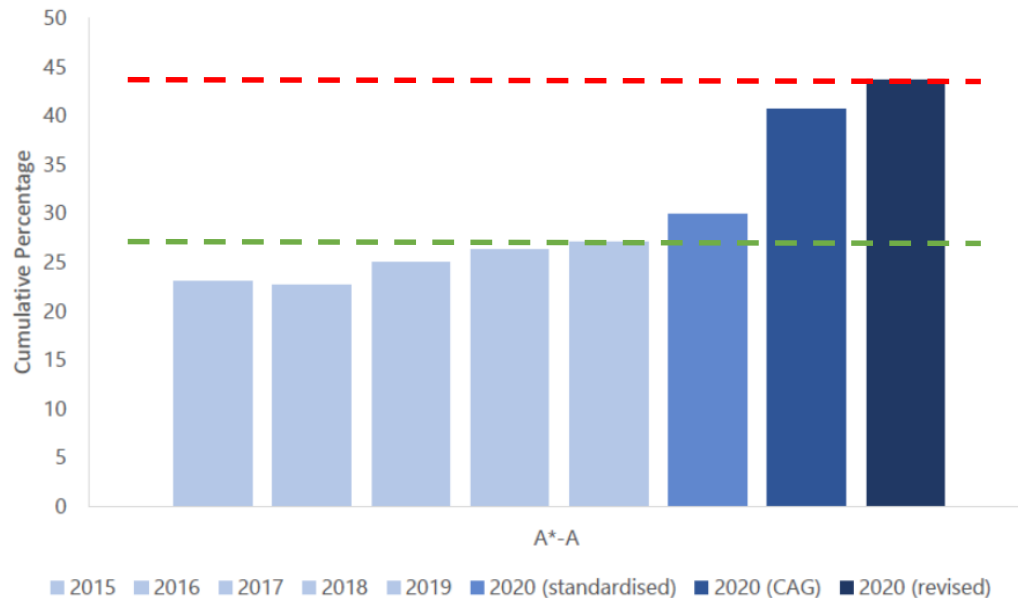
Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCQ; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies



The National Picture

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Figure 5.2: National A level summer cumulative A results 2015-2020



Source: 2015 to 2019 and 2020 (standardised): JCQ; 2020 (CAG) and 2020 (revised): awarding bodies

The previous three charts (taken from the Qualifications Wales report) show, at a national level, the impact of the changing approach to grade allocation in 2020. This should be considered when considering the next two slides where the performance of Monmouthshire's schools is captured.



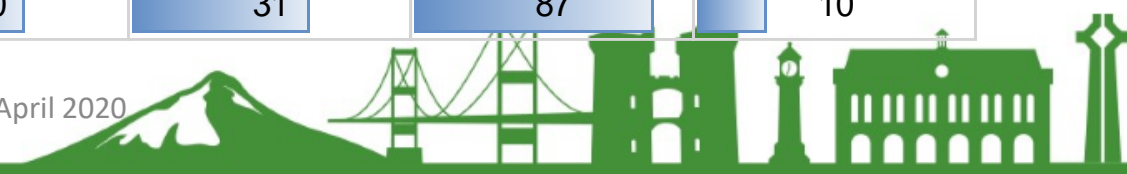
Monmouthshire Performance

All Schools above the median
 $\frac{3}{4}$ above the threshold of 400

All schools over 40 for all subject measures

Very strong performance by
 all school at the highest levels

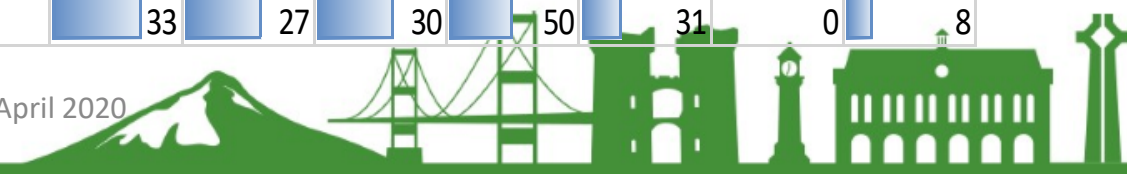
School	Capped Point 9	Average points for best of Literature or first Language Welsh or English GCSE	Average points for best of Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE	Average points for best Science GCSE	Average points for Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate	L1 Threshold	5 A*-As
School 1	414	43	42	42	44	99	29
School 2	410	44	45	44	45	100	32
School 3	408	46	45	45	47	100	37
School 4	389	43	44	42	44	98	29
Region 2020							
Highest	422	46	47	46	48	100	41
Median	376	41	39	38	41	97	21
Lowest	318	35	34	30	31	87	10



Monmouthshire Performance

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	Capped 9		Average points for best of Literature or first Language Welsh or English GCSE		Average points for best of Mathematics or Mathematics - Numeracy GCSE		Average points for best Science GCSE		Average points for Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate		L1 Threshold		5 A*-As	
School	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non	eFSM	Non
School 1	383	417	42	43	37	43	38	42	40	44	94	99	13	31
School 2	355	418	39	45	36	47	37	45	40	46	100	100	10	36
School 3	326	416	39	47	36	46	36	46	42	47	100	100	48	40
School 4	320	401	36	44	35	45	33	44	41	45	95	98	5	32
Region 2020														
Highest	395	426	44	47	43	47	42	46	44	49	100	100	48	42
Median	329	389	36	42	33	40	31	40	35	41	93	98	9	23
Lowest	272	331	28	36	26	37	23	33	27	30	50	31	0	8



