

# Public Document Pack



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Y Rhadyr  
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NP15 1GA

Dydd Mawrth, 3 Tachwedd 2020

Annwyl Cynghorydd

## **PENDERFYNIADIAU AELOD CABINET UNIGOL**

Hysbysir drwy hyn y caiff y penderfyniadau dilynol a wnaed gan aelod o'r cabinet eu gwneud **Dydd Mercher, 11eg Tachwedd, 2020,**.

### **AGENDA**

1. ADRODDIAD PERFFORMIAD BLYNYDDOL (APB) GWASANAETH CYNLLUNIO CYNGOR SIR

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2. ADRODDIAD MONITRO BLYNYDDOL CYNLLUN DATBLYGU LLEOL SIR FYNWY

**CABINET MEMBER:** County Councillor RGW Greenland

**AUTHOR:**

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3. CYNNIG I YSTYRIED A CHYMERADWYO DIWYGIADAU I'R POLISI DYRANNU CHWILIAD CAF

**CABINET MEMBER:** County Councillor RJW Greenland

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4. GWAITH MONITRO COMISIYNYDD Y GYMRAEG 2019-20

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Yr eiddwch yn gywir,

**Paul Matthews**  
**Prif Weithredwr**

**PORTFFOLIOS CABINET**

<b>Cynghorydd Sir</b>	<b>Maes Cyfrifoldeb</b>	<b>Gwaith Partneriaeth ac Allanol</b>	<b>Ward</b>
P.A. Fox (Arweinydd)	<b>Strategaeth a Chyfeiriad Awdurdod Cyfan</b> CCR Cyd Gabinet a Datblygu Rhanbarthol; Trosolwg Sefydliad; Gweithio Rhanbarthol; Cysylltiadau Llywodraeth; Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus; WLGA	Cyngor WLGA WLGA Bwrdd Cydlynu Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus	Porthysgewin
R.J.W. Greenland (Dirprwy Arweinydd)	<b>Menter</b> Cynllunio Defnydd Tir; Datblygu Economaidd; Twristiaeth; Rheoli Datblygu; Rheoli Adeiladu; Tai a Digartrefedd; Hamdden; Ieuencid; Addysg Oedolion; Addysg Awyr Agored; Hybiau Cymunedol; Gwasanaethau Diwylliannol	Cyngor WLGA Twristiaeth Rhanbarth y Brifddinas	Devauden
P. Jordan	<b>Llywodraethiant</b> Cefnogaeth y Cyngor a Phenderfyniadau Gweithrediaeth; Craffu; Safonau Pwyllgor Rheoleiddiol; Llywodraethiant Cymunedol; Cefnogaeth Aelodaeth; Etholiadau; Hyrwyddo Democratiaeth ac Ymgysylltu: Y Gyfraith; Moeseg a Safonau; Perfformiad Awdurdod Cyfan; Cynllunio a Gwerthuso Gwasanaeth Awdurdod Cyfan; Cydlynu Corff Rheoleiddiol		Cantref
R. John	<b>Plant a Phobl Ifanc</b> Safonau Ysgolion; Gwella Ysgolion; Llywodraethiant Ysgolion; Trosolwg EAS; Blynyddoedd Cynnar; Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol; Cynhwysiant; Cwricwlwm Estynedig; Derbyniadau; Dalgylchoedd; Cynnig Ôl-16; Cydlynu gyda Choleg Gwent.	Cyd Grŵp Addysg (EAS) CBAC	Llanfihangel Troddi
P. Jones	<b>Gofal Cymdeithasol, Diogelu ac Iechyd</b> Plant; Oedolion; Maethu a Mabwysiadu; Gwasanaeth Troseddu Ieuencid; Cefnogi Pobl; Diogelu Awdurdod Cyfan (Plant ac Oedolion); Anableddau; Iechyd Meddwl; Iechyd Cyhoeddus; Cydlynu Iechyd.		Rhaglan
P. Murphy	<b>Adnoddau</b> Cyllid; Technoleg Gwybodaeth (SRS); Adnoddau Dynol; Hyfforddiant; Iechyd a Diogelwch; Cynllunio Argyfwng; Caffaeliad; Archwilio; Tir ac Adeiladau (yn cynnwys Stadau, Mynwentydd, Rhandiroedd, Ffermydd); Cynnal a Chadw Eiddo; Swyddfa Ddigidol; Swyddfa Fasnachol	Consortium Prynu Prosiect Gwyrdd Cymru	Caerwent

S.B. Jones	<b>Gweithrediadau Sir</b> Cynnal a Chadw Priffyrdd, Rheoli Trafnidiaeth, Traffig a Rhwydwaith, Rheolaeth Stad; Gwastraff yn cynnwys Ailgylchu; Cyfleusterau Cyhoeddus; Meysydd Parcio; Parciau a Gofodau Agored; Glanhau; Cefn Gwlad; Tirluniau a Bioamrywiaeth; Risg Llifogydd.	SEWTA Prosiect Gwyrdd	Goetre Fawr
S. Jones	<b>Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol a Datblygu Cymunedol</b> Ymgysylltu â'r Gymuned; Amddifadedd ar Arwahanrwydd; Diogelwch y Gymuned; Cydlyniaeth Gymdeithasol; Tlodi; Cydraddoldeb; Amrywiaeth; Y Gymraeg; Cysylltiadau Cyhoeddus; Safonau Masnach; Iechyd yr Amgylchedd; Trwyddedu; Cyfathrebu		Llanofar

# Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

## Ein diben

Adeiladu Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chydnerth

### Amcanion y gweithiwn tuag atynt

- Rhoi'r dechrau gorau posibl mewn bywyd i bobl
- Sir lewyrchus a chysylltiedig
- Cynyddu i'r eithaf botensial yr amgylchedd naturiol ac adeiledig
- Llesiant gydol oes
- Cyngor gyda ffocws ar y dyfodol

## Ein Gwerthoedd

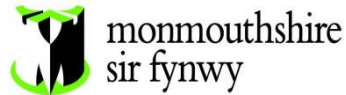
**Bod yn agored.** Rydym yn agored ac yn onest. Mae pobl yn cael cyfle i gymryd rhan mewn penderfyniadau sy'n effeithio arnynt, dweud beth sy'n bwysig iddynt a gwneud pethau drostynt eu hunain/eu cymunedau. Os na allwn wneud rhywbeth i helpu, byddwn yn dweud hynny; os bydd yn cymryd peth amser i gael yr ateb, byddwn yn esbonio pam; os na allwn ateb yn syth, byddwn yn ceisio eich cysylltu gyda'r bobl a all helpu - mae adeiladu ymddiriedaeth ac ymgysylltu yn sylfaen allweddol.

**Tegwch.** Darparwn gyfleoedd teg, i helpu pobl a chymunedau i ffynnu. Os nad yw rhywbeth yn ymddangos yn deg, byddwn yn gwrando ac yn esbonio pam. Byddwn bob amser yn ceisio trin pawb yn deg ac yn gyson. Ni allwn wneud pawb yn hapus bob amser, ond byddwn yn ymrwymo i wrando ac esbonio pam y gwnaethom weithredu fel y gwnaethom.

**Hyblygrwydd.** Byddwn yn parhau i newid a bod yn hyblyg i alluogi cyflwyno'r gwasanaethau mwyaf effeithlon ac effeithiol. Mae hyn yn golygu ymrwymiad gwirioneddol i weithio gyda phawb i groesawu ffyrdd newydd o weithio.

**Gwaith Tîm.** Byddwn yn gweithio gyda chi a'n partneriaid i gefnogi ac ysbrydoli pawb i gymryd rhan fel y gallwn gyflawni pethau gwych gyda'n gilydd. Nid ydym yn gweld ein hunain fel 'trefnwyr' neu ddatrys-wyr problemau, ond gwnawn y gorau o syniadau, asedau ac adnoddau sydd ar gael i wneud yn siŵr ein bod yn gwneud y pethau sy'n cael yr effaith mwyaf cadarnhaol ar ein pobl a lleoedd.

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PLANNING SERVICE'S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR)</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION – CLLR. R. GREENLAND</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11 NOVEMBER 2020</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide the Cabinet Member for Enterprise with a report on the performance of the Council's Planning Service for the financial year period 2019-20.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

- 2.1 To note the contents of the Annual Performance Report for submission to the Welsh Government by 31 October 2020 and recommend the APR for submission without any changes (see Section 10.0 below).

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Welsh Government normally requires all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in Wales to submit an Annual Performance Report for the planning service by the end of October each year. This requirement links with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, and the Welsh Government's objective of creating a positive and enabling planning service. The Act includes new powers for the Welsh Government to intervene, including removing planning powers from a Local Planning Authority, requiring the preparation of joint Local Development Plans (LDPs), or requiring the merger of LPAs. This year, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is no requirement to do this although your officers see the benefit of assessing the team's performance and to make recommendations for improvement despite the constraints we are working under.
- 3.2 This is the sixth Annual Performance Report (APR). The five previous APRs were reported for individual cabinet member approval and in the past the opportunity to review and discuss performance has been welcomed by the Members of the Economy & Development Select Committee (together with Members of Planning Committee, also invited), with a request that it become an annual item.
- 3.3 The APR looks at the performance of the Planning Service against nationally set performance indicators, Welsh Government (WG) targets, the Wales average performance, and Monmouthshire's performance over the previous year. The results are considered in the context of the challenges, opportunities, priorities and resources (staffing and financial) available. The objective of the APR is to reflect on and celebrate good performance, identify areas for improvement, and look across Wales to identify potential areas of best practice that Monmouthshire could learn from or share with others. As mentioned above, this year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic there has been no requirement from WG to submit an APR and no comparative data has been provided as is normally done. In the light of this, Monmouthshire's Planning Service has decided to commit to submitting an APR but

has had to base the assessment of our performance over 2019/20 against the Welsh average and our own performance over the 2018/19 reporting period.

3.4 The APR is divided into sections, with the format and appearance being consistent throughout Wales, and all LPAs reporting on the same performance indicators. The report looks at where the Planning Service sits corporately, how it is structured and how its work fits with corporate priorities; local pressures; customer feedback; and performance. Performance is analysed across the five key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in the Planning Performance Framework:

- Plan making (omitted this year as no performance data was provided by WG and the issues are more than adequately covered by the LDP Annual Monitoring Report, also submitted for approval by ICMD today);
- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

This Framework was established by the Welsh Government in partnership with Local Planning Authority representatives. Performance is ranked as 'good', 'fair' or 'needs improvement'.

3.5 The Annual Performance Report is provided at Appendix 1.

#### **4.0 KEY ISSUES**

4.1 The purpose of the Planning Service is to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations in Monmouthshire, which is a shared purpose with the Council's Corporate Plan and with our public service board partners. The service is directly involved with wider corporate projects such as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools, commercialisation of our estates portfolio and forms an enabling tool to help address some of the challenges and issues identified by Future Monmouthshire.

4.2 Key areas of work for the Planning Service include:

- Carrying out a revision of the Monmouthshire LDP.
- Preparing and co-ordinating thematic supplementary planning guidance to help to foster the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy.
- Implementing the Council's LDP through engaging and working with communities, and partnership working with both internal and external partners.
- Depending on the outcome of legislative changes, adopting and implementing the Community Infrastructure Levy. Infrastructure needs will be reviewed and consideration will be given to the best options for funding them alongside LDP progress.
- Monitoring and evaluating development plan policies, including preparing the statutory LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- Maintaining the LDP evidence base and ensuring fitness for purpose for future LDP revision.
- Developing linkages with the Council's emerging framework for community governance and development.
- Providing pre-application advice to customers.



- Determining planning applications in accordance with adopted policy and material planning considerations, taking into account stakeholder comments and corporate objectives;
- Securing financial contributions from developers to offset the infrastructure demands of new development;
- Safeguarding the County's 2400 Listed Buildings and 31 Conservation Areas, areas of archaeological sensitivity, the Wye Valley AONB and the Brecon Beacons National Park;
- Providing a heritage service for our neighbouring colleagues in Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent County Boroughs that works in a manner that is consistent and as well-resourced as the one provided for Monmouthshire.
- Taking robust enforcement action against unauthorised development that is unacceptable in the public interest, and
- Joint working with SE Wales Authorities with the ambition of preparing a Strategic Development Plan.

### **Delivery of service**

4.3 Between 2010 and 2012 the Council's Planning Service underwent a Systems Thinking review. This review sought to strip the function back to first principles: what is important to our customers, and how can waste (actions or procedures that do not add value to the outcome) be eliminated. This evidence-based review has been fully implemented, although part of the Systems Thinking approach requires services to be kept under review and closely monitored.

4.4 This review identified that the following things are important to customers:

- Customers value pre-application advice and advice during the consideration of the application;
- They want officers to be accessible and for there to be open and honest communication;
- They want consistency of pre-application advice and in the validation of applications;
- They want Planning Committee to follow the officer's recommendation and value being able to have a dialogue with Members prior to determination;
- They do not want too many conditions being attached to decisions, and when conditions are imposed they should be relevant and easy to discharge;
- They value being able to submit an application online and to search for applications and information online; and
- Third parties value being listened to during the application process.

4.5 The service therefore operates with these priorities as guiding principles, shaping behaviour and procedures. The service is committed to having an outcome focus rather than chasing arbitrary performance targets that are not a priority to our customers.

### **5.0 ACTIONS FROM OUR PREVIOUS APR**

5.1 Our 2018/19 Annual Performance Report identified four actions:

Action 1 – Complete the review of the effectiveness of the Council's bespoke pre-application advice service and rolling out the use of Planning Performance Agreements, where appropriate.

Action 2 – Continue to improve the Planning Service's web pages to deliver relevant, accessible and legible information so that customers can self-serve. This includes

investigating the value of a chatbot to signpost users to information held online that can help them self-serve and reduce queries to the team via phone and email.

Action 3 - Systems review of the Planning Service's enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, verify if we have the right resources and we are providing a good service for our customers

Action 4 – Continue to pursue an agenda of collaboration in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities and collaboration in other areas where possible, including the evidence base for the review of the Local Development Plan.

- 5.2 Action 1 resulted from the desire to ensure we provide a coherent and timely set of processes for our customers in delivering planning outcomes to reduce end-to end times for processing applications. Action 2 also overlapped into making our application processing more efficient in that signposting customers effectively so they can self-serve enables demand on our officers to reduce, freeing up their time to carry out work that is essential and valuable to the service.
- 5.3 While our evidence shows that customers prefer a positive outcome than a quick decision, we fully recognise that if customers are going to continue using our pre-application advice service (which streamlines the subsequent stages, improves outcomes and generates fee income), they must receive timely and meaningful responses that provide them detailed guidance on their proposals.
- 5.4 Action was 1 was completed. The conclusion is that the bespoke service represents good value for money for applicants (particularly when compared to the more limited statutory service) and is valued by customers. Take up of the bespoke service was healthy over 2019/20 generating over £53k of income for the Council. End-to-end times for determination of such applications were shorter than those where no pre-application advice was involved and 98% of ensuing planning applications that reached a decision were approved indicating the service is generally working well. As part of Action 1, the use of planning performance agreements was also successfully continued into 2019/20 to improve project management of a further more complex proposal for a major housing scheme in Caldicot; however, because of the shortfall in major applications anticipated over 2020-22, this process will be difficult to consolidate, and will need to be rolled forward once the replacement LDP nears adoption.
- 5.5 As regards Action 2, this was partially implemented and improvements and updates were made to the Planning web pages to improve the online payments process and to provide more legible and up to date information on the planning applications process, planning policy (including supplementary planning guidance) and GDPR. The concept of the chatbot was pursued and while the conclusion was that it could be useful in reducing demand particularly on the daily duty officer role, there was a significant cost attached to it which at present needs to be balanced against other ways we can reduce demand that are more of a priority. The chatbot option is therefore set aside for a different, higher priority for 2020/21 that is discussed below (2020/21 Action 1). The chatbot will remain on the agenda for the longer term but will be subject to allowances in the service's budget.
- 5.6 In respect of action 3, this was instigated following a downturn in the performance of the planning enforcement function in 2018/19. Following the appointment of a new enforcement manager midway through 2018/19 it was decided to undertake a more holistic systems review of the Council's planning enforcement team that is a comprehensive piece of work that requires regular assessment and intervention.

Measures were put in place to review all enforcement cases at the 10 week stage of the investigation. All officers provided data on cases approaching the 12 week deadline. In addition, quarterly 1-2-1s are now held with all Members of the Enforcement Team to review these figures and identify areas of improvement. In 2018/19 65% of all cases were investigated within the 12 week period as set out in WG Guidance. The investigation period took on average 107 days. In 2019/20 this improved to 73% of all cases being investigated within guidance and an average investigation time of just 64 days.

- 5.7 As regards Action 4, during this reporting period it has been possible to consolidate and manage a shared service between Monmouthshire CC and Torfaen CBC, and this has also been extended to provide a service to Blaenau Gwent CBC (on a lesser scale). The Heritage Manager drew up a Memorandum of Understanding and secured approval for the collaboration. This resulted in the appointment of a new Senior Heritage Officer to resource the collaboration, managed by Monmouthshire's Heritage Manager but funded by Torfaen. The service has been in place since January 2019 and has had the second review early in 2020/21. The feedback is positive and both authorities are pleased with the progress being made. It is anticipated that this will continue to be built on in the forthcoming period and it is hoped after the two year trial period the collaboration will continue on a more formal basis. The collaboration has many benefits, including improved resilience and skill sharing, together with more opportunities to learn and build on the teams skill set. For the above reasons Cadw have been supportive of the new way of delivering heritage services and have endorsed the collaboration. The team has also been able to secure umbrella delegation for MCC named officers to 'sign off' listed building consent applications in Torfaen, meaning that applications in TCBC no longer need to go to Cadw for approval. This has been welcomed and supported by Cadw.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF 2019/20 APR**

- o The proportion of major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales increased and was well above 80%, and substantially above the Welsh average.
- o The average time taken to determine applications has reduced significantly from 86 days 2018/2019 to 70 days 2019/2020;
- o The number of applications we determined slightly increased (by 2.8%);
- o The proportion of applications we approved remained high at 97%;
- o Of those applications that had gone through our pre-application advice service, 98% were approved;
- o We again dealt with a large number of applications for listed building consent (54 applications) and 84% of these were approved within agreed timescales;
- o Our appeal and our enforcement performance improved markedly during 2019/20.

This shows that, despite a challenging workload, our performance has been very good and our pre-application advice service is effective. We are working with customers to negotiate positive outcomes and high standards of development.

- 6.1 A summary table of our performance can be found in Appendix A of the APR.
- 6.2 A summary table of our performance can be found in Appendix A of the APR. Of the 12 ranked indicators, 9 are ranked Good, while 3 are Fair and 0 are in need of improvement. The 'fair' results relate to the average time taken to determine applications (70 days) which just missed the Good target of 67 days but was above the Welsh average of 77 days for 2018/19 as well as the two enforcement measures that improved significantly due to a review (which is on-going) of the enforcement function.

	Number of indicators
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is 'good'	9
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is 'fair'	3
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance 'needs improvement'	0

6.3 We performed above or at the Wales average in 11 of the 12 comparable indicators. The indicator for which performance was below the Welsh average related to the average time taken to determine "major" applications in days. Further commentary on the performance against these measures is set out in Section 6 of the APR. Our performance declined against one indicator, which again, was the average time to determine major applications. That measure rose due to a small number of longstanding applications being refused following lengthy periods of being held in abeyance pending the submission of necessary technical information.

6.4 Four actions are identified going forwards.

**Digitising paper information and improving the resilience of our back office systems and public access module**

6.5 We still hold substantial information on tree preservation orders in the County as paper records in the Council's 'amber storage area'. Retrieving such information is time-consuming and inefficient and the lack of accessible information for the public leads to a high volume of calls and enquiries to the Council's Tree Officer (who is part time, 0.6 FTE), the daily duty officer and also the Support team. Digitising this information will reduce phone calls and emails to all those officer sand will free up time to carry out work of greater value to the service and customers, such as processing submissions for pre-application advice and the applications themselves. The quality of the data also needs review (for example, some of the older TPOs need reviewing as the information will be out of date), although this will be carried out once the data is in a digitised format that is easier to manage and change (Action 1).

*Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to woodland / tree preservation order work to help customers self-serve and reduce the significant demand on the Planning Service's Tree Officer, the daily Duty officer and Support staff.*

6.6 In addition, the Service's planning application processing software, Idox Uniform, must be upgraded over 2020/21 as the current system is now de-supported. This will achieve business continuity and more resilience for the service. Also, the public access module will need to be upgraded which will provide benefits to customers once they have registered with the software and will be more robust in terms of GDPR compliance (Action 2).

*Action 2 – upgrade the Planning Service's Uniform (planning application processing) software and the public access module that will provide business continuity and provide enhancements to our customers and ensure better GDPR compliance.*

**Speed of resolving enforcement cases**

- 6.7 The performance of the Council's Planning Enforcement team had declined in relation to the two enforcement measures in the Performance Framework over 2018/19, resulting in complaints about delays from the public and the perception the service was poorly performing. These issues are certainly not unique to Monmouthshire, and the problem is at least in part due to a misunderstanding of the powers available to us and/or unrealistic expectations, a matter that had been addressed in some way by the training on enforcement that took place in May 2018 for community and town councillors. Over 2019/20 there were substantial reductions in the time taken to investigate enforcement complaints due to measures instigated by the new manager of this team. There remains, however, scope for continued improvement. The systems review of the Planning Enforcement function is ongoing and has already helped to improve this team's practices and drive out waste. The action below therefore is a spin-off from last year's (Action 3).

*Action 3 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service's enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers*

### **Collaborative Working and Buildings at Risk Strategy**

- 6.8 Monmouthshire has a wealth of heritage assets and has long invested in its heritage team to manage these assets in the public interest. It has become apparent in recent years that opportunities existed to work collaboratively with neighbouring Councils to provide a shared heritage resource. The previous reporting period saw the establishment of a shared heritage service with Torfaen Council that has been working well. This has given the opportunity to address issues of capacity and consistency of advice between Authorities. In addition, it provides an opportunity to increase resilience, knowledge and the skills base of aspects of Historic Environment Management through building and sharing of expertise and experience. It also acknowledges the agenda for collaboration in the delivery of local government services being promoted by Welsh Government. An action from last year saw the team seek to extend the offer to other neighbouring local authorities which resulted in a memorandum of understanding being agreed to provide heritage services for Blaenau Gwent CBC. This has so far worked well and has allowed the service to provide resilience to BGCBC whose range of work does not need a full time heritage officer while not impacting on the team's ability to cover the demanding heritage workload in Monmouthshire.
- 6.9 There are competing demands on the Heritage Team and many requests from the community are received to intervene to stop the decay of several prominent listed buildings throughout the County. Officer time and financial resources are listed in this regard, but an action plan agreed by Members would help to prioritise the cases that warrant priority working and action. To this end a Buildings at Risk Strategy and action plan is proposed to be developed to manage this process more effectively and to help the communities understand the choices we make when opting to take appropriate action to save and protect such assets. The strategy would put a methodology in place for drawing out the worst buildings and then set out appropriate actions as to how these are tackled; in all likelihood there would be actions identified to address the worst 5-10 buildings at risk so it is a more manageable and transparent process.

*Action 4 – Continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities (Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils) and to develop a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.*

## **Value of Planning**

- 6.12 RTPI Cymru has developed a toolkit which measures the value generated by a local authority planning service. The tool is able to capture the economic, social and environmental value at a local planning authority level across Wales. The tool and its 'Value Dashboard' has been designed to provide RTPI Cymru and the Welsh Government with a platform to demonstrate to local authorities, national policy makers, the private sector, researchers and other broader policy and media audiences, the value planning contributes and how planning is positively contributing to Wales' seven well-being goals. The data has been updated to reflect planning permissions and completions in the current reporting period (2019/20). The toolkit has been a very useful means of promoting the good work undertaken by the department that is often taken for granted. Over this period, the toolkit concludes that the service has contributed £115.2M to the local economy by the allocation of sites in the LDP, the safeguarding of land, the granting and implementation of planning permissions, the operation of its enforcement function and the securing of planning obligations. We aim to update this for the ensuing reporting periods. The 'Dashboard' data summarises the Planning Service's contribution below:

# Value of Planning in Monmouthshire 2019/20

## Planning service key data



28 FTE jobs in planning service



1,106 applications handled



£0.6m collected in fees

### LDP Land Safeguarded



### LDP Land Allocated

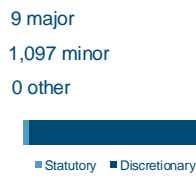


### LDP Value

**£2.1m uplift value**  
*(based on land allocated for whole plan period)*

**Value adding policies ✓ 89%**

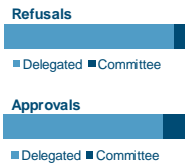
### Applications



0 DCOs dealt with  
0 DNS dealt with  
54 LBC applications granted  
14 refusals appealed  
0 judicial reviews

### Decisions

✓ 925 approvals (84%)  
x 24 refusals (2%)  
153 subject to pre app



### Permissions



### Permissions

■ Consistent with local plan  
■ Departures from local plan

### Contributions

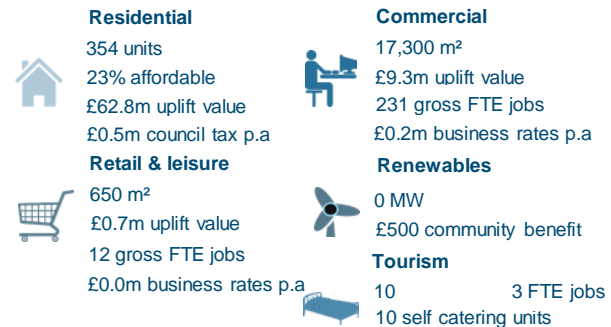
#### Section 106 income



#### CIL income



### Completions



### Enforcement

297 enforcement complaints  
3 planning contraventions  
2 enforcement notices  
7 breach of condition notices  
0 stop notices  
2 section 125 notices



### Wider indicators



In 2019/20 the total value of planning was

**£115.2m**

SOURCES: Planning function outputs (LPA survey), Land and property value data (JLL estimates), business rates valuations (Valuation Office Agency), employment densities (English Homes & Communities Agency), Council tax rates (Stats Wales), Health benefits from Affordable Housing (Department for Communities and Local Government Appraisal Guide, based on various studies outlined in appraisal databook), Community benefit from renewables (Renewables UK Cymru). Some of the calculations require high level assumptions to convert between units/m<sup>2</sup>/ha. Where possible, benchmarks have been employed otherwise reasonable assumptions have been used. Business rate, council tax and gross FTE job estimates based on assumption of 100% occupancy and do not factor in any displacement. Numbers of applications and decisions are unlikely to match up as these can take place in different financial years for any given application. 'Value adding policies' refers to the proportion of policies the team has identified as adding 'intangible value' that are included in local plans. Approvals and refusals do not sum to 100% due to applications carry across years. The total value of planning only incorporates some of the metrics presented in the dashboard.



## **7.0 OPPORTUNITIES GOING FORWARD**

7.1 The following opportunities for the coming year have been identified as a result of this Annual Performance Report, our LDP AMR and our Service Business Plan:

- Continue to roll out the project management of major planning applications, where appropriate, via planning performance agreements to seek by best endeavours to ensure timely and well-managed processing of such applications, providing a good customer experience for the customer;
- To digitise the Tree information held by the Council in paper form to improve the web site experience for customers and improve customers' pathways to information (Action 1);
- To upgrade the use of the more efficient database for planning applications to reduce waste for staff, including the production of standard letters and monitoring reports and to upgrade public access module to improve the customer experience (Action 2);
- To improve the speed with which we deal with enforcement cases via the continued systems review of the Enforcement function (Action 3);
- To continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to a Built Heritage Management Service with neighbouring local authorities, providing resilience, shared learning and consistency across those areas (Action 4);
- To develop a Buildings at Risk Strategy to safeguard some of our most precious but vulnerable heritage assets (Action 4);
- Continue with the replacement Monmouthshire LDP because of the need to address the shortfall in the housing land supply and facilitate the identification/ allocation of additional housing land as well as addressing the demographic and employment challenges of the County;
- To identify, implement and/or disseminate best practice via the Planning Officers' Society for Wales or other working groups, including the Welsh Government, the WLGA and the RTPI
- Promote the value of the work carried out by the Council's Planning Service by updating the Value of Planning toolkit on an annual basis and publicising the findings in each APR.
- To respond to the threat provided by the emerging Covid-19 pandemic to ensure business continuity. This will be reported in detail in next year's APR but can be summarised here as involving staff working almost entirely at home, signposting electronic submissions only, risk assessed site visits and remote committee and delegation panel meetings.

7.2 Progress will be measured via our 2021/22 Annual Performance Report, 2021/22 LDP Annual Monitoring Report, and our 2020-2023 Service Business Plan.

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

8.1 Officer time and costs associated with the preparation of this APR are met from the Development Management budget and work is carried out by existing staff.

## **9.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

9.1 Sustainability, equality and well-being considerations are central to the planning service's activities. This report is a review of the previous year's performance against targets and benchmarking information, however the proposed five actions for future



improvements seek to improve service delivery to the benefit of our customers and communities.

9.2 An Equality and Future Generations Evaluation is attached as an appendix.

## **10.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

10.1 There is normally a requirement on Local Planning Authorities to undertake an Annual Performance Report and to submit it to the Welsh Government by 31 October 2020. While the Council could decide not to submit the APR, this year we do consider it useful to carry on with this work to help us continue to improve our service. Consequently, the following options were considered:

- 1) Recommend the APR for submission without any changes;
- 2) Recommend the APR for submission but with changes to the proposed actions for the coming year.

10.2 The APR provides a useful reflection on last year's performance against targets and benchmarking information. The proposed actions seek to continue that journey of improvement, given the resources available to us. Consequently, option 1 is the preferred option.

## **11.0 HOW WILL SUCCESS BE MEASURED**

11.1 The Planning Service is measured against a number of clear and consistent (across Wales, and over time) performance indicators allowing aspects of a successful service to be measured. These indicators need to be viewed in the context of other factors, including what customers have identified as being important to them, customer and stakeholder feedback, outcomes (which are not always captured by performance indicators), and whole Council priorities.

11.2 We strive to deliver the best service possible, and our mission is to advise on, give permission for, and ensure the best development possible.

## **12.0 CONSULTEES**

- Planning Committee and the Economy and Development Select Committee via a report to the latter considered on 19 October 2020. Feedback from that committee was positive with members appreciating the hard and dedicated work of the teams together with the positive approach to dealing with planning applications. The achievement of the Heritage Team in developing and implementing the joint service with Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils was picked out for particular praise as was the work of the Planning Enforcement Team to improve its performance over the year. The actions to improve the service were recognised and endorsed. Members considered that The Value of Planning Tool was an excellent way of promoting the often unsung work of the team and is a tangible way of showing how much worth the service provides to the County.  
In conclusion, Members commented on the positive change they have seen in the department over recent years.

## **13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

## **14.0 AUTHOR & CONTACT DETAILS:**

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## **Monmouthshire LPA**

### **PLANNING ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR) – 2019-20**

#### **PREFACE**

I am very pleased to introduce the sixth Annual Performance Report for Monmouthshire County Council's Planning Service.

This report shows that Monmouthshire's Planning Service continues to perform very well, with none of the twelve relevant indicators in need of improvement against the Welsh Government's targets. We are performing well in dealing with all types of planning applications and I am pleased to note that the committee process is working effectively showing an excellent relationship between members and officers in this authority. The Heritage Team members deserve high praise for their outstanding quality of service and the commitment they have shown in establishing a joint heritage service with our neighbours at Torfaen Council and more recently with Blaenau Gwent Council. The Council's enforcement service improved its performance last year and is now investigating and closing cases far more quickly than the previous year.

Where we think there are areas that need improving, we have clear actions to improve those elements of the service.

Good planning is central to the Council's purpose of building sustainable, resilient communities while also generating growth in the economy and protecting the heritage and landscapes that make our County the beautiful place it is. It is central to achieving our well-being objectives for everyone who lives, works and spends time in our beautiful County. As part of this, Planning has a key role in assisting the local economy to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and we are committed as an authority to ensure this happens.

Councillor Bob Greenland, Cabinet Member

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is Monmouthshire's sixth Annual Performance Report, which looks at the performance of the Planning Service against nationally set performance indicators, Welsh Government targets, the Wales average performance, and Monmouthshire's performance last year. The results are considered in the context of the challenges, opportunities, priorities and resources (staffing and financial) available to us. The objective of the APR is to reflect on and celebrate good performance, identify areas for improvement, and look across Wales to identify potential areas of best practice that we could learn from or share with others.
- 1.2 The nature of the performance indicators means their focus is on decision speed and customer service rather than measuring whether or not better outcomes have been achieved. It has not yet been possible to identify an objective way of measuring outcomes, however we seek to prioritise securing the best scheme possible rather than traditional indicators relating to speed of decision-making. Research has identified that our customers' priority is securing planning permission: customers generally understand the benefits of good design and, within reason, do not see the time taken as a priority.
- 1.3 For the purposes of this report, performance is analysed across the five key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in the Planning Performance Framework:
- Plan making;
  - Efficiency;
  - Quality;
  - Engagement; and
  - Enforcement.

Owing to the absence of data from Welsh Government (WG) in relation to performance over 2019/20, in this year's APR, the Plan making element has been omitted. The performance of the Plan is more than adequately covered in the Annual Monitoring Report, also being submitted to WG in October 2020. For the other areas in the Planning Performance Framework, performance data has been obtained by Monmouthshire officers from the Development Management Quarterly Returns and our own back-office system. In the absence of all Wales data for 2019/20, comparisons have been made with the Welsh average performance for each measure over 2018/19 as well as our own performance against the measures over 2018/19. Performance is ranked as 'good', 'fair' or 'needs improvement'.

- 1.4 Based on the performance information in Section 6 and Annex A, we can be very pleased with the service we deliver. During this period:
- The proportion of all applications determined within 8 weeks or an agreed timescale rose to 91% and was well above the national target of 80% and was above the Welsh average;
  - The average time to determine all applications fell to 70 days (from 86 days in 2018/19) and was below the Welsh average of 77 days for the previous reporting period;
  - The proportion of major applications determined within agreed timescales was 85% and was almost 20% above the Welsh average in 2018/19;

- 84% of listed building applications were determined within approved timescales and we provided a valued Heritage service for Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent councils that is discussed later in this Report;
- The percentage of applications that were approved rose to 97%, well above WG average ;
- Over 2019/20, 154 planning applications stemmed from pre-application advice we gave. Of those that have been determined 77% were approved while 17 were returned, withdrawn or never became valid submissions due to a change in the applicant's circumstances. Only one application was refused and that proposal did not follow the officer advice given at pre-application stage. Consequently, we have a 100% success rate of applications that went to decision stage and followed our pre-application advice.

1.5 A summary table of our performance can be found in Annex A. This year there are 13 relevant indicators and of these 12 are ranked:

- Monmouthshire's performance is ranked 'good' against 9, 'fair' against 3 and there are none 'in need of improvement'. One of the 'fair' results relates to the average time taken to determine all applications in days; this just missed the target of 67 days but at 70 days was a good improvement on the previous year's performance of 86 days and was a priority in our Action Plan for 2018/19. The other two fair measures related to enforcement performance which improved significantly since they were in need of improvement in 2018/19. The new manager of that team has introduced more rigorous targets and the team has responded positively to these changes. The improvement of this area of the service is a work in progress so this element is kept as an action going forward. Our appeal performance improved significantly upon the 2018/19 period, and now stands at 86% of appeals being dismissed which is well above the expected standard of 66% and the previous years' performance of 46%.

Further commentary on the performance against these measures is set out in Section 6 and Appendix A.

- Our performance declined against two indicators,  
The declining performance related to:
  - a) Percentage of major applications determined within agreed timescales;
  - b) Average time taken to determine major planning applications

As regards a) above, we still turned around 85% of applications within the agreed timescale which is ranked Good. The average time to determine major applications rose significantly to 296 days but was artificially inflated by some longstanding applications that were refused. The use of PPAs to manage more complex applications will be promoted going forward to reduce such timescales.

1.6 In the light of the above and having regard to our key work areas, four actions are proposed going forward:

*Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to woodland / tree preservation order work to help customers self-serve and reduce the significant demand on the Planning Service's Tree Officer, the daily Duty officer and Support staff.*

*Action 2 – upgrade the Planning Service’s Uniform (planning application processing) software and the public access module that will provide business continuity and provide enhancements to our customers and ensure better GDPR compliance.*

*Action 3 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers.*

*Action 4 – Continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities (Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils) and to develop a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.*

## 2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 This section sets out the planning context within which the Local Planning Authority operates, both corporately and in terms of Monmouthshire as a county, for the 2019-20 period.

### Corporate Context

2.2 The Council adopted its Local Development Plan in February 2014 and will be submitting its sixth Annual Monitoring Report in October 2020.

2.3 The purpose of the Planning Service is to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations in Monmouthshire, which is a shared purpose with the Council's public service board partners. This is at the heart of everything we do.

We contribute to delivering the Council's well-being objectives, which align to the Public Service Boards objectives, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2017-2022, the specific objectives we contribute to are:

MCC Purpose	Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities
MCC Well-being Objectives	The best possible start in life Lifelong well-being Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment Thriving and well-connected county Future-focussed Council

2.4 The Planning Service's purpose links directly to Monmouthshire County Council's objective of building sustainable, resilient communities.

2.5 The Planning Service sits within the Council's Enterprise Directorate. The Enterprise Vision provides a strategic context for the development and promotion of an enterprising culture, which builds business resilience and creates high value outcomes for Monmouthshire's communities.

2.6 The Planning Service is made up of i) the Planning Policy and ii) the Development Management teams. The primary purpose of the Planning Policy team is to prepare and monitor the statutory Local Development Plan (LDP) and assist in its effective implementation through the Development Management (planning application) process. This ensures that the land use and sustainable development objectives of the Council are met ensuring the provision of an adequate supply of land in sustainable locations for housing, retail, education, recreation, tourism, transport, business, waste and other needs, whilst protecting the county's valued environmental, heritage and cultural assets. This work aligns directly with achieving four of the Council's Well-being objectives while being prepared to work innovatively aligns with the fifth objective regarding a Future-focussed Council.

- 2.7 The Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan identifies a key issue as being the need to respond to demographic change, with the County having an increasingly ageing population. The Planning Service has an important part to play (alongside Housing colleagues) in readdressing the supply and mix of housing stock to ensure suitable and affordable housing is available to all demographic groups.
- 2.8 The Planning Service in its policy-making role and when making decisions on planning applications has a significant part in the Well-being goal that seeks to “Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change”. The PSB Well-being Plan acknowledges this by i) identifying Planning’s (and its partners’) capacity to improve the resilience of ecosystems by working at a larger scale (landscape) to manage biodiversity and maximise benefits such as natural flood risk management; ii) ensuring design and planning policy supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities that are good for people and the environment, and iii) enabling renewable energy schemes, especially community owned schemes, and developing new solutions including storage, smart energy, heat and local supply.
- 2.9 The Planning Service’s Vision is “To enable through the land use planning policy framework the building of sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.”
- 2.10 In addition, the Development Management Service undertook a System Review between 2010-12 where its purpose was established as being: “To advise on, give permission for and ensure the best possible development” which complements the overall service vision.
- 2.11 Key areas of work for the Service include:
- Carrying out a revision of the Monmouthshire LDP.
  - Preparing and co-ordinating thematic supplementary planning guidance to help to foster the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy.
  - Implementing the Council’s LDP through engaging and working with communities, and partnership working with both internal and external partners.
  - Depending on the outcome of legislative changes at the UK Government level, adopting and implementing the Community Infrastructure Levy. Infrastructure needs will be reviewed and consideration will be given to the best options for funding them alongside LDP progress.
  - Working with colleagues in Development Management to create a unified Planning Service focused on enabling positive outcomes.
  - Monitoring and evaluating development plan policies, including preparing the statutory LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
  - Maintaining the LDP evidence base and ensuring fitness for purpose for future LDP revision.
  - Developing linkages with the Council’s emerging framework for community governance and development
  - Providing pre-application advice to customers;
  - Determining planning applications in accordance with adopted policy and material planning considerations, taking into account stakeholder comments and corporate objectives;
  - Securing financial contributions from developers to offset the infrastructure demands of new development;



- Safeguarding the County's 2400 Listed Buildings and 31 Conservation Areas, areas of archaeological sensitivity, the Wye Valley AONB and the Brecon Beacons National Park;
- Providing a heritage service for our neighbouring colleagues in Torfaen County Borough that works in a manner that is consistent and as well-resourced as the one provided for Monmouthshire.
- Taking robust enforcement action against unauthorised development that is unacceptable in the public interest.
- Preparing and submitting the Planning Services' Annual Performance Report (APR) to WG which assesses the effectiveness of the Monmouthshire's planning service and benchmarks it against other Councils' performance.

2.12 The main customer of the Planning Service is the applicant of any planning application, however there are numerous stakeholders including individuals, communities, businesses, third sector organisations, other Council Services and elected Members.

