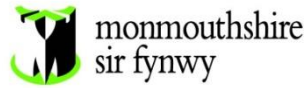


Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 8 March 2021

Notice of meeting

Adults Select Committee

Tuesday, 16th March, 2021 at 10.30 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.	Community Learning and Libraries - Discussion on how services evolved to ensure that adults in Monmouthshire continue to have access to books, learning and social connections while staying at home.	1 - 4
5.	Verbal update regarding the current position for Adults Services in respect of Covid-19 pressures.	
6.	Track, Trace and Protect - Verbal update on the current situation and service provision.	
7.	Adults Select Committee Forward Work Programme.	5 - 6
8.	Council and Cabinet Forward Work Plan.	7 - 16
9.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.	17 - 24
10.	Next Meeting: Tuesday 27th April 2021 at 10.30am.	

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 Ruth Edwards	Llantilio	Welsh Conservative Party
	Crossenny;	
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt	Lansdown;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Roger Harris	Croesonen;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Simon Howarth	Llanelly Hill;	Independent Group
County Councillor Malcolm Lane	Mardy;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Paul Pavia	Larkfield;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell	Castle;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Sheila Woodhouse	Grofield;	Welsh Conservative Party
Chris Bowie		
Tony Crowhurst		

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Watch this meeting online

This meeting can be viewed online either live or following the meeting by visiting www.monmouthshire.gov.uk or by visiting our Youtube page by searching MonmouthshireCC.

Welsh Language

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

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?

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<p>SUBJECT: Libraries and Community Learning during Coronavirus</p> <p>MEETING: Adults Select Committee</p> <p>DATE: 16th March 2021</p> <p>DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All</p>
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an overview of how libraries and community education have operated during the pandemic.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The committee is invited to use the information to understand how services have been delivered over the past twelve months and ensure that any lessons learnt are used to inform future service delivery and contribute to the well-being of adults in Monmouthshire.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Libraries and Community Education provide people with access to information, culture, a variety of courses and the opportunity to learn new skills and meet new people. They are places of ambition and learning that make a considerable contribution to prosperity and well-being in Monmouthshire.
- 3.2 The impact of the pandemic means it has not been possible to deliver these services in the conventional sense over the last year. This paper gives some context and basic information and will be supplemented by input from the Managers for each service at the committee. This will enable members to understand more about how these services have evolved to meet needs during this period and how this has led to opportunities that may be retained beyond the current restrictions.
- 3.3 Both services sit within Monmouthshire Community Hubs. This approach has enabled the authority to maintain a local service offer in our largest towns by delivering economies of scale in buildings, utilities and staffing costs. This paper is not focused on the entirety of the hub offer which sits within the remit of Strong Communities Select Committee.
- 3.4 The Community Hubs Manager (North) hold the strategic lead for the library service across the whole county, while the Community Hubs Manager (South) has the lead for community education. From March 2020 both services were initially required to close and staff were re-deployed into priority services including providing support to shielded people, operating Test, Trace and Protect service, business support grants and bolstering call-handling capacity in the council's contact centre.

Libraries

- 3.5 The library service was required to close between March and May under the stay at home restrictions. Following a change in the Regulations in May it became possible to offer a 'click and collect' offer and this was introduced from all sites from the end of June. Initial scientific advice suggested that the virus could survive on paper for up to 72 hours and so strict measures were introduced in place to quarantine books along with the introduction of a self-service booking form and the ability to reserve a collection slot via the contact centre.
- 3.6 We are keen to explore whether the request and collect service should be maintained in the long-term alongside the regular offer to maximise convenience for busy library users. This would mirror the rise in the popularity of collection lockers for goods delivered from on-line retailers.
- 3.7 The service has run a number of live story-telling and rhyme-time sessions on social media channels. While aimed at children these are also expected to benefit young parents.
- 3.8 During this time Abergavenny library re-located to the newly refurbished mezzanine level at the town hall. Readers were welcomed back through the doors at all sites when we were able to re-open the service for browsing between September and December, although there were restrictions in place at this time.
- 3.9 The latest data from the Wales public library standards, covering the period 2017-20 is about to be released by Welsh Government. Library membership has increased by 11% from 42,092 to 46,922 over this period. However, the county falls short against a number of standards including expenditure on the service and number of staff employed. Monmouthshire also fails to achieve the standard for the percentage of people who live within 2.5 miles of their nearest library. These are all areas that a rural authority, with our level of resources, will always struggle to attain.
- 3.10 We have seen an increase in the popularity of e-books and magazines during lockdown, both can be accessed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/community-hubs-and-libraries/digital-downloads/>. This reflects a long-term trend with downloads increasing from 23,340 to 56,195 between 2017 and 2020. We have also maintained the home delivery service provides a personalised service for the most vulnerable in our communities.