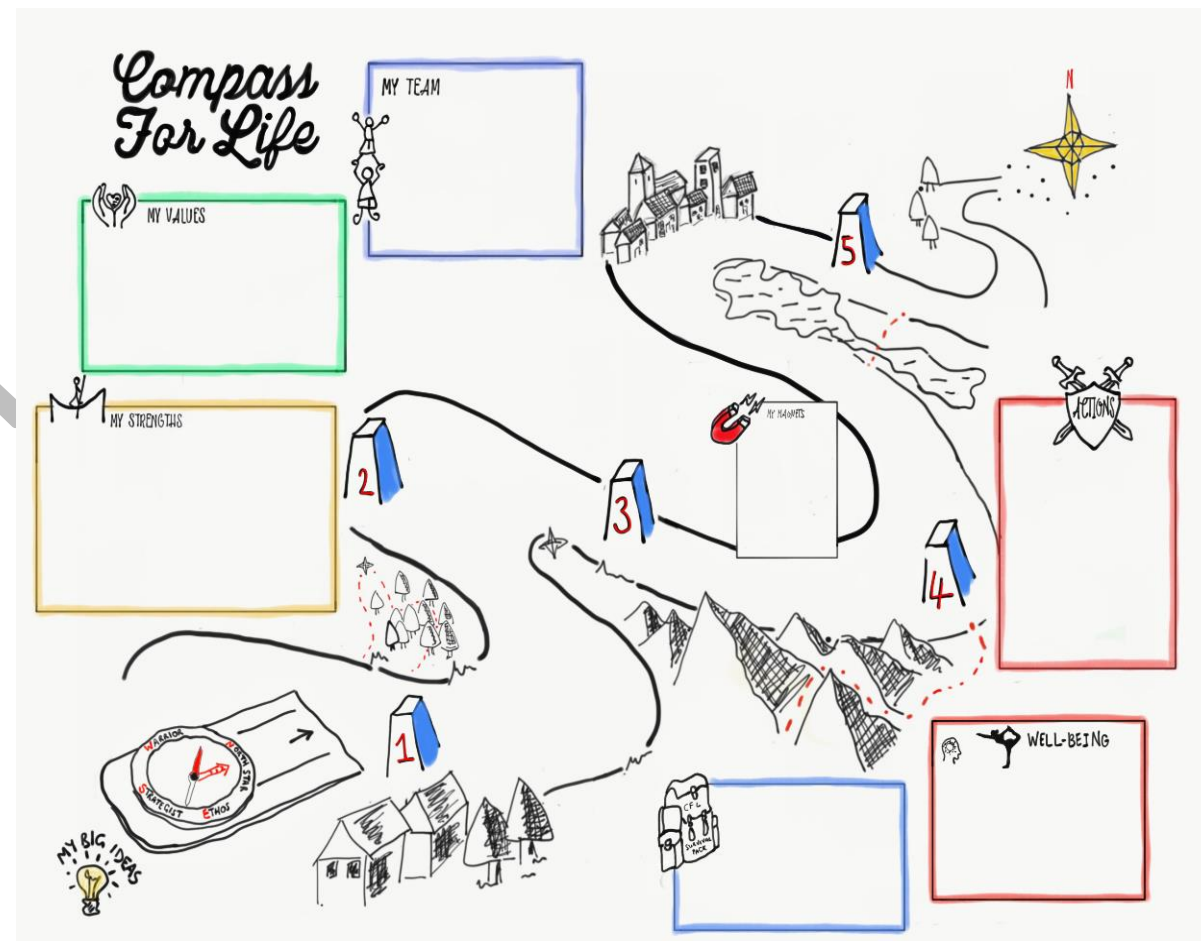
Compass for Life

2020 saw the launch of a new initiative across all of Monmouthshire's learners in years 5&6. The Compass for Life is aimed at raising the aspirations and resilience of all learners. It promotes children framing their aspirations and understanding the strengths they will have to show and steps they will have to follow if they are to achieve their 'Super North Star'.

The work is promoted by the Compass for Life Foundation and children and teachers experience the same powerful workshop before following a bespoke curriculum. The workshop works through the four cardinals of the compass:

- The Super North Star
- Your Ethos (East)
- Your Strategist (South)
- The Warrior (West)

The sessions in Monmouthshire are being led by Floyd Woodrow, MBE, DCM. COVID has slowed the rollout of the programme but work was completed in four primary schools (Deri View, Thornwell, Overmonnow and Dewstow). The response from learners in all four schools was exceptional and the next eight schools will enjoy their sessions early in the summer term.



The impact of COVID on our finances

Schools

All schools have had the opportunity to claim additional expenses / loss of income from the hardship fund. The claims for the financial year have amounted to:

- £540k for staffing. This covered a range of staff costs including: Maternity cover from 28 weeks, staff having to self-isolate or shield. Any additional staff required to maintain class bubbles.
- £175k for all non-pay costs. This covered PPE, sanitisers, social distancing signs and any additional equipment required to maintain class bubbles.
- £178k loss of income. The majority of this is lost catering income for our secondary schools, but also covered loss of letting income in the primary schools including after school clubs.

Schools have also managed to make saving through reduced supply costs, given the blended learning approach it has not always been necessary to cover all staff absences.

In addition to this schools have received grants to support the return to school and any catch up programmes:

- Initial ALPS grant - £518k split over the academic year £302k to end of March 2021 and £216k to the end of August 2021. In addition to this a further £669k was announced in March to support schools returning prior to Easter.

Schools also received:

- £1,098k relating to revenue maintenance this will be used in the main to offset cleaning or caretaking costs in 20-21 allowing schools to roll forward the underspends in to the new financial year.
- £1,217k relating to capital maintenance for schools. This is for costs that are capital in nature. Property Services are identifying the costs that qualify and the balance will be slipped to be spent in the new financial year.

The Month 9 forecast showed a collective deficit balance for schools of £166k with 12 schools in a deficit. Given the late notice of these grants, which are very welcome, it is likely that the school balances will move considerably and the latest update shows this could be a surplus in excess of £2.5m.

Central Budgets

The month 9 forecast for central costs centres showed an in year overspend of £87k the split is:

- £434k underspent ISB. This is a result of grant for teacher pay which had previously been afforded to schools and the over estimation of rates for Monmouth Comp.
- £3k overspent for resources this is a result of additional ICT costs.
- £518k overspent for standard, ALN is included in this as this is overspent by £608k.

Again the Local Authority has been able to claim for any additional costs or income losses as a result of COVID. This has been minimal for costs however £69k has been claimed for loss income for Before School Clubs.

During the year £22k was paid out to Childcare providers for loss of income due to COVID and a further £89k was paid to non-maintained setting for additional costs relating to COVID.

Two grants were received in March:

- £245k – ALN, this will be used to support the transition of pupils into secondary school with clusters working together to support this, in addition to this the Educational Psychologist service has increased its capacity to help support and identify the needs of young people at a very early stage.
- £122k – this is for any additional costs for covid that have not been claimed via the hardship fund and will support outdoor structures required to provide space and CO2 detectors.

The continued pressure on the ALN budget is an on-going concern, the appointment of two statutory officers and a cost planning tool will help to identify and control costs going forward.