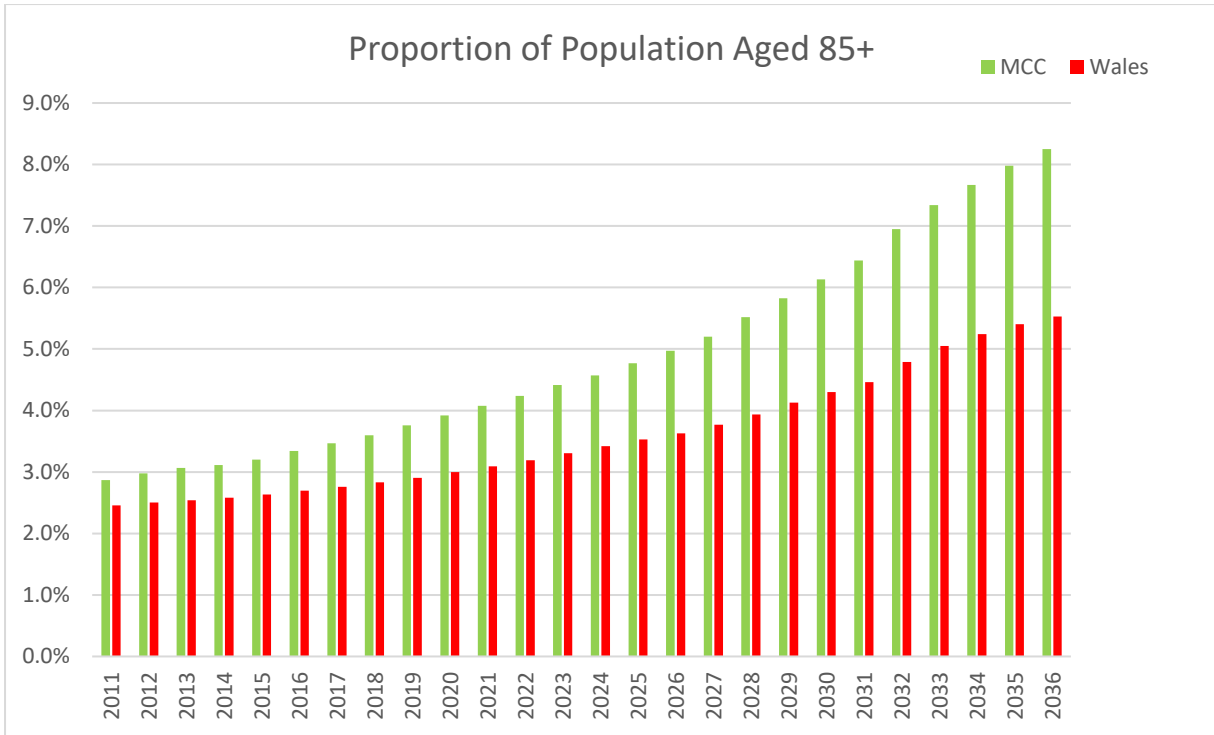
### **Local Context**

2.13 Located in South East Wales, Monmouthshire occupies a strategic position between the major centres in South Wales, the South West of England and the Midlands. The County shares a border with the neighbouring Local Planning Authorities of Newport, Torfaen and Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP) in Wales and Gloucestershire, the Forest of Dean and Herefordshire in England, with Severn crossing links to South Gloucestershire. The County forms the gateway to South Wales, and is part of the Cardiff Capital City Region. This location gives the County a distinctive identity.

### **2.14 Our people**

2.14.1 Monmouthshire covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares with a population of 91,323 in 2011 (92,843 according to the 2016 mid-year estimate), 7.9% of which resides within the BBNP area of the County. The County has a low population density of 1.1 persons per hectare – significantly lower than the South East Wales average of 5.3 persons per hectare – reflecting the area's rural nature. Only 53% of the population live in wards defined as being urban areas (i.e. with a population of more than 10,000).

2.14.2 Our population has been increasing steadily, up 7.6% between 2001 and 2011 compared with the Wales average of 5.5%. This increase is wholly attributable to inward migration, with natural change showing negative growth. The County has a relatively high and increasing proportion of older age groups, and a lower and decreasing proportion of younger adults compared with the UK and Wales averages. This trend is predicted to continue.



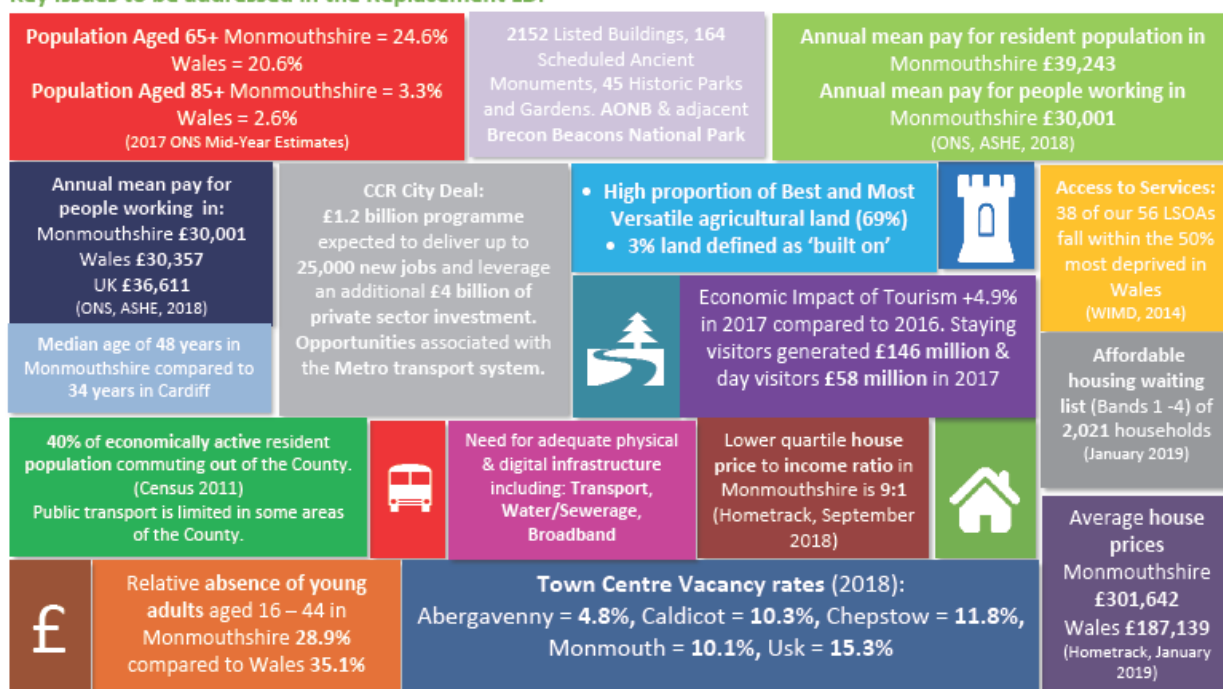
Source: Office for National Statistics

2.14.3 This demographic change has significant implications for economic activity and demand for services to enable our citizens to continue to live independent lives.

2.14.4 The following diagram encapsulates the issues that the Council are seeking to address during the development of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) over the next few years (Please see revised delivery agreement):

## Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan – Issues, Vision and Objectives

### Key Issues to be addressed in the Replacement LDP



## 2.15 Housing and quality of life

### 2.15.1 The County has three broad categories of settlement:

- The historic market towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth have developed over many years to have a wide range of opportunities for employment, shopping, community facilities and public transport;
- The newer settlements in Severnside of Caldicot/Portskewett, Magor/Undy, Rogiet and Sudbrook where recent high levels of residential growth have taken place without the local jobs and community facilities to match. The area benefits, however, from a strategic location at the 'Gateway' to Wales with good access to the employment markets of Newport, Cardiff and Bristol;
- The rural area, containing the small town of Usk, the larger villages of Raglan and Penperlleni, and a large number of smaller villages, widely dispersed around the County.

2.15.2 Over the last decade, housing completions in the Monmouthshire LPA area have averaged approximately 245 dwellings per annum, although there have been significant annual variations with just 158 completions in 2009/10. To deliver the LDP housing requirement, 488 completions per annum are required (2013-2021). To date, completions since LDP adoption have averaged approximately 240 per annum. This is discussed in more detail in the LDP Annual Monitoring Report however 356 dwelling completions (including 82 affordable homes) were recorded in 2019/2020.

2.15.3 Average house prices are significantly higher than the Wales average (£301,600 compared to £187,100 average in January 2019) resulting in a significant need for affordable housing (source: Hometrack Housing Intelligence). Between 2006 (the time the Monmouthshire Unitary Development Plan was adopted) and March 2020, there have been 3,760 completions of which 797 were affordable, equating to 21% of all dwellings built. Since LDP adoption (2014) to March 2020 there have been 1,755 completions of which 424 were affordable, equating to 24% of all dwellings constructed.

2.15.4 Monmouthshire is generally a prosperous County offering a high quality of life for its residents. However, poor access to community facilities and declining local service provision is an issue for rural and ageing communities. The health of Monmouthshire's population is generally better than the Wales average, with greater life expectancies and higher proportion of residents classing themselves as being in good health (2011 Census). Fewer residents in the County suffer with a limiting long-term illness compared with Wales as a whole. The rate of reported crime in Monmouthshire tends to be lower than for Wales as a whole.

## 2.16 Our economy

2.16.1 The County has a high proportion of working age people in employment (62.8% in 2011) compared to neighbouring Authorities or the Wales average (58.2%). Our economy is reliant on the public sector and services for employment:

- The public administration, education and health sector accounts for 33.3% of jobs;
- The distribution, retail, hotels and restaurants sector accounts for 27.4% of jobs;
- Tourism, as part of the services sector, is also important in the County (see 2.16.3 below).

2.16.2 The County had 3,720 active enterprises in 2011, 27% of which were in the property and business services sector. Nearly 99% of the County's businesses are classified as small (i.e. up to 49 employees). Monmouthshire has experienced growth in eight of fourteen sectors in the decade to 2011, with the greatest increases in the property business services, hotels and catering and education and health sectors, while there has been a decline in the number of manufacturing businesses. Recent changes in Business Rates by the Welsh Government have disproportionately affected Monmouthshire.

2.16.3 Tourism is vital to Monmouthshire's economy and generates income to support a wide range of businesses that benefit from spending by visitors. According to figures supplied by tourism economic indicator STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor), the sector brought in £204.43m to Monmouthshire in 2017 and supported the equivalent of 2,968 full-time jobs, accounting for approximately 10% of the workforce. Each visitor contributing to the county's economy by purchasing food and drink, fuel, services and accommodation spends on average over £66 per day.

2.16.4 Monmouthshire's tourism performance over the life of the previous plan displayed an encouraging 10% real growth in terms of economic impact, an increase of 8.7% in visitor numbers and a 1.5% growth in full-time jobs. The approved Destination Management Plan has been developed following a review of the previous plan and is based on Monmouthshire's best prospects for tourism growth as well as extensive consultation with

stakeholders. The Plan capitalises on key opportunities for Monmouthshire, including its location at the gateway to Wales offering an initial chance to make a great impression, especially now that the Severn Bridge tolls have been phased out.

2.16.5 The 2015 Welsh Government Commuting Statistics indicate that 58.3% of the County's residents work in the area. Although less than the Welsh average of 69.4%, this is an improvement of last year's figure of 54.5%. This suggests that there has been some progress in meeting the aspiration to increase the proportion of resident workforce working within Monmouthshire over the Plan period. However, the same data source suggests that Monmouthshire has a net outflow of 900 commuters – with 17,800 commuting into the Authority to work and 18,700 commuting out. There was significant in-commuting from Torfaen (3,000), Newport (2,900), Blaenau Gwent (2,800) and from outside Wales (8,000). The main areas for out-commuting were Newport (3,900), Bristol (3,400), Cardiff (2,500) and Torfaen (2,100), with a further 6,400 commuting to other areas outside Wales. A relatively high proportion of Monmouthshire's residents travel long distances to work, with a high usage of the private car. Heavy reliance on the private car and limited opportunities for public transport is a particular issue in rural areas. These figures should be treated with caution, however, as the data is based on a small sample survey.

## 2.17 **Communications**

2.17.1 The County is easily accessible from the rest of Wales by the M4, A40, A449 and A4042 and from England by the M4 and M48 Severn Bridges and the A48, A40 and A465. The good road transport links connect the County to major population centres such as Cardiff, Newport and Bristol. Monmouthshire is served by a number of local and national bus routes, with main bus stations in the towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth. In terms of rail provision, Monmouthshire has four railway stations, at Caldicot, Chepstow and Severn Tunnel Junction in the south of the County and Abergavenny in the north. As part of the Cardiff Capital Region, Monmouthshire is set to benefit from the proposed South Wales Metro proposals. The local community in Magor Undy is at an advanced stage of campaigning for a new Magor Undy Walkway Station, close to the Community Hub building that has now received planning permission. The announcement to remove the toll charge on the Severn Bridge has already had a demonstrable impact on house prices and, anecdotally, on speed of sales.

2.17.2 Public rights of way include 1,499km of footpaths, 71km of bridleways, 84.5km of restricted byways and 1.5km of unrestricted byways. These public rights of way are complemented by permissive paths. The County has three long distance regional trails (Usk Valley, Wye Valley and Three Castles) as well as the national trail (Offa's Dyke Path). The County also provides the start of the all-Wales coastal path. There are two national cycle routes within Monmouthshire, both of which run from Chepstow. The countryside access opportunities available in the County are one of its key assets, sustaining tourism and providing opportunities for economic regeneration.

2.17.3 The rural nature of the County and high proportion of SMEs means broadband and mobile communication are both vital and challenging. The Council is part of the Superfast Cymru

project rolling out BT broadband. Other local projects to roll out Broadband into less accessible rural areas are being explored.

## 2.18 **Our natural heritage**

2.18.1 The County is noted for its rural beauty and has a rich and diverse landscape stretching from the coastline of the Gwent Levels in the south of the County, to the uplands of the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north. In addition, there is the picturesque river corridor of the Wye Valley AONB in the east and the Blaenavon Industrial World Heritage Site to the north-west. The landscape and countryside of Monmouthshire contributes not only to the health and well-being of Monmouthshire's residents but also supports the important tourist economy.

2.18.2 Monmouthshire has significant biodiversity and nature conservation resources, a number of which are internationally or nationally recognised, including:

- The Severn Estuary Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar Site (Wetland of international importance);
- The River Wye, River Usk, Wye Valley woodlands and Wye Valley Special Areas of Conservation (bat sites);
- 49 nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) – covering some 2,087 hectares. Most are woodland or grassland sites with others designated for their wetland or geological interest;
- Two National Nature Reserves (Fiddler's Elbow (woodland) and Lady Park Wood) and one Local Nature Reserve at Cleddon Bog;
- Approximately 650 non-statutory Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) predominantly in relation to grassland and ancient and semi-natural woodland areas. The statutory sites cover 6,432 hectares, or 7.6% of the LPA area; 3,664 hectares of which comprises the Severn Estuary SPA.

2.18.3 Other key challenges facing the Planning Service include areas at risk of flooding (including most of the Gwent Levels and the flood plains of the Rivers Usk and Wye and their tributaries). There are, however, flood defences within the towns of Chepstow, Monmouth and Usk.

## 2.19 **Our built heritage**

2.19.1 The Monmouthshire LPA area has a rich built heritage and historic environment which includes:

- Approximately 2,400 Listed Buildings, of which 2% are Grade I, 10% are Grade II\* and 88% are Grade II. Of note, around 176 Listed Buildings have been identified as being at risk.
- 31 Conservation Areas – designated for their special historic or architectural interest, covering some 1,648 hectares in total;
- 45 Historic Parks and Gardens – identified as having a Special Historic Interest, covering 1,910 hectares;
- 3 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest identified by Cadw (parts of Blaenavon, the Gwent Levels and the Lower Wye Valley);
- 164 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

2.20.1 The current LDP has been heavily reliant on greenfield sites to deliver its development needs due to a lack of brownfield sites. Air quality in Monmouthshire generally meets current standards, although there are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within the County, where objective levels of nitrogen dioxide may be exceeded. These are at Bridge Street in Usk and Hardwick Hill/Mount Pleasant in Chepstow. The Monmouthshire Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy has not identified any sites as being contaminated.

### 3.0 PLANNING SERVICE

#### Organisational setting

3.1 During this period, the Planning Service underwent a number of significant changes, including a restructuring of management responsibilities. This resulted in a new head of service post, namely the Head of Planning, with the former head of service taking a more senior role in the Council as Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flooding. The new head of service was promoted internally from a management role in DM and that management post was not backfilled following agreement within the wider DM Management Team to absorb management of the successful candidate's responsibilities between the DM Service's Heritage Manager and the other existing Development Management Are Manger. Following initial concerns about the two managers' capacity to manage their enlarged teams, this has worked well and staff have commented that they feel that the management structure works effectively. It also enabled a departmental budget saving when application fees had fallen behind the targets in the DM budget (this is discussed below in the section on the service's budget).

There was also a restructuring of the Support team service in DM which was carried out in recognition of the changes in roles of that team following the rollout of the Uniform application processing software and having regard to the increased use of IT replacing more traditional ways of working. As a result, a Support Officer's post was approved by Individual Cabinet Member to be removed from the establishment and following consultation with the team, voluntary redundancy was agreed with a colleague, the team reducing from four to three support officers, managed by their job-share manger's post. This also provides a budget saving in the medium to longer term.

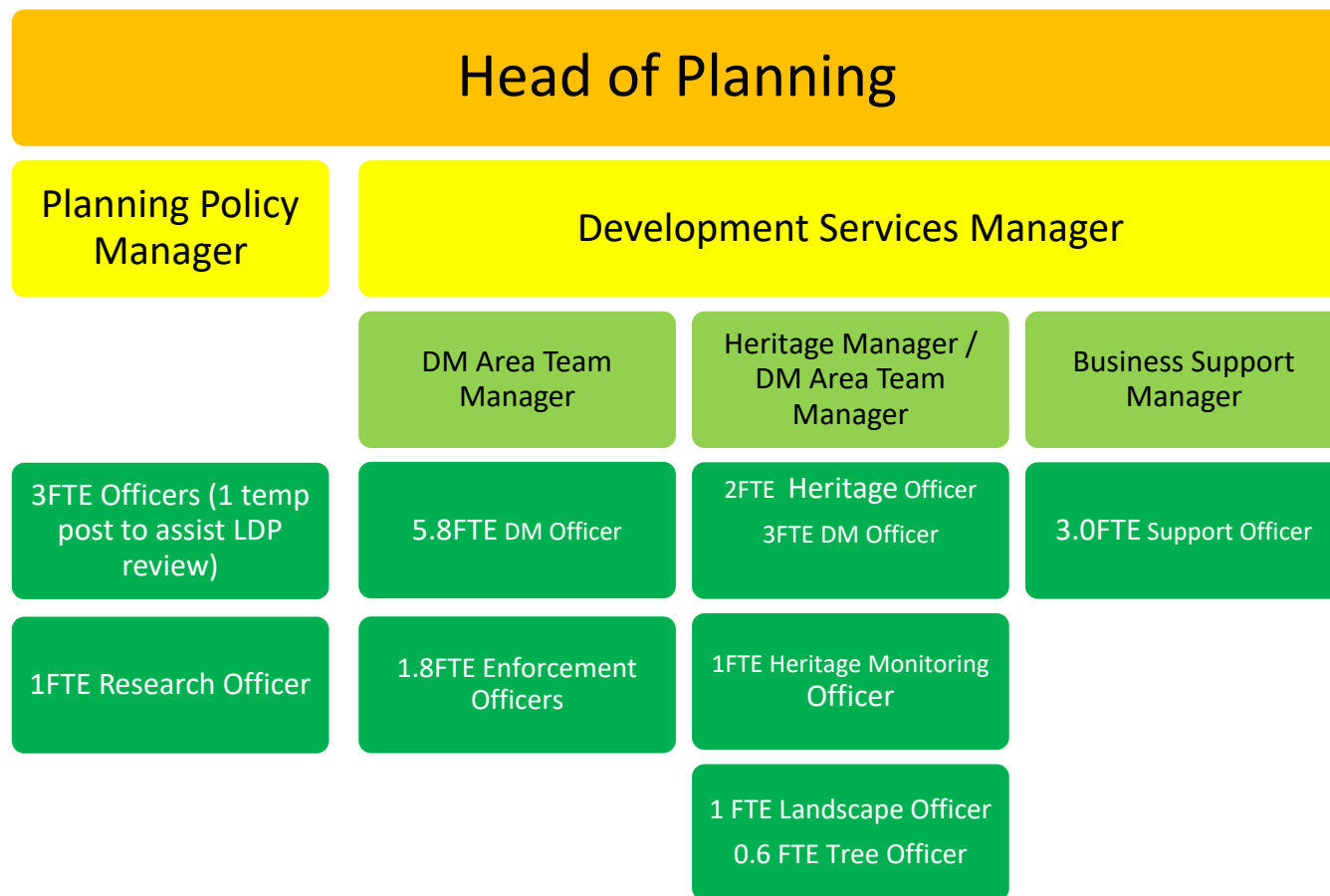
In Planning Policy, the Principal Planning Policy Officer was on maternity leave during this period and her post was filled by an experienced member of staff from a neighbouring planning authority.

#### Department structure and reporting lines for the 2019-20 reporting period





### 3.2 Planning Service staffing structure for the 2019-20 reporting period



#### Links with other Council projects

3.3 There are a number of wider corporate activities that impact upon the planning service, or that the planning service supports and/or shapes:

##### 3.3.1 Budget management

Local Government budgets have been significantly reduced over recent years, and the Planning Service has had to make savings in the same way as all other unprotected services. This has comprised a combination of reduced expenditure, increased income budget lines, and reduced staffing costs.

For 2018/19, DM planning application fee income recovered significantly compared to the two previous years leading to a small overspend of £7k in DM, whereas the Policy team underspent by £186k. Much of this underspend is the rolled over reserve to fund the LDP review which will be used over ensuing years during the LDP review process.

However, the (ambitious) income target for planning applications (£629,000) was not met over 2019/20 leading to a modest overspend of £23k in DM due largely to savings in staffing costs and the Professional fees budget, whereas the Policy team underspent by £33k, leaving an overall underspend of £10k.

### 3.3.2 Service improvement/Systems Thinking

The Council has reviewed a number of its services via a Systems Thinking approach. Planning underwent this review between 2010 and 2012, and it is now fully embedded. The review seeks to strip the service back to basic principles: who is the customer, and what is important to them? As far as is possible (for example taking into account legislative requirements), activities that do not add value to the customer are removed.

In terms of the Planning Service, this has resulted in a high performing, outcome-focused service. Officers are empowered to make decisions and take responsibility for their caseload from start to end. The outcome focus means that our emphasis is on securing a positive outcome where possible, rather than a focus on arbitrary performance targets. Performance against end-to-end times is monitored via monthly team meetings, however this monitoring is in the context that decision speed is only a small part of the wider picture, and is not always important to our customers.

The team applied this approach when implementing the roll out of a new planning application processing data base system that went live in March/ April 2018. This ensured disruption when changing over to the new system was minimised. It has also been used as method to seek ways of improving the service's web pages to improve the customer experience when accessing planning-related information online.

### 3.3.3 Development Team approach

A fee-paying pre-application advice service was introduced in late 2013 which has been well received by customers and is now embedded. This service includes offering a Development Team approach, which seeks to provide an integrated, round-table multi-disciplinary approach to pre-application enquiries. This has helped build positive relationships with other service areas, and help all parties to understand each other's objectives and priorities, leading to better outcomes. We also ask applicants if they wish the local ward member to be involved in pre-application discussions on major planning applications to improve communication and to promote transparency. Another improvement we have introduced is to ensure the council's Design Panel, made up of the council's planning committee chair, vice chair and opposition spokesperson and senior planning managers, is involved at an early stage for major planning proposals that have a design implication. Experience shows the subsequent planning application follows a smoother path during the committee process because of the inclusive nature of the journey. All applications that have undergone this process – including major housing proposals at Abergavenny, Monmouth and Caldicot that have been approved within agreed timescales.

During this reporting period, we received 474 applications for pre-application advice and closed 461. 78% were determined within agreed timescales for such advice.

Of these, 154 led to subsequent planning applications. 118 were approved (77%)

17 were returned/withdrawn or remain invalid (e.g. fee not paid, etc.)

18 are pending consideration.

Just 1 application that stemmed from the pre-application advice was refused – and in any case the officer advised in the pre-application submission response that the proposal would

not be acceptable. Consequently, we have a 100% success rate of applications that went to decision stage and followed our pre-application advice.

As part of the systems thinking revisit referred to in 3.3.2 above, it is intended to review our pre-application advice service to see how we can make this more effective for the customer and improve the timeliness of our responses. This is particularly important as we are looking to put in place fast track services for more complex proposals that will necessitate the Development Team approach. The Development Team approach is valued by customers as it provides a comprehensive service but it is more challenging to organise given the number of different officers involved.

### 3.3.5 Best practice benchmarking

We are involved in various regional and all-Wales working groups, which provide an important forum for identifying, learning from and sharing best practice, while recognising Monmouthshire's uniqueness. These groups include:

- Planning Officers' Society for Wales (POSW) (meeting of all Chief Planning Officers from Welsh LPAs; POSW is involved in benchmarking work among all Welsh local planning authorities undertaken for WG by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) to understand the costs of running a planning service more accurately and comparably than CIPFA data;
- South East Wales branch of POSW (POS-SEW);
- South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG) (meeting of planning policy lead officers from the ten SE Wales LPAs and the Brecon Beacons National Park together with WG representatives, HBF, NRW and Welsh Water). Monmouthshire and Newport Councils jointly chaired this group during this reporting period, with Monmouthshire becoming the Chair Authority in January 2017;
- South East Wales Heritage Forum. Monmouthshire's Heritage Manager chaired this group during this reporting period.
- South Wales Enforcement Forum
- South Wales Development Management Group (meeting of the South Wales Development Management lead officers)

An informal group of DM officers and managers from the former Gwent Local Planning Authorities also meets occasionally to share best practice and procedures in the light of new regulations coming into force. The objective is to discuss consistency on a more manageable basis, and feed learning back to all LPAs in Wales.

In addition, we hold bi-monthly liaison meetings between the Planning Policy and Development Management teams to disseminate policy changes at national and strategic levels, to understand corporate strategies, to aid interpretation and implementation of the adopted Local Development Plan, and to review implementation of the LDP to help inform and shape the replacement LDP. This has provided a valuable forum to ensure a cohesive and consistent planning service is provided.

### 3.3.6 Asset Management

In response to budget pressures, in addition to a wider desire to use our assets responsibly, the Council is undergoing a process of reviewing its estates portfolio and where appropriate, disposing of those assets. The planning service plays a key role in enabling best use

of/return from those assets. As an example, planning permission has been granted for a solar farm on one of our own County farms near Crick. The revenue from energy generation can be reinvested into providing valuable services to our citizens. The Corporate Business Plan includes a commitment to deliver a second solar farm.

The Local Development Plan includes four Council-owned sites as strategic (primarily housing) allocations. During this reporting period, detailed planning approval was granted at Crick Road for a mixed use development as well as detailed planning permission being granted for the development at Mabey Bridge, Chepstow.

### 3.3.7 Well-Being Plan

There are four well-being objectives forming part of the Monmouthshire Well-Being Plan, two relating to people and two relating to place:

People/Citizens:

- Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life
- Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change

Place/Communities:

- Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
- Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.

In tandem with the Well-Being Act and the Well-being Plan the Council's Planning Service is committed to securing sustainable development in the public interest for the good of the County's citizens and its environment.

### 3.3.8 Local Transport Plan and Active Travel

We contributed towards the Council's Local Transport Plan in a previous reporting period, and will continue to work with colleagues to help enable delivery of the identified priorities and compliance with the Active Travel Act, whether this be via LDP allocations, planning application decisions or securing planning contributions. During this reporting period we have been involved in negotiating pedestrian and cycle links for larger housing schemes at Crick Road, Raglan, Undy and Caldicot, as well as holding discussions relating to new cycle routes in the Chepstow and Usk areas.

### 3.3.10 IT improvements and 'channel shift'

The Council has a shared IT resource with Newport, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils, and through this has implemented a new planning back-office system. Collaboration on reporting functions and training has been undertaken with Torfaen Council. Setting up the new system has been very resource intensive but the system went live in April 2018.

The Planning Service is a key frontline service in terms of visibility and customer access. We have already introduced agile working and electronic document management, and work has been undertaken to improve our website to improve the ability of customers and

stakeholders to self-serve where possible, as well as to comply with the Welsh Language Measures, although more work is needed to improve the customer offer in this area.

In recent years we have improved the layout and content of the DM service's web pages to allow customers to self-serve more easily. We have also moved towards a paperless office, resulting in printing and postage savings. Going forward we would like to scan old microfiche records so that these are also available via our website, however this is prohibitively expensive at present. We also introduced a Report It function on the web site so that the public could report possible breaches of planning control for the planning enforcement team to investigate.

### Operating budget

3.4 The operating budget for the service is shown below together with the changes from last year:

	Costs	Income	Net Cost	Change
<b>2013-14</b>	£1,648,800	£601,200	£1,047,600	
<b>2014-15</b>	£1,397,400	£614,900	£782,500	−£265,100 (−25%)
<b>2015-16</b>	£1,360,500	£669,900	£690,600	−£91,900 (−12%)
<b>2016-17</b>	£1,363,600	£572,000	£791,600	+£101,000 (+15%)
<b>2017-18</b>	£1,292,600	£430,100	£862,500	+£70,900 (+9%)
<b>2018-19</b>	£1,426,500	£653,600	£772,900	−£89,600 (−10%)
<b>2019-20</b>	£1,535,022	£669,300	£865,722	+£92,822 (+12%)
<b>2020-21*</b>	£1,443,355	£680,000	£763,355	

\*Budgeted figures are shown for 2020-21; actual figures are shown for the other years. The figures exclude Planning Policy's budget for Professional fees which is rolled forward each year for LDP review work.

3.5 The two main costs for the service are staff costs and the LDP budget (money is transferred from the above budget to sit in an LDP reserve, built up to fund the next LDP). Income is generated by planning application fees and pre-application advice (the latter amounted to approximately £50,000 over 2019/20) as well as the Planning Service's newer discretionary services that are discussed below.

3.6 Planning application income was lower in 2019/20 than in 2018/19 (£515k compared to £583k). Although the number of planning applications received remained broadly comparable to 2018/19 the income from major planning applications fell compared to the previous financial year. Fee projection work means there will be little application activity on larger allocated and unallocated housing sites over 2020/21. This is chiefly due to the lifecycle of the current LDP which is at the end of the plan period and is now under review. Delays to the review stages of the new plan will mean there will be no new larger housing sites coming forward until post Deposit/ Examination stage, probably mid-2022 at the earliest. Aside from the income target not being achieved the service has made savings in terms of staff costs (a member of the support team accepted redundancy and a senior management post was not filled because of a re-structure of the DM Management roles). There was also an under-spend in the professional fees budget. Agreement to stop

increasing the application fees each year by inflation was agreed by the Council given that the authority does not set the fees, they do not rise by inflation each year and fee income is dependent on economic activity which is also out of the Council's hands.

- 3.7 Research by the Welsh Government identifies that application fees recover approximately 60% of the cost of dealing with planning applications, although work is currently being undertaken by work commissioned by WG and endorsed by POSW to provide a more accurate picture of cost recovery across all Welsh planning authorities. Additional costs are incurred through the work involved in the statutory Development Plan, and via other services such as enforcement and heritage management. Increased planning application fee income is used to reduce the net cost of the service to the Council. In-year windfall extra income is used to balance the Council's budgets and offset overspend in other services. Conversely as has been the case during recent years, underspend in other services was used to offset DM's under-recovery of income, when economic and other circumstances resulted in a sudden drop in fee income. Application fee income has fluctuated significantly over recent years, and this poses a challenge for budget management going forward. Fee income is heavily influenced by the wider economy, for example house-building (which itself is affected by mortgage lending and development viability) and other funding streams (for example the feed-in tariff for renewable energy schemes).

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Budgeted fee income</b>	£490k	£525k	£633k	£668k	£684k	£681k	£693k	£589k
<b>Actual income</b>	£596k	£584k	£664k	£560k	£430k	£653k	£666k	

N.B. Fee income includes planning application fees, pre-application income and the discretionary fees for fast track applications. The 2019/20 figure also includes payment from Torfaen Council towards funding the joint Heritage Service.

### **Staff resources**

- 3.8 Staffing levels for the reporting period are shown in the chart at paragraph 3.2 above. Key changes over 2019/20 saw a major change in that the former Head of Service was promoted to a more senior management role in the Council with the new Head of Planning post being taken up by a successful internal candidate within the DM Management team. That successful candidate's post was then not backfilled, the post remaining empty as a result of a management restructure within DM. This meant instead of three line managers (two DM area managers and one Heritage Manager) there was a reduction to two managers with the Heritage Manager assuming management of three DM Officers. This has resulted in a good response from the DM officers who find the new arrangements provide good management capacity and has been welcomed by the managers themselves, it allowing the Heritage Manager to widen her experience and depth of planning knowledge. The saving made in not replacing the manager's role was also welcomed given the on-going pressure on budgets.

There was also a re-structure within the Planning Support Team resulting in one 1.0FTE Support Officer post being removed from the DM Structure. This was because of a review of

the Support Team's role within the wider service and was influenced by the reduced input of Support colleagues owing to the introduction of the new Uniform application processing system that has changed responsibilities for tasks and automated many processes. In addition, the largely paperless systems we employ have reduced the need for repetitive printing tasks and old style, manual working. The role of the Support colleagues has changed to reflect a more technical, problem-solving function that is fit for purpose for a modern, innovative Planning Service.

In Planning Policy, the Principal Policy Officer underwent maternity leave and was replaced over this period by an experienced officer from neighbouring Newport City Council to help progress the Plan Review. Owing to the need to have adequate staff to undertake the LDP review, a three year temporary senior policy officer post was created in the last reporting period and filled internally by the secondment of a senior DM officer. The senior DM post has been backfilled to enable the DM team to be adequately staffed.

3.9 For the reporting period, sickness levels were very low, with an average of 0.8FTE days per colleague lost due to sickness in the DM and Policy team (target is 10.5FTE days). Team morale is good despite work pressures and the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic at the end of the reporting period with significant resource put into managing staff welfare through regular one to one meetings (via Teams) as well as a variety of other team meetings.

3.10 Training and development opportunities provided for colleagues during the reporting period included training provided by Welsh Government for members and officers regarding Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues. Regular workshops have taken place to engage DM officers regarding LDP issues such as the candidate site process. This is in addition to in-house development opportunities provided via Development Management and Planning Policy Liaison Meetings. External training and development opportunities included attendance at events run by Frances Taylor Building Law on recent legal changes in planning law. A Design Tour was held for Planning Committee Members in June 2019 to review applications granted by committee and officers under delegated powers as well as a separate officer event later in June 2019.

A workshop was run in January 2020 organised by the new Head of Planning to establish our vision and objectives for 2020 onwards for the Planning Service which was well-received and helped with team building and working.

Several officers attended the annual Wales Planning Conference in June 2019. The enforcement team attended the Welsh Enforcement Conference in October 2019. Five staff within DM have undertaken Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) qualifications over the last two years, three having qualified and two are underway.

3.11 All colleagues have had an annual appraisal during the reporting period.

## 4.0 YOUR LOCAL STORY

### Workload

#### 4.1 Key projects during the reporting period included:

- Work continued on the Replacement LDP including: An Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper, a RLDP Growth and Spatial Options Paper, the RLDP Preferred Strategy and a revised Delivery Agreement timetable. This work also involved a preferred Strategy Consultation and Second Call for Candidate Sites, joint working continued with Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Caerphilly Councils through progress meetings, as well as progress on jointly commissioning further evidence base work. There was also Member and Officer Involvement in the form of Workshops to discuss various RLDP related topics and Plan progress as well as an all staff seminar on the Preferred Strategy along with progress meetings with the Rural Housing Enabler and various internal departments including highways, education and estates. Candidate sites meetings were held following an initial sift of candidate sites and assessment of sites against the Preferred Strategy.
- Establishing a joint heritage service for Monmouthshire and Torfaen Councils. This commenced in January 2019 and reviews of its effectiveness took place periodically over the reporting period. MCC manages the service for TCBC via a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and provides the staff to deliver a resilient heritage service assisted by TCBC funding. The contract is intended to be renewed for a further 12 month period due to the confidence in its performance.
- Adoption of supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy, including 1) Revised Affordable Housing SPG; 2) Infill residential development and 3) an Archaeology planning advice note.
- Promoting and delivering our bespoke application services including fast track applications for householder planning applications, listed building consent and certificates of lawfulness, as well as pre-purchase certificates and completion certificates.
- Achieving succession planning in the Planning Service via the promotion of excellent internal candidates to management roles, providing the leadership needed for the challenges in each team, including the review of the LDP.
- Undertaking reviews of the management structure of the DM team and the Planning Support Team to ensure robust management capacity and a fit for purpose, skilled and resilient support team service.
- Implementing prioritised elements of the Team's Digital Plan to improve our processes and customer experience – including upgrades to the Idox Document Management System (DMS) and Public Access (PA).
- Securing detailed planning permissions for two of the LDP's strategic housing sites at Crick Road, Portskewett (including an innovative close care facility) and Mabey Bridge, Chepstow, as well as the reserved matters major housing proposals off Church Road, Caldicot and Grove Farm, Llanfoist. A detailed application for an allocated site for a mix of affordable and market housing at Well Lane, Devauden was also approved.
- A review of the Planning enforcement function to improve its performance and speed of decision-making.
- Working with a Building Preservation Trust to seek to secure the restoration of a Listed Building at Risk including a CPO.



- Bedding in and implementation of the Green Infrastructure SPG with the role of the new Landscape Officer in the Heritage team given a leadership role in this process. This SPG is the first of its kind in Wales, and has broken new ground to fill an identified gap in guidance for developers and planners. There is considerable interest in the new SPG from stakeholders, including the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales and other local authorities. Crucially, it is having a tangible positive influence on Monmouthshire’s landscapes and GI assets by encouraging higher quality planning applications. A review of 25 planning applications has been undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the SPG which has quite clearly shown the added value, as well some challenges/lessons to be learnt.
- At the very end of the reporting period the full national lockdown stemming from the Covid-19 outbreak took place and meant that new ways of working had to be brought in for our service, leading to 100% of our staff working from home, use of Teams technology for meetings and a suspension of site visits until the risk had been assessed and the lockdown eased. We also let agents know that all applications to be submitted should be done so electronically as the office was temporarily closed and paper forms of submission could not therefore be scanned for the case officer and consultation purposes.

4.2 Application caseload has increased slightly since the previous reporting period while the number of applications determined also marginally increased. The proportion of approvals was slightly higher than in previous reporting periods at 97%. During 2018-19, 95.5% of applications were determined under delegated powers (Wales’s average 93%).

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<b>Applications received</b>	983	1173	1284	1117	1188	1126	1134
<b>Applications determined</b>	852	1053	1085	1087	1071	1101	1106
<b>% within 8 weeks or agreed timescale</b>	70%	76%	79%	90%	91%	88%	91%
<b>% applications approved</b>	93%	95%	95%	96%	95%	95%	97%

4.3 During this reporting period, we received 474 applications for pre-application advice and closed 461. 78% were determined within agreed timescales for such advice.

Of these, 154 led to subsequent planning applications. 118 were approved (77%)

17 were returned/withdrawn or remain invalid (e.g. fee not paid, etc.)

18 are pending consideration.

Just 1 application that stemmed from the pre-application advice was refused – and in any case the officer advised in the pre-application submission response that the proposal would not be acceptable. Consequently, we have a 100% success rate of applications that went to decision stage and followed our pre-application advice.

The conclusion from the review of the bespoke service is that the pre-application advice service is working well. Adjustments were needed to balance the fees for smaller scale developments (the MCC Bespoke level 2 pre-application advice) to reflect the charges for the equivalent statutory (WG) pre-application advice service. These will be implemented in 2020/21.

4.4 A key area of work over the last two years has been the development of new, bespoke services. The most popular of these has been the Fast Track services for householder applications, lawful development certificates (LDCs) (existing and proposed) and listed building consent.

- 4.5.1 The Fast Track service accelerates the administration and processing of the application for a small additional charge. The offer is that Fast track applications are determined within 28 days following the submission of a valid application. This decision period varies for fast track applications for a certificate of lawfulness (10 days) and applications for listed building consent (35 days). There is an £85.00 additional fee (so £275 in total) although certificates of lawfulness are £190. A valid application is defined as outlined within Welsh Government Circular 002/12. In the unlikely event of not being able to achieve this target or agree a short extension of time (no more than 5 working days) we will refund the fast track service fee.
- 4.5.2 The *pre-purchase certificate* is a discretionary service aimed at people looking to buy a property in Monmouthshire. The application would provide the applicant with i) a planning history search; ii) details of planning permissions; iii) listed building consents and iv) enforcement history relating to identified breaches of planning control (this would not relate to unsubstantiated complaints). This service would include a site visit and identify whether there are any breaches of planning control and whether or not any breaches would be enforceable. The certificate confirms that any approved development at the site, up to the point of the request, has been carried out in accordance with approved plans and that there is no breach of planning control at the site. The fee for this service is £250 and we aim to provide a written response within 28 days. This service looks at compliance with all types of planning permissions including listed building consent: it does not provide a substitute to lawful development certificates. This fee was raised in 2019/20 from £180 to £250 to recover the costs involved in providing this service.
- 4.5.3 The other discretionary service we offer we provide is a *certificate of completion*. The certificate will indicate whether or not the planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent applied for has been carried out in accordance with the approved plans, and also it would confirm the status of all planning conditions and any approved amendments if applicable. The purpose of this service is to offer support to applicants, agents or any other interested party that the works are appropriate and acceptable once they have been built. If there is an issue of noncompliance this will be brought to the applicant's attention and an opportunity provided for the breach of planning control to be rectified. The service includes a site inspection and desk based research and investigation. The fee for this service is £200 for each application number requiring a certificate and we will aim to provide a written response within 28 days. Where an application for listed building consent and a planning application were required for the same development, they will be treated as one application.

4.6 These discretionary services have been in place since 1st July 2017 (they were rolled out slowly but have gradually gathered pace). The below table outlines the take up of these services and the amount of income that the additional services have generated. We are seeking to increase this with wider marketing, although the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will undoubtedly reduce the team's capacity to meet the targets for FastTrack applications.

Type of service	Number of applications/enquiries complete 01/04/18 to 31/03/19	Income generated*	Number of applications/enquiries complete 01/04/2019 to 31/03/20	Income generated*
Fast track householder applications	47 (9 refunds due to a range of issues, but mainly because the number of objections led to the need for the application to be presented to the Council's Delegation Panel rather than be officer delegated)	£3230  (This figures excludes the refunded amount)	46	£3485
Fast track certificate of lawful development	Existing - 0 Proposed – 4	£760	1	£285
Pre purchase certificates	6	£1080	5	£1050
Completion certificates	2	£240	1	£250
Fast track listed building applications	13	£1925 (Included 6 refunds as applications were too complex to be determined in 35 days)	5	£1375
<b>Total</b>		<b>£7, 235</b>		<b>£6,778</b>

\*Beyond the standard fee for a householder or other planning application

4.7 In relation to enforcement workload, significant changes to the performance indicator definition were made over recent years, changing what is measured as an enforcement case and the definition of when a case is 'resolved'. While 2018/19 saw a decline in performance against the revised WG measures, the appointment of a new manager in the Enforcement Team midway through 2018/19 has seen an encouraging improvement in the team's performance following a fundamental review of its work practices. This intervention has

enabled the measures to move from Poor to Fair, as discussed in Section 6 and Annex A below. Action 3 for this priority area is retained to seek sustained improvement.