Community Education

- 3.11 Monmouthshire's Community Education offer is divided into two distinct parts. The accredited learning offer is delivered as part of a franchise agreement with Coleg Gwent. The 'leisure' offer comprises a wide range of non-accredited including photography, pottery and cooking with your child. The service budget is made up of fees from learners and grant income from both Coleg Gwent and Welsh Government.
- 3.12 All courses were paused in March 2020 with two weeks of the term remaining. Some were concluded through digital and socially distanced delivery during the autumn.

During the pandemic, the service has launched more online courses and has secured grant funding to purchase a number of chromebooks and portable wi-fi devices which can be loaned to people without access to the internet to enable them to participate. A list of on-line courses is available at <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-courses/>

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

4.1 This paper is not seeking a decision and does not require a full impact evaluation.

5. REASONS:

5.1 To ensure that lessons are learnt from how services have been delivered during the coronavirus pandemic to contribute to an efficient and effective services that maximizes well-being for adults in Monmouthshire

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 There are no specific resource implications arising from this report.

7. AUTHOR:

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Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

Adults Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
16 th March 2021	Community Learning and Libraries	Discussion on how services evolved to ensure that adults in Monmouthshire continue to have access to books, learning and social connections while staying at home.	Richard Drinkwater Cheryl Haskell	Performance Monitoring
	Update on Adult Services Covid Pressures	A discussion with the Head of Service about the current position for the service ~ verbal update.	Eve Parkinson	Verbal Update
	Track, Trace and Protect	An update on the current situation and service provision.	Gill Dicken	Performance Monitoring
27 th April 2021	Homelessness Transition Plan Projects - To be confirmed	Discussion on what are we doing to address homelessness.	Ian Bakewell	Policy Development
To be confirmed	Workshop Gypsy and Travellers Needs Assessment	To consider the way forward following a review of needs.	Stephen Griffiths Mark Hand Ian Bakewell	Policy Development

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Future Agreed Work Programme Items: Dates to be determined

- ✓ **Mental Health Services** ~ Jointly with Children and Young People's Select Committee (ABUHB and Eve Parkinson)
- ✓ **G&T**
- ✓ **Community Development and Well-being** ~ results of most significant change ~ possible workshop
- ✓ **Market place for social care** ~ better understanding of services, play space community staff, integrated workspace, hub services, Turning the world upside down. Housing element.
- ✓ **Performance reporting** (normal plus other things Homefirst)

Agenda Item 7

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

- ✓ **Annual Complaints Report for Social Services**
- ✓ **Housing register allocations policy ~ Nov/December**
- ✓ **Housing Support Grant ~ replaces the supporting people grant (children and communities grant ~ Sharran Lloyd) ~ how is the money used (homeless prevention ~ difficult places) ~ homelessness ~ late autumn (discussion with Sharran Lloyd)**

Joint Scrutiny with Children and Young People's Select Committee:

- ✓ **Mental Health Capacity Act and Learning Disabilities ~ linked to implications of the DOLS (Deprivation Liberty Safeguards) Grant**
- ✓ **Adults Carers Strategy and Children and Young People's Carers Strategy.**
- ✓ **Safeguarding Performance Reporting and Progress of Regional Safeguarding Boards ~ Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**
- ✓ **Regional Integrated Autism Service**
 - **Regional partnership boards and integrated care fund transformation funding and impact, risks associated with funding stream**

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	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	
Cabinet	05/05/21	Active Travel Network Maps		Paul Sullivan	13/11/20	
Council	01/05/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement for consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	

Cabinet	14/04/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum – to consider the outcome of the feasibility study		Matthew Lewis/Ian Saunders	05/02/21	
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 9 held on 4th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment		Richard Jones	02/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Play Sufficiency Action Plan		Mike Moran	14/10/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Abergavenny CRC (Racecourse Farm)		Mike Moran	14/10/20	
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	