Our Future Direction

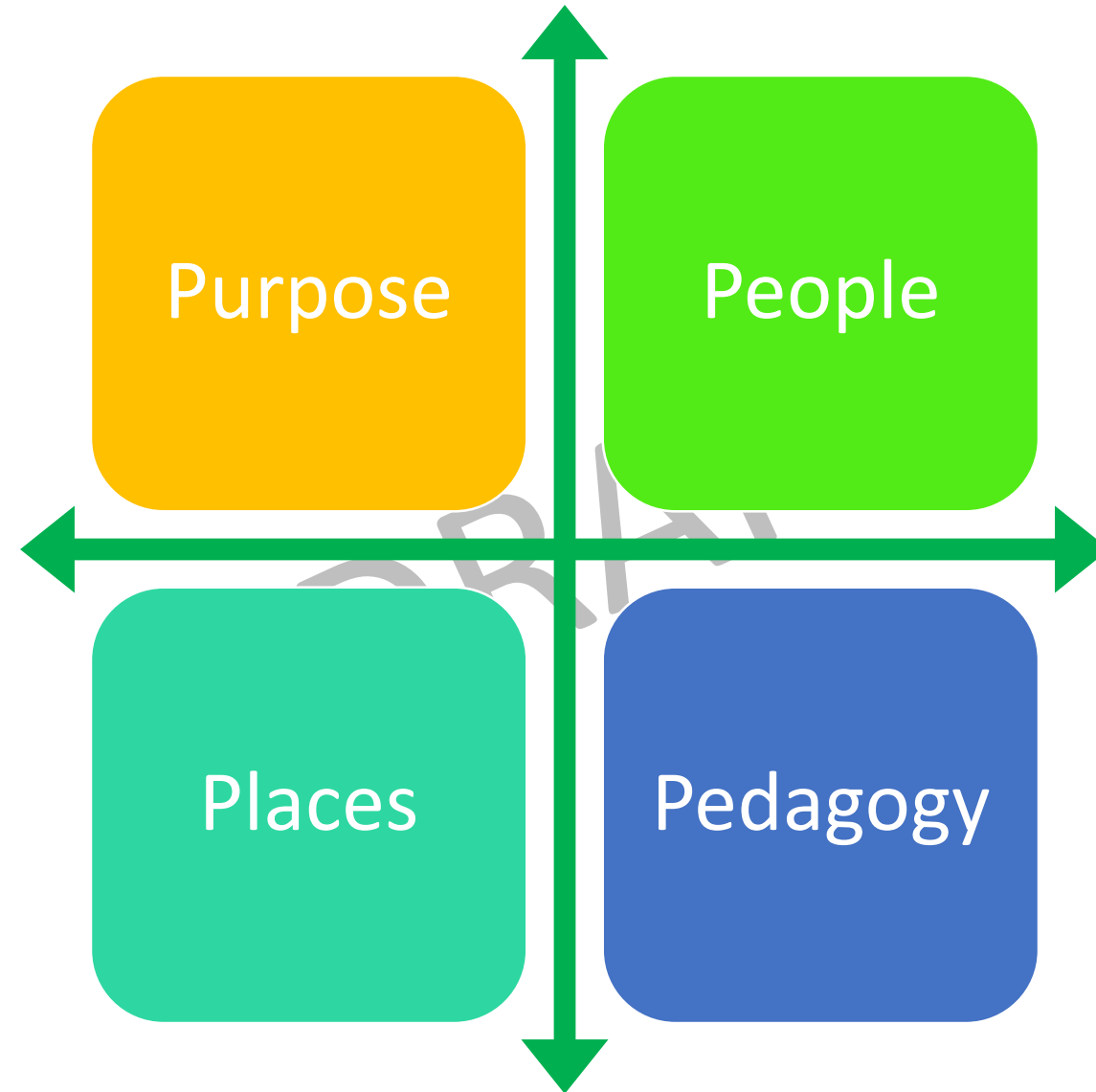
How will Monmouthshire respond to the challenges of a post-pandemic world?



What our context could be...

- Negative impacts estimated at 50% worse for disadvantaged children
- 80% of respondents agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse. 41% said it had made their mental health “much worse” - increased feelings of anxiety, isolation, a loss of coping mechanisms or a loss of motivation. *Young Minds survey*
- By autumn 20, significantly lower achievement in reading and maths compared to 3 years ago (UK) – *NFER study*
- 53% of learners questioned were struggling with learning at home – spring 20 – *WG review of impacts on Mental health*
- Long term loss of earning in children in the UK estimated at £350bn (and 100bn tax revenue) – *Institute of Fiscal Studies*





Purpose

Risk

Opportunity

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1. *'Children and Young People have the best possible start in life'* may no longer be an adequate purpose in light of the COVID-19 pandemic
2. We are in the earliest stages of the post-COVID-19 period and as yet we do not understand fully the impact of the pandemic
3. The development of a new purpose (if one is required) will take time and need a collective input to frame it
4. Our purpose needs to reflect the changes to the education context in Wales and beyond. Reform is part of this agenda but so to are maximising the opportunities to our children and young people
5. Capitalise and build on the authority's work on social justice and anti-poverty

1. Take the opportunity to work closely with our schools and partners to understand the needs that exist over the summer term and how we can prepare to deliver these in the coming years
2. Prepare our schools and services to allow them to align the new needs and the ambitions of the national reform agenda
3. Continue to develop our anti-poverty work and work with partners to maximise the impact this has on our learners and their outcomes in work
4. Continue to work closely with colleagues across the authority and in wider public services to develop a broader set of interventions to benefit Monmouthshire's children and young people



People

Risk

Opportunity

1. The pandemic remains a risk to all school based staff
2. School staff may not be prepared for the return to school of their children and new additional needs that they may have
3. School leaders will need a new set of skills and approaches to support their own staff's wellbeing
4. Learners at all stages of their education may have lost impetus and prior learning
5. School staff may require additional support for new interventions to enable all learners to make progress
6. The new themes of Curriculum and ALN reform require significant professional learning
7. As a County Monmouthshire needs all of its senior leaders, of which Headteachers are a critical element, to contribute to a new approach to public service post COVID-19
8. Increased Tribunals – if Wales follows what happened in England post their reform there will be a tsunami of tribunals, which could overwhelm services.
9. ALN budget – high risk of overspend continuing and growing.
10. Support schools in their preparations for the Centre Determined Grades (CDGs)
11. Implementation of ALNET Act – upskilling and supporting early years settings
12. Addressing Child Development needs that have arisen as a result of Covid-19

1. Continue to work closely with colleagues across the Association of Directors of Education, Wales (ADEW) and the Welsh Government to ensure that forthcoming changes to the Operational Guidance are proportionate and timely
2. To work with schools, Qualifications Wales and the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) to support the establishment of Centre Determined Grades
3. Continue to support all school staff ensuring that their wellbeing is maintained allowing them to support their learners
4. Work closely with partners to understand the most effective interventions to support learners returning to school
5. Continue to play an important role in regional endeavours to support schools to be ready for the implementation of the new curriculum and the ALN Act.
6. Develop greater integration of school leaders into the corporate leadership frame
7. To focus on the SNRB development process to provide enhanced and broader support to learners in these settings
8. Work with an integrated early years team to support our non-maintained early years settings