#### **Annual Monitoring Report**

4.8 The Council adopted its Local Development Plan in February 2014 and our fifth LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) was submitted in October 2019 to cover the 2018-19 period. Our fifth AMR identified that although good progress had been made in implementing many of the Plan's policies and that overall the strategy remains sound, a number of key housing provision policy targets were not being met which indicated that these policies were not functioning as intended. The continued lack of a 5 year housing land supply remained a matter of concern that needed to be addressed if the Plan's housing requirements are to be met. The third AMR recommended an early review of the LDP was necessary because of the housing land supply shortfall. A full review of the LDP commenced during the previous monitoring period which culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018. The report concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a fully revised LDP. It also concluded that the Monmouthshire LDP should be revised on an individual basis, rather than jointly with adjacent Local Planning Authorities. Work on this project has commenced and is described full in the latest AMR (2019/20).

4.9 As at March 2020, the status of the strategic sites is as follows (more detailed information is available in the Council's 2020 JHLAS and AMR):

##### **4.10.1 Deri Farm, Abergavenny (SAH1):**

Persimmon Homes submitted a full application (DC/2014/01360) for 250 residential units (201 market and 49 affordable units) in November 2014. The progress of the application was slower than anticipated due to significant issues relating to site viability, particularly affordable housing provision and the undergrounding of overhead power lines. However, these issues were subsequently resolved, the application was approved in the 2017 - 2018 monitoring period and 100 units have been completed to date.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 188 dwellings within the Plan period.

##### **4.10.2 Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2):**

In the last monitoring period Monmouthshire County Council and Melin Homes submitted a joint outline application (DM/2018/00696) for 291 residential units (218 market and 73 affordable units), this was granted permission in March 2019. During the current monitoring period a reserved matters application (DM/2019/01041) for 269 residential units has been approved (201 market and 68 affordable units). This is below the target number of units for the site (285) in the LDP. The changes that have resulted in a drop in density of the site have been driven by changes to the proposed house types and by positive improvements, such as embracing Green Infrastructure that forms the north-south axis of the site, the ecological implications of a badger sett on the site which has led to greater protected open space, whilst the highway requirements have resulted in safer, more accessible links. The employment allocation on the site has been replaced with a care home which will provide up to 32 beds on the area outlined for employment use. This is subject to a separate planning application, DM/2019/01629, which was granted permission on 26 February 2020.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver around 14 dwellings within the Plan period. The first completions on site are expected in 2021/22.

#### **4.10.3 Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3):**

The landowner submitted an outline application (DC/2014/01290) in October 2014 for up to 600 residential units (350 to be delivered within the Plan period), commercial space including offices and workshops (Use Class B1), small scale retail/food and drink floorspace (Use Classes A1 and A3) and multi-functional green and blue open space. Progress with the application has been slower than anticipated due to various matters, including highways issues (Welsh Government Highways Division had a holding objection on the application for 18 months). However, the outstanding issues have since been resolved and the site gained outline planning permission for 450 units (432 market and approximately 18 affordable units on 1.5 acres of the site) in November 2017. A Reserved Matters Application (DM/2019/00001) was approved during the current monitoring period for 347 units. The application is for the market housing element of the site and does not include the land identified for affordable housing or employment land, these will be the subject of separate applications. Work on the site has now begun.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 58 dwellings within the Plan period.

#### **4.10.4 Wonastow Road, Monmouth (SAH4):**

Outline permission was granted for up to 370 dwellings and 6.5ha of employment land in December 2014. The site developers (Barratt/David Wilson and Taylor Wimpey) submitted a Reserved Matters application (DC/2015/00392) for 340 units (238 market and 102 affordable units) which was granted permission in November 2015. The site is now nearing completion with 327 dwellings completed to date.

The overall LDP site allocation is for a total of 450 units. The additional units relating to this allocation are to be delivered as an extension to the site at Drewen Farm. An application for this element of this site has not yet been submitted.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 340 dwellings within the Plan period.

#### **4.10.5 Rockfield Farm, Undy (SAH5):**

This site is allocated for 270 residential units and 2ha of serviced land for business and industrial use in the adopted LDP. An outline planning application was submitted in July 2016 (DC/2016/00883) for 266 units and 5,575 sq. m of employment land (B1 use). For the purposes of the AMR 265 units (198 market and 67 affordable units) are recorded as a net gain, the existing farmhouse has a residential use and is being demolished so has been taken off the overall figure. Progress with the site has been slower than anticipated due to various issues, including archaeology. These issues have, however, been resolved and the outline application was approved in March 2018. A Reserved Matters application (DM/2018/01606) was granted planning permission for phase 1 of the site during the last monitoring period for

144 residential units). The site is currently under construction with 16 dwellings completed during this monitoring period.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 107 dwellings within the Plan period.

#### **4.10.6 Land at Vinegar Hill, Undy (SAH6):**

This site for 225 residential units is linked to the adjacent Rockfield Farm site and was expected to progress in tandem. However whilst initial progress has been slow, the developer (Bovis) submitted a hybrid application (DM/2019/01937) during the current monitoring period (November 2019). The application is for 155 dwellings, 72 dwellings as a full application and 83 dwellings as outline. It is expected that this phase of the development will be approved during the next monitoring period.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver around 8 dwellings within the Plan period. The first completions on site are expected in 2021/22.

#### **4.10.7 Former Paper Mill, Sudbrook (SAH7):**

A full planning application (DC/2015/01184) was submitted by Harrow Estates (Redrow confirmed as the developer) in October 2015 for 212 residential units (192 market and 20 affordable units). There had been a number of site viability issues associated with this application meaning that progress with the application has been slower than anticipated. However, these issues were subsequently resolved and the application was approved in the 2016 - 2017 monitoring period (November 2016). Following a re-plan of part of the site the number of residential units on the site has decreased to 210. The site is currently under construction, with 96 dwellings completed to date.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 166 dwellings within the Plan period.

4.11 The AMR highlights issues surrounding the delivery of affordable housing, and developers continue to raise viability issues on some of the strategic housing sites above. This is a Wales-wide issue. The Council's approach to viability debates has now been established, and the links between a project management approach to these applications with LDP delivery are understood.

4.12 In response to the Council's lack of five-year housing land supply and the Welsh Ministers' decision to 'disapply' par. 6.2 of TAN1 the Council adopted an innovative and evidence-based approach to dealing with non-allocated housing sites. This was described in a report to Council considered on 21 February 2019 where Members resolved that the Council continued to give 'appropriate weight' to its lack of a five year housing land supply, insofar as those development proposals are otherwise acceptable in planning terms and that the 11 'ground rules' set out in the report were all satisfied.

An outline planning application (and subsequent reserved matters) for a major housing proposal was approved in the light of this policy at Church Road, Chepstow while another at Raglan was called in by Welsh Ministers and subsequently refused.

In the light of the Raglan appeal and subsequent Ministerial clarification that major housing proposals should only come forward as part of the Development Plan system, then this innovative policy approach has been abandoned.

- 4.13 In October 2015 the Council's Economy and Development Select Committee scrutinised the LDP's impact on enabling tourism-related development. As stated above, the tourism industry forms a key part of the County's economy and links directly to what makes Monmouthshire distinctive. This scrutiny identified a need to produce Supplementary Planning Guidance to clarify for customers and officers how the LDP supports different types of tourism development, and also identified a need for future revisions to the policy to allow greater flexibility for agricultural diversification for tourism purposes. The SPG was adopted during this reporting period and is now widely used by DM officers to consider proposals for sustainable rural tourism. The AMR shows that the clarity provided by the SPG has had a positive impact on tourism-related proposals coming forward and being approved.

### **Value of Planning**

- 4.14 RTPI Cymru has published a new toolkit which measures the value generated by a local authority planning service. The tool has been developed to capture the economic, social and environmental value at a local planning authority level across Wales. The tool and its 'Value Dashboard' has been designed to provide RTPI Cymru and the Welsh Government with a platform to demonstrate to local authorities, national policy makers, the private sector, researchers and other broader policy and media audiences, the value planning contributes and how planning is positively contributing to Wales' seven well-being goals. The data has been updated to reflect planning permissions and completions in the current reporting period (2019/20). The toolkit has been a very useful means of promoting the good work undertaken by the department that is often taken for granted. Over this period, the toolkit concludes that the service has contributed £115.2M to the local economy by the allocation of sites in the LDP, the safeguarding of land, the granting and implementation of planning permissions, the operation of its enforcement function and the securing of planning obligations. We aim to update this for the ensuing reporting periods. The 'Dashboard' data summarises the Planning Service's contribution below:

# Value of Planning in Monmouthshire 2019/20

## Planning service key data



28 FTE jobs in planning service



1,106 applications handled



£0.6m collected in fees

### LDP Land Safeguarded



20

369 ha Green Wedge  
3,174 ha Local Nature Reserve



434 ha open space  
7,942 ha minerals

### LDP Land Allocated



**Residential**

111 ha



**Retail & leisure**

0 ha



**Commercial**

244 ha



**Waste**

0 ha

### LDP Value

**£2.1m uplift value**

(based on land allocated for whole plan period)

**Value adding policies ✓ 89%**

### Applications

9 major

1,097 minor

0 other



0 DCOs dealt with

0 DNS dealt with

54 LBC applications granted

14 refusals appealed

0 judicial reviews

### Decisions

✓ 925 approvals (84%)

x 24 refusals (2%)

153 subject to pre app

#### Refusals

Delegated Committee

#### Approvals

Delegated Committee

### Permissions

#### Permissions

Consistent with local plan  
Departures from local plan



**Residential**

958 units

£40.4m uplift value

18% affordable



**Retail & leisure**

122 m<sup>2</sup>

£0.0m uplift value



**Tourism**

128 bedspaces

128 self catering



**Commercial**

7,546 m<sup>2</sup>

£0.2m uplift value



**Renewables & other**

6 MW

0 tonnes waste

0 tonnes minerals

0 ha remediation

4ha

### Contributions

#### Section 106 income

£1.1m

Breakdown

- Training and employment
- Sports and leisure
- Environmental
- Community/cultural
- Formal open space
- Primary health
- Education
- Infrastructure
- Active travel
- Highways
- Affordable housing

#### CIL income



£0 total value

### Completions



**Residential**

354 units

23% affordable

£62.8m uplift value

£0.5m council tax p.a



**Retail & leisure**

650 m<sup>2</sup>

£0.7m uplift value

12 gross FTE jobs

£0.0m business rates p.a



**Commercial**

17,300 m<sup>2</sup>

£9.3m uplift value

231 gross FTE jobs

£0.2m business rates p.a



**Renewables**

0 MW

£500 community benefit



**Tourism**

10

3 FTE jobs

10 self catering units

### Enforcement

297 enforcement complaints

3 planning contraventions

2 enforcement notices

7 breach of condition notices

0 stop notices

2 section 125 notices



### Wider indicators



£194,000 spend on consultancy fees



£20,000 health benefits of affordable housing provision p.a



8 internal consultees



£110,000 recreational benefits from open space created p.a

0 Energy statements

0 EqIAs

2 Environmental statements

3 Travel plans

0 HIAs

8 Transport assessments

In 2019/20 the total value of planning was

**£115.2m**

SOURCES: Planning function outputs (LPA survey), Land and property value data (JLL estimates), business rates valuations (Valuation Office Agency), employment densities (English Homes & Communities Agency), Council tax rates (Stats Wales), Health benefits from Affordable Housing (Department for Communities and Local Government Appraisal Guide, based on various studies outlined in appraisal databook), Community benefit from renewables (Renewables UK Cymru). Some of the calculations require high level assumptions to convert between units/m<sup>2</sup>/ha. Where possible, benchmarks have been employed otherwise reasonable assumptions have been used. Business rate, council tax and gross FTE job estimates based on assumption of 100% occupancy and do not factor in any displacement. Numbers of applications and decisions are unlikely to match up as these can take place in different financial years for any given application. 'Value adding policies' refers to the proportion of policies the team has identified as adding 'intangible value' that are included in local plans. Approvals and refusals do not sum to 100% due to applications carry across years. The total value of planning only incorporates some of the metrics presented in the dashboard.



ARUP

JLL



## Service Plan priorities for 2019-20

4.15 The Service Plan for the Planning Service identified the following priority actions:

- Work continued on the Replacement LDP (RLDP) including:  
The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was subject to further political reporting to reflect further amendments to the Paper following Council's declaration of a climate emergency on 16th May 2019. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper was reported to Cabinet in July 2019 for endorsement to be issued for non-statutory consultation between 8th July and 5th August. The consultation responses were analysed which have informed the preparation of the Preferred Strategy.  
The Preferred Strategy involved a significant amount of work by the Planning Policy Team which was endorsed by Council on 5th March 2020 for public consultation /engagement. The revised Delivery Agreement timetable was reported to the same Council meeting to reflect the slight delay in the plan preparation process for Council's agreement and submitted to the Welsh Government for the Cabinet Secretary's approval. Various reports and background papers to support/inform the Preferred Strategy were finalised including Housing Background Paper, Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy, Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper, Initial ISAR and HRA, Employment Land Review and Larger than Local Employment Study. The Preferred Strategy Consultation and Second Call for Candidate Sites - public consultation and engagement on the Preferred Strategy, along with the second call for candidate sites commenced on 9th March. A series of public drop-in sessions were planned during the 6 week Preferred Strategy consultation period, together with officer attendance at Area Committee and Area Cluster meetings. However, as a result of the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, the decision was taken on 17th March 2020 to postpone the RLDP Preferred Strategy engagement events until further notice and to keep open, with an extended deadline, both the Preferred Strategy consultation period and the second call for candidate sites.
- Joint working continued with Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Caerphilly Councils through progress meetings, as well as progress on jointly commissioning further evidence base work for the respective RLDPs.
- Provision of evidence of the County's housing land supply, retail data and employment land take up. This provides data to inform the LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and RLDP.
- Regular attendance to ensure that MCC's policies and interests are effectively represented at regional fora, including SEWSPG and Pathfinders. This includes participation in the SDP Task & Finish Group meetings.
- Upgrade the Idox Uniform planning application data base software system and public access module to ensure system resilience and better functionality for system users
- Implement elements of the Team's digital plan for the future of the whole team and implement the plan. This has included improvements to the web site experience for our customers. The web pages have been redesigned to be more accessible and more relevant to users with less text and more links. Information regarding the DM team's recent discretionary services, including fast-track applications and pre-purchase certificates was added to the team's web pages, as were revisions to the pre-application

advice service; changes were also made to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations.

- Review the pre-application advice service to verify it is adding value, reducing waste and that it is valued by customers. This has been carried out although it is proving difficult to obtain customer feedback due to a lack of responses. Of the small proportion returned we understand that the general consensus is that the bespoke service is regarded as 'good' although it can be a little slow; it is regarded favourably compared to many other LPA's services. In terms of officer feedback, they consider that the Uniform Enterprise task works well to prompt them to carry out a task but that it can be challenging to get other internal departments to a meeting. The review has involved the introduction of an online form to enable customers to request pre-application advice. We also reviewed the charges for 2019/20 to more accurately and fairly reflect the time taken to do the work. This has led to an increase in the fee for pre-application advice we charge at Level 2 which now better reflects the statutory service (even through the latter does not involve a meeting with the applicant). The charges were increased from 3 August 2020 but this had been delayed owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. We also introduced a small charge for non-starters which always involve some work but were previously returned without a charge.
- Prepare the 6th LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and Annual Performance Report (APR). These will be sent to WG in October 2020 and published online.
- Continue the systematic improvement of the processes of the Planning Enforcement team. While significant improvement has been made it remains an action in the current APR.
- Cross-departmental working to ensure corporate plans and activities align with the LDP. This priority is on-going, although significant steps have been taken to improve cross-departmental working relationships, including work on s106 agreements, green infrastructure and the City Deal.
- Consolidate collaborative working arrangements with other agencies including neighbouring local authorities. This has led to joint working arrangements regarding the council's heritage service (with Torfaen Council) as well as joint working on the LDP review with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen and for the employment evidence base there is a larger than local joint study on the Gwent footprint (including Newport and Caerphilly Councils). Managers also attend SEWSPEG and the DM regional managers' meeting to share good practice and discuss pending or recent changes in planning legislation.

### **Local pressures**

#### 4.16 Key local pressures include:

- Enabling delivery of the County's housing needs: bringing forward allocated LDP sites; site viability; achieving good planning decisions, creating sustainable communities and seeking to achieve a good housing land supply;
- Consideration of whether to adopt and implement CIL;
- Securing timely consultation responses from consultees, both internal and external;
- The work associated with the review of the adopted LDP having regard to the current Plan's expiry date in 2021 as well as the challenging timetable for delivery;
- The need to help resource and deliver the Strategic Development Plan for SE Wales;
- Constant change caused by successive new legislation, national planning policy and procedures;

- The lack of income from major planning applications due to the gap between the implementation of the current LDP and the adoption of its successor with associated impacts on budgets to resource the service;
- Career and training support for staff in the light of limitations on budgets.

4.17 One of our key challenges is balancing our aim of creating quality places in a timely manner while ensuring schemes are viable and help deliver housing numbers. We are, however, clear that quality is more important than quantity. The introduction of a place-making emphasis in PPW10 is welcomed, as is its form that embraces the Well-Being of Future Generations Act.

#### **Actions from our previous APR**

4.18 Our 2018/19 Annual Performance Report identified four actions:

Action 1 – Complete the review of the effectiveness of the Council’s bespoke pre-application advice service and rolling out the use of Planning Performance Agreements, where appropriate.

Action 2 – Continue to improve the Planning Service’s web pages to deliver relevant, accessible and legible information so that customers can self-serve. This includes investigating the value of a chatbot to signpost users to information held online that can help them self-serve and reduce queries to the team via phone and email.

Action 3 - Systems review of the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, verify if we have the right resources and we are providing a good service for our customers

Action 4 – Continue to pursue an agenda of collaboration in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities and collaboration in other areas where possible, including the evidence base for the review of the Local Development Plan.

4.19 Action 1 was completed as discussed and resulted from the desire to ensure we provide a coherent and timely set of processes for our customers in delivering planning outcomes to reduce end-to end times for processing applications. Action 2 also overlapped into making our application processing more efficient in that signposting customers effectively so they can self-serve enables demand on our officers to reduce, freeing up their time to carry out work that is essential and valuable to the service.

4.20 While our evidence shows that customers prefer a positive outcome than a quick decision, we fully recognise that if customers are going to continue using our pre-application advice service (which streamlines the subsequent stages, improves outcomes and generates fee income), they must receive timely and meaningful responses. In addition, new regulations allow customers to claim an application fee refund if their application is not determined within a given timescale. We can reduce this risk by agreeing extended deadlines, which we do to good effect. Customers, however, will not be willing to agree a time extension if they cannot see a timely conclusion being reached or have previously received poor service.

- 4.21 Action 1 was carried out as referred to par. 4.15 (bullet point 6) above. The conclusion is that the bespoke service represents good value for money for applicants (particularly when compared to the more limited statutory service) and is valued by customers. Take up of the bespoke service was healthy over 2019/20 generating over £53k of income for the Council. End-to-end times for determination of such applications were shorter than those where no pre-application advice was involved and 98% of ensuing planning applications that reached a decision were approved indicating the service is generally working well. As part of Action 1, the use of planning performance agreements was also successfully continued into 2019/20 to improve project management of a further more complex proposal for a major housing scheme in Caldicot; however, because of the shortfall in major applications anticipated over 2020-22, this process will be difficult to consolidate, and will need to be rolled forward once the replacement LDP nears adoption.
- 4.22 As regards Action 2, this was partially implemented and improvements and updates were made to the Planning web pages to improve the online payments process and to provide more legible and up to date information on the planning applications process, planning policy (including SPG) and GDPR. The concept of the chatbot was pursued and while the conclusion was that it could be useful in reducing demand particularly on the daily duty officer role, there was a significant cost attached to it which at present needs to be balanced against other ways we can reduce demand that are more of a priority. The chatbot option is therefore set aside for a different, higher priority for 2020/21 that is discussed below (2020/21 Action 1). The chatbot will remain on the agenda for the longer term but will be subject to allowances in the service's budget.
- 4.23 In respect of action 3, this was instigated following a downturn in the performance of the planning enforcement function in 2018/19. Following the appointment of a new enforcement manager midway through 2018/19 it was decided to undertake a more holistic systems review of the Council's planning enforcement team that is a comprehensive piece of work that requires regular assessment and intervention. Measures were put in place to review all enforcement cases at the 10 week stage of the investigation. All officers provided data on cases approaching the 12 week deadline. In addition, quarterly 1-2-1s are now held with all Members of the Enforcement Team to review these figures and identify areas of improvement. In 2018/19 65% of all cases were investigated within the 12 week period as set out in WG Guidance. The investigation period took on average 107 days. In 2019/20 this improved to 75% of all cases being investigated within guidance and an average of just 64 days.
- 4.24 As regards Action 4, during this reporting period it has been possible to secure and manage a shared service between Monmouthshire CC and Torfaen CBC, also extended to provide a service to Blaenau Gwent CBC (on a lesser scale). The Heritage Manager drew up a Memorandum of Understanding and secured approval for the collaboration. This resulted in the appointment of a new Senior Heritage Officer to resource the collaboration, managed by Monmouthshire's Heritage Manager but funded by Torfaen. The service has been in place since January 2019 and has had the second review early in 2020/21. The feedback is positive and both authorities are pleased with the progress being made. It is anticipated that this will continue to be built on in the forthcoming period and it is hoped after the two

year trial period the collaboration will continue on a more formal basis. The collaboration has many benefits, including improved resilience and skill sharing, together with more opportunities to learn and build on the teams skill set. For the above reasons Cadw have been supportive of the new way of delivering heritage services and have endorsed the collaboration. The team has also been able to secure umbrella delegation for MCC named officers to 'sign off' listed building consent applications in Torfaen, meaning that applications in TCBC no longer need to go to Cadw for approval. This has been welcomed and supported by Cadw.

## 5.0 Customer Feedback

- 5.1 The number of formal complaints and letters offering compliments are recorded. There were 13 complaints received over 2019/20, compared to 13 in 2018/19. Two of these led to Stage 2 Complaint recommendations to remedy justified complaint but the elements that were upheld related to responses and communication being kept clear and open with those making representations in respect of other service areas. Any relevant issues are actioned and are raised when necessary at team meetings. Although this level of complaint is regrettable, planning is a contentious area dealing with individual's rights to develop land and where third parties' interests will be affected by planning decisions. Land-use planning will always be an area where complaints will be inevitable to some degree. We do try to learn from any issues of justifiable complaint. It is fair to say that complaints have generally risen across all sectors of the Council over the last year. We received six recorded compliments over 2019/20, the same as the previous period.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of Stage 1 formal complaints received	17	9	5	5	4	14	13
Number of Stage 2 formal complaints investigations received	11	5	2	2	1	4	2
Number of Stage 2 complaints upheld or partially upheld	4 partially upheld	3 partially upheld	0 upheld	0 upheld	0 upheld	3 partially upheld	2 elements of the complaints partially upheld*
Number of Ombudsman complaints upheld or partially upheld	1 partially upheld	0	0	0	1 upheld	0	0
Number of compliments received	3	4	2	9	2	6	6

\*One of these did not relate to the Planning Service but other Council service areas in terms of communication with the complainants; the other related to the conduct of a case officer which has been discussed with that officer via one-to-ones.

- 5.2 Quality customer service continues to be a service and organisation priority so the momentum and desire to improve remain.

## 6.0 OUR PERFORMANCE 2019-20

6.1 This section details our performance in 2019-20. It considers both the Planning Performance Framework indicators and other available data to help paint a comprehensive picture of performance. Where appropriate we make comparisons between our performance and the all Wales picture, although the absence of up to date data for 2019/20 from WG means we have to compare performance to the Welsh average over 2018/19.

6.2 Performance is analysed across the five key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in the Planning Performance Framework:

- Plan making (this aspect is not covered in this APR as the information is more than adequately analysed in the latest LDP Annual Monitoring Report);
- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

### Plan making

6.3 As at 31 March 2020, we were one of 23 LPAs that had a current development plan in place. We are proposing to submit an Annual Monitoring Report in October 2020. This document has been prepared and is being submitted to Welsh Government by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020. Issues on the performance of the Plan are discussed in detail in that document and are not repeated here.

### Efficiency

6.4 In 2019-20 we determined 1,106 planning applications, each taking, on average, 70 days to determine. This compares to an average of 77 days (11 weeks) across Wales (2018/19). Following engagement with customers and stakeholders, Monmouthshire County Council has made the evidence-based decision that the outcome of planning applications is far more important than the speed of decision-making. Within reason, customers would prefer to continue working with us to secure an acceptable scheme and obtain planning permission, with as few pre-commencement conditions as possible, than simply have a decision made within an arbitrary 8 week deadline. The impact of planning decisions is long-lived and, while it is recognised that timely decisions can assist the economy, developers and investors also seek clarity and certainty and ultimately want planning permission. Our focus is therefore on the outcome, although we have seen a marked improvement in this figure (which is close to the 'Good' standard of 67 days) via actions to improve our pre-

application advice service and the information on our web pages, as well as more focussed performance management of individual case officers in the DM team.

6.5 91% of all planning applications were determined within the required timescales. This was slightly above the Welsh average of 88% for 2018/19. We also determined 84% of Listed Building Consent applications within the required timescales (compared to the Welsh average of 75%).

Over the same period:

- The number of applications we received increased by 8 applications to 1134;
- The number of applications we determined decreased by 5 applications to 1106; and
- The number and percentage of applications we approved increased (97%).

### **Major applications**

6.6 We determined 13 major planning applications in 2019-20, none of which were subject to an EIA. Each application took, on average, 296 days (42 weeks) to determine. This compares to 66 days over 2018/19 and so is a substantial decline. This can be largely explained by a small number of longstanding major applications being determined which had been held up awaiting information from the applicants who had wanted the applications to remain in abeyance rather than agreeing to withdraw them and resubmit. This figure is expected to improve although the expectation that there will be fewer major applications because of the lifecycle of the LDP and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will need to be monitored. The use of planning performance agreements, where appropriate, should help to reduce end-to-end times for these larger projects.

6.7 85% of these major applications were determined within the required timescales, compared to 68% across Wales. This measure is ranked as 'good'.



- 6.8 We have consistently performed above the Welsh average on this measure since 2014/15. Our particularly strong performance for major applications is due to a combination of an effective pre-application service, and a good working relationship with customers ensuring agreement to an extension of time. We are now rolling out planning performance agreements for major applications, where applicants can opt for milestones to be agreed in the processing of their application, based on best endeavours and prioritisation of these important applications.
- 6.9 Over the same period:
- The percentage of householder applications determined within the required timescales decreased from 94% to 89%;
  - The level of approvals increased to 97% (from 95%).
- 6.10 This slight decline in the percentage of householder applications will be monitored over the next reporting period to ensure staff are seeking to agree extensions of time wherever they can. However, overall this shows a very good level of performance over the period.

## Quality

- 6.11 In 2019-20, our Planning Committee made 76 planning application decisions during the year, which equated to almost 7% of all planning applications determined. Across Wales just over 6% of all planning application decisions were made by planning committee. Unlike most Authorities, Monmouthshire has a Delegation Panel system in operation whereby most applications (but not householder applications) with between 1 and 4 objections are reviewed by a group comprising the three lead Planning Committee Members. This system works effectively in reducing the number of applications referred to Committee while ensuring interested parties are reassured that their concerns have been heard and reviewed before a decision is made.
- 6.12 Of these Committee-made decisions, 4% (3 out of 76 decisions) went against officer advice. This compared to 8% of member-made decisions across Wales in 2018/19. This equated to 0.27% of all planning application decisions going against officer advice in Monmouthshire (0.4% across Wales). The relatively low proportion of Committee overturns is testament to an effective Member-Officer working relationship, the added value of Planning Committee visiting most sites before making a decision, and an experienced Planning Committee provided with appropriate development training.

- 6.13 The three overturned applications in question related to firstly, an infill housing plot in Portskewett that was judged by Members to be an over development of the plot and indeed, was dismissed at appeal; secondly, a retrospective application for a raising of garden land and a fence in a housing estate in Llanfoist because of concerns about land drainage harming the neighbours' gardens (since regularised via approval of a revised scheme) and a Council proposal for an events pavilion in the grounds of Abergavenny Castle, refused for amenity and impact on the setting of the scheduled monument.
- 6.14 In 2019-20 we received 14 appeals against our planning decisions, which equated to 1.1 appeals for every 100 applications received. This was the third lowest ratio of appeals to applications in Wales indicating our willingness to negotiate proposals to a positive outcome and the strength of our policy framework.
- 6.15 Of the 14 appeals that were decided during the year, 86% were dismissed. These decisions show a marked improvement on the last two years' appeal performance and may reflect the greater emphasis on place-making in appeal decision-making. The proportion of appeals we receive is very low. An appeal is essentially waste in our system as well as waste to the applicant. Our pre-application advice system has been useful in deterring the submission of applications that have little chance of success.
- 6.19 During 2019-20 we had no applications for costs at a section 78 appeal upheld.

## **Engagement**

6.20 We are:

- one of 24 LPAs that allowed members of the public to address the Planning Committee;
- one of 22 LPAs that have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public, and
- one of 21 LPAs that had an online register of planning applications.

## **Enforcement**

- 6.21 In 2019-20 we investigated 254 enforcement cases, which equated to 2.8 per 1,000 population. This was a relatively high figure in Wales but was a reduction of 16% compared to the previous reporting period. We investigated 75% of these enforcement cases within 84 days compared to 65% in 2018/19. Across Wales 77% were investigated within 84 days in 2018/19.

6.22 The average time taken to pursue positive enforcement action was 142 days, which was a substantial improvement on last year's performance of 232 days. Given the need to manage this small team's sizeable workload, the team have been undergoing a systems review of the Enforcement function to drive out waste and sharpen our practices, which has led to this marked improvement. As this measure is ranked as Fair instead of Good we have retained this action for the next reporting period to seek to continue the improved performance.

**7.0 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 Based on the performance information in Section 6 and Appendix A, we can be very pleased with the service we deliver. During this period:

- The proportion of major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales increased and was well above 80%, and substantially above the Welsh average.
- The average time taken to determine applications has reduced significantly from 86 days 2018/2019 to 70 days 2019/2020;
- The number of applications we determined slightly increased (by 2.8%);
- The proportion of applications we approved remained high at 97%;
- Of those applications that had gone through our pre-application advice service, 98% were approved;
- We again dealt with a large number of applications for listed building consent (54 applications) and 84% of these were approved within agreed timescales;
- Enforcement performance improved markedly 2019/20.

This shows that, despite a challenging workload, our performance has been very good and our pre-application advice service is effective.

7.2 A summary table of our performance can be found in Appendix A of the APR. Of the 12 ranked indicators, 9 are ranked Good, while 3 are Fair and 0 are in need of improvement.

- The ‘fair’ results relate to the average time taken to determine applications (70 days) which just missed the Good target of 67 days but was above the Welsh average of 77 days for 2018/19 as well as the two enforcement measures that improved significantly due to a review (which is on-going) of the enforcement function.

	<b>Number of indicators</b>
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is ‘good’	<b>9</b>
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is ‘fair’	<b>3</b>
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance ‘needs improvement’	<b>0</b>

- We performed above or at the Wales average in 11 of the 12 comparable indicators. The indicator for which performance was below the Welsh average related to the average time taken to determine "major" applications in days. Further commentary on the performance against these measures is set out in Section 6.
- Our performance declined against one indicator, which was the average time to determine major applications, as referred to above.

7.3 Four actions are identified going forwards.

*Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to woodland / tree preservation order work to help customers self-serve and reduce the significant demand on the Planning Service’s Tree Officer, the daily Duty officer and Support staff.*

*Action 2 – upgrade the Planning Service’s Uniform (planning application processing) software and the public access module that will provide business continuity and provide enhancements to our customers and ensure better GDPR compliance.*

*Action 3 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers.*

*Action 4 – Continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities (Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils) and to develop a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.*

### **Digitising paper information and improving the resilience of our back office systems and public access module**

7.4 We still hold substantial information on tree preservation orders in the County as paper records in the Council’s ‘amber storage area’. Retrieving such information is time-consuming and inefficient and the lack of accessible information for the public leads to a high volume of calls and enquiries to the Council’s Tree Officer (who is part time, 0.6 FTE), the daily duty officer and also the Support team. Digitising this information will reduce phone calls and emails to all those officer sand will free up time to carry out work of greater value to the service and customers, such as processing submissions for pre-application advice and the applications themselves. The quality of the data also needs review (for example, some of the older TPOs need reviewing as the information will be out of date), although this will be carried out once the data is in a digitised format that is easier to manage and change (Action 1).

***Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to woodland / tree preservation order work to help customers self-serve and reduce the significant demand on the Planning Service’s Tree Officer, the daily Duty officer and Support staff.***

In addition, the Service’s planning application processing software, Uniform, must be upgraded over 2020/21 as the current system is now de-supported. This will achieve business continuity and more resilience for the service. Also, the public access module will need to be upgraded which will provide benefits to customers once they have registered with the software and will be more robust in terms of GDPR compliance (Action 2).

***Action 2 – upgrade the Planning Service’s Uniform (planning application processing) software and the public access module that will provide business continuity and provide enhancements to our customers and ensure better GDPR compliance.***

### **Speed of resolving enforcement cases**

- 7.5 The performance of the Council’s Planning Enforcement team had declined in relation to the two enforcement measures in the Performance Framework over 2018/ 19, resulting in complaints about delays from the public and the perception the service was poorly performing. These issues are certainly not unique to Monmouthshire, and the problem is at least in part due to a misunderstanding of the powers available to us and/or unrealistic expectations, a matter that had been addressed in some way by the training on enforcement that took place in May 2018 for community and town councillors. Over 2019/20 there were substantial reductions in the time taken to investigate enforcement complaints due to measures instigated by the new manager of this team. There remains, however, scope for continued improvement. The systems review of the Planning Enforcement function is ongoing and has already helped to improve this team’s practices and drive out waste. The action below therefore is a spin-off from last year’s (Action 3).

***Action 3 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers***

### **Collaborative Working and Buildings at Risk Strategy**

- 7.6 Monmouthshire has a wealth of heritage assets and has long invested in its heritage team to manage these assets in the public interest. It has become apparent in recent years that opportunities existed to work collaboratively with neighbouring Councils to provide a shared heritage resource. The previous reporting period saw the establishment of a shared heritage service with Torfaen Council that has been working well. This has given the opportunity to address issues of capacity and consistency of advice between Authorities. In addition, it provides an opportunity to increase resilience, knowledge and the skills base of aspects of Historic Environment Management through building and sharing of expertise and experience. It also acknowledges the agenda for collaboration in the

delivery of local government services being promoted by Welsh Government. An action from last year saw the team seek to extend the offer to other neighbouring local authorities which resulted in a memorandum of understanding being agreed to provide heritage services for Blaenau Gwent CBC. This has so far worked well and has allowed the service to provide resilience to BGCBC whose range of work does not need a full time heritage officer while not impacting on the team's ability to cover the demanding heritage workload in Monmouthshire.

There are competing demands on the Heritage Team and many requests from the community are received to intervene to stop the decay of several prominent listed buildings throughout the County. Officer time and financial resources are listed in this regard, but an action plan agreed by Members would help to prioritise the cases that warrant priority working and action. To this end a Buildings at Risk Strategy and action plan is proposed to be developed to manage this process more effectively and to help the communities understand the choices we make when opting to take appropriate action to save and protect such assets. The strategy would put a methodology in place for drawing out the worst buildings and then set out appropriate actions as to how these are tackled; in all likelihood there would be actions identified to address the worst 5-10 buildings at risk so it is a more manageable and transparent process.

***Action 4 – Continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to heritage services with neighbouring authorities (Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils) and to develop a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.***

#### **Opportunities going forward:**

7.9 The following opportunities for the coming year have been identified as a result of this Annual Performance Report, our LDP, AMR and our Service Business Plans:

- In tandem with our systems thinking approach, to use Team meetings and performance reports to drill down into specific areas of workflow and identify where problems exist and why, with a targeted approach to identifying solutions;
- Continue to roll out the project management of major planning applications, where appropriate, via planning performance agreements to seek by best endeavours to ensure timely and well-managed processing of such applications, providing a good customer experience for the customer;
- To digitise the Tree information held by the Council in paper form to improve the web site experience for customers and improve customers' pathways to information (Action 1);
- To upgrade the use of the more efficient database for planning applications to reduce waste for staff, including the production of standard letters and monitoring reports and to upgrade public access module to improve the customer experience (Action 2);

- To improve the speed with which we deal with enforcement cases via the continued systems review of the Enforcement function (Action 3);
- To continue to review the collaboration arrangements in relation to a Built Heritage Management Service with neighbouring local authorities, providing resilience, shared learning and consistency across those areas (Action 4);
- To develop a Buildings At Risk Strategy to safeguard some of our most precious but vulnerable heritage assets (Action 4);
- Continue with the replacement Monmouthshire LDP because of the need to address the shortfall in the housing land supply and facilitate the identification/ allocation of additional housing land as well as addressing the demographic and employment challenges of the County;
- To identify, implement and/or disseminate best practice via the Planning Officers' Society for Wales or other working groups, including the Welsh Government, the WLGA and the RTPi
- Promote the value of the work carried out by the Council's Planning Service by updating the Value of Planning toolkit on an annual basis and publicising the findings in each APR.
- To respond to the threat provided by the emerging Covid-19 pandemic to ensure business continuity. This will be reported in detail in next year's APR but can be summarised here as involving staff working almost entirely at home, signposting electronic submissions only, risk assessed site visits and remote committee and delegation panel meetings as well as meetings in general.

7.10 Progress will be measured via our 2021/22 Annual Performance Report, 2021/22 LDP Annual Monitoring Report, and our 2020-2023 Service Business Plan.



## ANNEX A - PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

### OVERVIEW

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE	WALES AVERAGE 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2019/20
<b>Efficiency</b>						
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	>60	50.1-59.9	<50	68	89	85
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	Not set	Not set	Not set	232	66	296
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	>80	70.1-79.9	<70	88	88	91
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+	77	86	70
Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time periods required	80+	70.1-79.9	<70	75	89	84
<b>Quality</b>						
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	5-9	9+	9	4	4
Percentage of appeals dismissed	>66	55.1-65.9	<55	68	46	86
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2+	0	0	0
<b>Engagement</b>						
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Enforcement</b>						

MEASURE	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Average time taken to take positive enforcement action	<100	101-200	200+

WALES AVERAGE 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2019/20
77	65	75
167	232	142

## SECTION 1 - EFFICIENCY

Indicator	05. Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
More than 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 50% and 60% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 50% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	85
<p>The team's performance has declined slightly from 89% over 2018/19. This element of the team's performance, however, remains strong over 2019/20 and is well above the Welsh average of 67.8%. We determined 11 out of 13 major applications within agreed time periods. To prioritise resources for major planning applications, planning performance agreements will be increasingly adopted with applicants for suitable planning applications, leading to better project management of these generally more complex applications.</p>	

Indicator	06. Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

Authority's performance	296
<p>The Council's performance declined under this measure due to a small number of long-standing applications being determined that skewed the overall figure. These applications were awaiting information from the applicant and had been 'held in abeyance' for lengthy periods – these applications involved i) a proposal for retail and food/drink uses at Dixton Road roundabout, Monmouth (subsequently refused and had been awaiting retail impact and surface water drainage information) – took 678 days to determine, and ii) a proposal for conversion of an office building to residential at the Job Centre, Abergavenny, that was impacted by significant design amendments and then the recommendation changed at the eleventh hour when it became clear the site had been let and was therefore viable for employment use – thus, refused after three years of consideration – took 1068 days to determine.</p> <p>If these two outlying applications were omitted this measure fell to 195 days, which would have been below the Welsh average. Although we acknowledge this could be improved upon.</p>	

It is worth noting that the continued use of PPAs should help the team to keep this measure at a good level of performance in future years.

Indicator	07. Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
More than 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Between 70% and 80% of applications are determined within the statutory time period	Less than 70% of applications are determined within the statutory time period

Authority's performance	91
<p>91% of all planning applications we dealt with were determined within the required timescales, which is well above the 80% threshold for the 'Good' performance ranking. This compared to 88% across Wales and is a slight improvement compared to last year (88%).</p> <p>The slight improvement can be attributed to the bedding in of the Council's planning application back office system which was introduced in March-April 2018.</p>	

Indicator	08. Average time taken to determine all applications in days	
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"
Less than 67 days	Between 67 and 111 days	112 days or more

Authority's performance	70 days
<p>In 2019-20 we determined 1106 planning applications, each taking, on average, 77 days (11 weeks) to determine. This is the same as the Wales average for 2018/19, also 77 days and just misses the 'good' target of 67 days. Given our focus on outcome rather than speed, this is a reasonable achievement and suggests we have struck a fair balance between these two objectives.</p> <p>This measure improved on the 86 days in the previous reporting period and showed the effects of the increased management of the planning application case officers by their line managers in terms of workload, target setting and output.</p> <p>This will continue to be a priority for the service.</p>	

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>08a. Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time periods required</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>	<b>“Fair”</b>	<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

<b>Authority’s performance</b>	<b>84</b>
<p>This is the third year of its inclusion as an indicator and the performance has improved significantly since its first where 67% of applications for listed building consent were determined within agreed timescales. The Welsh average for this indicator was 75%. The Council’s Heritage team has worked hard at improving its turnaround of listed building applications. The team of four officers (including a monitoring officer) also contributes to the pre-application advice process, the handling of appeals and provides consultation responses on planning applications in conservation areas. A similar service is also provided for Torfaen Council and to a lesser extent Blaenau Gwent CBC. The Authority has Cadw accredited delegation arrangements for grade II* and II buildings.</p>	

**SECTION 2 - QUALITY**

Indicator	09. Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
Less than 5% of decisions	Between 5% and 9% of decisions	9% or more of decisions

Authority’s performance	4
<p>Monmouthshire’s performance shows that 4% of Committee decisions go against officer recommendation, which equated to 3 planning applications out of 76 determined at committee during 2019/20 which was a similar rate to the performance over 2018/19. This compares favourably to the 8.2% average in Wales over 2017/18 and is below the 5% or less threshold to be rated ‘Good’.</p> <p>Provided that Committee decisions are based on good planning judgement and material planning considerations, overturned recommendations are a perfectly acceptable part of the planning process. The difficulty only arises where decisions are made that cannot be substantiated at appeal.</p> <p>The three overturned applications in question related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) A proposal for an infill detached dwelling in Portskewett, refused by Members as being incongruous and out of character which was then dismissed on appeal;</li> <li>ii) An open sided pavilion in the grounds of Abergavenny Castle, refused due to impact on local residential amenity and harm to the setting of the scheduled Castle; this decision was not appealed and no resubmission took place.</li> <li>iii) The third decision related to the raising of garden land and associated fencing at Jasper Tudor Close, Llanfoist which was refused by Members on the basis of the adverse impact of land drainage from the works on neighbouring gardens; this proposal was subsequently resolved via Committee’s approval of a revised proposal for a reduced development.</li> </ul> <p>All appeal decisions are reported to committee so that Members can review and learn from such decisions.</p>	

Indicator	10. Percentage of appeals dismissed	
“Good”	“Fair”	“Improvement needed”
More than 66% (two thirds) of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Between 55% and 66% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal	Less than 55% of planning decisions are successfully defended at appeal

Authority’s performance	86
<p>This year saw a marked improvement in performance and went from 46% (red) to 86% (green) with 12 out of 14 appeals being ‘won’. The placemaking agenda set out in PPW10 may be</p>	

providing a higher benchmark for appeal Inspectors' decisions which is helpful to our decision making process. The decisions are reviewed in the Planning Service's monthly Policy / DM Liaison meetings as well as at Planning Committee and detailed issues are shared and discussed.