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Adults Select Committee held at Remote Meeting on Tuesday, 26th January, 2021 at 10.30 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor S. Howarth, (Chairman)

County Councillors: L.Brown, R. Edwards, M.Groucutt, S. Howarth, P.Pavia, M. Powell, S. Woodhouse, C. Bowie, T. Crowhurst and P. Murphy

Also in attendance County Councillor: P. Murphy, Cabinet Member for Whole Authority Resources

C. Bowie, T. Crowhurst

Officers in Attendance

Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Jonathan Davies, Central Accountancy Finance Manager
Tyrone Stokes, Accountant
Ian Bakewell, Housing & Regeneration Manager
Mark Hand, Head of Place-making, Housing, Highways and Flood

APOLOGIES: County Councillors R. Harris and M.Lane

1. Declarations of interest

Paul Pavia declared an interest as a consultant for Practice Solutions Ltd. who hold the contract for ADSS Cymru, the Association of the Directors of Social Services in Wales.

2. Public Open Forum

No members of the public were present.

3. Budget Monitoring: Scrutiny of the budget monitoring capital and revenue position at Month 7, setting the context for scrutiny of budget proposals.

Tyrone Stokes presented the report and answered the members' questions with additional comments from Jonathan Davies and Cabinet member Phil Murphy.

The Outturn forecast shows the deficit increasing from £24k in Month 2 to £180k in Month 7 – is that mostly from the pandemic?

To put this into context, we have a roughly £8m budget for the Adult division, so the overspend in relation to the total is very small. The overspend itself is not related to Covid but is due to the over-and-above budgeted pay award for staff, and not meeting the 2% efficiency for frontline operations. Salary budgets have a 2% efficiency saving taken off but for the frontline services can't keep the vacancies open, which leaves them unable to make that efficiency saving.

For Social Care, Health and Safeguarding, there is a £69k overspend, largely due to the increased cost of care packages – what is the risk to care homes, and their financial state?

The Care market is being helped significantly by the Welsh Government Covid Hardship Fund, which allows us to make payments to Care Homes for any void beds that they have, and give

them a £50 per week allowance to help them to get over the pandemic. We don't see any significant risk currently because the Hardship Fund is in place until 30th March. We don't know, however, what resources Welsh Government will commit as we come out of the pandemic – we won't be able to go from the pandemic to the 'new normal' without some sort of transition.

Could a further breakdown be given of the overspend vs. underspend?

The Adult Select portfolio includes the Adult budget, which is an overspend of £180k, which is offset by a £4k underspend in Community Care, a £103k underspend in Commissioning and a £4k underspend in Resources and Performance. Adding them all together gives a net overspend of £69k.

What is the reason for the underspend in Commissioning?

Due to the pandemic, there are several schemes that can't recommence e.g. day services, due to the close proximity in one building; we have done a lot of outreach support for those clients. We have therefore seen many natural savings such as building overheads, for example. Also, we have had a Commissioner Officer post vacant for over a year – plans to recruit to that have been delayed, and have added to the underspend.

Day care centres aren't open as they were before because of lockdown. If there are savings in this area, can we ensure that when lockdown is lifted, these centres are still sustainable?

The savings will be there next year in order to facilitate the re-opening of day care centres, or whatever new provision we might decide to put in its place.

Regarding the capital slippage for Crick Care home, will there be any long-term problems as a result? Have the deadlines been extended?

Crick Road is a partnership with Aneurin Bevan via Welsh Government funding, which AB hosts. We have engaged with AB and had confirmation from Welsh Government that those deadlines have been extended, and the funding has moved with it too, to safeguard that.

In terms of the reduced capacity to offer services, have significant packages of care been handed back to the authority during the last year?

At the start of the pandemic, we did see packages being returned or clients refusing to have carers come to their homes. When the first lockdown eased, those clients started to return. With this second upturn in the pandemic, we haven't seen the same levels of care packages being returned. Infection control is much better, we know a lot more about the virus, sufficient PPE, and now there's the vaccination programme as well. And people have become accustomed to working in a different way e.g. carers arriving in PPE, which was a shock to people at the start.

Provision of Liberty Safeguards – what does this £100k saving relate to?

'Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding' is where we have a joint safeguarding team with Aneurin Bevan and other Gwent authorities. As part of the Capitalisation directive, we can capitalise certain revenue expenditures to help with the bottom line. One of the items that we've decided to capitalise is our contribution to the 'DOLS' team.

How many members of staff were put on furlough at the start, and how many are still?

In terms of Social Care, staff that were working in a day centre are still providing services to clients, just through a different vehicle, providing more 1-1 support, e.g. over the phone. Some of our community meals staff have been furloughed, but they are few in number. Furloughing can only happen in income-generating departments, which curtails the amount that can be used.

4. Budget Scrutiny: Scrutiny of the budget proposals for 2021/22

1. Budget Scrutiny: Scrutiny of the budget proposals for 2021/22

Jonathan Davies and Tyrone Stokes delivered the presentation and answered the members' questions with Ian Saunders and Peter Davies.

This committee previously had a report that said the Disabled Facility Grant will be reduced to £600k from £900k?

The support for the £900k capital budget for DFGs has been in the proposals for a number of years now. So continuation at that level, above £600k, has been reported for a while, with £900k as the base budget. We aren't sure which report is referred to but we can check that.

The Disabled Facility Grant includes Safety At Home, the amount for which is going up – is the £900k for DFG definite, and how much of it is the DFGs, rather than Safety At Home?

We try to be as flexible with that on a year-by-year basis as we can. We work closely with Social Care around that split because we know how important safety at home is. Around £100k of that budget goes to safety at home but we will be flexible, and will take our steer from OTEs and Care And Repair in relation to the levels of expenditure. In addition to our budget we also have Enable, which is a Welsh Government grant that helps us to build in some flexibility around adaptation.

Covid is splitting society – is the council acknowledging the number of people going through resultant difficulties, and what effect will this have on the budget's distribution?

As we exit the pandemic, we don't know what's around the corner or what the new level will be. In terms of addressing the pandemic, the Welsh Government Covid Hardship Fund has allowed us to address the pressures in the Care sector as well – this is support across the board, covering younger adults (including those with physical and mental disabilities) and older adults (to help to stabilise the marketplace and address those needs as we go through the pandemic.) There was significant investment in this year's budget for physically and learning disabled adults: £1.044m. We have tried to address all of the population's needs, not leaving anyone behind, and are committed to continuing that.

The figures from Stats Wales don't agree with Monmouthshire's – can this be addressed?

The reason is that our budget, which we label as 'DFGs', should probably be 'Disabled Adaptations', so it has proved to be a bit misleading.

Regarding the increase in fees for residential and non-residential care: what effect would the £100 cap have on the residential side? How does the cap operate?

In terms of charging, we follow the Social Services and Wellbeing Act that was introduced in 2014 by Welsh Government. For non-residential services it covers care in the home or community (day centres and respite), and the amount that we can charge anybody is capped at £100 per week. To arrive at that, they go through a means-tested assessment. If they are assessed that they can pay up to the maximum of £100, we will charge them whichever is lower: the £100 or the cost of the service. So if someone were only getting 2 hours per week, we would only charge them the hourly rate (£14.64) x 2. If someone were getting 20 hours a week, 20 x £14.64 would be much more than £100, in which case we would charge them the £100.

There is no cap for residential services. It is based not only on the person's income but also on their assets and dwelling i.e. their main property would be brought into consideration. If it is deemed that they have enough income and capital to pay for themselves, then they might not qualify for local authority financial support.

Does the £100 cap apply if, for example, someone is coming in in the morning and again in the evening to help an elderly person who doesn't need a care home?

When we charge, there is no distinction between whether the service was provided by the local authority or external market. If someone were to get 1 hour per week from the local authority and 1 hour private, the charge would be roughly £30 per week. If someone is assessed and they can pay the maximum amount, it is capped at £100 so we would charge them £30. If they were to get 20 hours a week – 5 from the local authority and 5 from the private sector – it would be approximately £150 total, and therefore the charge would be £100. No one will pay any more than £100 if they've come through the local authority and they've been financially assessed, in terms of non-residential. That includes care in their own home or day centre provision – it's all capped at £100. We have an hourly rate for care in the home and a session charge for day centre attendance.

So non-residential is not based on income or capital?