Places

Risk

1. The development of the new Abergavenny School
 - Budget and costs increasing
 - Not achieving the correct outcome from statutory consultation
 - Not achieving planning permission or delays in planning permission
 - Programme slips and opening is delayed
2. The lack of specialist provision places particularly regional special schools places and secondary specialist provision in MCC
3. Sustainability of early education and childcare providers (Loss of income last year and reduced demand has left some providers in a precarious position)
4. The need to rapidly develop new Welsh Medium provision in the north-east of the county

Opportunity

1. The development of the new school in Abergavenny represents a significant opportunity to invigorate a community discussion about a significant investment in the town
2. The initial engagement with staff and governors has been positive and provides an opportunity to think about the new curriculum in a new setting
3. Continued investment in the authority's SNRBs to enhance provision
4. Continued development of Welsh medium provision across Monmouthshire in line with our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP)
5. Continued development of our WESP to meet our targets in 2032



1. Further extended closures, requiring a continued reliance on distance learning as the primary method of curriculum delivery, could result in learning experiences which do not support effective learning.
2. An expectation that school staff provide face to face and distance learning in parallel with distance learning for extended periods of time could be overwhelming and result in higher numbers of staff absence or leaving the profession.
3. Currently, wellbeing is the main priority for schools. Staff are investing their time in supporting learners as they return to school full time and this may impact on the time available to develop new pedagogical approaches to support the implementation of the new curriculum.
4. All schools and settings, early years and further education provisions will be affected by the Act and will need to change their approach to the identification and management of children and young people with ALN.
5. Early years settings in Monmouthshire have been prepared for their new responsibilities under the Act through targeted training.
6. ALN reform – systems not being in place in schools and LA for September's implementation.

1. In response to the pandemic, schools have developed bespoke distance learning offers to ensure that pupils can continue learning. The opportunity to innovate and experiment with the use of technology to support learning has given many schools the confidence to build on this further and develop a blended learning approach consisting of a mix of face to face learning supported by on-line tools.
2. Many schools have benefited from increased opportunities to share pedagogical expertise within and across schools to support the implementation of the new curriculum.
3. Increased engagement across schools through the use of technology is enabling school staff to share learning experiences and planning across clusters of schools. This is facilitating the sharing of good practice and resources and in doing so reducing workload.
4. Access to, and uptake of, professional learning to support pedagogy has increased as a result of the move to on-line training courses. Many schools have used the time to develop staff skills to support learning.
5. Parents have had the opportunity to engage with learning whilst their children have been at home. Schools have provided more support for parents to enable them to support their children and designed the curriculum to be suitably flexible to fit with other commitments. As a result, parents feel more confident about providing support and less pressured about when this support is provided.
6. Some groups of learners have benefitted from learning at home and in a more solitary way and in many cases, engagement from these learners has been far higher compared to more traditional models. This means that schools may be able to develop a more bespoke curriculum which balances home and school-based learning where it is more beneficial for the learner.



Conclusions

As observed in the introduction this report feels and looks very different to those that have been previously offered to Select and Full Council.

However, I hope that this report has captured the challenges of 2020-2021 accurately and perhaps more importantly, the response of our services to support schools and our learners.

The future of education in Monmouthshire is well placed. We have the strongest school leadership cadre we have ever had and the pandemic has promoted a renewed sense of common purpose across our system. The future will not be easy and as I present this report we cannot yet be certain about the full impact of the COVID pandemic but the system's ability to respond is secure.

There are a range of further challenges that we face; implementing the new Curriculum and the ALN Reform Act will require commitment and energy but they allow us to form our own teaching with pedagogy and wellbeing at its very heart.

Our ambitions with regards to ensuring that all learners achieving the very best that they can remain undiminished and we will continue to ensure that the emergent Welsh Government accountability framework is implemented effectively across the county. We will not relent on our work to ensure that success in school is not diminished or unduly affected by a young person's background.

Whilst COVID has presented a huge challenge to our system I believe it is a test we have passed and we will now look to the future and build on the good work that exists and has been recognised in both of Estyn's reports this year.



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Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

Children and Young People's Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Special Meeting 11 th February 2021 2pm	EAS Business Plan 2021/2022	To consult the committee on the EAS Business Plan prior to Cabinet agreement in April.	Education Achievement Service (EAS)	Consultation
	Free School Meals Strategy	Engagement on Free School Meals ahead of drafting strategy.	Sharon Randall Smith Will Mclean	Policy Development
25 th March 2021	Young People's Mental Health	To discuss with the Youth Service children and young people's concerns around mental health.	Josh Klein Charlie Jade Atkins	Engagement and Policy Development
	Feedback from Estyn	Verbal update from the Chief Officer on the feedback from Estyn recently communicated to the Council.	Sharon Randall Smith Will Mclean	Performance Monitoring
20 th April 2021	Annual Report of the Chief Officer for Children and Young People	To scrutinise the performance of the work of the directorate over the past year and the forward direction.	Will Mclean	Performance Monitoring
27 th May 2021				
8 th July 2021				
9 th September 2021				
14 th October 2021				
2 nd December 2021				
20 th January 2022				
3 rd March 2022				
7 th April 2022				

Future Agreed Work Programme Items:

Schools items:

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

- **Inclusion updates** – wellbeing/attitudes to learning/supporting the pupil voice
- **Post 16 education provision/Apprenticeships/Engagement and progression and support for those Not in Education or Employment**

Non-education issues:

- **Support for Foster Carers** ~ Edge of Care Team and BASE. Bringing in Foster Carers
- **Engage with the Youth Forum** ~ Discuss their priorities and key concerns
- **Young Carers Strategy Update**
- **Childcare sufficiency** – annual update
- **Well-being reporting (obesity, eating disorders etc)**
- **Family Support Services ~ Young People's Mental Health Support in Schools:** Chair to liaise with Chief Officer
- **Children with Complex Needs and play provision.**

Suggestions from the Chief Officer:

- **ADL Transformation** ~ new legislation and practice early next year. Regional leads to provide and input. Readiness assessments
- **Ongoing Transformation** between health board and regional partnership boards. Intermediate Care funding and in particular, supporting wellbeing needs.
- **Inclusion in schools (primary and secondary), Behaviour policy.** CAMS support ~ early presentation.
- **Risk areas, financial position and budgetary pressures, Schools Finance Forum work**
- **2 years' delivery plan for Children's Services** ~ understanding good practice and the significant drivers on schools and social services
- **Chief Officer Annual Reports and Corporate Parenting**

Cabinet, Council and Individual Cabinet Member Decisions (ICMD) Forward Plan

Monmouthshire County Council is required to publish a forward plan of all key decisions to be taken. Council and Cabinet items will only be considered for decision if they have been included on the planner no later than the month preceding the meeting, unless the item is considered urgent.