The proportion of appeals we deal with is low at 1.1 appeals for every 100 applications received (Welsh average 2 appeals per 100 applications determined in 2018/19). This indicates our willingness to negotiate proposals to a positive outcome and the strength of our policy framework.

Indicator	11. Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period		
"Good"	"Fair"	"Improvement needed"	
The authority has not had costs awarded against it at appeal	The authority has had costs awarded against it in one appeal case	The authority has had costs awarded against it in two or more appeal cases	

Authority's performance	0
<p>No awards of costs for unreasonable behaviour have been made against us this year. An action identified in the first APR was to report appeal decisions to Planning Committee every month for learning and discussion. This action has been implemented and has been welcomed by the Committee as useful. Committee members are also encouraged to sit in on appeal hearings or inquiries as further development training and to assist the case officer. The Council's protocol is that nominated members help to present the case where a decision is contrary to the officer recommendation.</p>	



### SECTION 3 – ENGAGEMENT

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>12. Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>		<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
Members of the public are able to address the Planning Committee		Members of the public are not able to address the Planning Committee

<b>Authority’s performance</b>	Yes	
<p>Monmouthshire has an established and effective Public Speaking Protocol and also allows applicants, objectors, supports and community and town councils to speak at the Delegation Panel site visits prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has proven to be a valuable exercise in terms of making informed decisions and improved customer and community satisfaction, even if the final decision is not the one they hoped for.</p> <p>The Size and Composition of Local Planning Authority Committees (Wales) Regulations 2017 did not seek to control the public speaking element of a planning committee. If any future national protocol seeking consistency throughout Wales is published it is hoped it is provided as best practice guidance and does not curtail the successful delegation and public speaking systems we already employ.</p>		

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>13. Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>		<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
Members of the public can seek advice from a duty planning officer		There is no duty planning officer available

<b>Authority’s performance</b>	Yes	
<p>We have a duty officer available every day from 9am to 5pm and although this is resource intensive, we recognise from feedback to previous customer satisfaction surveys that this is a service that the customer values.</p>		

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>14. Does the local planning authority’s web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access track their progress (and view their content)?</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>	<b>“Fair”</b>	<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
All documents are available online	Only the planning application details are available online, and access to other documents must be sought directly	No planning application information is published online

Authority's performance	Yes
<p>Our public access element allows customers to view all public documents and plans relating to applications including officer reports and decision notices, and also allows customers to comment online.</p> <p>We implemented a new back office system at the start of the previous reporting period and now this has become well-established this has helped make savings in time in relation to automation and easier process steps. This has allowed officers to carry out more work of value such as determining applications for pre-application advice and planning applications.</p> <p>Navigational and functional improvements to the Idox public access module (e.g. to enable a customer to track changes to an application) have been actioned during this reporting period.</p>	

**SECTION 5 – ENFORCEMENT**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>15. Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>	<b>“Fair”</b>	<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
More than 80% of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days	Between 70% and 80% of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days	Less than 70% of enforcement cases are investigated in 84 days

<b>Authority’s performance</b>	75
<p>This was a previously a disappointing area of performance and compared poorly to the Welsh average of 76.3% in 2018/19 when it was 65%. The appointment of a new Area Team Manager who manages the enforcement section saw the commencement of a systems review of the enforcement function in 2018/19. This measure rose to 75% over 2019/20 and while the key changes were put on place by December 2019 we would like to move much closer to 100% for this measure and thus the action to closely monitor the performance of the Enforcement Team is retained. Special attention will be given to this measure in the next reporting period.</p>	

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>16. Average time taken to take positive enforcement action</b>	
<b>“Good”</b>	<b>“Fair”</b>	<b>“Improvement needed”</b>
Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked	Target to be benchmarked

<b>Authority’s performance</b>	142
<p>Again, this indicator improved significantly and is now below the Welsh average of 165 days (2018/19). The systematic review of the enforcement service during 2020/21 will continue to seek to omit waste, poor working practices and find smarter ways of working to reduce this time further.</p>	

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<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation Philip Thomas</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 01633 644809 <b>E-mail:</b> philipthomas@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>Submit the Monmouthshire Planning Service’s sixth Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Welsh Government in accordance with statutory requirements and publish the Report on the Council’s website.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service</b></p> <p>Planning Services (Planning Policy and Development Management)</p>	<p><b>Date Future Generations Evaluation</b> form completed</p> <p>October 2020</p>

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**6. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

The APR identifies areas for improvement within the Development Management section of the Council. Actions outlined to achieve this should bring positive benefits to all members of Monmouthshire’s population. A more efficient and effective Development Management service will secure the aims of the Welsh Spatial Plan, namely Promoting a Sustainable Economy, Valuing our Environment and Respecting Our Environment, be it through timely approval of planning proposals for sustainable forms of development or by preventing harm to acknowledged interests, such as amenity, public safety, health or biodiversity by either refusing permission for inappropriate development or by taking timely and reasonable enforcement action.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	See statement above	None	See above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	See statement above	None	See above
Gender reassignment	See statement above	None	See above
Marriage or civil partnership	See statement above	None	See above
Pregnancy or maternity	See statement above	None	See above
Race	See statement above	None	See above
Religion or Belief	See statement above	None	See above
Sex	See statement above	None	See above
Sexual Orientation	See statement above	None	See above
Welsh Language	<p><i>.Under the Welsh Language measure of 2011, we need to be considering Welsh Language in signage, documentation, posters, language skills etc.and also the requirement to promote the language.</i></p> <p>Welsh is treated on equal terms as English in the planning process,</p>	None	See above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Poverty	See statement above	None	See above

2. **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The APR seeks to shape an efficient and engaging development management process providing support and guidance for customers to ensure the best development possible for the benefit of local communities and to protect the character and appearance of Monmouthshire. Planning can provide economic investment and growth, and can protect acknowledged interests such as local amenity and townscape. Identifying areas for improvement and learning what works well elsewhere can ensure that customers are getting effective advice early in the process which is critical in securing positive outcomes and appropriate forms of development.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> Some areas for improvement may necessitate customers having to pay for elements of</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> The APR identifies areas for improvement to make the development management process more responsive and efficient for our customers' applications for developments that are of a high standard.</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> Care will be taken to improve the planning process via interventions set out in the associated report. The team will focus on positive outcomes rather than being process driven. We will continue to monitor performance through the actions we take, relevant performance measures and 1:2:1s with case officers.</p>



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	the service which can be considered to be costly by some customers.	
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> An effective and efficient DM service allows case officers to consider the implications of any development on biodiversity and ecosystems at an early stage in the application process. Officers who are the decision-makers are able to consider the impacts of decisions on ecological interests. This system would not deteriorate as a result of the proposed revisions to the DM process and indeed may provide a more effective system.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None identified.</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> The actions identified should speed up the delivery of sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> None</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Actions to improve the DM process would enhance support and guidance for customers when submitting a planning application and provide the opportunity for officers to add value to development proposals and provide acceptable forms of the development, which should improve Monmouthshire citizens' access to local services, such as shops, health and recreational/ play facilities, or prevent inappropriate development from harming the amenity of an area, or indeed the health of local people. Development should promote active travel to ensure it is sustainable.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None identified.</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> The approval and delivery of development proposals can have a positive impact on health and well-being and foster social and community pride in their communities.</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> None</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The area of work undertaken by the Planning Team directly and indirectly influences the</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> The timely approval and delivery of sustainable development</p>






Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>appearance, viability, safety and connectivity of communities via planning policy and land use planning decisions. Providing clear and effective guidance and support to customers at an early stage in the planning process is more likely to lead to positive outcomes that enable the best forms of development possible. This is critical in providing sustainable communities. Taking timely and reasonable enforcement action against inappropriate development can reduce impact on local amenity and health.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None identified.</p>	<p>proposals can have a positive impact on the character and appearance of an area, promote well-being and foster social and community pride.</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> None</p>
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The area of work undertaken by the planning section directly and indirectly influences local social, economic and environmental well-being via planning policy and land use planning decisions. However, the global-scale effect is acknowledged as being limited.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> none.</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> None</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> None</p>
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Planning decisions promote the value and significance of the historic built environment by ensuring that it is a direct consideration in planning policy and land use planning decisions. Planning decisions generally facilitate the provision of tourist and recreation development, including playing fields and built development. The Welsh language is now a material planning consideration.</p>	<p><b>Better contribute to positive impacts:</b> Timely planning decisions will ensure that proposals foster civic pride through well-designed development in historic areas or through the removal of development that has a negative impact on a heritage designation via enforcement action.</p> <p><b>Mitigate any negative impacts:</b> None</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<b>Negative:</b> none.	
<b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	<b>Positive:</b> Appropriate and timely development management decisions should bring positive benefits to all members of Monmouthshire's population through policies that seek to achieve the five main aims of the Wales Spatial Plan, namely Building Sustainable Communities, Promoting a Sustainable Economy, Valuing our Environment, Achieving Sustainable Accessibility and Respecting Our Environment  <b>Negative:</b> none.	None.

3. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p><i>We are required to look beyond the usual short term timescales for financial planning and political cycles and instead plan with the longer term in mind (i.e. 20+ years)</i></p> <p>The LDP covers the period 2011-21. The Council's Development Management function which makes planning decisions seeks to implement the policies of the LDP which promotes sustainable development. By its nature, therefore, it cannot look beyond the next five year period but the SA/SEA of the LDP would have ensured consideration of the impact on future generations. The revision to the LDP will seek to adopt land use planning policies up until 2033 taking into account the county's socio-economic challenges.</p>	<p>Ensure that the LDP and its policies have been subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny. This also applies to the current revision of the LDP.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Monmouthshire's Planning Service believes in working with its customers (which include not just applicants but the public, other Council departments, other local authorities, third sector agencies and businesses) to improve its offer to its customers to meet their needs. This APR identifies areas for improvement to achieve this aim. It is subject to scrutiny and endorsement by Members of both the Council's Economy &amp; Development Select Committee and Planning Committee. Members and officers of the Council have a specific interest in the subject to ensure that sustainable forms of development are carried out in Monmouthshire.</p>	<p>Any observations offered by Committee will be taken into account as part of the submission process to Welsh Government.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p><i>Who are the stakeholders who will be affected by your proposal? Have they been involved?</i></p> <p>The APR is subject to consultation with Members of the Economy &amp; Development Select Committee and Planning Committee whose Members have a specific interest in the subject, as well as senior officers of the Council.</p>	As above.
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The APR's aim is to identify areas for improvement in the Planning Service and to initiate actions for meaningful improvement. This would provide the basis for timelier decisions to secure much needed sustainable development. Taking timely and reasonable enforcement action against inappropriate development can reduce impact on local amenity and health.</p>	N/A
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p><i>There is space to describe impacts on people, economy and environment under the Wellbeing Goals above, so instead focus here on how you will better integrate them and balance any competing impacts</i></p> <p>The work undertaken by the Planning Service directly relates to promoting and ensuring sustainable development and its three areas: environment, economy and society.</p>	Improvements to the DM process would facilitate the implementation of the LDP which has been subject to a Sustainability Assessment that balances the impacts on Social, Economic and Environmental factors.

4. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Social Justice, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	<b>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has</b>	<b>What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</b>
Social Justice	None.	None	n/a
Safeguarding	None.	None.	n/a
Corporate Parenting	None.	None	n/a

**5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?**

The APR has been written having regard to data and evidence provided by the following:  
 The Development Management Quarterly Survey 2019/20; the Council's Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2019/20; the Planning Service's Business Plan 2019-2022 and the MCC/ Public Service Board Well-being Plan.

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**SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?**

*.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template*

The work undertaken by the Council's Planning Service, and in particular the Development Management function, directly relates to promoting and ensuring sustainable development. The APR 2019/20 would enable the service to identify areas of improvement in the processing of applications and in the enforcing of planning matters, and to engage with customers at an early stage of the planning process to ensure the most appropriate forms of development are approved within Monmouthshire. The planning process promotes sustainable forms of development, helping to create jobs and investment, while protecting material interests such as amenity, public safety and biodiversity.

**7. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
See actions in the APR	See APR	See APR

**8. VERSION CONTROL:** The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Economy & Development Select Committee (with Planning Committee Members invited)	19/10/2020	Members were very pleased with the progress made and congratulated the Planning Team on their performance over 2019/20. The four actions were noted and welcomed. No amendments to the report were requested.

**SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**  
**MEETING: INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER**  
**DATE: 11 NOVEMBER 2020**  
**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the extent to which the current Local Development Plan (LDP) is delivering against its objectives and monitoring indicators, as set out in the sixth Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), attached at **Appendix 1**. Although the decision has already been taken to commence work on a new LDP, there is a statutory requirement to continue to monitor the current LDP's performance. The Minister for Housing and Local Government in her letter to Chief Executives in July 2020 however stated that due to the requirement for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to reflect on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on their areas and consequences for replacement LDP preparation, AMR's will not be required to be submitted to Welsh Government this year. The next formal submission will be October 2021. The Minister, however, noted that LPAs can publish an AMR if they wish to do so and that data collection is strongly encouraged. As a consequence, the decision was made internally to complete the Monmouthshire AMR for continuity as this monitoring report provides valuable evidence that will help inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Land Use Planning endorses the sixth Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government on an informal basis.
- 2.2 To note comments raised by Economy and Development Select Committee (19<sup>th</sup> October 2020). The main issues raised included:
- The Replacement LDP needs to be as ambitious as possible in order to address our key issues including in relation to affordable housing delivery, supporting town centres and business growth / development.
  - The impact of Covid-19 on local businesses/ economy.

Comments from the meeting of the Economy and Development Select Committee will added as soon as the minutes of the meeting are received.

## 3. KEY ISSUES

### Background – Adopted Monmouthshire LDP

- 3.1 The Monmouthshire LDP 2011-2021 was formally adopted by the Council on 27 February 2014. As part of the statutory development plan process the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report.

## The Annual Monitoring Report

- 3.2 The AMR provides the basis for monitoring the effectiveness of the LDP and ultimately determines whether any revisions to the Plan are necessary. It aims to demonstrate the extent to which the LDP strategy and objectives are being achieved and whether the Plan's policies are functioning effectively. It also allows the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County and identifies any significant contextual changes that may influence plan implementation or review/revision.
- 3.3 This is the sixth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Monmouthshire LDP and is based on the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.
- 3.4 Although the Council has already made the decision to commence work on a new LDP, this monitoring report will help inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.

### LDP Monitoring Framework

- 3.5 The LDP policy and sustainability appraisal (SA) monitoring frameworks form the basis for the AMR, assessing how the Plan's strategic policies, and associated supporting policies, are performing against the identified key monitoring targets and outcomes and whether the LDP strategy and objectives are being delivered. This has enabled the Council to make an informed judgement of the Plan's progress in delivering the targets/monitoring outcomes and policies during this monitoring period.

### Key Findings

- 3.6 Section 5 of the AMR provides a detailed assessment of Plan's performance. The results of the monitoring process demonstrate that the majority of the indicator targets and monitoring outcomes are being achieved. Some of the most significant findings in relation to these are:
- Progress continues to be made towards the implementation of the spatial strategy.
  - 356 dwelling completions were recorded including 82 affordable dwellings. Whilst a drop on last year's figure, this remains significantly higher than in previous monitoring periods and reflect the progress being made on bringing the strategic housing sites forward.
  - Six of the seven LDP allocated strategic housing sites now have planning permission, with an application submitted on the seventh at Vinegar Hill, Undy. Two strategic housing sites gained reserved matters approval and two Main Village sites gained planning permission progressing their delivery:
    - Land at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) 269 dwellings including 68 affordable homes (25%);
    - Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3) 347 open market dwellings. Land identified for affordable housing or employment land as part of the outline approval (DC/2014/01290), will be the subject of separate applications.
    - Two Main Village sites at Well Lane, Devauden (SAH11(ii)) and Cross Ash Garage (SAH11(i)(b)) gained planning permission over the monitoring period for a combined 21 units in total (12 open market, 9 affordable over both sites).



- The target densities were exceeded in the reserved matters approved on the Strategic Housing Sites at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) and Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3).
  - Affordable housing policy targets set out in Policy S4 are generally being met in relation to planning permissions granted in the Main Towns, Rural Secondary Settlements, Severnside settlements and Main Villages.
  - The County has a total of 40.16 hectares of employment land available, indicating that sufficient employment land is maintained to meet the identified take up rate.
  - There has been progress in terms of employment permissions within the County, with permissions granted for a range of B use class employment uses on protected employment sites (SAE2) and non-allocated sites (totalling 1.14ha hectares). A number of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes have also been approved (15), providing employment opportunities throughout the County.
  - The Council approved proposals for a total of 17 tourism facilities, all of which related to tourist accommodation ranging from a hotel and holiday lets to glamping accommodation. The Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance [SPG] (November 2017) has helped clarify our general support for this important sector of our economy.
  - Vacancy rates in the central shopping areas of Caldicot, Chepstow, and Usk have decreased since the previous monitoring period, with Raglan remaining at the same level. However, vacancy rates in the central shopping areas of Abergavenny, Monmouth and Magor have risen. However, the increases do not raise any immediate concerns with the vitality and viability of the centres.
  - The proportion of A1 retail uses within the towns' Primary Shopping Frontages generally accord with the thresholds identified in the Primary Shopping Frontages SPG.
  - A total of 12 community and recreation facilities have been granted planning permission.
  - Ample land remains available for potential waste management sites and there has been no reduction in the minerals land bank.
  - There were no applications that resulted in the loss of listed buildings or historic sites and no development permitted which would have an adverse impact on the historic environment.
- 3.7 There is, however, a key policy monitoring outcome that is not progressing as intended relating to housing delivery:
- Housing completion rates represent an under delivery of -1,469 units (36.3%) for the Plan period to date when measured against the newly introduced cumulative average annual requirement (AAR).
- 3.8 In line with removal of the five-year housing land supply policy and the publication of the revised Development Plans Manual (Edition 3, Welsh Government, March 2020) setting out guidance on how housing delivery is now to be monitored, two new indicators have been included in this year's AMR, which replace the previous indicator which measured the five-year housing land supply. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR). Whilst the Plan under delivered in the early years of the Plan period in the most recent monitoring periods housing completions have been

much closer to the AAR, -7 units (-1.6%) in 2018/19 and – 94 units (-20.9%) in 2019/20. This is due in main to the speed with which the strategic sites have come forward. Of the seven strategic sites, six now have planning permission, whilst all seven are anticipated to contribute to completions during the Plan period as set out in the Housing Trajectory prepared in conjunction with the Housing Stakeholder Group. It is therefore likely that completions will be more in line with the AAR going forward. However, the trigger for Plan review has been met in previous AMRs and work on the Replacement Local Development Plan begun.

- 3.9 The second of these indicators measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR). There has been under delivery of cumulative completions since the beginning of the Plan period and so the trigger has been met. However, in more recent AMRs the percentage of under delivery has steadily declined as the strategic sites have come forward.

#### Contextual Information

- 3.10 Section Three of the AMR provides an analysis of the relevant contextual material that has been published since the adoption of the Plan at a national, regional and local level, along with general economic trends. At the time of this AMR it is still unknown what impact, if any, the Covid-19 pandemic will have for the Adopted LDP. Any implications will be reported in future AMRs. While some of these identified changes may have implications for the future implementation of the LDP/Replacement LDP, none of the changes identified over the monitoring period are considered to be significant and can be considered as part of the LDP revision process.

#### Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- 3.11 Progress has been made in the preparation and adoption of SPG to help to facilitate the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy. This is detailed in Section Three of the AMR. SPG preparation and adoption will continue in the next monitoring period as appropriate. Where essential, however, resources will be focused on Plan revision.

#### Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Monitoring

- 3.12 Section Six of the AMR expands on the assessment of LDP performance against the SA Monitoring Objectives, setting out the performance of the Plan against a number of sustainability indicators. There is an overlap between some of the LDP and SA indicators helping to demonstrate how the two monitoring processes are interlinked.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

- 3.13 Section Seven sets out the conclusions and recommendations of the sixth AMR. The 2019-20 AMR indicates that good progress continues to be made in implementing many of the Plan's policies and that overall the strategy remains sound. There were fewer 'red' ratings recorded during the current monitoring period, compared to the 2018-19 AMR due to improved performance in relation to developments permitted on previously developed land. However, while progress has been made in relation to the Plan's Strategic Housing Sites, cumulative completion rates for the Plan period are lower than the Plan requirement and remain a matter of concern if the housing needs of Monmouthshire's communities are to be met.
- 3.14 In accordance with the findings and recommendations from the previous AMRs, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2020 and culminated with the publication of the Final

Review Report in March 2018. Based on the evidence contained within the Review Report it was concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a replacement LDP. The Council resolved in May 2018 to commence work on a Replacement LDP for the County (excluding the area within the BBNP) which will cover the period 2018-2033.

### Next Steps

- 3.15 Although the decision has already been taken to prepare a Replacement LDP, there is a statutory requirement to continue to monitor the current LDP's performance, albeit that this has been relaxed this year<sup>1</sup>. The Plan will continue to be monitored on an annual basis through the preparation of successive AMRs, with the broad structure of the AMR remaining the same from year to year in order to provide ease of analysis between successive reports.
- 3.16 The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is being prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement. The Monmouthshire RLDP Delivery Agreement was first approved by Welsh Government on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018, with a revision approved in March 2020. The unavoidable delays to Plan preparation as a consequence of the current pandemic and recent publication of the Welsh Government 2018-based population and household projections, has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement. A Revised Delivery Agreement has therefore been prepared which sets out a revised Plan timetable, including the dates for the revisiting the Growth and Spatial Options, Preferred Strategy and second call for candidate sites. The Community Involvement Scheme (CIS) has also been reviewed and adjusted in line with the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice to reflect social distancing measures and other measures. This is scheduled to be reported to Council in October 2020.
- 3.17 The Revised Delivery Agreement timetable will result in a significant delay to the preparation and subsequent adoption of the RLDP, with consultation and engagement on the revised Preferred Strategy anticipated Spring 2021 and adoption of the RLDP anticipated in autumn 2023. While it is too soon to fully understand the impacts of Covid-19 it is clear that the planning system has a fundamental role in supporting sustained recovery post Covid-19, as reflected in the Minister's recent letter which recognises that "up to date agile development plans are the cornerstone of our planning system" and that Welsh Government's commitment to a plan-led system has been reinforced by the current pandemic. Welsh Government's 'Building Better Places – Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery' (July 2020) document further highlights the importance of planning in supporting Covid-19 recovery. It identifies numerous planning priorities as being fundamental in the response to Covid-19 including place-making, Green Infrastructure, de-carbonisation and town centres.

## **4 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council must comply with European Directives and Regulations to monitor the state of the environment and this forms an integral part of the AMR. The adopted LDP and completion of the AMR accord with these requirements.

### Sustainable Development

- 4.2 Under the 2004 Act the LDP is required to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The role of the SA is to assess the extent to which planning policies would help

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<sup>1</sup> Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19 July 2020 clarifies that the Minister does not require Annual Monitoring Reports to be submitted this October.

to achieve the wider environmental, economic and social objectives of the LDP. In addition, the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive requires the 'environmental assessment' of certain plans and programmes prepared by local authorities, including LDP's. All stages of the LDP were subject to a SA, whose findings were used to inform the development of LDP policies and site allocations in order to ensure that the LDP would be promoting sustainable development. The SEA Directive also requires that the Council monitor the state of the environment through monitoring the sustainability objectives set out in the SA Report. This forms an integral part of the AMR.

- 4.3 A Future Generations Evaluation (including equalities and sustainability impact assessment) is attached to this report at **Appendix 2**.

#### Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

- 4.4 There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications arising directly from this report.

### **5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

- 5.1 It is a requirement of the Regulations to monitor the LDP and to submit an AMR to the Welsh Government, so no other options were considered, even though this requirement has been relaxed this year.

### **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Officer time and costs associated with the data collection and analysis of the monitoring indicators and preparation of the AMR. These costs will be met from the Planning Policy budget and carried out by existing staff.

### **7. CONSULTEES**

- Economy and Development Select Committee, via meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The main issues raised at this meeting are set out in paragraph 2.2 above. Comments from this Committee meeting will added as soon as the minutes of the meeting are received.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

#### European Legislation:

- European Strategic Environment Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004.
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011).

#### National Legislation and Guidance:

- Planning (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005
- Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Development Plans Manual, Welsh Government, Edition 3 March 2020.
- Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10), Welsh Government, December 2018.

#### Monmouthshire LDP:

- Monmouthshire Adopted LDP, Monmouthshire County Council, February 2014.

- Monmouthshire LDP 'Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Report Addendum', February 2014.
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Reports, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 & 2018-19.

Monmouthshire County Council publications:

- Monmouthshire LDP 'Retail Background Paper', March 2020
- Monmouthshire LDP Draft 'Employment Background Paper', September 2020.

## 9. **AUTHORS**

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## 10. **CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Monmouthshire County Council**



**monmouthshire  
sir fynwy**

**Adopted Local Development Plan 2011-2021**

**Annual Monitoring Report**

**Monitoring Period 1st April 2019-31st March 2020**

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**Monmouthshire County Council  
Adopted Local Development Plan  
2011 - 2021**

**Annual Monitoring Report**

**Monitoring Period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

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## 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 27 February 2014. As part of the statutory development plan process the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.2 The AMR provides the basis for monitoring the effectiveness of the LDP and ultimately determines whether any revisions to the Plan are necessary. It aims to demonstrate the extent to which the LDP strategy and objectives are being achieved and whether the Plan's policies are functioning effectively. It also allows the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the County and identifies any significant contextual changes that may influence Plan implementation or review.
- 1.3 This is the sixth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Monmouthshire LDP and is based on the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

### **Key Findings of the Sixth Annual Monitoring Process 2019-2020**

#### **Contextual Information**

- 1.4 Section 3 provides a summary of the relevant contextual material that has been published during the current monitoring period. This includes national legislation and relevant plans, policies and strategies at the national, regional and local level, along with general economic trends which have occurred since the LDP's adoption. In the main, the implications of the contextual changes will take place over the longer term and will be considered in subsequent AMRs and as part of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). However one notable change in terms of this AMR is Welsh Government's decision to revoke TAN1 and the publication of the Development Plans Manual in March 2020. This removed the mechanism for monitoring the 5-year housing land supply through the Joint Housing Land Availability process and replaces it with monitoring based on the LDP housing trajectory. The results and analysis of this need monitoring method are discussed in Section 5.

#### **Covid-19**

- 1.5 The declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the associated lockdown measures has resulted in challenges in how planning operates, but also opportunities in how the planning system and the preparation of development plans can respond to the crisis. A letter published on 7th July 2020 by the Minister for Housing and Local Government setting out a number of Covid-19 responses, removed the requirement to submit an AMR this October, but strongly encouraged LPAs to continue with data collection to help shape and inform policy and plan development. Monmouthshire, however, considered it a worthwhile exercise to continue to prepare an AMR and undertake the associated policy analysis of the Plan's monitor indicators and triggers

to assess the effectiveness of the Adopted LDP and to feed into the preparation of the RLDP.

- 1.6 The UK was placed in to lockdown on 23rd March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Given that this occurred towards the end of this monitoring period, it is considered to have had limited impact on the ability to monitor for the 2019-20 period. At the time of writing this AMR, some easing of the lockdown restrictions had commenced such as the opening of retail, hospitality and the tourism industry. However, the County was in total lockdown for a period of over three months during March, April and May and part of June and some restrictions remain in place including maintaining social distancing measures and working from home where possible. The implications of the Covid-19 lockdown are still emerging on a national and local scale and it is still unknown what impact, if any, the current situation with Covid-19 will have for the adopted LDP. Any implications will be reported in future AMRs and reflected in the preparation of the RLDP.

#### **Local Development Plan Monitoring – Policy Analysis**

- 1.7 Section 5 of the AMR provides a detailed assessment of how the Plan’s strategic policies and associated supporting policies are performing against the identified key monitoring targets and outcomes and whether the LDP strategy and objectives are being delivered. This has enabled the Council to make an informed judgement of the Plan’s progress in delivering the targets/monitoring outcomes and policies during this monitoring period. The table below provides a visual overview of the effectiveness of policies during the current monitoring period based on the traffic light rating used in the assessment. There were fewer ‘red’ ratings recorded during the current monitoring period, compared to the 2018-19 AMR (3 red ratings). This is due to improved performance in relation to developments permitted on previously developed land compared to last year and progress with the Strategic Housing site at Vinegar Hill, Undy.

Targets / monitoring outcomes* are being achieved	<b>59</b>
Targets / monitoring outcomes* are not currently being achieved but there are no concerns over the implementation of the policy	<b>27</b>
Targets / monitoring outcomes* are not being achieved with subsequent concerns over the implementation of policy	<b>1</b>
No conclusion can be drawn due to limited data availability or no applicable data during the monitoring period	<b>4</b>

\*For those indicators with no target/trigger the monitoring outcomes are assessed and rated accordingly

### Key AMR Findings

1.8 The results of the monitoring process demonstrate that many of the indicator targets and monitoring outcomes are being achieved (green traffic light rating), indicating that the relevant Plan policies are performing as intended. Of particular note over this monitoring period:

- Progress continues to be made towards the implementation of the spatial strategy.
- 356 dwelling completions were recorded including 82 affordable dwellings. Whilst a drop on last year's figure, this remains significantly higher than in previous monitoring period and reflect the progress being made on bringing the strategic housing sites forward.
- Six of the seven LDP allocated strategic housing sites now have planning permission, with an application submitted on the seventh at Vinegar Hill, Undy. Two strategic housing sites gained reserved matters approval and two Main Village sites gained planning permission progressing their delivery :
  - Land at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) 269 dwellings including 68 affordable homes (25%);
  - Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3) 347 open market dwellings. Land identified for affordable housing or employment land as part of the outline approval (DC/2014/01290), will be the subject of separate applications.
  - Two Main Village sites at Well Lane, Devauden (SAH11(ii)) and Cross Ash Garage (SAH11(i)(b)) gained planning permission over the monitoring period for a combined 21 units in total (12 open market, 9 affordable over both sites).
- The target densities were exceeded in the reserved matters approved on the Strategic Housing Sites at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) and Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3).
- Affordable housing policy targets set out in Policy S4 are generally being met in relation to planning permissions granted in the Main Towns, Rural Secondary Settlements, Severnside settlements and Main Villages.
- The County has a total of 40.16 hectares of employment land available, indicating that sufficient employment land is maintained to meet the identified take up rate.
- There has been progress in terms of employment permissions within the County, with permissions granted for a range of B use class employment uses on protected employment sites (SAE2) and non-allocated sites (totalling 1.14ha hectares). A number of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes have also been approved (15), providing employment opportunities throughout the County.

- The Council approved proposals for a total of 17 tourism facilities, all of which related to tourist accommodation ranging from a hotel, holiday lets to glamping accommodation. The Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance [SPG] (November 2017) has helped clarify our general support for this important sector of our economy.
  - Vacancy rates in the centres of Caldicot, Chepstow, and Usk have decreased since the previous monitoring period, with Raglan remaining at the same level. However, vacancy rates in the central shopping areas of Abergavenny, Monmouth and Magor have risen. However, the increases do not raise any immediate concerns with the vitality and viability of the centres.
  - The proportion of A1 retail uses within the towns' Primary Shopping Frontages generally accord with the thresholds identified in the Primary Shopping Frontages SPG.
  - A total of 12 community and recreation facilities have been granted planning permission.
  - Ample land remains available for potential waste management sites and there has been no reduction in the minerals land bank.
  - There were no applications that resulted in the loss of listed buildings or historic sites and no development permitted which would have an adverse impact on the historic environment.
- 1.9 The analysis also indicates that various policy indicators are not being achieved but with no corresponding concerns over policy implementation, as detailed in Section 5 (amber traffic light rating). Further investigation has determined that there are justified reasons for the performance recorded and this is not representative of any fundamental issue with the implementation of the policy framework or strategy at this time.
- 1.10 There is, however, a key policy monitoring outcome that is not progressing as intended relating to housing delivery (red traffic light rating):
- Housing completion rates represent an under delivery of -1,469 units (36.3%) for the Plan period to date when measured against the newly introduced cumulative Average Annual requirement (AAR).
- 1.11 In line with removal of the five-year housing land supply policy and the publication of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020) setting out guidance on how housing delivery is now to be monitored, two new indicators have been included in this AMR, which replace the previous indicator which measured the five-year housing land supply. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR). Whilst the Plan under delivered in the early years of the Plan period in the most recent monitoring periods housing completions have been much closer to the AAR, -7 units (-1.6%) in 2018/19

and – 94 units (-20.9%) in 2019/20. This is due in main to the speed with which the strategic sites have come forward. Of the seven strategic sites, six now have planning permission, whilst all seven are anticipated to contribute to completions during the Plan period as set out in the Housing Trajectory prepared in conjunction with the Housing Stakeholder Group. It is therefore likely that completions will be more in line with the AAR going forward. However, the trigger for Plan review has been met in previous AMRs and work on the Replacement Local Development Plan begun.

- 1.12 The second of these indicators measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR). There has been under delivery of cumulative completions since the beginning of the Plan period and so the trigger has been met. However, in more recent AMRs the % of under delivery has steadily declined as the strategic sites have come forward.
- 1.13 Given the importance attached to the land supply issue, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018. The report concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**

- 1.14 SPG preparation and adoption will continue in the next monitoring period as appropriate. Where essential, however, resources will be focused on the Replacement Plan.

#### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Monitoring**

- 1.15 Section 6 expands the assessment of the performance of the LDP against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) monitoring objectives. There is an overlap between some of the LDP and SA indicators helping to demonstrate how the LDP monitoring and SA monitoring are interlinked.
- 1.16 Some of the most notable findings specific to the SA during the current monitoring period include:
- Two of the three major new development approved during the monitoring period are located within a 10 minute walk from a frequent and regular bus service.
  - No trees that were protected by a Tree Preservation Order were lost to development over the monitoring period. This is a decrease in the number of TPO trees lost over the monitoring period when compared to the previous AMR (3 trees).
  - One location where the annual objective levels of nitrogen dioxide was exceeded (Hardwick Hill, Chepstow). This is the same location as the previous 4 AMRs.



- Four of ten proposals permitted on LDP allocated sites and sites of over 10 dwellings/1ha incorporated Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)<sup>1</sup> into the scheme. This is an increase since the previous AMR where three of 13 schemes incorporated SUDs.
- All three water flow monitoring stations located across the County at River Usk, River Wye and River Monnow remained above the summer low flow level.
- 61.60% of Monmouthshire's total household waste was recycled or composted. This has decreased marginally since the previous AMR which indicated 62.41% was recycled or composted.
- Approximately 7.3ha of agricultural land at Grade 3a and above has been approved for major development (excluding LDP allocations) over the monitoring period. This relates to the Church Road site in Caldicot for 130 dwellings. An agricultural land assessment undertaken for the site states that the site is classified as 'best and most versatile' however that the site is at the lower end of this scale and is not practicably suitable for intensive agricultural use.
- 11.9% increase in tourism expenditure, £244.99 million compared to £218.93 million over the previous 2018 period.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1.17 Overall, the 2019-20 AMR indicates that good progress continues to be made in implementing many of the Plan's policies and that overall the strategy remains sound. There were fewer 'red' ratings recorded during the current monitoring period, compared to the 2018-19 AMR due to improved performance in relation to developments permitted on previously developed land. However, while progress has been made in relation to the Plan's Strategic Housing Sites, cumulative completion rates for the Plan period are lower than the Plan requirement and remain a matter of concern if the housing needs of Monmouthshire's communities are to be met.
- 1.18 Given the importance attached to delivering and maintaining a constant supply of housing land, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018. The Council resolved in May 2018 to commence work on a Replacement LDP for the County (excluding the area within the BBNP) which will cover the period 2018-2033.
- 1.19 The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is being prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement, which was first approved by Welsh Government on 14<sup>th</sup> May

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<sup>1</sup> SUDS are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. By mimicking natural drainage regimes, SUDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment. SUDS achieve this by lowering flow rates, increasing water storage capacity and reducing the transport of pollution to the water environment (*British Geological Society*).

2018 and revised in March 2020. The subsequent unavoidable delays to the plan preparation process experienced as a consequence of the current pandemic and the publication of the 2018 Population Projections has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement. A Revised Delivery Agreement is therefore in preparation which sets out a revised RLDP timetable, including a consultation stage on an updated Growth and Spatial Options Paper to take account of the recently published 2018 Population Projections. This is scheduled to be reported in autumn 2020.

1.20 The Revised Delivery Agreement timetable will result in a significant delay to the preparation and subsequent adoption of the RLDP, with the adoption of the RLDP anticipated in autumn 2023. While it is too soon to fully understand the impacts of Covid-19 it has become generally expected that the planning system has a fundamental role in supporting sustained recovery post COVID-19, as reflected in the Minister's recent letter which recognises that "up to date agile development plans are the cornerstone of our planning system" and that Welsh Government's commitment to a plan-led system has been reinforced by the current pandemic. Welsh Government's 'Building Better Places – Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery' (July 2020) document further highlights the importance of planning in supporting Covid-19 recovery. It identifies numerous planning priorities as being fundamental in the response to Covid-19 including place-making, Green Infrastructure, de-carbonisation and town centres.

1.21 Accordingly, the AMR recommends the following:

1. Continue to progress work on the RLDP. The next formal stage of RLDP involves consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options Paper to take account of the recently published 2018-based population projections. This is anticipated to commence towards the end of 2020.
2. Submit the sixth AMR to the Welsh Government by 31 October 2020 in accordance with statutory requirements. Publish the AMR on the Council's website.
3. Continue to monitor the Plan through the preparation of successive AMRs.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides the basis for monitoring the effectiveness of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and ultimately determines whether any revisions to the Plan are necessary. It aims to demonstrate the extent to which the LDP strategy and objectives are being achieved and whether the Plan's policies are functioning effectively. It also allows the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the County and identifies any significant contextual changes that might influence the Plan's implementation or review.
- 2.2 Monitoring is a continuous part of the plan making process. It provides the connection between evidence gathering, plan strategy and policy formulation, policy implementation, evaluation and plan review.

### **Adoption of the Monmouthshire Local Development Plan**

- 2.3 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and associated Regulations, local planning authorities (LPAs) are required to produce a LDP. The Monmouthshire Local Development Plan was formally adopted by Monmouthshire County Council on 27 February 2014. The LDP provides the land use framework which forms the basis on which decisions about future development in the County, including planning applications, are based.
- 2.4 This is the sixth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Monmouthshire LDP and is based on the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

### **The Requirement for Monitoring**

#### **Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004**

- 2.5 The Council has a statutory obligation, under section 61 of the 2004 Act, to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area. In addition, under section 76 of the Act, the Council has a duty to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government at the end of October each year following plan adoption. The preparation of an AMR is therefore an integral part of the statutory development plan process.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Following receipt of a letter from Minister for Housing and Local Government 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020, whereby due to the unprecedented impact of Covid19, it was stated that there was no requirement to submit an AMR formally to Welsh Government October 2020.

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/07/Planning-and-the-post-Covid-19-recovery-Letter-to-local-authorities-07.07.2020.pdf>

It was considered however that the data collection and evidence collated under the AMR would be beneficial to assess the effectiveness of the Adopted LDP and to help inform the Replacement LDP (RLDP). A 2019-2020 AMR has accordingly been prepared.

- 2.6 In order to monitor LDP performance consistently, plans should be considered against a standard set of monitoring indicators and targets. The Welsh Government has issued regulations and guidance on the required content of AMRs.

**Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015**

- 2.7 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations have been amended to simplify certain aspects of the local development plan procedures, however, these do not affect the LDP monitoring process. Under Regulation 37 the AMR is required to:

- Identify policies that are not being implemented;  
And for each policy:
- Identify the reasons why the policy is not being implemented;
- Identify the steps (if any) that are intended to be taken to enable the policy to be implemented;
- Explore whether a revision to the plan to replace or amend the policy is required.

- 2.8 In addition, the AMR is required to monitor identified core housing indicators including the five-year housing land supply from the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) and the number (if any) of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA area. In March 2020 however, Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is monitored. The changes removed the five-year housing land supply policy and replaced it with a housing trajectory method. It also involved the revocation of Technical Advice Note (TAN)1 : JHLAS. This change will impact on the way the LDP delivery of housing is monitored in the AMR.

**Development Plans Manual (Edition 3, March 2020)**

- 2.9 The 2006 LDP Manual outlined additional LDP indicators which the AMR should report on. These were incorporated into the LDP monitoring framework where relevant. Some of these indicators were adapted to better fit with local circumstances and some were discounted as being inappropriate. The subsequent revised Development Plan Manuals, previously Edition 2 and most recently Edition 3, have deleted many of the additional LDP indicators included in the first Manual, most significantly (and as referred to in the above section) the five-year housing land supply ,to be replaced with a housing trajectory monitoring method. Some of the original 2006 indicators nevertheless still remain included in the adopted LDP monitoring framework and the Council will continue to monitor these to ensure consistency with previous AMRs. The revised Manuals notably incorporate a smaller number of additional core output indicators relating the housing provision, employment and retail matters.
- 2.10 Of particular relevance to this AMR is the way in which housing delivery is to be monitored. For those LPAs who have an adopted LDP the changes introduced by

Welsh Government remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) method as the primary indicator to measure housing delivery. To reflect this change, as required by the Development Plans Manual, the housing land supply indicator has been deleted and two new indicators have been included in this AMR. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the AAR, the second measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative AAR.