It is, because if someone has gone through a means-tested assessment they will only be charged what they can afford. If they can afford to pay more than the £100, it will be capped at £100. It still includes income and capital but not their main dwelling, as they live in the community and still need a home. But if they then go into residential or nursing care, the main dwelling is then taken into consideration; that's one of the differences between residential and non-residential, and why the charge can be more, or they might not qualify for local authority assistance, because with residential more can be taken into consideration than with means-tested assessment.

Is that different from England?

Yes, the Welsh Care Act is different from the English one. Therefore, if someone moves from England to Wales there can be some confusion that we need to clear up with them. Also, if clients engage in services with solicitors from England, or places like Age Concern, we have to point out to them that the Act is different in Wales.

There is an assumption of a 1% increase of pay costs for staff – what about care staff? What would be the wider impact if companies also provided more than 1% for their staff?

The pay award is governed by the announcement from the UK Chancellor. We have been prudent in assigning a 1% pay award. The external carers are explained in the slideshow presentation, concerning the pressures that we have in Adult Social Care next year: we have a £536k pressure for provider fees, which is to incorporate any pay increases that private providers might give their staff. We have a fair fee negotiation tool that we use with the care providers; with this, we look at all issues such as pay award. One of the indicators we look at is the increase in the National Living Wage. That's already been announced by the UK Chancellor, and we have incorporated it in our modelling.

Will we still be able to get staff from overseas following Brexit? Will UK staff be willing to fill the vacancies?

This will be a national concern and we don't know how things will pan out. We've tried to address as much as possible to alleviate the impact on the front line services. With the providers, we have tried to meet the wage increase.

Is it wise to include the £536k – will the care providers therefore raise their pay further?

One of our mission statements as an authority is to be transparent. It is right to put forward our budget and try to address those issues. We have the fair fee consultation negotiation, so discussion with providers about fees is already underway, so that we can continue to work in partnership. But we do have limited financial resources with which to work, something that the Care sector appreciates. The fair fee negotiation tool has served us very well for the last 10+ years.

What discussions have taken place to try to understand how the Hardship Fund will evolve?

Our approach has been to focus on things that we can control i.e. those elements of the budget that we know. We also have the risk register looking at potential Covid risks and how they may or may not be funded as we move into the next financial year. We need to consider a number of things. Most important is to have the engagement with Welsh Government about how the Fund might continue, perhaps developing into more specific grants coming through, moving away from a claims basis towards allocation. We're continuing to lobby at a political level, with the Leader making strong representations. But at a local level, we're looking at the potential impacts from the pandemic on service deliveries, and how the demands on services might change as we come out of it. There are many different things to consider over the long term.

Regarding void payments, have we seen any unintended consequences with providers not accepting placements because the voids are covered?

We are making void payments on behalf of Welsh Government through the Hardship Fund. It is understandable that care homes are cautious about accepting new clients, but they aren't resistant, and are working with us. We talk to the care sector in a weekly forum about various issues and how we can support them with any problems they encounter. It is a joint approach.

With people needing rehabilitation and reablement due to Covid, do we have a pipeline figure in terms of pressure and new care packages for next year?

We have a short-term intervention reablement policy and a reablement team. We are over-recruiting our own in-house home carers to accommodate the demand, and Health has come up with winter pressures money to alleviate that impact. There is also a £250k extra investment for the shortfall in commissioned care in the Usk area. We are looking to accommodate that specific additional capacity in next year's budget.

As Covid is a health issue, surely the process of rehabilitation and reablement shouldn't be a pressure that falls solely to local authorities? What about the Health Board and its funding?

Our 3 community care teams are integrated with Health, so we have their practitioners as well around OTs. We have a joint integrated services partnership board that meets as well. The assessment process will identify what is a social care task and responsibility from the local authority and what is a Health one. It is split out at that stage, ensuring that everyone is meeting their obligations.

Coming out of the pandemic, Welsh Government should have Social Care very high on its agenda. All local authorities in Wales will lobby them very hard for fair funding within the care sector. We hope that there is proper recognition and funding as we move into that period, as the sector will continue to be a budgetary pressure point. So it's not just a case of local authorities

and health boards – Welsh Government plays a key role in its acknowledgement of where funding is distributed.

Regarding the provider fees, could the £536k figure potentially increase?

We have modelled this figure in terms of our fair fee negotiations. Part 9 of the Act covers to the pooling of residential budgets, and another covers a regional fee-setting process: there is a Gwent working group that has discussed this, but it is a long way off from being agreed, as is pricing up the implications if Monmouthshire were to adopt it. If we were to get to that juncture, before adopting anything it would be presented to members for scrutiny and agreement.