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Subject	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner	Date item originally scheduled for decision
Council	01/10/23	LDP for Adoption		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/02/23	LDP submission for examination		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/07/22	LDP Deposit Plan endorsement for consultation	Endorsement of Deposit Plan	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Review of Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan 2017-2020	Purpose: to approve the revised Destination Development Plan	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	01/09/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement post consultation		Mark Hand	20/05/20	
Cabinet	07/07/21	Active Travel Network Maps		Paul Sullivan	13/11/20	
Council	24/06/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement for consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	02/06/21	Budget Monitoring outturn report	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	

ICMD	12/05/21	Play Action Plan	Cabinet Member Richard John Report originally on Cabinet Agenda	hew Lewis/Mike Moran/Ian Saun	16/03/21	
Cabinet	05/05/21	Gilwern Site Developments		Maries Bartlett	23/05/21	
Cabinet	05/05/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum – to consider the outcome of the feasibility study		Matthew Lewis/Ian Saunders	05/02/21	
Cabinet	05/05/21	Abergavenny CRC (Racecourse Farm)	CM	Mike Moran	14/10/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Leisure Centre Investments		Marie Bartlett	22/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Statutory Consultation to establish 4-19 school in Abergavenny		Cath Saunders	03/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 6 held on 11th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment		Richard Jones	02/03/21	
ICMD	07/04/21	Strategic Procurement		Cath Fallon/P Murphy	09/03/21	
ICMD	24/03/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	To Clarify how S106 contributions are calculated/ deferred from 13/1/21 and 24/02/21 deferred UFN	Phil Thomas/Mark Hand	01/05/19	

Council	11/03/21	Appointments to outside bodies	To appoint a representative to the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee	Matt Gatehouse	08/02/21	
Council	11/03/21	Council Tax Resolution Report		Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Council	11/03/21	Treasury Strategy report		Jon Davies	15/12/20	
Council	11/03/21	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Council	11/03/21	The Annual Pay Policy		Sally Thomas	11/02/21	
ICMD	10/03/21	disposal of land for consideration	Awaiting notification re inclusion DEFERRED UFN	by Cllr Murphy/ Ben Thorpe	09/02/21	
ICMD	10/03/21	Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2021-26		Matthew Lewis/Richard John	10/02/21	
Cabinet	03/03/21	•EAS Business Plan		Sharon Randall Smith	21/09/20	
Cabinet	03/03/21	Final revenue and capital budget proposals		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	03/03/21	Social Justice Strategy Update		Cath Fallon	17/09/20	

Cabinet	03/02/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 5 held on 14th January 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Apprenticeship Pay Rates		Gareth James	08/01/21	
Cabinet	03/02/21	Outdoor Adventure Provision at Gilwern		Marie Bartlett	30/11/20	30/11/20
Cabinet	03/02/21	Proposed Disposal of MCC Cottages		Nicola Howells	15/12/20	
ICMD	27/01/21	Approval on Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 - The Local Authorities (Precepts) (Wales) Regulations 1995	Deferred from 13/1 to 27/1	Jon Davies		
Cabinet	20/01/21	•Draft revenue and capital budget proposals for consultation		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
Cabinet	20/01/21	Chippenham Mead Play Area, Monmouth		Mike Moran	15/12/20	
Cabinet	20/01/21	Play Area Assessments and Future Play Area Policy	to advise members of play area assessments carried out last year and suggest a rationalisation of provision	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	20/01/21	BUS EMERGENCY SCHEME (BES) – REQUEST TO ALL COUNCILS TO SIGN UP TO THE BES2 SCHEME		Roger Hoggins	24/12/20	
Council	14/01/21	Council Diary 2021/22		Nicola Perry		

Council	14/01/21	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/04/20	
Council	14/01/21	Annual Safeguarding Report		Jane Rodgers	21/09/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Minerals Regional Technical Statement Second Revision (RTS2)		Rachel Lewis	17/12/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Museum Service Collection Review	To propose the deaccessioning of and disposal actions for the proposed items in line with Section 4 of the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit	Matthew Lewis/Rachael Rogers	22/09/20	
ICMD	13/01/21	Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in the Private Rented Sector		Gareth Walters	15/12/21	
ICMD	13/01/21	Staffing Changes: Business Support	To seek approval for the voluntary redundancy of the Chief Executive's Personal Assistant, reducing the cost of administrative support arrangements for the senior management team and contribute to budget savings during the 2021-22 financial year./Paul Jordan	Matt Gatehouse	15/12/21	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Budget Monitoring Report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year.	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Cabinet	06/01/21	RIPA Policy		Matt Phillips	21/10/20	
Cabinet	06/01/21	Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
ICMD	23/12/20	Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025	To approve the review of the Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2020-2025 Deferred awaiting new date	Matthew Lewis	22/09/2020/	

Cabinet	16/12/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 7 held on 3rd December 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Proposal to pause work on a proposed Development Company		Deb Hill Howells	21/10/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Local Housing Market Assessment Update		Mark Hand	04/11/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Growth Options to Cabinet for endorsement for non-statutory consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	16/12/20	Review of school places in Caldicot town		Matthew Jones	21/10/20	
ICMD	09/12/20	Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum	Paul Jordan	Matthew Lewis	deferred from 11/11	
IMCD	09/12/20	Consultation on Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 - The Local Authorities (Precepts) (Wales) Regulations 1995	To seek Member approval of the proposals for consultation purposes regarding payments to precepting authorities during the 2021/22 financial year as required by statute.	Jon Davies		
IMCD	09/12/20	Council Tax base and associated matters	To agree the Council Tax Base figure for submission to the Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2021/22 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions	Ruth Donovan	02/04/20	
Council	03/12/20	Corporate Joint Committee: Consultation Response'	To discuss and endorse a council response to consultation about draft regulations which will create four regional Corporate Joint Committees. These are a statutory mechanism for regional collaboration by local government.	Matt Gatehouse	16/10/20	
Council	03/12/20	Updated Asset Investment Policy		Peter Davies	21/09/20	

Council	03/12/20	Statutory Director of Social Services annual report		Julie Boothroyd	14/08/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	InFuSe		Cath Fallon	10/11/20	
Cabinet	02/12/20	Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme Revision/S106 Funding, Cae Meldon		Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
ICMD	25/11/20	Homeseach Allocations Policy and Amendments	INCLUDED ON 11/11 AGENDA	Louise Corbett	22/10/20	
ICMD	11/11/20	WELSH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER'S MONITORING WORK 2019-20		Matt Gatehouse		
ICMD	11/11/20	LDP Annual Monitoring Report/ and Annual Performance Report for Planning Service		Rachel Lewis/Phil Thomas	19/10/20	
ICMD	11/11/20	Housing Register Review		Mark Hand	23/06/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Outdoor Adventure Service		Marie Bartlett/Ian Saunders	13/10/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Public Service Ombudsman's annual letter	To provide Cabinet with a copy of the Public Service Ombudsman's annual letter to inform understanding of the council's performance in handling complaints	Matt Gatehouse	09/09/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Welsh Church Fund working group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 4 held on 22nd October 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	