### **Monmouthshire LDP Monitoring Framework**

- 2.11 A Monitoring Framework is provided in Chapter Eight of the LDP comprising a series of 51 indicators, with corresponding targets and triggers for further action, in relation to the Plan's strategic policies. It also indicates the linkages between the Plan themes, objectives, strategic policies and other Plan policies. The indicators were developed in accordance with the above Welsh Government Regulations and guidance on monitoring. The Monitoring Framework forms the basis of the AMR.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (2004) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011)**

- 2.12 In addition the LDP and AMR must comply with European Directives and Regulations. The Sustainability Appraisal Report Addendum (2014) identifies a further set of indicators (61) that are used to monitor progress on sustainability issues. Whilst interlinked, these are set out separately from the LDP Policy Monitoring Framework and have been used in the AMR to measure the environmental, economic and social impacts of the LDP.
- 2.13 The completion of the AMR accords with the requirements for monitoring the sustainability performance of the Plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (2004) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

### **AMR Format and Content**

- 2.14 The AMR has been designed to be a succinct and easily accessible document that can be used as a convenient point of reference for all strategic policy areas.
- 2.15 The structure of the AMR is as follows:

**Section 1 Executive Summary** - Provides a succinct written summary of the key monitoring findings.

**Section 2 Introduction** - Outlines the requirement for, the purpose and structure of the AMR.

**Section 3 Contextual Information** - Provides a brief overview of the relevant contextual information which, although outside the remit of the Plan, could affect the performance of the LDP policy framework. Policy specific contextual information is provided in the relevant policy analysis section.

**Section 4 LDP Monitoring Process** - Explains the monitoring process undertaken.

**Section 5 LDP Monitoring - Policy Analysis** - Provides a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of the LDP policy framework in delivering the identified aims/outcomes and targets, together with recommendations for further action.

**Section 6 Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring** - Provides an assessment of the LDP's performance against the SA monitoring indicators.

**Section 7 Conclusions and Recommendations** – Gives an overview of the AMR findings with reference to the analysis made in the preceding sections and, where relevant, provides recommendations on issues that require further consideration.

**Publication** – The AMR will be published on the Council's website.

### **Future Monitoring**

- 2.16 The broad structure of the AMR should remain the same from year to year in order to provide ease of analysis between successive reports. However, given that the monitoring process is dependent upon a wide range of statistical information that is sourced from both the Council and external sources, any changes to these sources could make certain indicators ineffective or out-dated. Accordingly, the monitoring framework may evolve over the Plan period and AMRs will be used as a means of identifying any such inevitable changes to the framework.

### **LDP Review**

- 2.17 The 2016 Monmouthshire AMR recommended an early review of the LDP as a result of the need to address the shortfall in the housing land supply and to facilitate the identification and allocation of additional housing land. The 2017 AMR confirmed the recommendation to continue with an early review of the LDP due to the housing land supply shortfall.
- 2.18 The LDP Regulations allow for a 'selective review' of part (or parts) of a LDP. Such a provision would allow for a partial review of the LDP to cover issues associated with the housing land supply and site selection, in accordance with the recommendation of the 2016 and 2017 AMRs. The Council, however, is required to commence a full review of the LDP every four years. This would mean that a full review to meet statutory requirements would have had to commence in February 2018. It was considered, therefore, more appropriate to undertake a full review of the Plan to consider all aspects of the LDP in order to fully assess the nature and scale of revisions that might be required.
- 2.19 Consequently, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018, which was reported in the 2017-2018 monitoring period. The report concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a fully revised LDP (RLDP). It also concluded that the Monmouthshire LDP should be revised on an individual basis,

rather than, jointly with adjacent Local Planning Authorities. Preparation of the RLDP commenced in May 2018.

### 3 Contextual Information

- 3.1 This section provides a brief summary of the relevant contextual material that has been published during the current monitoring period. This includes national legislation and relevant plans, policies and strategies at the national, regional and local level. Any potential overall implications for the LDP as a whole are outlined where appropriate. General economic trends which have occurred since the LDP's adoption are also set out, together with progress on key supplementary planning guidance.
- 3.2 Contextual information which is specific to a particular LDP policy area is provided in the relevant policy analysis section for ease of reference and is therefore not repeated in detail here.
- 3.3 At the time of this AMR it is still unknown what impact, if any, the Covid-19 pandemic will have for the Adopted LDP. Any implications will be reported in future AMRs.

#### **National Planning Policy**

##### **National Development Framework (NDF)**

- 3.4 The Welsh Government has commenced work on the production of a National Development Framework (NDF) which will replace the Wales Spatial Plan. The NDF will set out the 20 year spatial framework for land use in Wales, providing a context for the provision of new infrastructure/growth. It will concentrate on development and land use issues of national significance which the planning system is able to influence and deliver. The Welsh Government undertook a consultation on the Draft NDF for a 14 week period from the 07 August 2019 to 15 November 2019. A National Development Framework Evidence Compendium was also published in February 2020 to assist people in understanding the range of evidence that informed its preparation. The final NDF is expected to be published in early 2021; at which time it will become a relevant 'development plan' in accordance with Sections 38(4a) & (6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and as such could have significant implications for the preparation of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). Future progress on the NDF and any subsequent implications for the Adopted LDP will be reported in future AMRs.

##### **Welsh Government Circular 001/2020 Guidance on the Town and Country Planning (Major Residential Development) (Notification) (Wales) Direction 2020**

- 3.5 Circular 001/2020 was published in January 2020. It sets out guidance on amendments to the provisions regarding "Significant Residential Development" set out in The Town and Country Planning (Notification) (Wales) Direction 2012 (the 2012 Direction) and paragraphs 16 to 18 of Welsh Government Circular 07/12. The 2020 Direction applies to applications made on or after 15 January 2020. It requires the Welsh Ministers to be notified of applications made on or after that date for any proposed residential



development of more than 10 residential units, or residential development on more than 0.5 hectares of land, which is not in accordance with one or more provisions of the development plan and which the authority do not propose to refuse. As such this has significant implications for any sites coming forward outside of those allocated in the Adopted LDP.

### **Technical Advice Notes (TANs)**

#### **TAN 1 – Joint Housing Land Availability Studies**

- 3.6 The Welsh Government carried out a six-week consultation on proposed revisions to Planning Policy Wales and associated advice and guidance related to the delivery of housing through the planning system, from 9 October to 20 November 2019. The aim of the consultation was to address the policy framework for ensuring housing delivery and the related monitoring mechanism (through Joint Housing Land Availability Studies). As such the consultation proposed to remove the requirement in Planning Policy Wales for local planning authorities to specifically provide a five-year supply of land for housing, and to consequently revoke Technical Advice Note 1 (TAN 1) which sets out the mechanism for monitoring the five-year housing land supply through the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) process. It also proposed to replace the monitoring of housing land supply with the monitoring of housing delivery based on the LDP housing trajectory, to be reported through the LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). TAN1 was revoked in its entirety as a consequence of the policy change to PPW announced in a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government on 26 March 2020. This will impact on the way the LDP delivery of housing is monitored in the AMR.

#### **TAN 11 – Noise**

- 3.7 The Welsh Government carried out a call for evidence and a consultation on the review of TAN 11 - Noise between 10 Feb 2020 and 04 May 2020. The review of the TAN is intended to provide policy guidance and technical advice to support the new planning policy in PPW relating to air quality and soundscape. This is to be achieved through the review and the production of a new TAN 11 covering air quality and soundscape as well as noise pollution. The new TAN 11 once reviewed will be the subject of further consultation. Progress on this will be reported in future AMRs.

#### **TAN 15 – Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion**

- 3.8 The Welsh Government consulted on changes to TAN 15 - Development and Flood Risk between 09 October 2019 and 17 January 2020. The current TAN was issued in 2004, a review of its effectiveness was carried out in 2017. As result of the review, the Welsh Government has prepared an updated document which contains a number of proposed changes and updates. These include factual updates to terminology and references, replacing the Development Advice Map with a new Wales Flood Map to be maintained by Natural Resources Wales, policy for the new flood zones, and updating guidance on coastal erosion currently set out in TAN 14 and integrating it

within TAN 15. This will enable TAN 14 to be cancelled. The outcome of the consultation and any impact on the LDP will be reported in a future AMR. It is anticipated that the revised TAN will be published in time to inform the RLDP.

### **Development Plans Manual (Edition 3, March 2020)**

- 3.9 A draft Development Plans Manual (Edition 3) was published for consultation between 07 June 2019 and 30 August 2019, with the final version published in March 2020; this replaces the previous iteration of the Manual. The Development Plans Manual has been updated to take account of significant changes to planning legislation and national policy since the LDP Manual (Edition 2) was published in 2015. The most significant changes are the Planning Wales (Act) (PWA) 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the publication of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 10, December 2018).

### **Welsh National Marine Plan**

- 3.10 The Welsh National Marine Plan was published in November 2019. It is the first marine plan for Wales. It has been prepared and adopted under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) 2009 for the purposes of Section 51 of the MCAA and in accordance with Schedule 6 of the MCAA and in conformity with the UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS)<sup>2</sup>. It states that the Plan and supporting material should be used by public authorities to guide decision making and as such should be taken into account when making decisions under the Adopted LDP, as well as in the preparation of the RLDP.

## **Regional Context**

### **Strategic Development Plans (SDP)**

- 3.11 The Planning (Wales) Act provides a legal framework for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans. This will allow larger than local issues such as housing demand, search areas for strategic employment sites and supporting transport infrastructure, which cut across a number of local planning authorities, to be considered and planned for in an integrated way. SDPs will address cross-boundary issues at a regional level and must be in general conformity with the NDF.
- 3.12 On 29th January 2018 the Cardiff Capital Region Cabinet agreed that work should commence on a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the region which includes Monmouthshire. A SDP Project Group<sup>3</sup> has been established tasked with progressing key options for the SDP, including SDP boundary, governance, timescale and scope. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill will mandate the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) in each of the four regions in Wales through a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC). It is anticipated that it will receive Royal Assent in

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<sup>3</sup> SDP Project Group comprises heads of planning and planning policy managers from the 10 local planning authorities in South East Wales.

February/March 2021. Future progress on the SDP and any subsequent implications for the Replacement LDP will be reported in future AMRs.

### **Cardiff Capital Region and City Deal**

- 3.13 The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) is made up of an area of South East Wales, consisting of the ten local authorities, including Monmouthshire. These local authorities are working collaboratively to seek to tackle issues that affect the whole of the region, such as worklessness and poor transportation links, with the aim of working together and collaborating on projects and plans for the area. The Authorities forming the Capital Region are progressing the City Deal to fund projects aimed at boosting the competitiveness of the region over the next 20 years. The CCR City Deal will help boost economic growth by improving transport links, increasing skills, helping people into work and giving businesses the support they need to grow. It will also establish strong governance across the region through the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet. The progress of the Cardiff Capital Region agenda, City Deal Bid and any subsequent implications for the LDP will be given further consideration in subsequent AMRs where appropriate. This investment represents a significant opportunity for Monmouthshire and for the region.

### **M4 Relief Road**

- 3.14 The decision was announced in June 2019 that the M4 Relief Road would not proceed, following the conclusion of a public inquiry into the project and the publication of the Inspector's Report. The route within Monmouthshire is currently safeguarded in the Adopted LDP. A Written Statement from the Welsh Minister for Economy and Infrastructure, has stated that the Welsh Government has appointed an expert Commission (the South East Wales Transport Commission) who are tasked with making recommendations about alternative solutions to improve the transport network in South East Wales. Progress on this and any subsequent implications for the Adopted LDP and the RLDP will be reported in future AMRs.

## **Local Context**

### **Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment and Plan**

- 3.15 Under the provisions of the Well-being of Future Generations Act every Public Service Board (PSB) in Wales was required to publish a Well-being Plan by May 2018. Replacing the Single Integrated Plan (SIP), the plans were to look at the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of each county and have clear links with the LDP. The Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-Being Plan was published in February 2018. PSB partners are working on detailed action plans which set out how they will deliver the steps identified in the Well-Being Plan. The prioritised steps for each year are set out in an Annual Report which provides details of the progress made

with each of these steps. Further progress on the implementation of the Local Well-being Plan will be reported in subsequent AMRs insofar as it relates to the Adopted LDP. The Well-being Plan has informed the preparation of the RLDP.

### **Future Monmouthshire**

- 3.16 Monmouthshire County Council embarked on a project to re-evaluate the needs and aspirations of our communities and how a 'Council of the Future' will seek to meet those challenges. The community engagement work ran alongside and was integral to work on the Local Well-being Plan. The results of this engagement and other relevant evidence gathered for this exercise will be of relevance to the RLDP.

### **Monmouthshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update**

- 3.17 The Wales Act 2017 devolved CIL to the Welsh Government, which to date has given no indication of its likely approach to CIL. Given the uncertainty over the measure, therefore, further implementation of CIL in Monmouthshire has been held in abeyance. The progress of the CIL and any subsequent implications for the LDP/RLDP will be given further consideration in successive AMRs where appropriate.

### **Monmouthshire 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools**

- 3.18 Of note work on two 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools in the County has been completed, Monmouth School and Caldicot School. The next school in the process will be King Henry VIII School in Abergavenny. The site will have a 3-19 school and the Council are currently in the process of appointing the Project Team and undertaking initial surveys. At the moment Chepstow School is in Band C and will not be brought forward for at least another 4 years. Progress on schools in the County reflects a key corporate priority of children having the best possible start in life and no-one being left behind.

### **Climate Emergency**

- 3.19 In May 2019 Monmouthshire County Council declared a Climate Emergency. The Council is looking to reduce its carbon emissions, by reducing its energy use, generating solar power and encouraging electric cars. The target is to reduce council carbon emissions to zero by 2030. During summer 2019, the Council developed an action plan and strategy to set out how this would be achieved. The action plan was adopted by the Council in October 2019 and focuses on energy, transport, green spaces, waste and procurement. Progress on the action plan will be reported in future AMRs and will inform the preparation of the RLDP.

### **Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement**

- 3.20 In November 2019 the Council published an economic ambition statement. This sets the Council's direction of travel and the combination of measures required for sustainable economic growth/prosperity, including an investment prospectus, close

engagement with the business sector, demonstrating a pro-business culture and land assembly interventions to ensure employment sites come forward. The AMR will consider how the LDP is performing against the existing employment indicators, whilst the RLDP will play a key role in supporting the Council’s vision for economic growth going forward and will be one of the main enablers in delivering sustainable economic growth.

## General Economic Trends

### Economic Activity

- 3.21 Key economic activity data for Monmouthshire and Wales from the LDP base date of 2011 to the current monitoring period is shown in the tables below. The data demonstrates that during the current monitoring period the percentage of the economically active who are in employment has increased to 79.5% and at the same time the percentage of the economically active who are unemployed has decreased, to 2.7% the lowest level recorded since monitoring began. The proportion of those economically active who are unemployed in the County remains significantly lower than the Wales figure. The Gross pay for full-time workers resident in the County remains at a higher level in Monmouthshire than in Wales as a whole (+20.1%). Such changes are not considered to be so significant as to have any implications for the LDP. These economic indicators and any future Covid-19 impacts will be considered in subsequent AMRs and any potential implications recorded.

#### Economically Active – In Employment

	Monmouthshire	Wales
April 2011-March 2012	73.8%	66.7%
April 2012-March 2013	74.2%	67.6%
April 2013-March 2014	73.0%	69.5%
April 2014-March 2015	74.5%	69.3%
April 2015-March 2016	78.8%	71.1%
April 2016-March 2017	76.5%	71.4%
April 2017-March 2018	78.0%	72.7%
April 2018-March 2019	77.7%	73.1%
April 2019-March 2020	79.5%	73.7%

Source: Nomis (Annual Population Survey, July 2020)

#### Economically Active – Unemployed

	Monmouthshire	Wales
April 2011-March 2012	5.1%	8.4%
April 2012-March 2013	5.6%	8.3%
April 2013-March 2014	5.1%	7.4%
April 2014-March 2015	4.9%	6.8%
April 2015-March 2016	3.3%	5.4%
April 2016-March 2017	2.9%	4.4%
April 2017-March 2018	3.5%	4.9%
April 2018-March 2019	3.0%	4.5%
April 2019-March 2020	2.7%	3.7%

Source: Nomis (Annual Population Survey, July 2020)

### Gross Weekly Pay Full-Time Workers (Earnings by Residence)

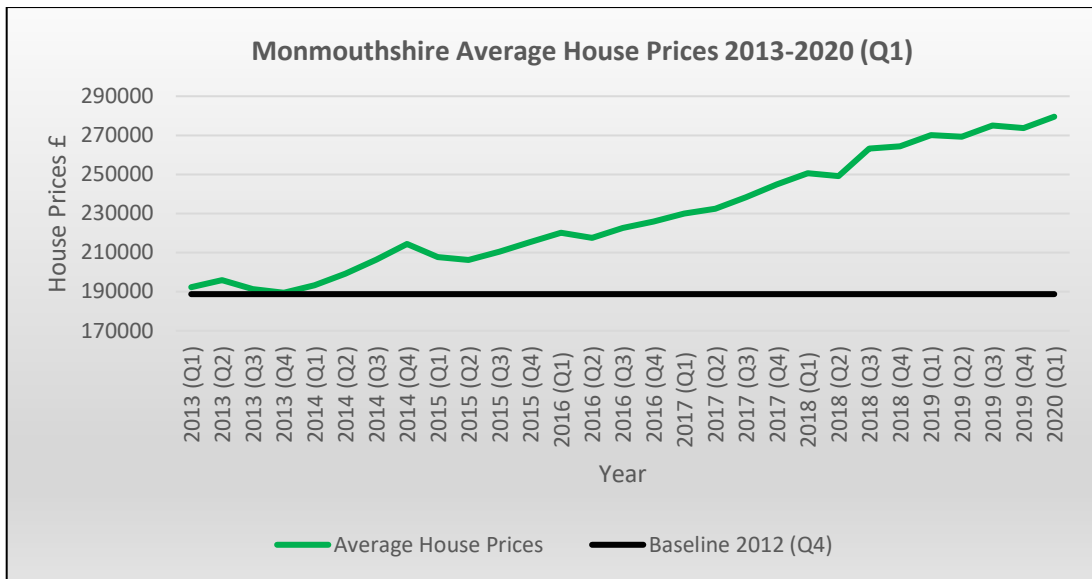
	Monmouthshire	Wales
2011	£560.3	£455.1
2012	£530.7	£454.9
2013	£579.5	£475.3
2014	£582.1	£480.0
2015	£610.5	£487.6
2016	£619.4	£499.2
2017	£619.6	£505.9
2018	£638.5	£518.6
2019	£649.6	£540.7

Source: Nomis (Annual Population Survey, July 2020)

- 3.22 Evidence continues to suggest that the income for economically active women who are resident within the County is significantly lower than that of men within the same category. It is unlikely that this is something that the land use planning system can directly influence, however, further consideration will be given to this as part of the Future Monmouthshire project and, if relevant, via Plan revision.

### House Prices

- 3.23 As demonstrated in the graph below, Land Registry data indicates that average house prices in Monmouthshire have increased over the current monitoring period. Subsequently, average prices in quarter 1 2020 (January to March) at £279,532 were higher than the 2012 quarter 4 baseline price (£188,720). If the average house price trend data recorded exceeds the identified trigger for further investigation set out in relation to Policy S4, the Council will consider re-assessing the viability evidence which informed the affordable housing policy targets. This is given further consideration in the policy analysis section relating to Policy S4.
- 3.24 A number of recent events and proposals, including the abolition of the Severn Bridge tolls in December 2018, plans for the South East Wales Metro together with wider opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal agenda, as well as the recent Covid-19 pandemic could have potential impacts on house prices in Monmouthshire. Any such impacts will be considered in subsequent AMRs and through the RLDP process.



Source: Land Registry UK House Price Index (July 2020)

### Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

3.25 Additional/amended SPG has been prepared and adopted during this monitoring period, namely the Revised Affordable Housing SPG and Infill Development SPG. The Infill Development SPG provides guidance on small scale (fewer than 10 dwellings) infill development within the designated settlements as defined under Policies S1, H1, H2 and H3 of the LDP. The existing Affordable Housing SPG has been revised in order to update housing data and to provide simplification and clarity with regard to a number of other areas, for example revisions following a change to the method for calculating financial contributions towards affordable housing.

### Summary

3.26 As detailed above, revised/new national, regional and local plans, policies and strategies have emerged during the current monitoring period, some of which may have implications for the future implementation of the LDP and for the RLDP. Subsequent AMRs will continue to provide updates on relevant contextual material which could affect the Plan’s future implementation.

## 4 LDP Monitoring Process

### How is the LDP Monitored?

- 4.1 Section 5 provides a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of the LDP policy framework in delivering the identified policy aims/outcomes and targets, together with appropriate recommendations for further action. Consideration is also given to any significant policy specific contextual issues that have arisen over the monitoring period which could affect policy implementation. Aligned with the LDP monitoring framework, the analysis is grouped according to the Plan's strategic policies and is structured as follows:

<b>Monitoring Aims / Outcomes</b>	The monitoring aim / outcome identifies what each strategic policy is seeking to achieve. Supporting objectives, development management and site allocation policies are also set out to demonstrate the interlinkages between the policies.
<b>Contextual information</b>	Significant contextual information that has been published over the monitoring period is outlined where relevant to a particular strategic policy. This will enable the AMR to determine whether the performance of a policy has been affected by contextual changes. These can include new or amended legislation, national, regional and local plans, policies or strategies as well as external social and economic trends which could affect the delivery of the LDP such as economic conditions. Any such changes lie outside the remit of the LDP.
<b>Indicators, targets and triggers</b>	<p>Policy performance recorded during the monitoring period in relation to the indicators and relevant targets /triggers for further investigation is set out for each strategic policy.</p> <p>The targets and triggers for certain indicators have been subdivided to enable the effective monitoring of these indicators. This includes indicators relating to the following strategic policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S1 Spatial Strategy</li> <li>• S3 Strategic Housing Sites</li> <li>• S4 Affordable Housing</li> <li>• S6 Retail</li> <li>• S8/S9 Enterprise and Economy/ Employment Sites Provision</li> </ul> <p>The total number of targets and triggers in the monitoring framework has subsequently increased.</p>



	<p>Where relevant, indicator data recorded in previous AMRs is provided in the tables. Such data is colour coded (i.e. red, amber, green) to enable trends to be readily identified.</p>
<p><b>Analysis</b></p>	<p>Having regard to the indicators, relevant targets, triggers and monitoring outcomes, the AMR assesses whether the Plan’s strategic policies are being implemented as intended and whether the LDP objectives and strategy are being achieved. This includes the identification and further investigation of any policy that fails to meet its target and/or has reached its trigger point. However, the fact that a policy reaches its trigger level does not automatically imply that the policy is failing. The analysis will consider whether such performance may be due to extraneous circumstances or could be justified in the context of the overall policy framework.</p> <p>The analysis excludes those indicator targets with no applicable planning applications or completions to assess during the monitoring period. These totalled 2 during the current monitoring period.</p>
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	<p>Taking account of the policy analysis, appropriate recommendations are provided including a statement of any necessary actions required. If policies are found to be failing the AMR will set out clear recommendations on what, if anything, needs to be done to address this.</p> <p>Consideration of the LDP against all of the information gathered over the monitoring period will allow the Council to determine whether a review of the Plan is required.</p>

### Policy Performance Traffic Light Rating

- 4.2 As a visual aid in monitoring the effectiveness of the Plan’s strategic policies and to provide a quick reference overview of policy performance a ‘traffic light’ rating is included for relevant indicators as follows:

	Policy targets/monitoring outcomes* are being achieved
	Policy targets/monitoring outcomes* are not currently being achieved but there are no concerns over the implementation of the policy
	Policy targets/monitoring outcomes* are not currently being achieved with subsequent concerns over the implementation of the policy
	No conclusion can be drawn due to limited data or no applicable data during the monitoring period

\*For those indicators with no target/trigger the monitoring outcomes are assessed and rated accordingly.

### Replacement Indicators

- 4.3 In instances where the Council has been unable to monitor an indicator or where an indicator has been superseded, an explanation will be provided in the relevant policy analysis section and, where appropriate, an alternative indicator will be identified. There may also be instances where it is necessary to amend an indicator, for example, to improve the clarity of the indicator or realign it with relevant data sets. In such cases an explanation will be provided in the relevant policy analysis section and the indicator amended as appropriate.

### Triggers for Plan Review

- 4.4 The Council is required to commence a full review of the LDP every four years. It is, however, recognised that the following exceptional circumstances could elicit an early review of the Plan:
- A significant change in external conditions
  - A significant change in national policy or legislation
  - A significant change in local circumstances e.g. closure of a significant employment site that weakens the local economy
  - A significant change in development pressures or needs and investment strategies of major public and private investors
  - Significant concerns from the results of the AMR in terms of policy effectiveness/implementation and site delivery.

All of these issues will be taken into consideration in determining whether a full or partial review of the Plan is necessary.

- 4.5 As detailed in paragraphs 2.16-2.18, a full review of the Monmouthshire LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018. The report concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a new LDP.

**Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring Framework**

- 4.6 The Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring expands the assessment of the performance of the LDP against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) monitoring objectives. The SA identifies 17 objectives and 62 indicators to measure the environmental, economic and social impacts of the LDP. This is set out in Section 6 of the AMR.

## 5 LDP Monitoring – Policy Analysis

- 5.1 This section provides a detailed assessment of whether the Plan’s strategic policies, and associated supporting policies, are being implemented as intended and whether the LDP objectives and strategy are being achieved. Appropriate recommendations are subsequently provided, together with necessary actions to address any policy implementation issues identified through the monitoring process. Aligned with the LDP, the analysis is set out in strategic policy order.

## Spatial Strategy

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** New housing development to be distributed in accordance with the LDP Spatial Strategy

**Strategic Policy:** S1/S2 Spatial Distribution of New Housing Provision

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 3 & 4

### Contextual Changes

In March 2020, Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is monitored. The changes relate to the monitoring of overall completions and involve the revocation of Technical Advice Note 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015). Full details on revision to the monitoring method is set out in relation to Policy S3.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
Proportion of new housing development provided in accordance with the spatial strategy Policy S1 / settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2*	Location of new residential development should correspond to the requirements set out in the Tables to Policy S2:	Housing completions are +/- 10% of the requirements set out in the tables to Policy S2 in any 1 year	
	<b>a) Main towns 41%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 27%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 40.2%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 38.2%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 71.3%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 60.3%)</i>		<b>Dwelling Completions</b> <b>60.11%</b>
	<b>b) Severnside Settlements 33%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 43%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 8.1%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 19.3%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 5.4%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 16.9%)</i>		<b>24.43%</b>

	<b>c) Rural Secondary Settlements 10%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 6%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 37.2%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 21.4%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 12.2%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 16.7%)</i>		<b>3.65%</b>
	<b>d) Rural General 16%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 24%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 14.5%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 21%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 11.1%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 6.1%)</i>		<b>11.79%</b>

#### Analysis – Dwelling Completions

##### a) Main Towns

A total of 356 dwelling completions were recorded for this monitoring period. Further analysis on the overall completion rate is set out in relation to Policy S3.

Of the 356 completions recorded during the monitoring period, 60.11% (214 units) were in the County's main towns. This is higher than the identified target of 41% and exceeds the 10% acceptability range. The trigger for this indicator has consequently been met. Abergavenny accounted for the highest number of completions at 114 units or 53% of main town completions. Monmouth accounted for 38% with 80 completions and Chepstow 9% with 20 completions.

Of the completions in Monmouth, the majority were located on the LDP allocated Wonastow Road site (SAH4) (64 units). Of the completions in Abergavenny, 68 units were located on the LDP allocated Deri Farm site (SAH1), with a further 32 on the LDP allocated Coed Glas site (SAH9). There were no completions recorded for Chepstow from LDP allocations. The remainder of the completions related to small sites\*\*. There were no completions relating to windfall sites in any of the main towns during this monitoring period\*\*\*.

General market housing accounted for 71% (153 units) of the completions in the main towns, with the remaining 29% (61 units) made up of affordable housing. The largest number of affordable housing completions were delivered in Abergavenny (39 units), the majority of which were delivered on the Deri Farm site. Monmouth accounted for 15

affordable units, all of which were delivered in the Wonastow Road site. Seven affordable units were completed in Chepstow, all of which were on unallocated small sites\*\*.

The percentage of dwelling completions recorded in the main towns during this monitoring period of 60.11% is consistent with last year's rate of 60.3% and a slight drop from 2017-18 rate of 71.3%. It remains considerably higher than in the first three monitoring periods (2016 – 2017, 38.2%, 2015 – 2016, 40.2% and 2014 – 2015, 27%). These trends are considered to reflect the time attributed to getting the LDP allocations in position to provide deliveries. This is also reflected by the contribution LDP allocations made to the main towns' completion figures. Three allocated LDP sites accounted for 81% of the main town completions, delivering 174 dwellings between them (Deri Farm, Wonastow Road and Coed Glas). Further details on the progress of these and other LDP allocations is set out in the analysis of strategic housing sites (Policy S3).

The exceedance of the target within this indicator is considered to reflect a timing/phasing issue with the delivery of the Plan's spatial strategy, rather than an issue with the effectiveness of the strategy itself. While there is a higher proportion of overall completions than the earlier monitoring periods, where it fell below the target of 41%, the more recent trend of exceeding the target is considered to be adjusting to this and reflective of a number of large LDP allocations delivering on sites. As such, there is not considered to be any significant issue with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to dwelling completions in the main towns. It is recognised that the allocated sites at Wonastow Road, Monmouth, Deri Farm and Coed Glas, Abergavenny accounted for the majority of completions, all of which are in accordance with the spatial strategy. The Council will nevertheless continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining Plan period.

#### **b) Severnside Settlements**

The Severnside Settlements accounted for 24.43% (87 units) of dwelling completions recorded during the monitoring period. This falls within the acceptability range of +/- 10% of the 33% target. The LDP allocation at Sudbrook Paper Mill (site SAH7) accounted for 70% of these completions which recorded 61 completions, of which 6 were affordable. The Rockfield Farm allocation at Undy (SAH5) contributed a further 16 units (9 open market and 7 affordable units). The remaining 10 completions were all on small infill sites. Six of which were general open market units and 4 affordable units on a site at Elm Road, Caldicot.

The proportion of completions achieved within the Severnside area is anticipated to continue to broadly align with the target figure of 33% and the spatial strategy set out in Policy S2. The Rockfield Farm, Undy (SAH5) site is scheduled to progress further in the next monitoring period and continue to be a significant contributor to completions in this part of the County. Other notable sites scheduled to contribute to the housing supply in the Severnside area include the allocated site at the Former Sudbrook Paper Mill, Sudbrook (SAH7) and a windfall site at the Old Shipyard, Sudbrook.

Over the longer term, reserved matters approvals on a couple of sites in the Severnside area look set to provide a constant supply of housing in this part of the County. Reserved matters have been approved on the Crick Road, Portskewett site (SAH2) and the

'unallocated' site at Church Road, Caldicot. Neither site are scheduled to contribute completions during the next monitoring period, however they are scheduled to contribute to the supply of homes over the next five years. Similarly, while progress has been slower than anticipated on Strategic Housing allocation SAH6 – Land at Vinegar Hill, a planning application for 155 units has been submitted and the first completions are anticipated on site 2021/22, subject to gaining planning permission.

Progress with delivery of sites on the ground and through the planning applications process indicates an ongoing supply of homes in the Severnside area. The Council will continue to monitor this issue in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy and continued alignment with the target set out in Policy S2.

### **c) Rural Secondary Settlements**

A total of 13 completions were recorded during the monitoring period within the Rural Secondary Settlements, accounting for 3.6% of all completions in the County. This is below the identified target of 10%, but within the +/- 10% flexibility range. Accordingly, the trigger for further investigation has not been reached.

The completion of the final unit on the Usk Road, Penperlleni (SAH10(ii)) site contributed one unit towards the total number. The remaining twelve completions in the Rural Secondary Settlement were all small sites\*\* providing general open market units. The units were distributed across the four settlements that make up the Rural Secondary Settlements (Usk, Raglan, Penperlleni & Llanfoist)

The completion rate is lowest rate recorded since the AMR process commenced. This is considered to be a reflection of the completion of one of the SAH10 – Rural Secondary Settlements site allocations, with the remaining two allocations yet to commence – SAH10(i) – Cwrt Burrium, Usk and SAH10(iii) – Land at Chepstow Road, Raglan. Progress has however been made on these allocations with planning permission now in place for both sites. A further windfall site is also scheduled to contribute to the housing supply on a site at Grove Farm, Llanfoist. Development is yet to commence on all three sites and completions are not anticipated until the 2021/22 monitoring period. A low completion rate is therefore anticipated next year, to be delivered primarily through small sites.

Given the progress made on the remaining allocations in the Rural Secondary Settlements, there is not considered to be any significant issues with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to dwelling completions delivered from this tier of the settlement hierarchy. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining Plan period.

### **d) Rural General**

A total of 42 completions were recorded during the monitoring period in the County's Rural General areas, which includes the Main Villages and Minor Villages listed in Policy S1, as well homes in the open countryside. These completions account for 11.79% of the overall completions in the County compared to the identified target of 16%. This is within the +/- 10% flexibility allowance and accordingly, the trigger for further investigation has not been reached.



All of the completions recorded are accounted for by small sites. Of these 38 were general market dwellings and 4 were affordable dwellings. There affordable units were as a result of the rural exceptions site at Llantilio Crossenny, delivered by Monmouthshire Housing Association.

Main Villages accounted for 10 units of the overall 42 units, Minor Villages accounted for 14 units and 18 were delivered in the open countryside. All 18 units in the countryside involved the conversion or change of use of an existing building rather than the development of new buildings.

There were no completions recorded on the SAH11 – Main Villages sites during this monitoring period. However, two Main Village sites have received planning permission in the past 12 months and are expected to contribute to completions in this tier in the settlement hierarchy over the next couple of years. The sites involved are SA11(i)(b) – Cross Ash Garage and SA11(ii) – Land off Well Lane, Devauden. Through the delivery of these sites together with continued opportunities for small site conversions and infill development, it is anticipated that the proportion of completions in these settlements will continue to align with the target figure of 16% over the Plan period.

The completion rate is in line with those achieved over previous monitoring periods, with rates ranging from a low of 6.1% and a high of 24%, all of which have been within the +/- 10% flexibility allowance. In view of this, there is not considered to be any issues with the implementation of the Plan’s spatial strategy in relation to dwelling completions in the rural general areas as set out in Policy S1. Therefore no further investigation is required at present. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the Plan period.

<b>Recommendation</b>
a) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor. Continue to monitor, however, see comments in relation to allocated strategic housing sites (Policy S3).
b) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.
c) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.
d) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.

\*Dwelling completions and permissions are monitored in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the spatial strategy’s implementation

\*\* Small site windfall <10 dwellings

\*\*\* Large site windfall >10 dwellings

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019– 31 March 2020	
Proportion of new housing development permitted in accordance with the spatial strategy Policy S1 / settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2*	Location of new residential development should correspond to the requirements set out in the Tables to Policy S2:	Housing permissions are +/- 10% of the requirements set out in the tables to Policy S2 in any 1 year	<b>Dwelling Permissions</b>	
	<b>e) Main towns 41%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 81%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 31%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 30.2%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 59.61%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 29.6%)</i>			<b>13.5%</b>
	<b>f) Severnside Settlements 33%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 11%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 10%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 54.1%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 24.15%)</i> <i>(2018 - 19: 53.2%)</i>			<b>61.8%</b>
	<b>g) Rural Secondary Settlements 10%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 1%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 37%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 5.2%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 10.26%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 8.0%)</i>			<b>2.4%</b>
	<b>h) Rural General 16%</b>  <i>(2014-15: 7%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 22%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 10.5%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 5.98%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 9.2%)</i>			<b>22.3%</b>

## Analysis – Dwelling Permissions

Dwelling permissions in Monmouthshire are lower than recorded during the last two monitoring periods, from 1,238 in 2017-2018, 598 in 2018-2019 to 251 in 2019-2020. This decrease is due to the majority of allocated LDP Strategic Sites already having planning permission. It is worth noting that significant progress is being made on a number of strategic sites and sites pursued through the unallocated policy that was introduced to address the shortage of housing land supply. A number of reserved matters applications have been approved during this monitoring period which are not included in this year's figures to avoid double counting numbers included in previous AMRs from the outline planning applications. Further details on these sites can be found in the commentary to the Strategic Housing Sites section discussed in relation to Policy S3.

### e) Main Towns

Of the 251 dwelling units granted planning permission during the monitoring period, 13.5% (34 units) were in the County's Main Towns of Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow. As this is 27.5% lower than the identified LDP target (41%), the trigger for further investigation has been reached. The permissions were made up of 34 applications, none of which are for major applications or allocations in the LDP. In this respect, all 34 units are classified as small sites, contributing to the Plan's small site allowance. Of these, 5 applications accounted for 9 units (26%) relating to conversions and change of uses and 9 applications accounted for 25 units (74%) relating to new build dwellings. Two applications accounted for 17 of these units and 50% of all the units approved in the main towns during this monitoring period. These both involved 100% affordable housing schemes submitted by Monmouthshire Housing Association over two former garage sites in Chepstow and accounted for all affordable housing permitted in the main towns during the monitoring period. Overall the open market/affordable housing split across all the main towns was 17 affordable units (50%) and 17 open market (50%)

Chepstow accounted for the majority of dwelling permissions recorded at 73%, with Abergavenny accounting for 18% and Monmouth 9%.

The number of dwellings permitted in the main towns during the current monitoring period is significantly lower than previous monitoring periods and is the lowest recorded since the adoption of the LDP, both in terms of numbers of units permitted and as a percentage of overall permissions across the County. This year permissions in the main towns accounted for 13.5% of all units approved compared to 29.7% in the 2018 – 2019 AMR, 59.6% in 2017 – 2018 period, 30.2% in 2016 – 2017, 31% in 2015 – 2016 and 81% in 2014 – 2015.

It was anticipated in the earlier AMRs that the proportion of permissions in the main towns would decrease in the subsequent AMRs due to the allocated Strategic Housing Sites in Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow gaining planning permission in previous monitoring periods. An update on the progression of allocated sites in the main towns is provided in the strategic sites policy analysis (Policy S3).

In view of the above, there is not considered to be any significant issue with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to dwelling permissions granted in

the main towns and therefore no further investigation is required at present. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining Plan period.

**f) Severnside Settlements**

Over half (60.8%, 155 units) of the 251 dwellings granted planning permission during the monitoring period were in Severnside settlements. This is above the identified target for this area (33%) accordingly, the trigger for further investigation has been reached. Of the 155 units granted permission 88% were in Caldicot, 8% in Rogiet, 3% in Undy and 1% in Magor. Caerwent, Portskewett and Sudbrook did not have any residential units permitted during the monitoring period.

A site at Church Road, Caldicot accounts for the majority of the units permitted in Caldicot and the wider Severnside area at 95% of units in Caldicot and 84% of units in Severnside. This application (2018/00880) grants outline permission for 130 units assessed against the 'unallocated sites' assessment approved by the Council to address the housing land supply shortage in the County. A windfall site at Ifton Manor Farm, Rogiet accounted for an additional 12 units permitted. Small sites accounted for the remaining permissions in Severnside – 7 dwellings in Caldicot, 1 dwellings in Rogiet, 1 dwelling in Magor and 4 dwelling in Undy.

Of the dwellings permitted in Severnside settlements, 69% (107units) were for market homes and 31% (48 units) for affordable homes.

The proportion of development permitted in Severnside settlements is higher than the previous monitoring periods at 61.8% compared to the lowest rate of 10% recorded in 2015-2016 and next highest rate of 54% in 2016-2017. This year's permissions represented a further increase on last year's rate of 53.2%. This is attributed to the permission at Church Road, Caldicot and there being no other significant developments approved elsewhere in the County during this monitoring period.

No additional sites are anticipated to emerge through the 'unallocated sites' policy mechanism during the next monitoring period. There is one further strategic housing allocation in Severnside that is yet to receive planning permission – Land at Vinegar Hill, Undy. Submission of this application in next monitoring period may result in a continued higher proportion of permissions in the Severnside region due to all other strategic housing sites having planning permission. An update on the progression of allocated sites in Severnside and the County is provided in the Strategic Sites policy analysis (Policy S3).

The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining Plan period.

**g) Rural Secondary Settlements**

Six units (2.4%) of all dwellings permitted during the monitoring period were in the County's rural secondary settlements. This is within the 10% indicator range; therefore the trigger for further investigation has not been reached.

The six units can be attributed to two planning applications, both of which are small windfall sites. The first is for four units at the former Llanfoist Primary School site in Llanfoist and two units on land at Caestory House, High Street, Raglan.

While the percentage of permissions in the Rural Secondary Settlements is lower than in previous years (2.4% compared to 8% and 10.2% in the last two AMRs) this was anticipated and reflects two of the three LDP allocations in settlement tier already having planning permission. Progress has also been made on the remaining Rural Secondary Settlement allocated LDP site at Monmouth Road, Usk (SAH10(i)). This received planning permission in April 2020 and will be included in next year's monitoring period.

In view of the above, there is not considered to be any significant issue with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to dwelling permissions granted in the rural secondary settlements. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining plan period.

#### **h) Rural General**

56 (22.3%) of all dwellings permitted during the monitoring period were in the County's rural areas. While this is higher than the identified LDP target of 16% it is within the +/-10% flexibility. Accordingly, the trigger for further investigation has not been reached.

The number of permissions recorded in rural areas during this monitoring period is higher than most of the other monitoring periods, although it is broadly in line with the rate reached in the 2015-2016 rate of 22%. While this year's proportion of 22.3% is higher than last year's proportion of 9.2%, the number of units permitted is only an increase of 1 unit (56 units approved 2019-2020 compared to 55 units in 2018-2019). This increase in proportion is therefore more a reflection of a drop in permissions in the main towns than any real increase in the rural general settlements. Despite variations in previous AMRs, the proportion of permissions in the County's rural areas recorded has been within + / - 10% of the target since adoption, meaning that the trigger for further investigation has not been met to date which signifies that there are no significant concerns with the permissions achieved in rural areas.