What is an example of the flexible use of capital receipts to fund service reform?

The flexible use of capital receipts is under a Capitalisation directive from Welsh Government. We've used it in the 2019/20 financial year and have budgeted it for this year too. We are permitted to use our capital receipts to fund eligible revenue expenditure that looks to fund service reform. We propose using another £1m of capital receipts as part of this draft budget. The key risk around that is that our capital receipts pot is limited. Traditionally, we have used that to support our ongoing capital pressures. We have to be mindful of the limited nature of the reserves to support the capital programme. As part of these budget proposals, we recognise that this is an exceptional year and a one-off use of reserves, as far as possible.

So to use capita monies on revenue certain criteria have to be met?

Yes, there are strict criteria for usage of capital receipts, around service transformation, partnership working, sharing with regional authorities and organisations, etc.

Were non-residential care savings based on a slight increase in the hourly rate, and what was the increase? How are the residential care savings arrived at?

Non-residential savings were £11k and residential were £68k. The savings are related to the fees and charges, as discussed earlier, based on the increase announced by the department of Work and Pensions to the state retirement and benefits of 2.5%. We've taken our income budgets and uplifted them 2.5%. That's the extra income that we've put forward as a saving and that we might be able to get from the charging. The residential saving doesn't only relate to our care home (Severn View), it's people in residential care, generally. They could be in a private care home and their placement is funded by the local authority, and their means-tested assessment says that they can't pay the full charge themselves but they have to pay a contribution to the local authority, regardless of whether they reside in our single care home or in a private care home.

Looking forward, is there any expectation to redesign services?

We've taken a conscious decision with next year's budget (21/22) not to bring any savings from redesigning frontline services. It is possible that services will be provided in a different way as we come out of Covid – but we simply don't know at this stage. If and when it is felt that a service needs to be redesigned, we will pick that budget year and bring it the members' attention.

Homelessness is another huge pressure – £874k. Can we hear about the policy update from Welsh Government, and what their expectation will be for the next financial year?

The position is consistent with previous discussions. Welsh Government is continuing with their change in policy concerning eliminating rough sleeping. They want to improve the provision of temporary and permanent accommodation – quality, type, etc. No one would disagree with the sentiment of the policy but it creates a challenge for us. Our demands continue to be high; at

the last count, we had over 120 people in temporary accommodation, most of whom are high need and have challenging, complex cases. The situation over the last 6 months has been more challenging because of funding but it has significantly improved, and continues to. Welsh Government's main thrust has been to uplift the Housing Support grant programme. We have just under £700k extra in that programme and are looking to continue Phase 2 projects that were granted this financial year. We have also had government assurance about the Hardship Fund in this area, and we hope that Cabinet will agree to some additional staffing, taking us to a more proactive position. We continue to work with the housing associations over additional accommodation.

Aside from Health and Care, what is the position of the budget in relation to the other portfolios?
In terms of the overall directorate, we have pressures just under £3m. £1.26m relates to this Adult Select portfolio, the remaining pressures relate to Children's Services and trying to address the overspend and the pressures that were delivered in the paper to CYP Select last week. Public Protection had Covid-related pressures from lost registrar's income, which Welsh Government has now decided to compensate us for, allowing that team to come within its budget. TTP is Gwent-wide, for which there are various boards, managed by Health. We are recovering all of the monies in line with the costs Monmouthshire put forward for TTP.

Chair's Summary:

The committee thanks officers and frontline staff for their hard work. Councillor Pavia is concerned that rehab and reablement doesn't fall disproportionately to local government but that Health takes its fair share of responsibility, especially as Post-Covid syndrome is a complete unknown. Officers agreed and will keep this in mind. As there are a lot of crosscutting aspects in the budgets, officers were asked to put page numbers on the reports. Peter Davies noted that information needs to be distilled and simplified for the public – this is the purpose of the presentation – but that there is further information on the website for any member of the public wishing to seek further details.

5. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th October 2020.

The minutes were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. Adults Select Committee Forward Work Programme

7. Council Cabinet ICMD Forward Plan

8. To confirm the date of the next meeting as 16th March 2021

The meeting ended at **12.35 pm**

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