Cabinet	04/11/20	Three Fields Site Magor – Lease Arrangements		Mike Moran	14/10/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Coronavirus Strategic Aims: Progress and Next Steps	To provide an overview of progress against the strategic aims set by Cabinet in July, and communicate an updated version of the plan on a page	Matt Gatehouse	26/08/20	
Cabinet	04/11/20	Section 106 Funding – The Hill, Abergavenny		Mike Moran	20/02/19	
Council	22/10/20	Corporate Plan Annual Report 2019/20		Richard Jones	25/08/20	
Council	22/10/20	MCC Audited Accounts (formal approval)	To notify Council of completed Audit process and resultant accounts - To go to Audit Committee	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	22/10/20	ISA 260 report - MCC Accounts - attachment above	Deferred from september	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/04/20	
Council	22/10/20	Future Data Hall and Data Hosting Arrangements		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Council	22/10/20	LDP revised Delivery Agreement including LDP timetable and community involvement strategy		Craig O'Connor	03/07/20	
Cabinet	21/10/20	Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2020/21 Forecast Outturn Statement – Month 5		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Cabinet	21/10/20	MTFP and Budget Process 2021/22 to 2024/25		Peter Davies	16/09/20	

Cabinet	21/10/20	Review of Garden Waste Service		Laura Carter	23/07/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION - GRANTS TO LOCAL COUNCILS AND FUTURE PROVISION IN ABERGAVENNY	DEFERRED	Roger Hoggins	25/09/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	Closure of Capita Gwent Consultancy and distribution of Reserves		Roger Hoggins	25/09/20	
ICMD	14/10/20	Extension of PSPO	To seek approval to extend three Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) in respect of Bailey Park,	Andrew Mason	23/09/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Future Data Hall and Data Hosting Arrangements		Peter Davies	16/09/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 2 held on 28th July 2020 and meeting 3 held on 10th September 2020.	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	07/10/20	Future Provision of HWRCs including the closure of Usk recycling centre		Carl Touhig	14/09/20	
ICMD	23/09/20	SCM Collaboration with TCBC Heritage Services		Amy Longford	24/08/20	
ICMD	23/09/20	SCM Collaboration with TCBC Heritage Services		Amy Longford	24/08/20	
Council	10/09/20	Audit Committee Annual Report		Philip White	11/08/20	

Cabinet	29/07/20	Digital Infrastructure Action Plan		Cath Fallon	08/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	'Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2020/21 Forecast Outturn Statement – Month 2		Jonathan S Davies	12/06/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Coronavirus Risk Management Update'		Peter Davies	10/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 30th June 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Outdoor Education - Service Update		Marie Bartlett	09/07/20	
Cabinet	29/07/20	Public Toilets				
Cabinet	29/07/20	5G Rural test bed		Cath Fallon/Frances O'Brien		
Council	16/07/20	Climate Emergency Update		Hazel Clatworthy	10/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	CEx Report		Matt Phillips	18/06/20	
Council	16/07/20	Cabinet decision re Gilwern		Matt Phillips	27/05/20	

ICMD	08/07/20	Archaeology Planning Advice	Adoption post-guidance	Mark Hand	19/09/19	Deferred
Cabinet	01/07/20	COVID-19 Evaluation of Recovery Phase and Establishing Aims for Response Stage			17/06/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Home to School Transport Policy	Deferred		20/05/20	
Cabinet	01/07/20	Household Waste Recycling Centres	Deferred		20/05/20	
Cabinet	17/06/20	Revenue and Capital Monitoring Outturn	To provide Members with information on the outturn position of the Authority for the financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	02/02/20	
Council	04/06/20	Licensing Act Policy		Linda O'Gorman		
Council	04/06/20	Estyn Report		Will Mclean		
Council	04/06/20	Safeguarding Covid19 Position Statement		Julie Boothroyd		
Council	04/06/20	Chief Officer, CYP Annual Report'		Will Mclean	11/03/20	
Council	04/06/20	Refit Programme		Ian Hoccom	28/02/20	

Cabinet	27/05/20	Safeguarding		Julie Boothroyd		
Cabinet	27/05/20	Active Travel and Town Centres		Paul Sullivan		
Cabinet	06/05/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 1 held on 2nd April 2020	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
ICMD	08/04/20	GUARANTEED INTERVIEWS FOR CARE LEAVERS		Gareth James	23/03/20	
ICMD	08/04/20	Momouthshire Registration Service Collaborative Working Agreement		Jennifer Walton	23/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Staffing re-alignment: Community Hubs and Contact Centre		Matt Gatehouse	11/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	EAS Business Plan		Will Mclean	04/03/20	
Cabinet	01/04/20	Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Care Leavers		Gareth James	28/02/20	
ICMD	25/03/20	Non Domestic Rates: High Street and Retail Rate Relief 2020/21	for approval of the adoption of a High Street and Retail Rate Relief Scheme for 2020/21, in accordance with Welsh Government guidance.	Ruth Donovan	12/02/20	
ICMD	25/03/20	Contract Extension		Tracey Harry	14/02/20	

Council	05/03/20	Pay Policy		Sally Thomas	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Annual Safeguarding Report		Julie Boothroyd	06/02/20	
Council	05/03/20	Strategic Equality Plan		Alan Burkitt	26/09/19	
Council	05/03/20	LDP Preferred Strategy	Endorsement to consult on Preferred Strategy	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	05/03/20	Council Tax Resolution	To set budget and Council Tax	Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	05/03/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	04/03/20	Investment Committee		Peter Davies	13/02/20	
ICMD	26/02/20	CHARGING APPLICANTS FOR THE MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS		Phil Thomas	06/02/20	
ICMD	26/02/20	Non Domestic Rates - Application for Hardship Relief		Ruth Donovan	14/01/20	

Cabinet	19/02/20	2020/21 Education and Welsh Church Trust Funds Investment and Fund Strategies	The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet for approval the 2020/21 Investment and Fund Strategy for Trust Funds for which the Authority acts as sole or custodian trustee for adoption and to approve the 2019/20 grant allocation to Local Authority beneficiaries of the Welsh Church Fund.	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Matt Gatehouse		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2019/20, meeting 7 held on 5th December 2019	Dave Jarrett	18/04/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Consideration of Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	03/10/19	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Proposal to change the school funding formula.		Nikki Wellington		
Cabinet	19/02/20	Strategic Review of Outdoor Education		Marie Bartlett	18/10/20	
Cabinet	19/02/20	Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) review/ Policy Statement - Results of statutory consultation and proposed Final Plan	To seek approval of the Review of the ROWIP and associated policies	Matthew Lewis	18/07/19	
Cabinet	17/02/20	•Final revenue and capital budget proposals		Peter Davies	21/09/20	
ICMD	29/01/20	Various roads, county wide Amendment No. 1 of consolidation order 2019 (part 2)		Paul Keeble	13/01/20	