Unsurprisingly, small sites accounted for the majority of the dwelling permissions recorded in a range of rural settlements throughout Monmouthshire (73%, 41 units). Two LDP allocated main village sites at Devauden (SAH11(ii)) and Cross Ash Garage (SAH11(i)(b)) gained planning permission over the monitoring period accounting for 21 units in total (38%) over the monitoring period, (12 open market, 9 affordable over both sites). The remaining units predominately related to small scale residential developments of which 36% (20 units) are attributed to barn conversions. A total of 47 market dwellings were permitted and 9 affordable dwellings.

In view of the above, there is not considered to be any issue with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to dwelling permissions granted in the County's rural settlements. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining plan period.

<b>Recommendation</b>
e) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.
f) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.
g) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.
h) No action is currently required. Continue to monitor.

\*Dwelling completions and permissions are monitored in order to gain a comprehensive picture of the spatial strategy's implementation

## Housing Provision

<b>Monitoring Aim/Outcome:</b>	To provide 4,500 dwelling units (including 960 affordable dwelling units) in the County over the plan period.
<b>Strategic Policy:</b>	S2 Housing Provision
<b>LDP Objectives Supported:</b>	1, 3 & 4
<b>Other LDP Policies Supported:</b>	H1-H9, SAH1-SAH11

### Contextual Changes

In March 2020, Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is monitored. The changes to PPW remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with a policy statement making it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of development plan housing requirements as part of LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). It also involved the revocation of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015) in its entirety as a consequence of the policy change to PPW.

Following these changes and in accordance with the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), a housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group has been undertaken. This includes additional information on Monmouthshire's current housing land availability, including dwelling completions/permissions and their locations.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. The number of additional general market and affordable dwellings built over the plan period*	Up to 488 dwellings to be built per annum 2013-2021  <i>(2014-15: 205)</i> <i>(2015-16: 234)</i> <i>(2016-17: 238)</i>	10% less or greater than the LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	<b>356</b>

	(2017-18: 279) (2018-19: 443)		
2. The annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR)**	Difference between actual annual completions and the AAR  (2014-15: -245 units (-54.4%)) (2015-16: -216 units (-48%)) (2016-17: -212 (-47.1%)) (2017-18: -171 units (-38%)) (2018-19: -7 units (-1.6%))	Under delivery of annual completions on two consecutive years	<b>-94 units (-20.9%)</b>
3. Total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR)**	Difference between the cumulative completions and the cumulative AAR  (2014-15: -769 units (-42.7%)) (2015-16: -985 units (-43.8%)) (2016-17: -1197 (-44.3%)) (2017-18: -1368 units (-43.4%))	Under delivery of completions on two consecutive years	<b>-1469 units (-36.3%)</b>



	(2018-19: -1375 units (-38.2%))		
4. Density of housing permitted on allocated sites♦	Meet the target densities set out in site allocation policies SAH1 to SAH10	Planning permissions granted that do not meet these densities	SAH2: 30 dph SAH3: 39 dph
5. Review of Gypsy/ Traveller Accommodation Needs and Sites Study to be completed within two years of the LDP's adoption	If a need for additional site(s) is identified seek to allocate a suitable site by Spring 2017	Identified need not met by Spring 2017	<b>Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment approved by WG January 2017. 13 pitches have been approved.</b>

#### Analysis

1. Whilst the method by which the monitoring of housing delivery has changed during this monitoring period this indicator is still included as it measures completions against the completion target (488) from Plan adoption in 2014 rather than from 2011, the beginning of the Plan period. This indicator thus addresses any under / over delivery in the first three years of the Plan period prior to adoption.

356 dwellings were built during the monitoring period (274 general market and 82 affordable).

The majority of completions were on allocated sites (252 units, 71%), including Deri Farm, Abergavenny (68), Coed Glas, Abergavenny (32), Wonastow Road, Monmouth (74), Land South Usk Road, Penperlleni (1 – this site is now complete), Sudbrook Paper Mill (61) and Rockfield Farm, Undy (16). Small sites (including conversions and windfalls) accounted for the remaining 104 completions (29%).

Whilst the completions recorded were not as high as in the last monitoring period they remain significantly higher than in the previous monitoring periods. The trigger for this indicator has, however not been met as completions have not been 10% less or greater than the LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years. The current completion figure, coupled with the completion rate of 1399 dwellings recorded during the five monitoring periods since adoption (205 completions in 2014-2015; 234 completions in 2015 – 2016; 238 completions in 2016 – 2017; 279 completions in 2017 – 2018; and 443 completions in

2018 – 2019), means that a total of 1755 completions have been recorded since the Plan's adoption.

The progression of LDP allocated sites continue to account for the higher level of completions recorded during this period compared to earlier monitoring periods. As a number of other allocated sites have obtained permission the dwelling completions will undoubtedly increase over the remainder of the Plan period. Given that two Strategic Housing Sites gained reserved matters permission during this monitoring period, it is anticipated that this, combined with the other strategic site allocations, will result in further completions on these sites during next year's monitoring period. The delivery of the LDP strategic housing sites in particular will enhance the completion rate in line with the identified target. An update on the progression of allocated strategic sites is provided in the strategic sites policy analysis (Policy S3).

There are numerous wider economic factors that influence housing delivery above and beyond the planning system. Six strategic site allocations had gained consent by the end of this monitoring period, and significant progress is being made on bringing the remaining strategic site forward, as indicated in the analysis of Policy S3. There is no evidence to suggest that the remaining strategic site allocation is not deliverable or that the allocation needs to be reviewed.

The Council will continue to monitor dwelling completion rates closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework in enabling the delivery of both general market and affordable dwellings.

2. & 3. As discussed above and in the context section of the AMR, during this AMR period the Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is to be monitored. The changes remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with a policy statement making it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP and agreed with the Housing Stakeholder Group, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of development plan housing requirements as part of LDP Annual Monitoring Reports. The way in which this should be undertaken is set out in the Development Plans Manual (DPM) (Edition 3) (March 2020).

Those LPAs who adopted their LDP prior to the publication of the DPM and so have not prepared a housing trajectory, are required to use the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) method as the primary indicator to measure housing delivery, and to include the trajectory approach within the first AMR published following publication of the DPM. The AAR for the adopted LDP equates to 450 dwellings per annum, the LDP requirement of 4,500 dwellings divided by the 10 year Plan period. This is the figure against which LDP dwelling delivery will now be monitored.

Two new indicators have been included in this AMR, which replace the previous indicator which measured the five-year housing land supply. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the AAR. The DPM states that this must be presented clearly in the AMR both in numerical and percentage terms (plus/minus x %) and that the trigger for further investigation should be under delivery of annual completions on two consecutive years. Whilst the Plan under delivered in the early

years of the Plan period in the most recent monitoring periods housing completions have been much closer to the AAR, -7 units (-1.6%) in 2018/19 and – 94 units (-20.9%) in 2019/20. This is due in main to the speed with which the strategic sites have come forward. Of the 7 strategic sites, 6 now have planning permission so it is likely that completions will be more in line with the AAR going forward. However, the trigger for Plan review has been met in previous AMRs and work on the Replacement Local Development Plan begun.

The second of these indicators measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR). Again the DPM states that this must be presented clearly in the AMR both in numerical and percentage terms (plus/minus x %) and that the trigger for further investigation should be under delivery of completions on two consecutive years. There has been under delivery of cumulative completions since the beginning of the Plan period and so the trigger has been met. However, in more recent AMRs the % of under delivery has steadily declined as the strategic sites have come forward. More detailed analysis of progress on strategic sites can be found in the section on Strategic Housing Sites (Policy S3).

The DPM also requires that the components of housing supply, including site allocations, large and small windfalls should be monitored separately and included on a graph to be included in the AMR. A housing trajectory has been prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group and is shown in the table and graph below. Detailed information with regard to the timing and phasing of sites included in the trajectory are included at Appendix 1. As there is only one year left of the Plan period the trajectory includes a further 5 years beyond this monitoring period. This takes the trajectory into the Replacement LDP Plan period and allows for more meaningful analysis of housing provision.

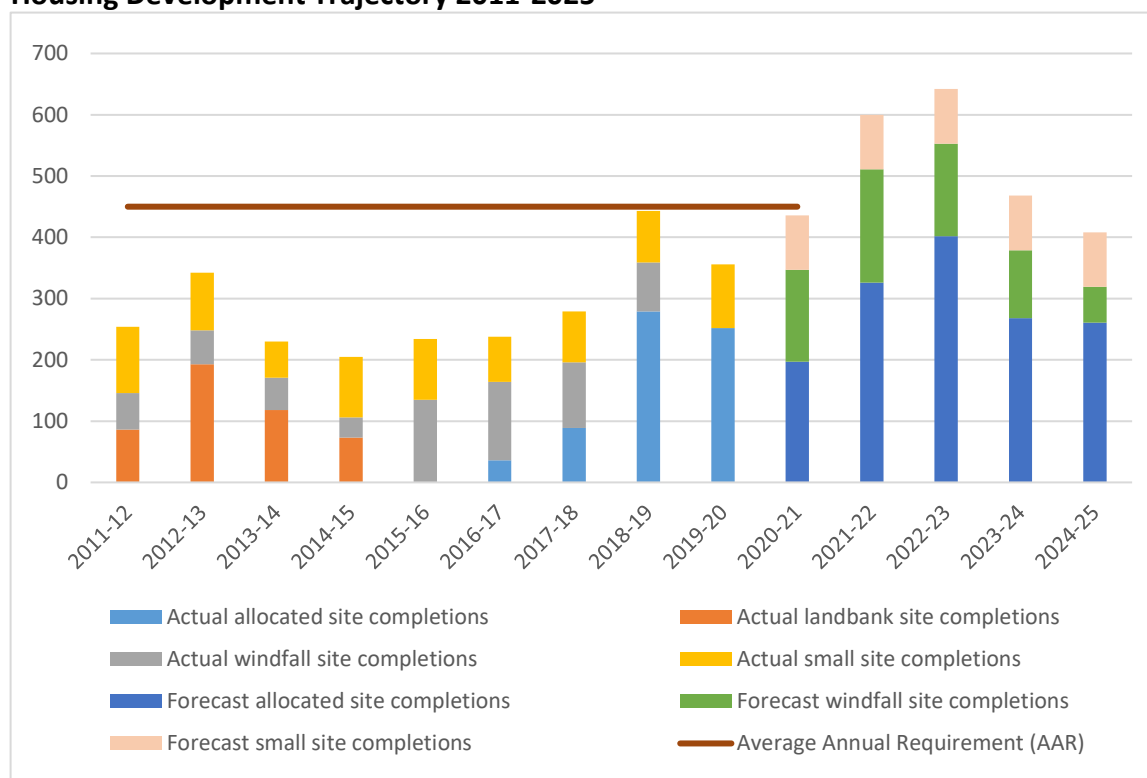
#### Annual Completions Compared against the AAR

LDP Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Actual completions landbank sites <sup>4</sup>	86	193	118	73	0	0	0	0	0					
Actual completions allocated sites	0	0	0	0	0	36	89	279	252					
Actual completions windfall sites	60	55	53	33	135	128	107	80	0					
Actual completions small sites	108	94	59	99	99	74	83	84	104					

<sup>4</sup> Landbank sites are those sites which were allocated for development in previous Plans

Anticipated completions allocated sites										197	326	402	268	261
Anticipated completions windfall sites										150	185	151	111	58
Anticipated completions small sites										89	89	89	89	89
<b>Total Actual Completions</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>408</b>
Average Annual Reqt. (based on straight line AAR)	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450				

### Housing Development Trajectory 2011-2025



This information clearly shows that in the early years of the LDP the majority of completions were coming from the landbank of sites from the previous Plan. In recent years, however, as the Strategic Sites have gained permission they are contributing significantly to total completions. Whilst these fall short of the AAR during the monitoring period they are projected to meet or exceed it over the next 5 years as the remaining sites build out.

4. The following allocated LDP sites\*\*\* acquired reserved matters planning consent over the monitoring period which has impacted on the number of units to be delivered on site. The site densities are as follows:

- Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) 269 units, density of 30 dwellings per hectare.

- Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3) 347 units, density of 39 dwellings per hectare.

Both sites achieved a density that was slightly higher than the target as set out in the LDP. The LDP target for Crick Road, Portskewett is 28.6, whilst that for Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow is 37.

In view of the above, as both of the LDP allocations granted permission over the monitoring period slightly exceeded the required target densities, there is not considered to be any significant issue with the implementation of the Plan's spatial strategy in relation to the density of housing permitted on allocated sites. The Council will nevertheless continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the spatial strategy over the remaining Plan period.

5. The Council is committed to monitoring the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and has prepared a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) which was submitted to the Welsh Minster in the 2016 - 2017 monitoring period. The aim of the assessment was to provide data which would identify Gypsy and Traveller pitch needs separately from wider residential demand and aspiration. A key finding of the assessment was that there was an estimated unmet need for eight pitches to 2021, based on overcrowding, unauthorised occupation and the likelihood of cultural aversion to conventional housing.

In view of this the Council's intention is to make provision for an appropriate site(s) to meet identified unmet need by working proactively with the Gypsy and Traveller households to establish their preference for site provision (private or Council). The findings of the GTAA process suggest that there is an aspiration within much of the Gypsy Traveller community for private site provision in Monmouthshire. Where necessary, the Council will work with and support Gypsy Traveller households to identify and develop suitable private sites to address the identified unmet need in accordance with the LDP policy framework. It is considered that the provision of such sites would be best dealt with through the existing LDP policy framework (Policy H8). If a private site(s) cannot be achieved there may be a need to identify a public gypsy/traveller site in accordance with the LDP policy framework.

During the last monitoring period, there was some progress in terms of progressing the recommendations of the GTAA, including the preparation and adoption of a Gypsy Traveller Pitch Accommodation Policy. The adoption of this policy was required before consideration could be given to the identification of suitable Gypsy Traveller sites. The Council's Housing Strategy Service produced a Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Accommodation Policy (a waiting list based on bands (levels) of need to assist in the allocation of pitches), this was approved and adopted by Single Member Cabinet Decision on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

In accordance with the monitoring framework, the identified need had not been met by Spring 2017 so the trigger for further investigation has been reached. However, as of Spring 2019 the unmet need identified in the GTAA has been met. Further details are given below.

As reported in previous AMRs, 2 planning applications for Gypsy/Traveller accommodation were refused over the 2016-17 period. The applications related to a private gypsy site comprising of an additional 5 pitches and associated development at land in Llangeview and a 4 pitch private Gypsy site in Llancayo. Both proposals were considered to be contrary to LDP policies in relation to development in the open countryside and it was considered that the applicants had failed to demonstrate that there were overriding exceptional circumstances that would outweigh the LDP policy framework. The Llangeview application (DC/2015/01424) was subsequently allowed at appeal in October 2017 for a permanent site for 7 pitches and associated development. The 4 pitch private Gypsy site in Llancayo (DC/2016/00297) was dismissed at appeal in December 2017 on all but one of the grounds. The inspector allowed in respect of ground (g) only, relating to the period of compliance with the Enforcement Notice, extending the period from 2 months to 12 months. This decision is currently being challenged at the High Court by the appellant.

A planning application for a one family traveller site with 1 pitch at land north east of Llanvetherine (DM/2018/00205) was refused on grounds of highway safety during the last monitoring period. The applicant subsequently appealed the decision with an appeal hearing in February 2019. The appeal was dismissed on the grounds of highway safety.

During the current monitoring period a planning application for a change of use of land to accommodate two park homes and up to 4 touring caravans (private family site) was approved at land adjacent Sunnybank, Crick (DM/2019/01480).

LDP criteria-based policy H8 will be used to consider any applications for Gypsy/Traveller accommodation that arise in Monmouthshire. An updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is being prepared to inform the RLDP.

<b>Recommendation</b>
1. Continue to progress the RLDP.
2. Continue to progress the RLDP.
3. Continue to progress the RLDP.
4. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
5. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Core Indicators

\*\* Following the revocation of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015) in its entirety this indicator has been changed to reflect the requirements of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020)

\*\*\*Indicator relates to SAH1 – SAH10 allocated sites only. Therefore excludes allocated Main Village sites (SAH11).

◆Amended to delete reference to ‘average’ for clarification. The indicator seeks to monitor the density achieved on allocated sites, rather than average density.

**Amended/Deleted Indicators – This indicator has been deleted since the 2018-2019 Annual Monitoring Report**

Original Indicator	Reason for amendment
Housing land supply	<p>During this AMR period the Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is to be monitored. For those LPAs who have an adopted LDP the changes remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) method as the primary indicator to measure housing delivery. To reflect this change, as required by the Development Plans Manual, the housing land supply indicator has been deleted and two new indicators have been included in this AMR. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the AAR, the second measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative AAR.</p>

## Strategic Housing Sites

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To deliver the strategic housing sites in accordance with strategic policy S3 and site allocation policies SAH1-SAH7.

**Strategic Policy:** S3 Strategic Housing Sites

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 3 & 4

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** SAH1-SAH7

### Contextual Changes

In March 2020, Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is monitored. The changes to PPW remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with a policy statement making it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of development plan housing requirements as part of LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). It also involved the revocation of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015) in its entirety as a consequence of the policy change to PPW.

Following these changes and in accordance with the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), a housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group has been undertaken. This includes additional information on Monmouthshire's current housing land availability, including dwelling completions/permissions and their locations.

Indicator	Target	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019– 31 March 2020
1. The number of dwellings permitted on strategic sites as identified in Policy S3 and site allocation policies SAH1 to SAH7	Secure /deliver housing need on the key strategic sites identified in Policy S3 and site allocation policies SAH1-SAH7 during the plan period:	Planning permission is not granted by the end of 2014 for each of the strategic sites	
	a) Deri Farm, Abergavenny		(250*)
	b) Crick Road, Portskewett		269



	c) Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow		<b>347</b>
	d) Wonastow Road, Monmouth		<b>(340*)</b>
	e) Rockfield Farm, Undy		<b>(266*)</b>
	f) Land at Vinegar Hill, Undy		<b>0</b>
	g) Former Paper Mill, Sudbrook		<b>(210*)</b>
2. The number of dwellings completed on strategic sites as identified in Policy S3 and site allocation policies SAH1 to SAH7	Dwelling completions in accordance with the housing trajectory for each of the strategic sites**	Dwelling completions fall below 10% of housing trajectory target for each of the strategic sites	
	a) Deri Farm, Abergavenny <i>(2018-19 trajectory = 50 completions for 2019-20)</i>		<b>68</b>
	b) Crick Road, Portskewett <i>(2018-19 trajectory = 0 completions for 2019-20)</i>		<b>0</b>
	c) Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow <i>(2018-19 trajectory = 0 completions for 2019-20)</i>		<b>0</b>
	d) Wonastow Road, Monmouth <i>(2018-19 trajectory = 74 completions for 2019-20)</i>		<b>74</b>
	e) Rockfield Farm, Undy <i>(2018-19 trajectory = 22)</i>		<b>16</b>

	<i>completions for 2019-20)</i>		
	f) Land at Vinegar Hill, Undy (2018-19 trajectory = 0 completions for 2019-20)		N/A
	g) Former Paper Mill, Sudbrook (2018-19 trajectory = 35 completions for 2019-20)		61

### Analysis

#### 1. Dwelling Permissions

In terms of allocated strategic sites, no additional sites were granted permission over the current monitoring period, although two sites were the subject of reserved matters permissions which has impacted on the number of units to be delivered on site. The Crick Road, Portskewett site was granted reserved matters planning permission for 269 dwellings and the Fairfield Mabey site was granted reserved matters planning permission for 347 dwellings.

These two sites combined with permission for 340 units at the Wonastow Road site\*, 210 units at the Former Paper Mill, Sudbrook\*, 266 units at Rockfield Farm, Undy\* and 250 units at Deri Farm, Abergavenny\* mean that six of the Plan's strategic site allocations have achieved consent since LDP adoption. However, as the remaining strategic site at Vinegar Hill, Undy has not yet gained planning permission the trigger for further investigation has been met.

Given the constraints associated with some of the sites, including Deri Farm and Fairfield Mabey, the trigger date of gaining permission for all sites by the end of 2014 was unrealistic. The failure to have obtained planning permission on the remaining strategic site at Vinegar Hill by the end of the current monitoring period is of concern, albeit that progress is being made on bringing this site forward as outlined in brief below.

#### **Deri Farm, Abergavenny (SAH1):**

Persimmon Homes submitted a full application (DC/2014/01360) for 250 residential units (201 market and 49 affordable units) in November 2014. The progress of the application was slower than anticipated due to significant issues relating to site viability, particularly affordable housing provision and the undergrounding of overhead power lines. However, these issues were subsequently resolved, the application was approved in the 2017 - 2018 monitoring period and 100 units have been completed to date.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 188 dwellings within the Plan period.

**Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2):**

In the last monitoring period Monmouthshire County Council and Melin Homes submitted a joint outline application (DM/2018/00696) for 291 residential units (218 market and 73 affordable units), this was granted permission in March 2019. During the current monitoring period a reserved matters application (DM/2019/01041) for 269 residential units was approved (201 market and 68 affordable units). This is below the target number of units for the site (285) in the LDP. The drop in density of the site has been driven by changes to the proposed house types and by positive improvements to the design of the site. These improvements include Green Infrastructure that forms the north-south axis of the site, the ecological implications of a badger sett on the site which has led to greater protected open space, whilst the highway requirements have resulted in safer, more accessible links. Policy SAH2 allocates 1 hectares of B1, which has been replaced with a care home which will provide up to 32 beds on the area outlined for employment use. This is subject to a separate planning application, DM/2019/01629, which was granted permission on 26 February 2020. The acceptance of this loss has previously been justified in relation to the outline permission which was approved in an earlier monitoring period. Whilst not strictly B1 employment a care home represents a form of employment and would result in job creation on the site.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver around 14 dwellings within the Plan period. The first completions on site are expected in 2021/22.

**Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3):**

The landowner submitted an outline application (DC/2014/01290) in October 2014 for up to 600 residential units (350 to be delivered within the Plan period), commercial space including offices and workshops (Use Class B1), small scale retail/food and drink floorspace (Use Classes A1 and A3) and multi-functional green and blue open space. Progress with the application has been slower than anticipated due to various matters, including highways issues (Welsh Government Highways Division had a holding objection on the application for 18 months). However, the outstanding issues have since been resolved and the site gained outline planning permission for 450 units (432 market and approximately 18 affordable units on 1.5 acres of the site) in November 2017. The outline application at the Fairfield Mabey site reduced the employment provision from 2.8ha to 0.65ha of B1 land. A Reserved Matters Application (DM/2019/00001) was approved during the current monitoring period for 347 units. The application is for the market housing element of the site and does not include the land identified for affordable housing or employment land; these will be the subject of separate applications. Work on the site has now begun.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 58 dwellings within the Plan period.

**Wonastow Road, Monmouth (SAH4):**

Outline permission was granted for up to 370 dwellings and 6.5ha of employment land in December 2014. The site developers (Barratt/David Wilson and Taylor Wimpey) submitted a Reserved Matters application (DC/2015/00392) for 340 units (238 market and 102

affordable units) which was granted permission in November 2015. The site is now nearing completion with 327 dwellings completed to date.

The overall LDP site allocation is for a total of 450 units. The additional units relating to this allocation are to be delivered as an extension to the site at Drewen Farm. An application for this element of this site has not yet been submitted.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 340 dwellings within the Plan period.

**Rockfield Farm, Undy (SAH5):**

This site is allocated for 270 residential units and 2ha of serviced land for business and industrial use in the adopted LDP. An outline planning application was submitted in July 2016 (DC/2016/00883) for 266 units and 5,575 sq m of employment land (B1 use). For the purposes of the AMR 265 units (198 market and 67 affordable units) are recorded as a net gain, the existing farmhouse has a residential use and is being demolished so has been taken off the overall figure. Progress with the site has been slower than anticipated due to various issues, including archaeology. These issues have, however, been resolved and the outline application was approved in March 2018. A Reserved Matters application (DM/2018/01606) was granted planning permission for phase 1 of the site during the last monitoring period for 144 residential units). The site is currently under construction with 16 dwellings completed during this monitoring period.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 107 dwellings within the Plan period.

**Land at Vinegar Hill, Undy (SAH6):**

This site for 225 residential units is linked to the adjacent Rockfield Farm site and was expected to progress in tandem. However whilst initial progress has been slow, the developer (Bovis) submitted a hybrid application (DM/2019/01937) during the current monitoring period (November 2019). The application is for 155 dwellings, 72 dwellings as a full application and 83 dwellings as outline. It is expected that this phase of the development will be approved during the next monitoring period.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver around 8 dwellings within the Plan period. The first completions on site are expected in 2021/22.

**Former Paper Mill, Sudbrook (SAH7):**

A full planning application (DC/2015/01184) was submitted by Harrow Estates (Redrow confirmed as the developer) in October 2015 for 212 residential units (192 market and 20 affordable units). There had been a number of site viability issues associated with this application meaning that progress with the application has been slower than anticipated. However, these issues were subsequently resolved and the application was approved in the 2016 - 2017 monitoring period (November 2016). Following a re-plan of part of the site the number of residential units on the site has decreased to 210. The site is currently under construction, with 96 dwellings completed to date.

The housing trajectory prepared in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group expects the site to deliver 166 dwellings within the Plan period.

It is recognised that, with exception of Wonastow Road, allocated strategic sites have not progressed in accordance with the identified target of obtaining planning permission by the end of 2014. However, given the constraints associated with some of the sites, including Deri Farm and Fairfield Mabey, the trigger date of gaining permission for all sites by the end of 2014 was unrealistic. The strategic allocation at Sudbrook Paper Mill gained consent in the 2016-2017 monitoring period. Full planning permission was granted at the Deri Farm site along with outline permissions at Mabey Bridge, Chepstow and Rockfield Farm, Undy in the 2017 – 2018 monitoring period, with Crick Road, Portskewett gaining outline permission during the 2018 – 2019 monitoring period. It is expected that the final strategic site, Vinegar Hill, Undy will gain permission during the next monitoring period.

The agreed housing trajectory figures demonstrate a Plan period shortfall (i.e. up to the end of 2021) of 1,172 dwellings from strategic sites. While there has been further progress over this monitoring period with two strategic sites gaining reserved matters planning permission and construction having commenced on two further strategic sites, there is still a significant shortfall on the delivery of dwellings on strategic sites during the Plan period. The trigger has been met for the sixth consecutive year. As stated above, it is likely that the remaining strategic site at Vinegar Hill, Undy will be progressed during the next monitoring period and will be reported accordingly and there is no evidence to suggest that this site is not deliverable or that the allocation needs to be reviewed. The delays in sites coming forward, however, have implications for other monitoring targets and triggers and the need for any further action is being considered in connection with those particular indicators. In particular the delivery of strategic sites has obvious implications for the spatial strategy and housing delivery (general market and affordable). For further information with regard to this see the policy analysis for Policy S1, S2 and S4.

Given the importance of delivering the strategic sites the Council will continue to monitor their progress closely.

## **2. Dwelling Completions**

Completions were recorded on the following allocated strategic sites during the monitoring period: Wonastow Road, Monmouth (74 completions), Sudbrook Paper Mill (61 completions), Deri Farm, Abergavenny (68 completions), and Rockfield Farm, Undy (16 completions). This is expected as all of these sites gained planning permission prior to this monitoring period. With the exception of Rockfield Farm, all of the completions recorded exceeded the 2018-19 JHLAS trajectory. With regard to Rockfield Farm there was only a minor shortfall of completions; the 2018-19 JHLAS trajectory predicted 22 completions on this site in 2019-20, actual completions were 16. However, as the site has only just begun construction and construction was halted before the end of the monitoring period due to Covid-19 restrictions, the shortfall of 6 units is not considered a cause for concern.

As evidenced above, given that considerable progress is being made on the remaining strategic site planning applications, it is anticipated that dwelling completions will align with the identified Housing Stakeholder Group agreed trajectory targets as these sites progress during the next monitoring period.

As stated in the contextual changes above, the Welsh Government have revoked Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015) in its entirety during the current monitoring period, as a consequence of the policy change to PPW. In light of the new guidance as set out in the Development Plans Manual (Ed 3, March 2020) Monmouthshire County Council, in consultation with the Housing Stakeholder Group, has produced a housing trajectory. Further analysis of the housing trajectory is included in the section on Policy S2 Housing Provision. Whilst the requirement to evidence a 5 year housing supply no longer applies and with only 1 year of the Adopted LDP remaining, it is useful to consider those units which are projected to be completed outside of the next 5 years. This shows that while anticipated completions on a number of strategic sites have not yet been met the sites are progressing, although the total number of units outside of this 5 year period (i.e. 2020 – 2025) has remained the same as in the previous monitoring period, as detailed in the table below.

### Housing Stakeholder Group Trajectory

	2017-18		2018 – 19		2019 – 20		Change in Number Units Outside next 5 years
	Within next 5 years	Outside next 5 Years	Within next 5 years	Outside next 5 Years	Within next 5 years	Outside next 5 years	
<b>Deri Farm</b>	229	21	218	0	150	0	=
<b>Fairfield Mabey</b>	230	120	325	125	305	68	-57
<b>Rockfield Farm</b>	232	34	266	0	250	0	=
<b>Vinegar Hill</b>	150	75	175	50	130	95	+45
<b>Wonastow Road (Taylor Wimpey)</b>	115	0	34	0	4	0	=
<b>Wonastow Road (Barratt)</b>	117	0	52	0	9	0	=
<b>Wonastow Road (Drewen Farm)</b>	110	0	110	0	110	0	=
<b>Crick Road</b>	160	125	203	88	169	100	+12
<b>Sudbrook Paper Mill</b>	175	35	175	0	114	0	=

Two strategic sites have seen an increase in the number of units outside of the next 5 year period, Vinegar Hill, Undy and Crick road, Portskewett. However, completions on Fairfield Mabey have come forward in the trajectory. Accordingly, there remains 263 units which fall outside of the next 5 years (i.e. 2020 – 2025) in the 2020 housing trajectory.

The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine whether the Plan's strategic residential allocations are being delivered in accordance with the housing trajectory targets.

<b>Recommendation</b>
1. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Site permitted prior to this AMR monitoring period.

\*\*2018-19 Trajectory as this forecasts completions for 2019-20 period i.e. current monitoring period.

## Affordable Housing

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To provide 960 affordable dwelling units over the plan period

**Strategic Policy:** S4 Affordable Housing

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 3 & 4

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** H7, SAH1-SAH11

### Contextual Changes

#### House Prices

The recorded fluctuations in the County's average house prices since 2012 are set out in Section 3 - Contextual Information. The potential implications of average house price trends recorded over the monitoring period are assessed in relation to indicator 5 below.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019– 31 March 2020
1. The number of additional affordable dwellings <b>built</b> over the plan period* <sup>1</sup>	Deliver 96 affordable dwellings per annum 2011-2021 (total of 960 over the plan period)  <i>(2014-15: 17)</i> <i>(2015-16: 63)</i> <i>(2016-17: 47)</i> <i>(2017-18: 84)</i> <i>(2018-19:131)</i>	10% less or greater than the LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	<b>82</b>
2. Number of affordable dwellings <b>secured</b> on new housing sites	a) 35% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable on sites of 5 or more dwellings in the Main Towns and Rural Secondary Settlements identified in Policy S1  <i>(2014-15: 35%)</i> <i>(2015-16: 34%)</i> <i>(2016-17: 43%)</i> <i>(2017-18: 16.5%)</i> <i>(2018-19: 32%)</i>	Proportion of affordable housing achieved on development sites in each area falls below the requirement set out in Policy S4	<b>100%</b>



	<p>b) 25% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable on sites of 5 or more dwellings in the Severnside Settlements identified in Policy S1</p> <p><i>(2014-15: 100%)</i>  <i>(2015-16: N/A)</i>  <i>(2016-17: 9.7%)</i>  <i>(2017-18: 31.7%)</i>  <i>(2018-19: 26%) **</i></p>		<b>32%</b>
	<p>c) 60% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable on sites of 3 or more dwellings in the Main Villages identified in Policy S1</p> <p><i>(2014-15: 0%)</i>  <i>(2015-16: 60%)</i>  <i>(2016-17: 60%/20%***)</i>  <i>(2017-18: 62.5%)</i>  <i>(2018-19: 60.0%)</i></p>		<b>67.5%</b>
	<p>d) Minor villages: sites with capacity for 4 dwellings make provision for 3 to be affordable; and sites with capacity for 3 dwellings make provision for 2 to be affordable.</p> <p><i>(2014-15: N/A)</i>  <i>(2015-16: N/A)</i>  <i>(2016-17: N/A)</i>  <i>(2017-18: N/A)</i>  <i>(2018-19: N/A)</i></p>		<b>N/A</b> <b>(No applicable applications)</b>
3. Number of affordable dwellings permitted/built on Main Village Sites as	Main Village sites to collectively deliver 20 affordable dwellings per annum 2014-2021	10% less or greater than the target build rate for 2 consecutive years	<b>2019-20: 9 permitted/0 built</b>

identified in Policy SAH11	(2014-15: 0) (2015-16: 9 permitted) (2016-17: 9 permitted/9 built) (2017-18: 5 permitted/0 built) (2018-19: 12 permitted/3 built)		
4. Number of affordable dwellings <b>built</b> through rural exception schemes	No target  (2014-15: 0) (2015-16: 0) (2016-17: 0) (2017-18: 0 built/3 permitted) 2018-19: 4 (1 permitted)	None	<b>4 built/0 permitted</b>
5. Affordable housing percentage target in Policy S4	Target to reflect economic circumstances	Average house prices increase by 5% above the base price of 2012 levels sustained over 2 quarters	<b>Refer to analysis below (5)</b>

### Analysis

1. A total of 82 affordable dwellings were completed during the monitoring period accounting for 23% of the total dwelling completions recorded. Allocated LDP sites accounted for 77% of these with the remaining 23% on windfall sites. The allocated site at Deri Farm, Abergavenny (SAH1) accounted for 30 of the 82 affordable housing completions recorded, representing 37%. Four further allocations contributed to the supply of affordable homes:

- Coed Glas, Abergavenny (SAH9) – 5 affordable homes completed during 2019/20
- Wonastow Road, Monmouth (SAH4) – 15 affordable homes completed during 2019/20
- Sudbrook Paper Mill ( SAH7) – 6 affordable homes completed during 2019/20
- Rockfield Farm, Undy (SAH5) – 7 affordable homes completed during 2019/20

In addition to completions on allocated sites, four windfall sites contributed 19 affordable homes accounting for 23% of the total. All four windfall sites were 100% affordable housing sites located at:

- Croesonen Road, Abergavenny – 4 affordable units completed during 2019/20
- Garden City Way, Chepstow – 7 affordable units completed during 2019/20
- Elm Road, Caldicot – 4 affordable units completed during 2019/20
- Llantilio Crosenny – 4 affordable units completed during 2019/20

The overall figure of 82 units is lower than the 131 affordable housing completions recorded in last year's AMR. It is, however in line the 84 delivered in the 2017/18 monitoring period. The delivery

rate has fluctuated over previous monitoring periods ranging from 17 in 2014/15, 63 in 2015/16 and 47 in 2016/17, but has however, maintained a consistently higher rate for the past in recent years reflecting the delivery of the LDP allocations, supplemented by a number of 100% affordable housing sites.

Whilst the number of affordable dwelling completions is lower than the identified target (96 per annum) in the latest monitoring period, it has not occurred for two consecutive years and has not therefore triggered the need for further investigation.

The total number of affordable dwelling completions recorded over the six years of the Plan's adoption (424) remains below the required delivery. Based on the LDP target a total of 576 affordable dwellings should have been completed which, in view of completions achieved, results in a shortfall of 152 units between 2014 – 2020. Last year's completion rate of 131 units reduced the shortfall slightly, but this year's rate of 82 completions has increased the shortfall further.

Slow progress on the implementation of a number of LDP allocated sites, as considered above in relation to Policies S2 and S3, has resulted in limited delivery of both market and affordable housing at the start of the Plan period. As allocated sites, including main village sites, have achieved consent, affordable housing completions have increased in line with the target. There is no specific evidence to date that demonstrates that Policy S4 itself is not operating effectively, albeit that there have been delays in the determination of some strategic site planning applications, particularly Deri Farm (now resolved and development commenced on site), because of negotiations over viability issues arising from the requirements of Policy S4. These viability issues themselves directly impact on levels of affordable housing secured, robust assessments are nevertheless being undertaken to ensure the maximum potential contribution is achieved.

No specific action is required in relation to Policy S4, but the Council will continue to monitor completion rates closely in future AMRs to determine its effectiveness in delivering affordable dwellings.

## **2. Main Towns and Rural Secondary Settlements**

The proportion of affordable dwellings permitted on sites of 5 or more homes in the County's main towns and rural secondary settlements during the monitoring period equated to 100% which is significantly higher than the LDP target of 35%.

The findings are based on a total of 2 applications, both in the main town of Chepstow. Both applications have been submitted by Monmouthshire Housing Association and involve the demolition of garages and redevelopment of the sites for 100% affordable housing schemes. Both sites are windfall sites within the settlement boundary. The remainder of permissions recorded in the main towns and rural secondary settlements were for sites with a capacity of fewer than 5 homes and, therefore, fell below the 35% threshold set out in Policy S4.

The policy target of 35% has been exceeded this year at 100%, although it is recognised that this is based on only two applications. Nevertheless, the schemes will make an important contribution to affordable housing in Chepstow.

Progress has been made on other notable developments in this affordable housing threshold, but as reserved matters applications. Two reserved matters applications were approved in the main towns and rural secondary settlements during the monitoring period at Grove Farm, Llanfoist and Mabey Bridge, Chepstow. These sites gained outline permission during the earlier monitoring periods so are not counted towards the figures for the current monitoring period. The schemes were in compliance with the LDP policy target (i.e. 35%\*\*\*\*) and once constructed will provide a significant contribution to affordable housing provision in the main towns and rural secondary settlements. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in order to determine the effectiveness of the affordable housing target identified in Policy S4 in future AMRs.

### **Sevenside Settlements**

Three applications were permitted in Sevenside for 5 or more dwellings over the monitoring period. The largest scheme relates to an outline permission on land east of Church Road, Caldicot that was determined under the Council's 'unallocated sites' policy established to address the housing land supply shortage in the County. In accordance with the Affordable Housing SPG and its advice on departure sites, a requirement of 35% applied to this site, which was agreed. The outline permission (DM/2018/00880) approved 130 dwellings, of which 46 are affordable. The reserved matters application was also determined during this monitoring period and approved the same numbers.

The second site was for 12 units at Ifton Manor, Rogiet. Two of the 12 units are affordable achieving a rate of 17% affordable on the scheme. This was agreed on viability grounds. The third scheme involved the change of use of offices to six flats. The assessment of the proposal considered it unlikely that a Registered Social Landlord would want one flat in a block of privately owned flats. An initial financial contribution of £42,753 units was requested, but was reduced and agreed to £5,000 on viability grounds. Overall a rate of 32% was achieved across the Sevenside area, albeit it is noted that this due to the higher requirement of 35% being achieved on the departure site.

A further notable reserved matters application was also approved at the Strategic Housing Site SAH2 – Crick Road, Portskewett where the 25% affordable housing requirement continued to be achieved. This site gained outline permission during an earlier monitoring period so has not been counted towards the figures for this period.

The remainder of the permissions recorded in Sevenside settlements were for sites with a capacity of less than 5 dwellings and, therefore, fell below the affordable housing threshold set out in Policy S4. The Council will continue to monitor such sites over the next monitoring period in order to assess the implementation of the affordable housing targets identified in Policy S4.

### **Main Villages**

Two applications were permitted over the monitoring period within Main Villages for sites 3 or more dwellings. These related to LDP allocations, SAH11(ii) – Land at Well Lane, Devauden and SAH11(i)(b) – Land adjacent to Cross Ash Garage, Cross Ash. The Devauden site was for a total of 15 units and achieved the required 60% affordable rate with 6 affordable units. The Cross Ash site proposes 6 units in total including additional land outside of the allocation, but within the settlement boundary. A rate of 75% was achieved on the allocation as three of the four dwellings proposed on this part of the scheme are affordable. In accordance with Policy S4 an additional financial contribution is required for the two open market dwellings proposed on the area of land

located outside of the allocation, but within the development boundary of the village. However, after pre-application discussions with planning officers relating to economic viability, it was agreed that this could be waived due to the fact that this site is a brownfield allocation and the additional market dwellings would help with remediation costs to bring the overall site forward. Overall, this site is considered to have met the requirements of the affordable housing policy.

An overall percentage rate of 67.5% has been agreed on the SAH11 allocation sites, exceeding the 60% target. The Council will continue to monitor Main Village sites in order to determine the effectiveness of the affordable housing target identified in Policy S4.

#### **Minor Villages**

No permissions were granted during the monitoring period for small sites in Minor Villages. The Council will continue to monitor Minor Village sites in order to determine the effectiveness of the affordable housing target identified in Policy S4.

3. Two applications were permitted over the monitoring period on the allocated sites identified in Policy SAH11, as referred to above. Full commentary on the applications is provided above, but combined the two sites permitted 9 affordable units on the SAH11 Main Village sites.

While there has been some progress with Main Village allocations gaining planning permission, the target for these sites to collectively deliver 20 affordable dwellings per annum has not been achieved. These sites have delivered 12 affordable homes since the LDP's adoption which is significantly short of the LDP target of 20 affordable units per annum. The delivery of these sites will be given further consideration as part of the LDP revision process. The reasons for the lack of progress on Main Village sites will be investigated further as part of this process, including for example unrealistic land owner expectations in relation to land values. This will enable the Council to de-allocate those sites that are not progressing as intended.

#### **4. Rural Exceptions Completions.**

There were four completions relating to a rural exception scheme over the monitoring period. The homes were delivered on the rural exception site at Llantilio Crosenny. The site is a 100% affordable housing site, delivered by Monmouthshire Housing Association.

No rural exception schemes were permitted over this monitoring period. While there is no target in relation to the number of completions for rural exception schemes the Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to rural exception schemes.

5. The trigger for conducting additional viability testing in relation to the affordable housing targets set out in Policy S4 is an increase in average house prices of 5% or more above the 2012 base price sustained over 2 quarters.

As set out in Section 3, Land Registry data indicates that average house prices in Monmouthshire have increased over the current monitoring period with average prices in quarter 1 2020 (January to March) standing at £279,532, significantly higher than the 2012 quarter 4 baseline price (£188,720). Despite this, the trigger for further investigation has not been met. A 5% increase in the 2012 quarter 4 baseline price figure would equate to an increase of £9,436 and while average

house prices have risen over the 2019-20 monitoring period, prices have not risen by this amount continuously over 2 quarters. The largest increase recorded over the monitoring period was £5,775 between quarter 4 2019 and quarter 1 2020. Accordingly, as with the previous AMRs, the change in average house prices does not necessitate a reassessment of the viability evidence in relation to Policy S4 and its monitoring indicator, although it is well documented that high average house prices in the County are one of the key issues identified for the Replacement LDP. The Council will continue to monitor average house price trends in future AMRs in order to determine any potential implications for the effective implementation of Policy S4.

It should also be recognised, however, that house prices are just one factor that could impact on development viability. Build costs, for instance, would also have risen over the monitoring period. Whilst build costs are not specified as a LDP monitoring indicator, general viability issues will be kept under review as information comes forward on a case-by-case basis and in connection with any strategic viability work in relation to the Replacement LDP process. This will enable the Council to consider any further potential implications for the effective implementation of Policy S4.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
3. Consider progress of Main Village sites as part of the Replacement LDP process.
4. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
5. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Core Indicators

<sup>1</sup> Indicator and Target based on the Monmouthshire planning area and Monmouthshire LDP only.

\*\* This was previously recorded as 100% - This was an error that reflected all sites approved last year achieved the 25% target and was therefore recorded as 100% success rate. The indicator is, however, monitoring the percentage of affordable houses approved. Four sites were approved during last monitoring period for the Severnside area. They approved a total of 312 units, of which 82 where affordable, equating to 26%. The table has been updated accordingly.

\*\*\*60% achieved on LDP sites. The 20% relates to a Reserved Matters application approved following an outline application made prior to LDP adoption.

\*\*\*\*The Mabey Bridge Outline application (2014/01290) approved 1.5ha of land to be used for the delivery of affordable housing on the development. The Reserved Matters for this element of the site have not been submitted yet.

## Community and Recreation Facilities

<b>Monitoring Aim/Outcome:</b>	To retain existing community and recreation facilities and seek to develop additional facilities
<b>Strategic Policy:</b>	S5 Community and Recreation Facilities
<b>LDP Objectives Supported:</b>	1 & 5
<b>Other LDP Policies Supported:</b>	CRF1, CRF3

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Number of community and recreation facilities granted planning permission	No target*  <i>(2014-15: 9)</i> <i>(2015-16: 5)</i> <i>(2016-17: 4)</i> <i>(2017-18: 10)</i> <i>(2018-9: 8)</i>	None*	12
2. Number of community/ recreation facilities lost	Minimise the loss of community and recreation facilities  <i>(2014-15: 3)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0)</i> <i>(2016-17: 6)</i> <i>(2017-18: 2)</i> <i>(2018-19: 2)</i>	Loss of any 1 community/ recreation facility in any 1 year	4
<b>Analysis</b>			
<p><b>1.</b> Twelve planning applications were approved for community and recreation uses during the current monitoring period. Five of the twelve applications relate to recreation uses and seven in relation to community uses.</p> <p>Of the five of the application for recreation uses, the largest gain was in relation to the proposed 4ha community park and woodland in association with the unallocated residential site at Church Road, Caldicot. Other recreational uses approved included</p>			

tracks, trails and an outdoor gym at Portskewett and Sudbrook recreation centre; a change of use of woodland to archery recreation in Llantilio Petholey; a relocation of a children's play area at Chippenham Mead Monmouth; and a Riverside Pavillion (revised scheme) at Chepstow Castle carpark.

In relation to the seven community facilities approved, several applications related to change of uses including: change of use of part of an unused area of MCC's Old Market Hall, Monmouth, to a facility for rough sleepers; creation of a daycentre (for learning disabilities) at The Old Board School Chepstow; change of use from B&B at Northgate House Caerwent to private day nursery; and change of use of the first floor of 57 Bridge Street Usk (formerly Natwest Bank) to a day nursery.

The remaining community facility applications are additions to existing community uses which entail: demountable units at Ysgol Cymreag Y Fenni and Dell primary school; and demountable units at Abergavenny fire station for use by the Police.

Overall, the number of community facilities approved during is considered to be broadly in line with previous years which ranges from 4 in the 2015-16 AMR to 10 in the previous 2017-18 AMR.

2. There has been a loss of four community facilities over the period monitored. The first related to the loss of a former school in Llanfoist primary school to residential use. There was little likelihood of the building being reused as a school (as a replacement 21<sup>st</sup> school has been built within the settlement) and so it was considered that the change of use of to residential did not conflict with the objectives of Policy CRF1.

The other community facilities lost related to a change of use of two nurseries: one at Riverside Nursery Chepstow to a residential use; and 1 Bridge Street Usk to a gin distillery (B2) and tasting shop area (A1). However, it is noted in the above section that there has been a gain of two nursery facilities over the monitoring period.

The final loss of community space was a small section of Usk Community Hub to allow an extension of the Post Office (A1) which in recent years has located within the hub centre.

The principle of losing these community uses is considered to be acceptable having regard to Policies S5 and CRF1.

While the data collected indicates that a number of community facilities have been lost to alternative uses over the monitoring period and subsequently the trigger for this indicator has been met, their loss is justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework. Consequently the Council will continue to monitor such proposals in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

#### **Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.



2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Not considered appropriate to include a target/trigger for this indicator given that in some instances the Council is looking to reduce the amount of community facilities or to focus investment on existing facilities

## Retail

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** Direct new food and non-bulky retail development to the County's town and local centres and seek to enhance their vitality, attractiveness and viability.

**Strategic Policy:** S6 Retail

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1 & 2

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** RET1-RET4

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Amount of new food and non-bulky retail development permitted in town/local centres as a proportion of all retail development permitted	90% of new food and non-bulky retail floorspace to be located in town/local centres  <i>(2014-15: 0%) (2015-16: 53.2%) (2016-17: 33%) (2017-18 – 35.7%) (2018-19 – 0%)</i>	More than 10% of new food and non-bulky retail floorspace is developed outside town/local centres in any 1 year	<b>70.5% retail development permitted in town/local centres.</b>  86 sqm permitted inside town/local centres 36 sq m permitted outside town/ local centres*
2. Percentage of vacant units within the CSA of each town and local centre**	No increase in the number of vacant units:	Vacancy rate in a town/local centre increases for 2 consecutive years	
	<b>a) Abergavenny</b> <i>(2014: 5.1%) (2015: 5.8%) (2016: 8.7%) (2017: 6.3%) (2018: 4.7%)</i>		<b>6.6%</b>

	<b>b) Caldicot</b> <i>(2014: 9.2%)</i> <i>(2015: 7.6%)</i> <i>(2016: 10.1%)</i> <i>(2017: 8.8%)</i> <i>(2018: 10.6%)</i>		<b>7.6%</b>
	<b>c) Chepstow</b> <i>(2014: 9.0%)</i> <i>(2015: 10%)</i> <i>(2016: 7.1%)</i> <i>(2017: 5.9%)</i> <i>(2018: 11.8%)</i>		<b>11.2%</b>
	<b>d) Monmouth</b> <i>(2014: 8.3%)</i> <i>(2015: 7.9%)</i> <i>(2016: 4.9%)</i> <i>(2017: 10.1%)</i> <i>(2018: 10.1%)</i>		<b>14.4%</b>
	<b>e) Magor</b> <i>(2014: 9.1%)</i> <i>(2015: 0%)</i> <i>(2016: 0%)</i> <i>(2017: 9.1%)</i> <i>(2018: 4.5%)</i>		<b>13.6%</b>
	<b>f) Raglan</b> <i>(2014: 0%)</i> <i>(2015: 0%)</i> <i>(2016: 0%)</i> <i>(2017: 0%)</i> <i>(2018: 9%)</i>		<b>9%</b>
	<b>g) Usk</b> <i>(2014: 7.8%)</i> <i>(2015: 11.1%)</i> <i>(2016: 13.1%)</i> <i>(2017: 9.7%)</i> <i>(2018: 15.8%)</i>		<b>15.3%</b>
3. Percentage of A1 uses in the primary shopping frontages of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth***	% of A1 uses no less than the thresholds identified for the towns' primary shopping frontages as defined in the Primary Shopping Frontages SPG**	% figures for a primary shopping frontage fall below the threshold set out in the SPG	

	<p><b>a) Abergavenny</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF1 Cross St, High St, Frogmore St &amp; 1 Nevill St <b>(Target 75%)</b> (2014: 76%) (2015: 77%) (2016: 76%) (2017: 75%) (2018: 75%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>74%</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF2 Cibi Walk <b>(Target 100%)</b> (2014: 100%) (2015: 100%) (2016: 100%) (2017: 100%) (2018: 94%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>100%</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF3 Cross St (51-60&amp;Town Hall) <b>(Target 55%)</b> (2014: 36%) (2015: 36%) (2016: 36%) (2017: 36%) (2018: 36%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>36%</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>b) Caldicot</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF4 Newport Rd <b>(Target 65%)</b> (2014: 65%) (2015: 65%) (2016: 65%) (2017: 65%) (2018: 63%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>63%</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>c) Chepstow</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF5 High St <b>(Target 75%)</b> (2014: 80%) (2015: 80%) (2016: 80%) (2017: 80%) (2018: 76%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>80%</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF6 St Mary St <b>(Target 65%)</b> (2014: 65%) (2015: 65%) (2016: 65%) (2017: 69%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>73%</b></li> </ul>

	(2018: 69%)		
	<b>d) Monmouth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF7 Monnow St <b>(Target 75%)</b> (2014: 77%) (2015: 76%) (2016:72%) (2017: 74%) (2018:73%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>73%</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSF8 Church St, Agincourt Sq &amp; Priory St (1-4) <b>(Target 65%)</b> (2014: 57%) (2015: 57%) (2016:62%) (2017: 65%) (2018: 67%)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>67%</b></li> </ul>

#### Analysis

1. Four applications were permitted for retail development over the monitoring period, three of which were for A1 retail use in town centre locations (one in Monmouth for a change of use of an upper floor to provide additional A1 floorspace [50 sq m], one in Chepstow for a change of use to create a mixed D1/A1 use [13 sq m] and one in Usk for a change of use from a day nursery (D1) to a mixed B2/A1 use [23 sq m]). The other permission was in an out-of-centre location, at Magor Motorway Services [36 sq m].

Accordingly, 70.5% of all new retail floorspace was permitted in town/local centres and 29.5% outside town centres, meaning that the trigger for this indicator has been met.

The out of centre permission (DM/2018/01818) relates to a drive through kiosk at Magor Motorway Services. The site of the kiosk is within the existing Motorway services, where other retail facilities exist. It is not thought that it will compete for customers in Magor Shopping Centre as the customers will be those travelling on the motorway. As a cafe already exists on the site, the drive through will be offering an alternative to those already visiting the services. Because of its location within an existing motorway service station the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the trade/turnover, vitality or viability of Magor's Central Shopping Area and therefore the proposal is not deemed contrary to the objectives of Policy RET4 of the LDP.

The out-of-town development is considered appropriate given the circumstances of the application and justified within the context of the LDP retail planning policy framework.

Furthermore, the fact that there have been three permissions for A1 retail use within 3 of the County's town centres is an improvement on last year's performance when no permissions were recorded.

In view of the above, there are not considered to be any concerns with the implementation of LDP retail policies and therefore no further investigation is required at present. However, the Council will continue to monitor this issue in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the Plan's retail policy framework.

2. Vacancy rates recorded during the monitoring period\*\* in all of the County's central shopping areas (CSA), with the exception of Monmouth, Magor and Usk were below the GB High Street vacancy rate (12.1% December 2019, Local Data Company). Retail vacancy rates in the County's town centres ranged from 6.6% in Abergavenny to 15.3% in Usk.

Comparison with last year's vacancy rates indicates that 3 centres have seen a fall in vacancy rates, although the rates in Chepstow and Usk remain high with Usk in particular still above the GB average – Caldicot (10.6% to 7.6%), Chepstow (11.8% to 11.2%) and Usk (15.8% to 15.3%). Conversely, 3 centres recorded a rise in vacancy rates since the previous monitoring period – Abergavenny (4.7% to 6.6%), Monmouth (10.1% to 14.4%), and Magor (4.5% to 13.6%). In the case of Magor this represents a rise from 1 vacant unit to 3 vacant units and due to the small size of the centre this impacts disproportionately on the level of vacancies. In Abergavenny the rise in total vacancy rates has been across both primary and secondary frontages. In Monmouth, however, whilst vacancy rates across primary frontages has increased, the steepest climb in vacancy rates has been across secondary frontages, from 12.3% in the previous monitoring period to 22.8% in this monitoring period this has impacted on the overall vacancy rate. As this is the highest vacancy rate recorded over the previous 15 years this will need to be looked at carefully in the next AMR.

As none of the County's centres have seen an increase in vacancy rates for 2 consecutive years the trigger for further investigation has not been reached and given that of the 7 centres 4 are below GB High Street vacancy rate, this indicates that Monmouthshire's town and local centres are functioning effectively. Recent changes to business rates are, however, a cause of concern. The Council will continue to monitor vacancy levels in future AMRs to determine trends.

2. The percentage of A1 retail uses within the towns' primary shopping frontages (PSF) recorded during the monitoring period\*\* generally accord with the thresholds identified in the Primary Shopping Frontages SPG.

The identified thresholds in two of the PSFs were set at higher levels than the existing level of non-A1 retail uses at the time as there is an aspiration to improve their retail offer i.e. PSF3 Cross Street (51-60 & Town Hall) Abergavenny and PSF8 Church Street, Agincourt Square & Priory Street (1-4) Monmouth. While there has been no change in the proportion of retail uses within PSF3 since monitoring began, there has been an increase in the proportion of A1 retail uses within PSF8 over the past monitoring periods, from 57% in 2015 to 67% in 2018. Over the current monitoring period the proportion of A1 uses along the frontage has remained at 67%, exceeding the identified threshold within this frontage (65%). Despite achieving the identified threshold within PSF8 it remains important that a strong policy stance on proposals for change of use to non-retail uses in both of these frontages is maintained in order to improve and protect their retail offer.

Comparison with last year's figures indicate that the proportion of A1 uses within the towns' primary shopping frontages improved or remained unchanged with the exception of the following:

- PSF1 Cross St, High St, Frogmore St & 1 Nevill St, Abergavenny recorded a marginal decline, down from 75% to 74%. This is due to a change of use of one unit from an A1 use to an A3 use. The unit was previously a New Look clothes shop but is now occupied by Portico Lounge. The proposed change of use required a careful balance of all of the relevant material planning considerations as well as local and national planning policy. Of notable significance was the importance of preserving the vitality of the designated Primary Shop Frontage. It was acknowledged that there would be a very modest increase above the threshold of Non A1 uses and that the premises had not been vacant for 2 years as prescribed in Policy RET1. However, genuine attempts at marketing the existing use had been made for almost 1 year and were unsuccessful. Having regard to relevant policies within the adopted LDP as well as national planning policy PPW10 it was considered that the proposed use would maintain an active day time frontage and would complement the variety of uses and services within Abergavenny Town Centre. Therefore it was considered that the change of use was acceptable.

Overall, it is considered that the towns' primary shopping frontages are vital and viable and functioning well and no further investigation is required at present. The Council will continue to monitor this issue in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the Plan's retail policy framework.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
3. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*One planning permission granted for retail development over the monitoring period in out of town locations.

\*\*Monmouthshire Retail Background Paper (March 2020). Base date October 2019.

\*\*\*Monmouthshire Primary Shopping Frontages SPG, April 2016

## Economy and Enterprise

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To ensure a sufficient supply of employment land and to protect the County’s employment land

**Strategic Policy:** S8 Enterprise and Economy, S9 Employment Sites Provision

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 7

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** E1-E3, RE1, SAE1-SAE2

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Net employment land supply/development♦	Maintain sufficient employment land to meet identified take-up rate of 1.9 ha per annum  <i>(2014-15: 46.8ha)</i> <i>(2015-16: 41.18ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 40.76ha)</i> <i>(2017-18: 40.16ha)</i> <i>(2018-19: 40.16ha)</i>	Insufficient employment land available to meet the identified take-up rate of 1.9ha per annum	<b>40.16ha</b>
2. Take-up of employment land♦	Maintain sufficient employment land to meet identified take-up rate of 1.9 ha per annum  <i>(2014-15: 0.38ha)</i> <i>(2015-16: 1.131ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 3.21ha)</i> <i>(2017-18: 5.002ha)</i> <i>(2018-19: 0.873ha)</i>	Insufficient employment land available to meet the identified take-up rate of 1.9ha per annum	<b>3.74ha</b>
3. Planning permission granted for new development (by type)	No specific target  <i>(2014-15: 0)</i>	Lack of development on strategic employment sites	<b>0 planning permissions granted</b>



on allocated employment sites as identified in Policy SAE1♦	(2015-16: 3) (2016-17: 2) (2017-18:1) (2018-19: 2)	identified in Policy SAE1 by the end of 2017	
4. Planning permissions granted for employment use (B use classes) by settlement♦♦	No specific target	None	
	<b>Main Towns</b> (2014-15: 9.ha) (2015-16: 0.95ha) (2016-17: 0.52ha) (2017-18: 0.784ha) (2018-19: 4.37ha)		<b>0.11ha</b>
	<b>Severnside Settlements</b> (2014-15: 0.39ha) (2015-16: 2.83ha) (2016-17: 0.17ha) (2017-18: 2.124ha) 2018-19: 0.04ha)		<b>0.92ha</b>
	<b>Rural Secondary Settlements</b> (2014-15: 0.3ha) (2015-16: 0.48ha) (2016-17: 0.01ha) (2017-18: 0ha) (2018-19: 0.005ha)		<b>0.01ha</b>
	<b>Rural General</b> (2014-15: 0.25ha) (2015-16: 0.22ha) (2016-17: 1.14ha) (2017-18: 0.575ha) 2018-19: 0.454ha)		<b>0.096ha</b>
5. Planning permissions granted for employment use (B use classes♦♦) by sector*	No specific target	None	
	Manufacturing		<b>0.15ha</b>
	Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles		<b>0.96ha</b>
	Transport & storage; information and communication		<b>0.01ha</b>
	Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and		<b>0.02ha</b>

	support service activities		
	Accommodation & food service activities		<b>0ha</b>
6. Amount of employment land lost to non-employment uses (i.e. non-B1, B2, B8 uses)	Minimise the loss of employment land to non-B1, B2, B8 uses  <i>(2014-15: 0.08ha)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0.56ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 0.65ha)</i> <i>(2017-18:0.12ha)</i> <i>(2018-19: 0.105ha)</i>	Loss of any B1, B2 or B8 employment land in any 1 year	<b>0ha</b>
7. Proportion of resident workforce working within Monmouthshire	Increase the proportion of resident workforce working within Monmouthshire <i>(2014: 54.5%)</i> <i>(2015: 58.3%)</i> <i>(2016: 57.9%)</i> <i>(2017: 58.1%)</i> <i>(2018: 60.4%)</i>	None	<b>60.1%</b>
8. Number of people in-commuting to Monmouthshire♦♦♦	Reduce the level of in-commuting over the plan period <i>(2014: 19,200)</i> <i>(2015: 17,800)</i> <i>(2016: 20,400)</i> <i>(2017: 17,100)</i> <i>(2018: 24,600)</i>	None	<b>18,900</b>
Number of people out-commuting from Monmouthshire♦♦♦	Reduce the level of out-commuting over the plan period <i>(2014: 19,600)</i> <i>(2015: 18,700)</i> <i>(2016: 18,700)</i> <i>(2017: 18,500)</i> <i>(2018: 17,400 )</i>	None	<b>17,700</b>
<b>Analysis</b>			

1. There is currently 40.16ha of employment land available across the County. The employment land availability has not changed since the previous two AMR figures, which reflects the fact that there have been no new land take up on the County's strategic SAE1 employment sites during this current monitoring period.

Sufficient employment land has therefore been maintained over the monitoring period providing the opportunity to meet the identified take-up rate of 1.9ha per annum. Policies S8 and S9 are functioning effectively in this respect. However, the Council will continue its efforts through its Enterprise Directorate to promote economic initiatives that seek to support economic activity in the County.

2. The take-up rate of employment land (i.e. completed developments) equated to 3.74ha over the monitoring period, all of which relate to the development on protected employment sites (SEA2) that had been granted permission in previous years. The majority of this related to a development on the Newhouse Farm (SAE2k) (ref: DM/2018/00731) site in Chepstow (3.69ha) for a workshop (B2), two storey office (B1), valet/car preparation area (Sui Generis) and parking areas for car storage (B8). There has also been 0.0244ha take up at the Lower Monk Street SAE2b site, in Abergavenny, and 0.022ha at the Severnbridge Industrial Estate (SAE2p) site in Caldicot.

The trigger for further investigation relates to the total amount of land supply of Strategic SEA1 Employment Sites rather than take-up rates, this indicator will nevertheless be closely monitored in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to employment land.

3. There were no planning applications approved on allocated employment sites as identified in SAE1 during the monitoring period. This is the second consecutive year of limited progress on the identified SAE1 sites. It is noted that 2 permissions were approved last year's monitoring period on the SAE1i – Beaufort Park site in Chepstow, but these related to change of use applications from B1 use to an A1 retail use.

While there has been limited progress on the delivery of the strategic employment sites over the monitoring period, the trigger for this indicator is the lack of development on the SAE1 employment allocations by the end of 2017. A total of six planning permissions had been granted in SAE1 sites by the end of 2017 and a further two since adoption of the LDP (albeit the last two are change of use applications).

It is recognised, however, that there has been limited progress on the delivery of strategic employment sites over the monitoring period. The Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to the delivery of strategic employment sites. A full review of the SAE1 allocations will be undertaken as part of the evidence base to inform the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). Progress has been made on this with the completion of the Employment Land Review and the Larger Than Local Employment (regional) Study. Detailed assessments of the strategic employment sites are ongoing and will continued to be reviewed as the RLDP progresses.

4. This indicator seeks to monitor the amount of employment floorspace for B use classes permitted by settlement in Monmouthshire. 12 applications were approved for such employment uses during the monitoring period, totalling 1.14ha. Of these, five permissions were on protected employment sites (SAE2 sites) totalling 0.994 ha and the remaining seven permissions were on non-allocated employment land totalling 0.143ha.

The main towns accounted for 0.11ha of the approved B use class employment floorspace. This related to one application (ref: DM/2019/01174) at the protected SAE2i site at Bulwark Road, Chepstow and approved a change of use from retail use (furniture sales) to B1 manufacturing.

The Severnside area accounted for the largest proportion of approved B use class employment, accounting for 0.92ha of the overall 1.14ha. Six planning permissions were approved in this area of the County, five of which were in Magor. Four of which were on the protected employment site at SAE2o – Magor Brewery. The remaining application in Magor related to the change of use of four bays from agricultural use to the change of use of a holiday let to B1 office use in Magor House (DM/2019/01288). The sixth permission was an extension to an existing vehicle repair unit in Portskewett.

One permission was approved in the Rural Secondary Settlement of Usk for a change of use of a day nursery to gin distillery (B2) and tasting and shop area (A1). This accounted for 0.01 ha of the overall figure.

Four permissions within Rural Areas accounted for the remaining 0.096ha of B use class employment space. These involved a change of use from agricultural bays to B"/B8 use in Whitehall (ref: DM/2019/01694), B8 storage use at Magor Sawmills (ref: DM/2019/00038), B8 storage at Ty Newydd Farm, Bryngwyn (ref: DM/2019/00383) and a bespoke personalisation vehicle facility in Devauden (ref:DM/2019/00191).

Although there is no specific target relating to this indicator, the Council is keen to monitor employment permissions for B uses in the County. The amount of employment floorspace permitted during this monitoring period is lower than that recorded in the last AMR (4.86ha). The Council will continue to monitor this issue in future AMRs and work with colleagues in the Economy and Enterprise Section to actively promote economic opportunities in the County.

While indicators 4 and 5 of this section relate to B use classes, it is useful to note that a number of permissions were granted for other employment generating uses (i.e. non-B uses) during the monitoring period, particularly rural enterprise/diversification schemes as detailed in the analysis for Policy S10.

In addition as detailed in the analysis for Policy S11 (Visitor Economy), 17 applications were approved for tourism uses during the monitoring period, all of which were for tourist accommodation facilities ranging from hotel accommodation to holiday lets and b&bs to glamping accommodation in various settlements across the County. These will provide a further boost to the visitor economy in Monmouthshire.

5. This indicator seeks to monitor the amount of employment floorspace for B use classes permitted by sector in Monmouthshire. B1 use class accounted for 0.13ha of floorspace approved through two planning applications. B2 use class accounted for 0.07ha, also through two planning applications. B8 warehousing and storage use class accounted for the largest proportion of the floorspace approved at 0.90 ha. This was approved over six planning permissions. A further 0.04ha was approved on two planning applications involving a mixture of B use classes.

Turning more specifically to employment sectors, based on the UK Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007, the employment permissions for B use classes recorded over the monitoring period were in the following sectors\*\*:

- Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles/motorcycles (0.96ha) – 7 permissions
- Transport and storage; information and communication (0.01ha) – 1 permission
- Manufacturing (0.15ha) – 3 permissions
- Arts, entertainment and recreation; Other service activities (0ha)
- Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities (0.02) – 1 permission
- Accommodation and food services (0)

While there are no specific targets relating to this indicator the Council monitors employment sectors coming forward in the County. This will assist in determining whether the Council's ambitions for growing specific key economic sectors, are being achieved. A full review of the existing employment policies is being undertaken as part of the RLDP evidence base. It is recognised that the RLDP has a key role in supporting the Council's vision for economic growth and will be one of the main enablers in delivering Monmouthshire's priorities for economic growth which are set out in Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement.

6. No new applications were granted during the monitoring period that related to the loss of B uses on employment sites.

As there has been no loss of B use class employment recorded over the monitoring period, deviation from the target has not been triggered. The Council will continue to monitor such proposals in the future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this matter.

7. The 2019 Welsh Government Commuting Statistics indicate that 60.1% of the County's residents work in the area. This is slightly down on last year's figure of 60.4% but still higher than the average levels recorded since the monitoring of the Plan began. This remains at a lower level than the Welsh average of 68.2%. This suggests that there has been progress in meeting the aspiration to increase the proportion of resident workforce working within Monmouthshire over the Plan period. However, these figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution.

8. According to the 2019 Welsh Government Commuting Statistics, Monmouthshire has a net inward flow of 1,200 commuters – with 18,900 commuting into the area to work and 17,700 commuting out. There was significant in-commuting from Blaenau Gwent (3,000),

Newport (2,900) and Torfaen (2,700) and from outside Wales (4,400). The main areas for out-commuting were Bristol (5,400), Newport (4,000), Cardiff (2,100) and Torfaen (1,000), with a further 3,200 commuting to other areas outside Wales. The high proportion of commuting to/from areas outside of Wales clearly reflects Monmouthshire's location as a border authority.

There is an aspiration to reduce levels of both in-commuting and out-commuting recorded in Monmouthshire over the Plan period. While the level of out-commuting has remained relatively constant over the Plan period, the level of in-commuting has been variable, ranging from 17,100 to a high of 24,600 during the last monitoring period. However, these figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution.

While the Council can seek to encourage economic development and approve associated planning applications, travel to work patterns are influenced by wider factors such as family ties and property prices which are outside the control of the plan.

**Recommendation**

1. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
3. Consider progress of employment sites as part of the Replacement LDP process.
4. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
5. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
6. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
7. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
8. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*UK Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 2007. Only includes those sectors for which planning permission has been granted over the monitoring period. For a full list of sectors refer to the SIC 2007.

\*\* Amended to include permission missed in monitoring period 2018 - 19 - DM/2018/00696 – Crick Road, Portskewett – Outline permission for 291 dwellings and 0.73ha Care Home. Care home approved on land allocated for B1 use (SAH2).

◆Data Source: Monmouthshire Employment Land Background Paper for the period April 2019-March 2020

◆◆Amended to clarify that these indicators monitor B use classes only.

◆◆◆Data Source: Welsh Government Commuting Statistics 2019 (release date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020)

## Rural Enterprise

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** Encourage diversification of the rural economy

**Strategic Policy:** S10 Rural Enterprise

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 3, 5, 7 & 14

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** RE1-RE6

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
9. Number of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes* approved	No target  <i>(2014-15: 7)</i> <i>(2015-16: 10)</i> <i>(2016-17: 6)</i> <i>(2017-18: 8)</i> <i>(2018-19: 7)</i>	None	<b>15</b>
<b>Analysis</b>			
<p>A total of 15 applications relating to rural enterprise/diversification were approved during the monitoring period. 7 of the applications were approved as rural enterprise schemes and 8 applications as rural diversification of existing farmsteads.</p> <p>Of the rural enterprise schemes approved, two related to existing established businesses. This included: construction of new bespoke vehicles personalisation facility at Percus Barn Devauden; and erection of a glazed covered area to provide addition seating to an existing café at Emm Lee Bungalow at Llantilto Pertholey .</p> <p>Four new enterprise schemes were approved, which included: two new wedding venue events, one at Woodbank Llanhennock and the other at Tredilion Park, Abergavenny; a multi-purpose venue for filming kitchen and small residential cookery school (with additional use as a holiday accommodation) at Weir House Llantillio Crosseny; and a change of use of 3 barns - one to a gym, one to sui generis/B1 and one to ancillary staff accommodation at Court House , Llangattock Lingoed.</p>			

Finally, a retrospective application was approved to continue a dog breeding rural enterprise at Dan y Derwen stables Llanvapley. Breeding had taken place at the premises in various degrees of intensity for over 30 years, the application however regularised the use.

The diversification schemes relate to existing farm businesses, which are diversifying to help support their existing agricultural income. Four proposals related to change of use to equestrian/livery businesses. These were at Latimer Farm Earlswood; Land adjacent Sunnybank Crick; Upper Farm Bungalow Llandewi Rhydderch; and Coed Poerth Farm, Pen yr Heol.

Three farms had permission to diversify into business/enterprise schemes, which included 4 small separate B2/B8 units at Magor Pill Farm; New A2 offices at Court Farm West End Magor; and a B8 use at High House Farm Bryngwn.

The final diversification scheme related to Llanvertherine Court Farm, Llanvetherine, which gained permission for a change of use to a D2 events (including wedding events).

There has been an increase in the amount of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes approved over the monitoring period (15 schemes) when compared to the previous AMRs. The number and consistency of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes approved since the LDP's adoption (total 53 schemes) suggests that Strategic Policy S10 and the supporting development management policies are operating effectively. The Council will continue to monitor this indicator in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of this policy framework in relation to the diversification of the rural economy.

#### **Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Rural Enterprise Schemes as listed here do not constitute those that require special justification as defined by TAN6



## Visitor Economy

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** Encourage high quality sustainable tourism

**Strategic Policy:** S11 Visitor Economy

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 3, 5 & 7

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** T1-T3, RE6, SAT1

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
10. Number of tourism schemes approved <i>(includes extensions/conversions and new build)</i>	No target  <i>(2014-15: 17)</i> <i>(2015-16: 10)</i> <i>(2016-17: 24)</i> <i>(2017-18: 16)</i> <i>(2018-19: 22)</i>	None	<b>17 tourism schemes approved</b>
11. Number of tourism facilities lost through development, change of use or demolition	Minimise the loss of tourism facilities  <i>(2014-15: 5)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0)</i> <i>(2016-17: 1)</i> <i>(2017-18: 3)</i> <i>(2018-19 : 3)</i>	Loss of any 1 tourism facility in any 1 year	<b>7 tourism facilities lost</b>
<b>Analysis</b>			
<p>1. 17 applications were approved for tourism uses during the monitoring period, all of which were for tourist accommodation facilities. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 holiday lets (all conversions) in various settlements*,</li> <li>• Change of use of a dwelling into a 17 bedroom hotel and wedding venue in Llantilio Pertholey;</li> <li>• 4 Glamping accommodation sites (2 pods and 9 pods in separate sites at Glascoed; 5 pods at a site in Stanton; and the siting and conversion of a railway carriage in The Hendre;).</li> </ul>			

- Change of use of land for a touring caravan/campsite in Llanvetherine for up to 18 caravans (the site had been operating as a touring caravan site for 50 years, this permission however formalises the use and permits the use of the site throughout the whole year, which was not previously permitted);
- An additional 8 bed spaces at an existing bunk house accommodation at Tyr Goytre, Pandy.

Collectively, these provide approximately 128 new bed spaces and will provide a further boost to the visitor accommodation available in Monmouthshire.

The number of tourist accommodation facilities approved over the monitoring period suggests that the relevant Plan policies and adopted 'Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG' are operating effectively allowing such developments to take place in Monmouthshire.

Comparison with previous AMRs demonstrates that the number of tourism schemes approved during the current monitoring period remains at a positive level. Cumulatively a total of 106 tourism schemes have been approved since the LDP's adoption in February 2014 which further indicates that the LDP tourism policy framework is operating effectively to enable such development in the County.

The Council will continue to monitor tourism applications closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to the provision of tourist facilities.

2. 7 applications were permitted during the monitoring period relating to the loss of tourism facilities.

5 of the applications related to the removal of holiday let conditions to residential use. Two of these applications at Newcastle Monmouth and Llandewi Rhydderch were justified on the basis that the evidence provided indicated there was a low take-up of lettings and they were not financially viable. The other three applications at Trellech, Llangovan and Shirenewton were justified on the basis that a conversion to residential use was compliant with Policy H4 (conversion to residential within the open countryside) of the LDP.

A further application permitted, related to the change of use of a B&B with 8 bedspaces in Caerwent to a children's nursery, which complied with the adopted planning policy framework. Previous to a B&B use the property was a dwelling house.

The final application permitted was in relation to the loss of Llansantffraed Court a 21 bedroom hotel in Llanarth. This was justified on the basis that substantial evidence had been submitted to show that the hotel has not been financially viable for some years.

While the data collected indicates that some visitor accommodation has been lost to alternative uses over the monitoring period and subsequently the trigger for this indicator has been met, the loss is small in number and justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework. The Council will continue to monitor such proposals in future

AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue, given the importance of tourism to the County's economy.

Of note, 1 tourist facility was refused planning permission during the current monitoring period<sup>5</sup>. It was considered that due to their scale and massing, together with their degree of permanency, the glamping pods did not represent an acceptable form of sustainable tourism accommodation contrary to the requirements of Policy S11 and Policy LC1 of the LDP.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Llantillio Crossenny, Llanfair Discoed, Llandogo, Llangwm and Pandy

<sup>5</sup> DM/2019/01296- 3 No. glamping pods, Lower Cwm Farm, Llantilio Crossenny

## Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To ensure development accords with the principles of sustainable development

**Strategic Policy:** S12 Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1, 8, 9, 10 & 11

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** SD1-SD4

### Contextual Changes

The Welsh Government consulted on changes to TAN 15 - Development and Flood Risk between 09 October 2019 and 17 January 2020. The draft TAN contains a number of proposed changes and updates which include factual updates to terminology and references, replacing the Development Advice Map with a new Wales Flood Map to be maintained by Natural Resources Wales, policy for the new flood zones, and updating guidance on coastal erosion currently set out in TAN 14 and integrating it within TAN 15. This will enable TAN 14 to be cancelled.

In May 2019 Monmouthshire County Council declared a Climate Emergency, which seeks to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030. This sets out a clear policy commitment for the council to:

- strive to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030;
- encourage and support residents and businesses to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions;
- Work with partners across the county and other councils and organisations to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5 °C

During summer 2019, the Council developed an action plan and strategy to set out how this would be achieved. The action plan was adopted by the Council in October 2019 and focuses on energy, transport, green spaces, waste and procurement. Progress on the action plan will be reported in future AMRs.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
12. Proportion of development on brownfield land as a percentage of all development permitted ( <i>including change of use of land</i> ) ( <i>excludes householder, conversions and agricultural buildings</i> )	Increase proportion of development on brownfield land  <i>(2014-15: 28% /17.3ha)</i> <i>(2015-2016: 16.8%/10.51ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 51.2% /18.6ha)</i> <i>(2017-18 40.18%/ 21.58ha)</i> <i>(2018-19 12.7% / 3.7ha)</i>	No increase in proportion of development on brownfield land for 2 consecutive years	<b>21%/5.3ha</b>
13. Amount of development (by TAN15 category) permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN15 tests	All developments to be compliant with TAN15 requirements  <i>(2014-15: 1)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0)</i> <i>(2016-17: 0)</i> <i>(2017-18: 1 )</i> <i>(2018-19:1)</i>	Planning permission is granted contrary to TAN15 requirements	<b>0 application granted in Zone C2</b>
14. Number of new developments permitted that incorporate on-site renewable energy generation*	Increase in the number of new developments permitted incorporating renewable energy generation  <i>(2014-15: 2)</i> <i>(2015-16: 9)</i> <i>(2016-17: 5)</i> <i>(2017-18: 1)</i> <i>(2018-19: 3)</i>	No annual increase	<b>6</b>
15. Number of new developments completed that	Increase in the number of new developments	No annual increase	<b>1</b>

incorporate on-site renewable energy generation	completed incorporating renewable energy generation  <i>(2014-2015: N/A)</i> <i>(2015-2016: 4)</i> <i>(2016-2017: 3)</i> <i>(2017-2018:2)</i> <i>(2018-19: 1)</i>		
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### Analysis

1. A total of 25.03ha of development was permitted over the monitoring period, whereby only 5.3ha was located on brownfield sites. This equated to 21% of all development (excluding householder, conversions and agricultural buildings) as being permitted on brownfield land.

Residential development accounted for the majority of brownfield land permitted (2.32ha /44%). This included: a section of the allocated Cross Ash garage site( SAH11) (i)(b) whereby an area of 0.03ha was on brownfield land; the erection of 12 dwellings at land at former Ifton Manor Farm, Rogiet (0.49ha); 2 new residential properties at the former Llanfoist primary school (0.16); and two garage block redevelopments in Chepstow – one at Pembroke Road for 9 dwellings (0.3ha) and the other at Western Avenue for 8 one bedroom mews (0.2). A further 1.3ha of brownfield land related to housing infill plots within existing residential curtilage/garden areas.

During this monitoring period employment development accounted for a large proportion of brownfield development at 40% (2.08ha). This was in relation to various extensions at Magor Brewery (a combination of 0.35ha); a drive thru kiosk at Magor services (1.11ha); an extension to a unit at Severn Bridge Industrial for a car repair unit (0.016ha); a small extension to Magor Sawmills (0.006ha); a carpark extension at County Hall Usk (0.5 ha); a toilet block for a commercial site in Crick (0.006ha); and an extension to a café - Emm Lee Bungalow, Llantilio Pertholey (0.027ha) .

The remaining proportion of development on brownfield land related to community facilities at 16%/ 0.87ha. This related to demountable units at Ysgol Cymreag Y Fenni (0.635ha) and Dell primary school (0.006ha); demountable units at Abergavenny fire station (0.2ha); and the Riverside Pavilion at Chepstow Castle carpark (0.025ha).

Apart from the last monitoring period 2018-19 (12.7%/ 3.7ha), the percentage amount of development permitted on brownfield sites and number of hectares permitted is lower than recorded previous AMR monitoring periods.

As with last year, this suggests that there is limited brownfield land available within the County for development. The allocated strategic brownfield sites, namely Fairfield

Mabey and Sudbrook Paper Mill, have been accounted for in previous monitoring periods and there are no further allocated strategic brownfield sites available for residential development in the current plan. The trigger for further investigation has been met and as part of the LDP revision process the potential for further development on brownfield land will be considered.

2. No applications have been granted planning permission contrary to TAN15 requirements in either Zone C1 or C2 floodplain over the monitoring period. Policy S12 is consequently functioning effectively in this respect. The Council will continue to monitor this indicator to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

3. Six applications were approved for on-site renewable energy generation during the monitoring period, these related to solar, biomass and a ground source heat pump.

Three proposals related to roof mounted solar panels to small scale housing proposals for MHA whereby proposed new small scale housing development were to incorporate solar panels on the roofs from the onset. These related to 9 dwellings in Pembroke Road, Chepstow; 8 mews style dwellings in Western Avenue, Chepstow; and a non-material amendment (nma) for a recently approved scheme (feb 2019) for plots 7-9 at Station House Road, Dingestow.

Two applications were recorded in relation to biomass renewable energy. One, a retrospective application related to the retention of an 110kw woodchip biomass boiler at Mill Farm, Dingestow. This required planning permission as the associated flue for the boiler required permission. The second, a replacement scheme (in relation to an earlier consent in 2014) for the redevelopment of Pentwyn Farm, Llanarth to holiday lets and a multi-functional venue space. The replacement scheme introduced a biomass boiler house to the proposed development.

The final application related to an 180kw ground source heat pump at Alice Springs (former golf club) holiday let apartments. The pump required planning permission due to its larger heat generating capacity of 180kw.

As with previous monitoring periods, a limited number of on-site renewable energy schemes have been permitted, particularly ground-mounted solar panels, which is believed to be a result of the reduction of Government incentive schemes (Feed in Tariff). It is apparent however that schemes incorporating renewable design from the on-set are being proposed, such as solar panels to the roofs of housing association schemes. Moreover, it is considered that the majority of smaller scale renewable energy schemes fall under permitted development, and therefore not picked up by the planning system, for instance the biomass boiler scheme only required planning permission due to the required flue.

While the trigger has been met, it is important to note that collectively a total of 26 schemes incorporating on-site renewable energy have been permitted since the LDP's

adoption in 2014 which suggests that Strategic Policy S12 and its supporting policies are operating effectively in respect of the provision of renewable energy.

The Council will nevertheless continue to monitor this issue closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to efficient resource use.

4. Just one scheme incorporating on-site renewable energy generation was completed, which related to the retrospective application (already completed at application stage) for an 110KW Woodchip boiler at Mill Farm Dingestow).

While there has been a reduction in the number of completions compared to the previous years and the trigger has there for been met, it should be noted that since the Plan's adoption in 2014, a total of 11 schemes incorporating on-site renewable energy have been completed and are operational. This further indicates that Strategic Policy S12 and its supporting policies are operating effectively in respect of the provision and completion of on-site renewable energy schemes.