Council	16/01/20	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	18/04/19	
Council	16/01/20	Mid Term Review of the Corporate Plan		Peter Davies	26/09/19	
Council	16/01/20	Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy		Mark Hand	06/09/19	
Council	16/01/20	Constitution Review		Matt Phillips	14/08/19	
Council	16/01/20	Safeguarding - Annual Report to Council		Jane Rodgers	20/06/19	
Council	16/01/20	Proposed Development Company		Deb Hill-Howells	16/09/19	Deferred
Cabinet	08/01/20	Ethical Employment code of practice - Approval Paper Draft		Scott James	08/11/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Budget Monitoring report - month 7 (period 2)	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2019/20 financial year.	Mark Howcroft	18/04/19	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Redundancy implications within MonLife		Marie Bartlett	07/11/20	
Cabinet	08/01/20	Homelessness Report		Deb Hill-Howells	07/11/19	

Cabinet	08/01/20	Primary School Places Reiview in Caldicot		Matthew Jones	02/10/19	
Cabinet	06/01/20	Fixed Play Provision		Mike Moran	26/08/20	

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee held at Remote Meeting on Thursday, 25th March, 2021 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor T.Thomas (Chairman)
County Councillor (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: L.Brown, L.Dymock,
M.Groucutt, M.Lane and M. Powell

Officers in Attendance

Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Sharon Randall-Smith, Head of Achievement and Attainment
Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Charlie-Jade Atkins, Youth Worker
Josh Klein, Youth and Community Officer

APOLOGIES: County Councillor J.Watkins

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Public Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

3. Young People's Mental Health: To discuss with the Youth Service children and young people's concerns around mental health.

Charlie-Jade Atkins and Josh Klein presented the report and answered the members' questions.

Challenge:

What sort of information are young people after, in terms of relationships and sex education, problems of body image and social media, respect and consent, etc.? How can we help with that?

We recently had a very good conversation with a young person in a secondary school, who had sent an email to their headteacher voicing concerns and feedback about sex education. We met with her and it was very insightful. She was alarmed at her friends' lack of knowledge. The areas discussed were: being safe physically and emotionally, contraception and protection, how to get to know the person one is with, peer pressures, family values, who to talk to in order to have good conversations, feelings of guilt and shame, the complexity of female pleasure, expectations and self-esteem, anatomical correctness, and the effect of social media such as Instagram. We have worked with a lot of young people during lockdown who have issues with self-esteem and body image, to the point where some of the people we saw in person prior to lockdown chose not to interact with us via video calls. Our online consent form includes a choice for how young people wish to interact with us; a lot of them have decided that they would prefer

to do so by phone call or text, rather than video call. This applies to girls and boys. Revenge porn and sexting are other big concerns, as is knowing where to go for help, information and contraception, as well as consent, managing risks, and the consequences of not doing so.

It's great that they are so aware of what they want. Sexual health clinics could be much less degrading and clinical. Perhaps a sub-group would be useful to work on these matters?

The young people are already having these conversations and are looking for someone to talk to – the Friday Friendlies have begun to serve this purpose. This would be a good place for councillors to attend and join the conversations. Cabinet Member Sara Jones recently attended one on Gender Equality, giving her the chance to speak and listen to the young people, which was very helpful.

Martyn: When we talk about sex and relationships education, one thing we see time and again when things reach a crisis point with violence against women, is that the perpetrators are male. There is a huge problem with a gender divide. Looking to the new curriculum in Wales, there is a big role for youth organisations to be in schools and influence what is taught.

We are working on the Participation and Shift projects, through which we are seeing things first-hand. Perhaps there aren't enough of us working on these areas. Development of the new curriculum is a great opportunity for the Youth Service to be involved. We have been invited to the meeting of the secondary school staff responsible for developing SMRSE: we are going to identify gaps in provision at Key Stage 3 and 4, look at what young people in the area are telling us, what the needs are that have been identified by the school, and we are going to develop bespoke packages, as the new curriculum dictates. These conversations are in the early stages now.

Regarding the recommendations, something we can help with is to call those who collaborate on dealing with adolescent mental health (Aneurin Bevan, Mind, etc.) to come to this committee and answer our questions?

The data from sex ed. table and young people's opinions at the Youth Conference in January have been fed back to the Welsh Youth Parliament, which fed back to the curriculum group. So much of what we've discussed in terms of young people's needs has been fed back directly.

You mentioned 'family values' – will there be an emphasis on strong and stable relationships, as there has been in the past?

Something we try to do is develop young people's resilience, and ensure they have the right networks and support. We would hope that all of that would be encapsulated in what we hope to develop, yes.

Domestic violence being included is very important. Healthy relationships include respect and non-violence. It's important that strong and stable relationships are included, beyond just biological knowledge.

Yes, one of the themes that came through from the young people was that it wasn't so much the biological side that they wanted to know about, but everything else. We will make a note of that.

Young people being persuaded to take photographs of themselves, which then go online, is a big concern. Do we have people who can help the young people before they get into trouble?

Yes, youth work is all about listening to people, without judgement. We have had a lot of feedback in recent years about 'Sexting', and there are very good resources out there. When we speak to young people and parents about this problem, the legalities around it shock them i.e. if a young person who is under 18 takes a photo of themselves, they are 'producing an

indecent image of a child' in doing so, and sending it is then classed as 'distribution', and the recipient is in 'possession'. When these issues first came to the fore in recent years, the Police went into schools, approaching the problem from the criminal side, but eventually, as more has been understood, education has come to have the biggest impact on young people. It is positive that Revenge Porn is now in legislation as illegal.

What is the contact with our Mental Health team, and their initiatives such as the Iceberg Project?

The Shift project, and the specific mental health and wellbeing work that we do, is specifically non-clinical, using youth work methodologies and interventions. We have a great network around us of mental health specialists e.g. we have done a lot of work with Papyrus, a group that addresses suicide. We have an excellent database of organisations from which we can seek advice, share referrals, etc. The framework is very much there for 11-18 and we are getting there for 18-25. Any other suggestions for people to work with would be very welcome.

Chair's Summary:

The members have all benefitted greatly from this update are very grateful to the team for its work.

Sub-groups will be useful for a number of these areas, as suggested by Councillor Dymock. We need to do what the young people want, not what the Council thinks they want. Councillor Groucott raised the point about sexual violence, which is a great concern – we need to tackle this, and the underlying contributing attitudes. Linking up with Aneurin Bevan and Mind etc. on this is a good idea. He suggested further that perhaps once a year, we could have a dedicated CYP committee where the wishes and needs of young people form the basis, or the young people could even run the committee. Members spoke of the importance of strong and stable relationships. Councillor Penny Jones mentioned the mental health team and contributing to Friday Friendlies sessions, including talking to the young people about politics, and how they can bring about change in society.

We accept the recommendations, and offer our support to the youth service. We should foster closer links between MCC and E2C, using the latter as a method of engagement with the young people of Monmouthshire to inform agendas and decision-making. The door to CYP will always be open, and we are very happy to participate in the Friday Friendlies, if that would be useful. We will build an annual report from the youth service into the work programme.

4. Feedback from Estyn: Verbal update from the Chief Officer on the feedback from Estyn recently communicated to the Council.

Will McLean spoke to the members and answered their questions.

The letter that we have received from Estyn captures very well the work that we, our schools, and EAS colleagues have done, to ensure the transition throughout this period has been as effective as possible. The letter is in two segments: March-August 2020 and September 2020 onwards. Spring 2021 has been a period of lockdown and remote learning for many, and Estyn will continue their work with us to assess and discuss how that period of time has been managed as well. We have maintained our half-termly Local Authority Link Inspector visits, to ensure the Inspectors understand our position and the decisions we are taking.

Some things to draw out from the letter: in terms of Leadership and Collaboration, we are pleased about their recognition of our communication and clear expectations for schools, and that members have been kept up to date with events as they have unfolded. The quality of questions and level of challenge from members has been good.

There are interesting reflections about how we have worked with the schools. We have never had a 'one size fits all' approach – we recognise that each of them has a different set of pressures, building layout, community, etc. We have set clear parameters and expectations for schools but then given them the flexibility to respond as best fits their local needs.

The letter discusses our decision about the end of term; our children came back for three weeks in the summer, meaning we didn't have the extra week of holiday in the autumn term. Schools were only allowed 30% pupil capacity at that time. In essence, children missed one day at the end of the summer term but gained 5 days in autumn. Because of low transmission levels in Monmouthshire, many of our children had an uninterrupted autumn term. The letter recognises that this wouldn't have an equal impact on learners, which we have addressed in our planning and expectations.

Another positive is that Estyn spoke to our schools, who said that they felt well supported by us. The paper also recognises the good work undertaken by colleagues in education and social services to ensure that the needs of the more vulnerable learners were met. It talks about the supply of technology to ensure that blended learning was effective, and the way in which childcare hubs were established, and places were guaranteed for those children who would need them. Now, with a little hindsight, we can recognise that speed with which our colleagues worked, the commitment they showed, and how they worked alongside headteachers. Speedy establishment of childcare hubs was a very good example of our commitment to joint working.

The document is very positive about our relationship with EAS. We have been clear throughout the pandemic that we have different roles: the role of the local authority has been to support schools, 'tactical responses', etc., while EAS has provided the right levels of professional learning to enable blended learning to develop significantly, and also to make sure that the leaders met the challenge. There has been excellent sharing of information on a weekly basis.

This committee has shown concern about how devices have been managed. This document was written a little while ago; the figures for the number of devices that have been provided are now significantly higher than this, and the procurement challenges referenced in the letter have been eased somewhat.

There are positive indicators of our support for vulnerable learners: 84% of identified vulnerable learners took up the offer of places in school hubs; of the remaining 16%, parents of some children with complex needs took the decision to keep those children at home. We continued our work up to the end of the summer term and began the transition to return in September. This was an important moment, as the stability we could afford across the school system meant that many of our children had uninterrupted periods in school. We have benefitted from lower transmission rates than other regions, but the investment in time that we put in in the spring and summer terms was rewarded in the autumn term.

The letter recognises our work to support the wellbeing of Headteachers. We contacted a former headteacher and brought him back as someone that current headteachers could talk to about their issues, which was very well-received by the heads.

We've continued with our work with some of the schools that have been in processes of schools causing concern, to ensure they feel fully supported and engaged. Events put on by our schools this term to provide members with an insight into what blended learning looks like have been very positive for all involved. Everyone should be proud of how they have delivered blended learning so effectively, under such time pressures.

Whereas summer term involved providing childcare, the focus this term was on providing education. Working with schools, we have identified vulnerable learners who have continued to receive face-to-face learning throughout, while numbers of critical worker children in our schools have remained high. We give great thanks to all of our colleagues and governing bodies, and look forward now to re-opening schools fully from 12th April. Hopefully, measures in place regarding Lateral Flow Testing for teachers and enhanced social distancing measures continued to keep rates low – we have not yet had a positive Lateral Flow result.

Challenge:

Has anything emerged from the second wave that has added to the complications in young people's lives, especially pertaining to PRU?

PRU provision has been very interesting. Those children were classed as vulnerable learners, so their provision has therefore continued 'face to face' in school, which has been very positive. The work that PRU does to support children in our centres and in-reach provision has been very important. Those children will often face multiple layers of challenge in their education. We have seen some advantages, e.g. remote and blended learning has been a benefit. The current pressures around PRU concern the capacity for it to meet the needs of a growing population. There has been a bit of disruption, i.e. from moving to a new building in Abergavenny, but the service has responded very positively to that. As we move into the summer term, we will take the time to work very closely with our learners to understand where there might still be deficits and what we can do differently to address those.

Classroom learning is preferable. With blended learning, has there been guidance for staff about screen time lasting for too long, given the stress it can take on the teachers' eyes?

We have worked closely with our schools around teacher wellbeing. We meet the Professional Associations fortnightly (it was weekly at the height of the pandemic). Many of our schools have a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous learning, so some of the day will be live teaching and some will be tasks set ahead of time. We have tried to balance those two elements. Our schools have adopted different approaches e.g. two have moved to 100 minute lessons, entailing a teacher being live at the start, set the activities etc., then the live element stops and the asynchronous element takes over, with the teacher perhaps checking in at the end.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you to the Chief Officer for his and his team's efforts during this most difficult time, as well as anyone who has worked in or with the education sector. We, the parents and pupils are very glad that the children are now returning to school. We have noted concerns about PRU, and the difficulties of teaching online. A second year with no exams will be a huge challenge.

5. Children and Young People Select Forward Work Plan

The draft Annual Report will come to the next meeting. Consideration of FSM children and those from families with lower incomes would be useful in the near future. Following up on the work of

the Youth Service will be explored, with the suggestion of one item per meeting for those issues.

6. Cabinet and Council Work Planner

7. To confirm the minutes of the previous meetings held on :

- 19th January 2021
- 11th February 2021

The minutes were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

8. To confirm the date and time of the next meeting as 20th April 2021

The meeting ended at **12.10 pm**