The Council will nevertheless continue to monitor this issue closely in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to efficient resource use.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

3. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

4. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Additional monitoring indicator included in the monitoring framework in order to identify schemes in 4.

\*\*Based on applications granted permission for on-site renewable energy since LDP adoption.



## Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To protect open space and sites of acknowledged nature conservation and landscape importance

**Strategic Policy:** S13 Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 8

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** LC1-LC6, GI1 & NE1

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Amount of Greenfield land lost to development which is not allocated in the development plan <i>(includes new built development – housing, employment but excludes agricultural buildings)</i>	Minimise the loss of non-allocated Greenfield land  <i>(2014-15: 26 ha)</i> <i>(2015-16: 44.6 ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 16.5 ha)</i> <i>(2017-18 : 8.98ha)</i> <i>(2018-19: 9.71ha)</i>	Any loss of non-allocated Greenfield land in any 1 year	<b>18.27ha*</b>
2. Amount of public open space / playing fields lost to development which is not allocated in the development plan	Minimise the loss of open space / playing fields to development that is not allocated in the development plan  <i>(2014-15: 1.47ha)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0.76ha)</i> <i>(2016-17: 0)</i> <i>(2017-18:0)</i> <i>(2018-19 :1.74ha)</i>	Any loss of open space due to development, not allocated in the development plan in any 1 year	<b>0.1ha</b>
3. Developments permitted / completed that are	None adversely affected	Recorded damage or fragmentation of	<b>3</b>

within internationally / nationally important nature conservation areas**	(2014-15: N/A) (2015-16: 0) (2016-17: 0) (2017-18:0) (2018-19:1)	designated sites / habitats	
4. Developments granted permission that cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of locally designated sites	Minimise developments that would cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of locally designated sites (2014 -15:N/A) (2015-16:1) (2016-17: 1) (2017-18:1) (2018 – 19: 2)	1 or 2 developments result in overall harm for 2 consecutive years, or 3 or more developments result in harm in any 1 year	<b>2</b>
5. Number of new developments delivering habitat creation and restoration	Increase number of new developments delivering habitat creation / restoration  (2014-15: 1) (2015-16: 1) (2016-17: 0) (2017-18:2) (2018-19 :1)	None	<b>0</b>

### Analysis

1. Over the current monitoring period, 34 permissions were granted on greenfield land which is not allocated for development in the LDP, totalling 18.27ha. This is higher than recent monitoring periods (16.5ha in 2016-17; 8.98ha in 2017-18; 9.71ha in 2018-19), but not as high as earlier periods in the review (44.6ha in 2015-16 and 26ha in 2014-15). The high figure recorded in 2015-16 was predominantly due to the increase in larger scale renewable energy (solar PV arrays) schemes permitted which were justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework and national planning policy, there were no such renewable energy schemes permitted over the current monitoring period.

Again, like the most recent monitoring periods, residential development accounted for the majority of non-allocated greenfield land permitted during the current period, at 7.11 ha (38.9%). The main contributor to residential development was 'Land to the east of Church Road' departure site in Caldicot, which is permitted for up to 130 dwellings, with the developable area of land for residential use accounting for approximately 6ha. This was

justified on the basis of the need to address the shortfall in Monmouthshire's five year housing supply, as the permission was granted permission prior to the revoking of TAN1.

Other residential contributors included: Change of use of land in Crick to accommodate 2 park homes and up to 4 touring caravans for travellers' needs (0.23ha); a rural enterprise dwelling at Blossom Park and campsite, Llantilio Pertholewy in lieu of an existing warden mobile home (0.15ha); a new dwelling in lieu of a lawful caravan that had been in situ for more than 10 years at Llanllowell (0.022ha); an infill plot for 2 residential dwellings in Chepstow (0.065ha); and a section of greenfield land at the former Llanfoist school (0.04ha) in order to accommodate a residential development.

The remainder of residential permissions were granted for the change of use of agricultural land to small scale residential curtilage extensions of existing garden areas (6 permissions totalling 0.6ha), all of which met visual amenity considerations of the LDP.

The second highest proportion of non-allocated greenfield land permitted related to community and recreation facility provision accounting for 23.6% (4.32ha). As with the residential category, this was mainly due to the departure site 'Land to the east of Church Road, Caldicot', whereby as part of the approved scheme a 4ha community park and woodland was granted for use by the wider community to accompany the 6ha residential development area. Further greenfield land was lost to provide tracks, trails and an outdoor gym at Portskewett and Sudbrook recreation centre (0.18ha), and two demountable classrooms at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni, Abergavenny, which was part greenfield on designated amenity land (0.065ha)/part brownfield development. A small section of woodland (0.012ha) was granted for to be used for archery purposes at Llantilio Petholey; and a small area of riverside bank was lost (0.25ha) to aid the provision of the Riverside Pavilion at Chepstow Castle carpark.

'Horsiculture' activities accounted of 17.9% of all permissions on non-allocated greenfield land. A total of 10 permissions (3.27ha) including riding arenas and stables, were granted permission over the monitoring period. These were considered to be an appropriate use of land in rural areas and to comply with the LDP policy framework.

Tourism uses accounted for 16.4% (3.26ha) of permissions on non-allocated greenfield land in this monitoring period. The 4 permissions granted all related to a change of use of land for glamping uses and siting of sustainable units, such as 'pods' and an old railway carriage at The Hendre. This increase in tourism uses within recent monitoring periods is considered in part attributable to the effective implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG (November 2017) which allows for sustainable, non-permanent forms of tourism use, such as glamping.

Employment uses accounted for just 3.2% (0.59 ha) of permissions on non-allocated greenfield land. Two of the permissions granted related to the expansion of existing employment carparks at Newhouse Industrial Estate (0.14ha) and Brook Farm Holdings, Nr Raglan (0.26ha). A further 0.14ha was granted for a livery business at Latimer Farm Earlswood, and a new vehicle personalisation facility was permitted at Percus Barn, Devauden (0.05ha).

No permissions were granted that related to the loss of greenfield land to renewable energy (0%/0ha) during the current monitoring period.

While the monitoring data indicates that there has been a loss of non-allocated greenfield land over the monitoring period due to the aforementioned permissions, (albeit less than recorded in previous AMRs) and subsequently the trigger for this indicator has been met, the loss is justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework at the time of decision making. The loss of greenfield land for large scale residential development in this year's monitoring period was justified as a positive policy approach to consider unallocated sites in order to address the shortfall in the housing land supply. This was prior to the revocation of TAN1 in March 2020.

Accordingly, the loss of non-allocated greenfield land does not indicate any issue with the implementation of LDP policies and therefore no further investigation is required at present. The Council will continue to monitor such proposals in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

2. Two applications were permitted within an area of amenity open space, which resulted in a loss of 0.1ha of public amenity space. These related to the loss of a small section of DES2 amenity space at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni Abergavenny( 0.065ha) for demountable classrooms; and a loss of amenity space at the former Llanfoist school (0.04ha) for residential units. Both applications were justified on the basis that the majority of the proposed development areas were on previously developed brownfield land and the loss of the amenity area was incidental and a minimal loss in context of the total site(s) areas. In the case of the Llanfoist site, it was also further justified that the section of amenity land to be developed had historically been used to house demountable classrooms and the scheme would provide access to the previously closed off wider DES2 area.

The Council will continue to monitor the amount of non-allocated public open space lost to development in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue

3. Three applications were permitted within a nationally important nature conservation area during the monitoring period. These related to a proposed garage within Pond Cottage Mynyddbach, which is part of the Mwyngloddafa Lesser Horseshoe Bat Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); construction of a garage and stables at Tregeirgog House which is part of the site of the Wye Valley Lesser Horseshoe Bat SSSI; and a proposed access gate (a delivery and maintenance route for an existing wind turbine site granted planning permission by Newport City Council January 2019) within the Gwent Levels SSSI.

In all cases the developments were justified on the basis that Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) and detailed surveys had been undertaken to inform the assessment of impacts of the scheme, which were full mitigated against and conditioned on the consents granted.

This indicates that the policy framework relating to nature conservation is functioning effectively in protecting nature conservation sites of international /national importance. The Council will continue to monitor permission and completions within these nature conservation sites to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this matter.

4. Two applications were granted over the monitoring period that were considered to cause harm to locally designated sites. The first relates to a replacement shed at The Patch, Elms Road, Raglan, which is within a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), known as Cuckoos Row Meadow (the retention of this site as a leisure plot was granted consent in May 2018).

The second relates to a new vehicle personalisation facility within Percus Woods, Devauden, SINC, which resulted in a permanent loss of ancient woodland (trees had previously been cleared from the application site area).

While the two permissions were considered to cause harm to the SINCS identified, in both cases the developments were conditioned to provide detailed management plans of how the SINCS are to be managed in the future, thus ensuring long term management of the SINCS, which was considered to be a net benefit to the ecology. The planning application process has demonstrated that harm to the SINCS was considered and justified within the context and requirements of Policy NE1 of LDP policy framework as evidenced above. This indicates that the policy framework relating to nature conservation is functioning effectively in protecting the nature value of locally designated sites. The Council will continue to monitor permissions and completions within these nature conservation sites to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this matter.

5. There were no developments permitted to specifically deliver habitat creation and restoration during the monitoring period.

While no applications were granted to deliver habitat creation and restoration, it is likely that other schemes approved over the monitoring period will help restore habitat through improved Green Infrastructure networks. Although there is no trigger for further investigation in relation to this indicator, the Council will continue to monitor the issue in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework in relation to Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

3. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

4. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

5. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

[Redacted]

\*Additional 1.41ha greenfield land relates to allocated sites SAH11 (ii) (Devauden) and SAH11(i) (b) (Cross Ash Garage) and is therefore excluded.

\*\*Indicator has been amended in line with the SA indicator for ease of data collection

## Waste

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** Meet the County's contribution to local waste facilities

**Strategic Policy:** S14 Waste

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 12

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** W1-W6, SAW1

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
Amount of waste management capacity permitted expressed as a percentage of the total capacity required as identified in the Regional Waste Plan	<p>Aim to provide between 2.2 and 5.6 hectares for new in-building waste management facilities located on appropriate B2 employment sites over the plan period</p> <p><i>(2014-15: 1.49ha permitted; 32.5ha potential waste management sites)</i></p> <p><i>(2015-16: 0.24ha permitted; 26.86ha potential waste management sites)</i></p> <p><i>(2016-17: 0ha permitted; 26.26ha potential waste management sites)</i></p> <p><i>(2017-18: 0ha permitted; 26.26ha)</i></p>	Amount of B2 employment land falls below 5.6 ha	<p><b>Waste capacity permitted 0ha</b></p> <p><b>Identified potential waste management sites 26.26ha</b></p>

	<p><i>potential waste management sites)</i></p> <p><i>(2018-19: 0ha permitted; 26.26ha potential waste management sites)</i></p>		
<b>Analysis</b>			
<p>1. There were no permissions for waste management capacity during the monitoring period. Additionally there was no take up of B2 land over the monitoring period, the amount of land available for potential waste management sites (i.e. B2 employment sites and existing waste disposal or management sites) remains the same as the previous AMR at 26.26ha. There remains, therefore, ample land available for potential waste management sites in relation to the maximum requirement of 5.6ha.</p>			
<b>Recommendation</b>			
<p>1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.</p>			



## Minerals

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** Safeguard areas of aggregates resources

**Strategic Policy:** S15 Minerals

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 12

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** M1-M3

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Extent of primary land-won aggregates resources as a percentage of total capacity identified in the Regional Technical Statement	A minimum land bank of 10 years to be maintained  <i>(2014-15: 0)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0)</i> <i>(2016-17: 0)</i> <i>(2017-18: 0)</i> <i>(2018-9: 0)</i>	10 years land bank is not maintained	<b>0</b>
2. Number of permitted permanent non-mineral developments on safeguarded sites that do not comply with Policy M2*	Minimise the number of permanent non-mineral developments on safeguarded sites  <i>(2014-15: 0)</i> <i>(2015-16: 0)</i> <i>(2016-17: 0)</i> <i>(2017-18: 0)</i> <i>(2018-19: 0)</i>	If any such developments are permitted	<b>0</b>
<b>Analysis</b>			
1. No land-based minerals extraction took place in the County during the monitoring period. There has, therefore, been no reduction in the land bank, which relies on the reserves available at Ifton Quarry, Rogiet. This quarry has not been worked for some time but has the benefit of an existing planning permission. Given the importance of maintaining a 10 year land bank the Council will continue to monitor this issue closely in future AMRs.			

2. There were no permissions for permanent non-mineral developments on safeguarded sites that did not comply with Policy M2 during the monitoring period.

This indicates that Policy M2 is being implemented effectively and no further investigation is required at present. The Council will continue to monitor this issue in future AMRs to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Indicator amended to include reference to Policy M2 for clarification

## Transport

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To increase sustainable forms of transport and ensure that all development meets sustainable transport planning principles

**Strategic Policy:** S16 Transport

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 1-6, 9 & 13

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** MV1-MV10

### Contextual Changes

During the current monitoring period, following the conclusion of a public inquiry into the project and the publication of the Inspectors Report, the Welsh Government announced that the M4 Relief Road would not proceed. Further details and the implications for Monmouthshire are given in the analysis below.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
1. Number of improvements to transport secured through S106 agreements	No target  <i>(2014-15: 3)</i> <i>(2015-16: 3)</i> <i>(2016-17: 2)</i> <i>(2017-18: 4)</i> <i>(2018-19: 3)</i>	None	<b>1 S106 agreement delivering transport improvements</b>
2. Progression of Local Transport Plan* (LTP) schemes detailed in Policy MV10 in accordance with the LTP delivery timetable	LTP proposals implemented in accordance with the LTP delivery timetable	LTP proposals detailed in Policy MV10 are not being implemented in accordance with the LTP delivery timetable	<b>Progression detailed in analysis below</b>
<b>Analysis</b>			
<p>1. During the current monitoring period the following transport and pedestrian improvement has been secured through a S106 agreement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Road, Caldicot (DM/2019/0161)</li> </ul>			

An indexed payment as a contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives and highway improvements in Caldicot (£130,000).

As indicated above, there has been one S106 agreement signed during the monitoring period which will result in transport and pedestrian improvements. This relates to an unallocated site which received permission in the context of the Council's decision on 20th September 2018 to give 'appropriate weight' to the lack of a five year housing land supply. In accordance with the LDP transport policy framework, the improvements seek to encourage sustainable forms of transport and ensure the development meets sustainable transport planning principles.

While there is no specific target relating to this indicator, the Council is interested in monitoring the amount of transport improvements secured through S106 agreements. As may be expected, given that progress with numerous allocated LDP sites was slower than anticipated, there were a relatively small number of transport improvements secured via S106 agreements in relation to these sites in the early part of the Plan period. However, in total, in the 6 years to date, of the 16 S106 agreements which have resulted in transport improvements 9 have related to allocated sites. The Council will continue to monitor this issue in future AMRs.

2. The progress of LTP\* schemes detailed in Policy MV10 in accordance with the LTP timetable is as follows:

**Welsh Government Road Schemes:**

**M4 corridor enhancement scheme Magor to Castleton:** (length in Monmouthshire to be safeguarded indicated on Proposals Map). The Welsh Government decided in June 2019 to not go ahead with the M4 corridor enhancement project. At the same time the WG set up a South East Wales Transport Commission to "consider the problems, opportunities, challenges and objectives for tackling congestion on the M4 in south east Wales, and make recommendations to the Welsh Government on a suite of alternative solutions". MCC has engaged with the commission, and is now awaiting the commissions' report.

**Monmouthshire County Council Road Schemes:**

**B4245 Magor/Undy By-pass:** (length to be safeguarded indicated on Proposals Map). See above. The M4 corridor enhancement project would have provided a by-pass for Magor/Undy. Once the report of the commission and the Welsh Government's reply to the report is known, MCC will take a decision on the proposed Magor/Undy by-pass.

**B4245/M48 Link Road and B4245/Severn Tunnel Junction Link Road:** These projects were seen as prerequisites for a large extension at Severn Tunnel Junction station (north side). The then proposed car park extension turned out to be unaffordable and undeliverable. Following the rebuilding of the road overbridge at STJ station as part of the rail electrification works, plans have been prepared for a smaller car park extension on the south side of STJ which can be delivered without these road schemes, and these are expected to be delivered over the next two years. Together with the Welsh Government,

Transport for Wales and other partners MCC is currently undertaking a Chepstow Transport WelTAG stage 2 study (Outline Business Case, i.e. feasibility, outline design, cost/benefits), which includes looking at a possible new A48/M48 junction to the northeast of Caldicot.

**A48 Chepstow Outer By-pass:** One of the key issues to be tackled by the above mentioned Chepstow Transport WelTAG stage 2 study is traffic relief for Chepstow, and as such it includes looking at a possible new road allowing traffic to avoid Chepstow town centre.

**A472 Usk By-pass:** No progress

#### **Public Transport Improvement Schemes:**

**Abergavenny Rail Station Interchange:** a provisional sum of £1.75m, which will be subject to TfW business case approval, allocated to deliver improvements to integrated transport and station facilities. These include:

- A new accessible footbridge (using existing Access for All funds if they are available that were earmarked for Abergavenny or through partnership with TfW Rail).
- A new Park-and-Ride car park on Network Rail land between the railway and A465, using the preferred Option 3 from the 2013 Abergavenny Station Study undertaken by the Council.
- A new bus interchange to enable TrawsCymru and other bus services to call at the station.
- A significant expansion in better quality cycle storage, with a minimum of 48 sheltered cycle spaces, monitored by CCTV.
- The station is also proposed as a 'model' for work with Disability Wales to pilot solutions that could be deployed across Wales that are also eligible further (Minor Works) funding for disability-focused inclusive design improvements.

Abergavenny bus station improvement: No further work. It is expected that there will be improvements to shelters and information displays delivered during 2020/21, the medium-long term solution is to move the bus station to the rail station.

**Chepstow Rail Station and Bus Station Interchange:** TfW Rail and MCC committed to provide joint funding to develop and implement (KA - £300,000)

- The station being made fully accessible for passengers with reduced mobility
- The construction of a new Park-and-Ride car park
- The creation of a new bus interchange at the station forecourt.

Development of the station and possible additional services will also be reviewed as part of the above mentioned Chepstow Transport Study. During 2020/21 TfW will also undertake an assessment of the Newport – Chepstow corridor as part of its Metro Enhancement Framework programme.

**Chepstow Park and Ride:** Options for park and ride will also be reviewed as part of the above mentioned Chepstow Transport Study.

**Severn Tunnel Junction (STJ) Interchange:** The proposed upgrade at Severn Tunnel Junction has been accepted in principle as a 'Metro Plus' project by the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet and the Welsh Government. The following items are currently being developed:

- Car Park extension - Construction of new 150-space car park to the south of the existing station, by 2021.
- Footbridge Extension - Extension of the existing station footbridge to the new car park extension (subject to feasibility).
- Improved Active Travel access from Rogiet - New footpath across existing station car park and along Station Approach by 2021, a new footpath along Station Road / Seaview Terrace has already been delivered.
- Improved AT access from Magor - New combined foot/cyclepath along B4245 between Rogiet and Undy (subject to feasibility).
- Parking restrictions across Rogiet - To prevent commuters parking their vehicle in the street of Rogiet, by 2021.
- Restore Country Park car park - Including new parking restrictions to prevent commuters parking their vehicle in the Country Park car park and prevent its use by visitors, by 2021.
- Improved AT access from Caldicot - Upgrade existing mudpath between station entrance and Caldicot (subject to funding).
- Improved station facilities - Additional cycle storage, possible ticket office, waiting room, café, solar panels, bus interchange (subject to feasibility and funding).

**Monmouth Park and Ride:** No progress.

**Monmouth bus station improvement:** No further work in 2019/20. It is expected that there will be improvements to shelters and information displays delivered during 2020/21.

### **Walking and Cycling Schemes**

**Monmouth Links Connect 2:** The remaining Monmouth Links Connect 2 programme has been superseded by the Monmouth Active Travel Integrated Network Maps. Work in Monmouth in 2018/19 concentrated on further work on undertaking the proposed Monmouth Wye Active Travel Crossing.

**Abergavenny walking and cycling network:** In 2019/20: Further phases of the Abergavenny town centre public realm scheme were completed, now extending to the top of Frogmore Street.

**Llanfoist pedestrian and cycling river crossing:** - Planning permission was granted in 2018/19, however National Resources Wales (NRW) refused to grant a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP). MCC's appeal was turned down. MCC is currently looking at options to reduce the flooding risk so that NRW will be able to grant a FRAP.

**Severn Tunnel Junction pedestrian and cycling access:** See above

Further progress on the LTP schemes will be reported in future AMRs.

Although not specifically identified in Policy MV10, the LTP identifies a number of additional transport schemes in Monmouthshire which are programmed for delivery over the 2015-2020 period and will also be monitored through the AMR process. One such scheme is the Magor and Undy new walkway rail station. MCC's Transport Section has advised that work has commenced on Network Rail's Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process in relation to the proposed station, with GRIP1 (Output definition) and GRIP2 (Feasibility) completed with work ongoing on GRIP3 (Option Selection). Current timescales anticipate that the scheme will be delivered by 2022/23.

The Council will continue to monitor the progress of the aforementioned schemes in future AMRs to determine whether they are being implemented in accordance with the LTP delivery timetable.

**Recommendation**

1. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action is required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*the 2015 Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) has replaced the 2010 South East Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP). The transport schemes identified in the RTP have been carried forward to the LTP – accordingly the indicator wording has been amended to reflect this.

## Place Making and Design

**Monitoring Aim/Outcome:** To protect sites and buildings of acknowledged built and historic interest

**Strategic Policy:** S17 Place Making and Design

**LDP Objectives Supported:** 14 & 15

**Other LDP Policies Supported:** DES1-4, HE1-4

### Contextual Changes

There have been no significant contextual changes relating to this policy area during the monitoring period.

Indicator	Target <i>(Previous AMR Performance)</i>	Trigger for Further Investigation	Performance 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020
3. Number of listed buildings and historic sites	No applications to result in the loss of listed buildings	There is a loss of more than 1 listed building each year for 3 or more consecutive years*	<b>Refer to analysis (1) below</b>
4. Number of conservation areas with up-to-date character appraisal	100% of identified draft Conservation Area Appraisals by 2016**	Target is not met	<b>19 Complete (100%) Refer to analysis (2) below</b>
5. Sample of planning applications granted for developments with potential for significant design / environmental implications	All development to contribute to the creation of a high quality well designed environment	Monitoring results are negative	<b>Refer to analysis (3) below</b>
6. Sample of planning applications granted for developments with the potential for significant impact on buildings of historic / archaeological interest,	No adverse impact on the historic environment	Any development adversely affects the historic environment	<b>Refer to analysis (4) below</b>



scheduled ancient monuments and conservation areas			
7. Occasions when development permitted would have an adverse impact on a listed building, conservation area, site of archaeological significance, or historic landscape park or their setting	<p>Development proposals do not adversely impact upon buildings and areas of built or historic interest and their setting</p> <p><i>(2014-15: none)</i>  <i>(2015-16: none)</i>  <i>(2016-17: none)</i>  <i>(2017-18: none)</i>  <i>(2018-19: none)</i></p>	1 or more planning consents are issued where there are outstanding objections from the Council's Conservation Team, Cadw or GGAT	<b>None recorded</b>

### Analysis

#### 3. Number of listed buildings and historic sites:

	LDP Base Date 2011	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Listed Buildings	2146	2153	2153	2152	2151	2149
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	169	164	164	164	164	164
Historic Parks and Gardens	44	45	45	45	45	45
Archaeologically Sensitive Areas	10	10	10	10	10	10
Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest	3	3	3	3	3	3

Two Listed Buildings were delisted over the monitoring period taking the total number across Monmouthshire to 2149. There were no changes in relation to Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens, Archaeologically Sensitive Areas or Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest over the monitoring period.

Despite there being a loss of 2 listed buildings during this monitoring period, the trigger has not been met. Since monitoring began in 2015 4 buildings have been delisted. The Council will continue to monitor the number of listed buildings and historic sites to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

4. Like the previous monitoring period, no further Conservation Area Appraisals have been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance during the monitoring period. A total of 19 Conservation Area Appraisals have however been adopted and the target of 100% of identified draft Conservation Area Appraisals by 2016 was therefore met in the 2015 - 2016 monitoring period. The remaining 12 Conservation Area Appraisals will be progressed in the future subject to available resources.

3. Unfortunately the 2019 - 2020 Members of Planning Committee design tour did not take place this monitoring period due to the impact of Covid-19 in early 2020.

4. Three applications have been identified by the Council's Heritage Team, which have potential for significant impact upon Monmouthshire's historic environment. These are:

- Caerwent House, a site discussed in 2018-19 AMR, a listed building at risk within Caerwent Conservation Area and on the boundary of Caerwent's Roman Town Scheduled Ancient Monument . During 2019-2020 work has fully begun on site with the structural works to the property underway, and building recording and investigation to fully understand the development of the house. Much of the modern fabric has been removed in order to sympathetically restore the character of the building.
- White Hart Inn, Usk – Listed Building Consent was granted for alterations to the building for use as a distillery and bar. This has been positive as the building had been empty for a significant period of time without a use. The works and use have ensured that a listed building has been provided with a sustainable use, an historic enforcement case has been closed and it has improved the character of the high street and conservation area.
- Lloyds Bank, Monmouth – Listed Building Consent granted for the formation of a disability access into the building. The site is difficult due to proximity to the High Street and road, but also the constraints of the site itself. The consent granted has allowed access for all to enter to the building, providing a continued use for a listed building, prevents loss of an important high street bank, and it is the design which least compromises the character, appearance and fabric of the entrance of a prominent listed building.

As the significant impacts identified are positive impacts upon the historic environment, the trigger has not been initiated and it is considered the current LDP policy 'development in Conservation Areas' policy (HE1) is working effectively, however we will continue to closely monitor development within sensitive historic areas.

5. There was only one planning consent issued over the monitoring period with an outstanding objection from the Council's Heritage Management Team, Cadw or GGAT. This related to the change in material from a stone tile roof to a natural slate roof at St Peter's Church Dixton, a grade II \* listed building. The heritage team assessed that the stone tile is a significant part of the overall importance of the church and its architectural and historic character. The application however was approved, as on balance the change in material was considered to benefit the community in order that they could continue to use the church for community use. Overall despite the application above, which was considered against other LDP policy considerations, Policy S17 is functioning effectively. The Council will continue to monitor the number of listed buildings and historic sites to determine the effectiveness of the policy framework relating to this issue.

<b>Recommendation</b>
1. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
2. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
3. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
4. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.
5. No action required at present. Continue to monitor.

\*Trigger wording amended to clarify that the trigger relates to a loss of more than 1 listed building each year for 3 or more consecutive years.

\*\*Target wording amended for clarification, relates to the 18 draft Conservation Area Appraisals that were in progress during the lead up to the adoption of the LDP.

### Methodology

6.1 The Sustainability Appraisal monitoring expands the assessment of the performance of the LDP against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Monitoring Objectives. The data collated includes a mix of qualitative and quantitative data with a commentary in the latter column to describe the progress and provide a recommendation. Not all of the indicators originally listed in the SA monitoring framework are included, information is only provided for those indicators where data is available.

6.2 There is an overlap with some LDP indicators, these indicators are marked in bold and coloured green for clarity. This is intended to provide an indication of how the LDP monitoring and SA monitoring are interlinked. A brief commentary is provided although reference should be made to Section 5 LDP Policy Analysis for additional information.

6.3 There are a number of SA indicators where information is not published annually, for example those based on the Census. The purpose of the monitoring framework is to review changes on an annual basis, as a consequence these are not necessarily going to be useful moving forward in terms of future monitoring. They have been retained in order to provide a baseline, work has been undertaken to try and find alternative sources of information however none appear to be available.

6.4 The traffic light rating system used for the LDP Monitoring Indicators has not been taken forward for use with the SA Monitoring. Many of the SA objectives are aspirational. In addition, the LDP alone would not be the only factor that would need to be considered in achieving their aims. The SA Monitoring does not include targets as such, unlike the LDP monitoring, it would therefore prove difficult to interpret the commentary into a traffic light rating. The symbols associated with certain indicators identify the desired direction for change. The symbols refer to; (+) increase or more; (-) decrease, less or none and; (nc) no change. As this relates to the sixth SA monitoring since the adoption of the LDP it is compared to the previous five AMRs and allows for emerging trends. Accordingly, the direction of change is referred to as relevant in the commentary section. This is utilised to assess the LDP's progression towards meeting the identified sustainable development indicators.

6.5 Information contained in the SA monitoring framework in the main relates to a wide range of data produced internally, by various departments of the Council and externally from other organisations. Where data has been sourced externally, a footnote is provided to ensure the data source is easily identifiable.

## Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
Accessibility	Allow equitable access for all to jobs, services and facilities they need, in a way that reduces reliance on car use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Average travel to work distance (-)</li> <li>2. Proportion of people travelling to work by public transport, walking or cycling (+)</li> <li>3. <b>Proportion of the workforce who remain in their own area for work, according to travel to work statistics (+)</b></li> <li>4. <b>Proportion of housing development completed within or adjoining the main towns, Severnside Settlements, Rural Secondary Settlements (RSS) and rural general, as identified in Policy S1.</b></li> <li>5. Percentage of major* new development within 10 minute walk from a frequent and regular bus service</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 21.9km**</li> <li>2. 16.7%**</li> <li>3. 60.1%*****</li> <li>4. Main Towns: 60.11%, Severnside: 24.43%, RSS: 3.65%, Rural General: 11.79%</li> <li>5. 66.6%</li> </ol>	<p><b>1 – 2.</b> The 2011 Census recorded 16.7% of people travelling to work by public transport, walking or cycling. The average travel to work distance is 21.9km. Data will not be published until the next Census in 2021, as a consequence a meaningful comparison will not be able to be obtained until that time. The data will subsequently remain the same in future AMRs.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The Welsh Government travel to work statistics identify 60.1% of the Monmouthshire workforce remaining in their own area for work. This figure has decreased by 0.3% since the previous AMR. However, these figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The Main Towns provided the largest proportion of dwelling completions over the monitoring period equating to 60.11% of the overall figure (356). The Severnside Settlements accounted for a total of 24.43% resulting in a further increase compared to the previous monitoring period which saw 16.9%. The Rural Secondary Settlements provided 3.65% and the Rural General which incorporates figures from the Main Villages provided 11.79%. The Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to the Spatial Strategy provides full analysis of this indicator.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Of the 3 applicable schemes, all related to residential uses. 2 of the 3 schemes were within a 10 minute walk of a frequent and regular bus service whilst the other residential scheme at Church Road in Caldicot was outside. However, officers note that the Church Road scheme complies with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy and that pedestrian</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
		(+)(includes residential, employment, retail and leisure permissions only)'		links throughout the site encourage walking into Caldicot Town Centre where public transport can be accessed. The previous AMR recorded 100%. This indicator will continue to be monitored.  <b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b>
Housing	Provide a range of types and tenures of housing that allows people to meet their housing needs	<b>1. People in housing need (-)</b> <b>2. Affordable home completions (+)</b> <b>3. General market home completions</b> <b>4. Annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR)*****</b> <b>5. Total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR)*****</b> <b>6. Density of housing permitted on allocated sites (SAH1 – SAH10)</b>	<b>1.</b> 474 per year over 5 Year Period (2017 base date) <b>2.</b> 82 <b>3.</b> 274 <b>4.</b> -94 units <b>5.</b> -1469 units <b>6.</b> 2 granted reserved matters, densities of 30 and 39 <b>7.</b> 616 dwellings permitted, 219 completed <b>8.</b> 4 completed <b>9.</b> See table in commentary section	<b>1.</b> The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2017 -2022 (July 2018) uses a different methodology to that used to provide evidence for the LDP. The results, therefore, are not directly comparable. The 474 figure should not be taken as a target for the delivery of affordable housing as new build homes are not the only supply of affordable homes in Monmouthshire. The Council is working with private landlords to increase the supply of private rented homes and to bring empty homes back into use. The figures and the breakdown of tenures are the same as the 2017-2018 and the 2018-2019 AMRs. The social rent need is 104.83 per year, Low Cost Home Ownership is 273.20 per year and Intermediate Rent is 96.73 per year. The low cost homeownership need will be addressed in a variety of ways in addition to new build housing negotiated by the Council. The government's Help to Buy and Rent to Own schemes as well as LCHO resales will have a substantial role to play. As stated above this figure should not be taken as an annual target, it does however provide an indication of current projected need for affordable housing within the County and sets a benchmark the Council can work towards.  <b>2 – 3.</b> There were 82 affordable home completions and 274 market dwelling completions over the monitoring period.

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
		<p><b>7. The number of dwellings permitted and completed on strategic sites as identified in policy S3.</b></p> <p><b>8. Number of affordable dwellings built through rural exception schemes</b></p> <p><b>9. Number of dwellings provided in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2</b></p>		<p><b>4 - 5</b> During this AMR period the Welsh Government have announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is to be monitored. The changes remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with a policy statement making it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP and agreed with the Housing Stakeholder Group, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of development plan housing requirements as part of LDP Annual Monitoring Reports. Two new indicators have been included in this AMR, which replace the previous indicator which measured the five-year housing land supply. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR). In 2019-2020 this figure was – 94 dwellings (-20.9%). The second of these indicators measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR). In 2019-2020 this figure was -1469 dwellings (-36.3%). The Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to the Housing Provision provides a full analysis of the new indicators.</p> <p><b>6.</b> No additional sites were granted permission over the current monitoring period, however two sites referred to in previous AMRs were the subject of reserved matters permissions which has impacted on the number of units to be delivered on both sites and therefore density. The Crick Road SAH1 site in Portskewett has gained reserved matters approval for 269 dwellings, resulting in a density of 30dpha (dwellings per hectare). The Fairfield Mabey SAH3 site in Chepstow has been granted reserved matters approval for 347 dwellings equating to 39dpha. The Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to the Housing Provision provides a full analysis of this indicator.</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary															
				<p><b>7.</b> There has been a minor increase in the number of completions on strategic sites over the monitoring period (219 completions 2019 - 2020) compared to the previous AMR (210 completions 2018 – 2019). The majority of strategic site completions (74) relate to the SAH4 Wonastow Road site, the remainder relate to SAH1 Deri Farm site (68), SAH7 Sudbrook Paper Mill site (61) and SAH5 Rockfield Farm, Undy site (16).</p> <p><b>8.</b> There were 4 completions relating to rural exception schemes over the monitoring period. The homes were delivered at the rural exception site at Llantilio Crossenny. The site is a 100% affordable housing site, delivered by Monmouthshire Housing Association.</p> <p><b>9.</b> The table below provides a breakdown of the 356 dwelling completions, in comparison with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2. The Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to the Spatial Strategy provides a full analysis of this indicator.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2019 – 2020</th> <th>Target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Main Towns</b></td> <td>60.11%</td> <td>41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Sevenside</b></td> <td>24.43%</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Rural Secondary</b></td> <td>3.65%</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Rural General</b></td> <td>11.79%</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>		2019 – 2020	Target	<b>Main Towns</b>	60.11%	41%	<b>Sevenside</b>	24.43%	33%	<b>Rural Secondary</b>	3.65%	10%	<b>Rural General</b>	11.79%	16%
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Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
Health, safety & security	To improve health and wellbeing by encouraging more healthy lifestyles, and protecting people from risk that may impact on their health and/or safety	1. Amount of open space created as a result of planning permissions	1. 12.7 ha.	1. 12.7ha of additional open space was approved as a result of planning permissions over the monitoring period. This data is collected from the Development Management statutory returns and excludes any outline applications or applications awaiting the signing of S106 agreements. This demonstrates that developments permitted through the planning process are successfully facilitating the provision of new open spaces. <b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b>
Community	To support and promote the distinctive character of local communities and community cohesion	1. <b>Number of community and recreation facilities granted planning permission (+)</b> 2. <b>Amount of community and recreation facilities lost to other uses.</b> 3. <b>Amount of public open space / playing fields lost to development which is not allocated in the development plan</b>	1. 12 2. 4 3. 0.1ha	1. Twelve planning applications were granted planning permission for community and recreation uses over the monitoring period. Five of the twelve applications relate to recreation uses and seven in relation to community uses. This represents an increase in the number of community / recreation facilities granted in the two previous AMRs (2018-2019; 8, 2017-2018; 10) and therefore meets the desired direction of change. For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Community and Recreation Facilities.  2. There has been a loss of four community facilities over the period monitored. While the data collected indicates that four community facilities have been lost to alternative uses over the monitoring period and subsequently the trigger for this indicator has been met, their loss is justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework. For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Community and Recreation Facilities.  3. During the monitoring period 2 permissions were granted on areas of open space not allocated for development in the LDP totalling 0.1

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				<p>hectares. Both applications were justified on the basis that the majority of the proposed development areas were on previously developed brownfield land and the loss of the amenity area was incidental and a minimal loss in context of the total site(s) areas. For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Biodiversity	Protect, value, manage and enhance healthy functioning ecosystems, habitats and natural species diversity, valuing nature conservation interests wherever they are found	<p><b>1. Developments permitted that cause harm to the overall Nature Conservation value of locally designated sites (-)</b></p> <p><b>2. Number of new developments delivering habitat creation and restoration</b></p> <p><b>3. Hectares of ancient woodland lost to development (-)</b></p> <p><b>4. Development permitted within internationally / nationally important nature conservation areas.</b></p>	<p><b>1.</b> 2 applications</p> <p><b>2.</b> 0</p> <p><b>3.</b> 0.05ha ancient woodland potentially lost to development</p> <p><b>4.</b> 3</p>	<p><b>1.</b> There were two applications granted over the monitoring period that will cause harm to the overall Nature Conservation value of locally designated sites. The first relates to a replacement shed at within the Cuckoos Row Meadow Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The second application will result in a loss of Ancient Woodland within the Percus Wood SINC boundary due to the construction of a new vehicle personalisation facility.</p> <p>For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment.</p> <p><b>2.</b> There were no developments permitted to specifically deliver habitat creation and restoration during the monitoring period.</p> <p><b>3.</b> A very small proportion of ancient woodland could be lost as a result of one application approved over the monitoring period. This application could result in the loss of 0.05ha of ancient woodland. The previous AMR reported a 0.0125ha loss which is lower than the current monitoring period, therefore the desired direction of change has not been met. This indicator will continue to be monitored closely in the next AMR.</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				<p><b>4.</b> There were 3 developments permitted within internationally / nationally important nature conservation areas during the monitoring period, all of which were located in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Landscape	To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, including its contribution to the setting and character of settlements	<p><b>1.</b> Number of trees protected by TPOs lost to development (-)</p>	<p><b>1.</b> 0 trees protected by TPOs lost.</p>	<p><b>1.</b> No Tree Preservation Order trees were lost to development over the monitoring period. This is a decrease when compared to the previous AMR (3 trees), the desired direction of change has therefore been met.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Built Environment	To maintain and enhance the built environment for both its visual character and distinctiveness and to create a better living environment.	<p><b>1.</b> Planning permission granted for renewable and low carbon energy development.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Number of new developments completed that incorporate on-site renewable energy</p>	<p><b>1.</b> 6</p> <p><b>2.</b> 1</p> <p><b>3.</b> N/A</p>	<p><b>1.</b> Six applications were approved for on-site renewable energy generation during the monitoring period. Three of the aforementioned applications were for small scale development of solar panels, two applications were in relation to biomass renewable energy whilst the final was for a ground source heat pump.</p> <p>This compares to a total of three schemes in the previous AMR</p> <p>For further detail refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 on Efficient Resource Use and Flood Risk.</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
		<p>generation. (i.e. permissions following LDP adoption that have been completed over the 2019-2020 monitoring period)</p> <p><b>3. Sample of planning applications granted for developments with the potential for significant design / environmental implications.</b></p>		<p><b>2.</b> One scheme incorporating on-site renewable energy generation were completed over the monitoring period; this was a 110KW Woodchip boiler at Mill Farm Dingestow and was a retrospective application and thus this scheme is considered complete.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Unfortunately the 2019 – 2020 Members of Planning Committee design tour did not take place this monitoring period due to the impact of Covid- 19 in early 2020.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Historic Heritage	Understand, value, protect and restore, where necessary, the historic cultural heritage of the area, including features of the built and semi-natural environment	<p><b>1. Number of listed building and historic sites (-)</b></p> <p><b>2. Sample of planning applications granted for developments with the potential for significant impact on buildings of historic / archaeological interest, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation areas</b></p>	<p><b>1.</b> Listed Buildings: 2149, Scheduled Ancient Monuments: 164, Historic Parks &amp; Gardens: 45, Archaeological Sensitive Areas: 10 and Landscapes of Historic Importance: 3</p>	<p><b>1.</b> Two listed building were delisted by Cadw over the monitoring period. There were no other changes in relation to Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens, Archaeologically Sensitive Areas or Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest over the monitoring period.</p> <p><b>2.</b> Unfortunately the 2019 – 2020 Members of Planning Committee design tour did not take place this monitoring period due to the impact of Covid- 19 in early 2020.</p> <p><b>3.</b> A total of 19 Conservation Area Appraisals have been produced and adopted as SPG. Refer to the Place Making and Design Policy Analysis in Section 5 for further details.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
		<p>adversely affected by development.</p> <p><b>3. Number of conservation areas with an up-to-date character appraisal</b></p>	<p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. 19 up to date Conservation Area character appraisals.</p>	
Air	To reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere to protect from climate change	<p><b>1.</b> Number of locations where air quality exceeds objective levels per annum (-)</p> <p><b>2.</b> Percentage of people employed using their car/van as their main way of commuting to and from work either by driving or as a passenger (-)</p> <p><b>3.</b> Proportion of people employed travelling to work by public transport, walking or cycling (+)</p>	<p><b>1.</b> 1 location in Chepstow</p> <p><b>2.</b> 81.4%**</p> <p><b>3.</b> 16.7%**</p>	<p><b>1.</b> The annual objective level of nitrogen dioxide was only exceeded in one location in 2019. This related to Hardwick Hill in Chepstow, the same location as the previous four years. For the fourth year running there was no exceedance in Usk. While there has been no improvement it is encouraging that there are no additional locations that exceed objective levels of air quality. The indicator will continue to be monitored in future AMRs.</p> <p><b>2 – 3.</b> The 2011 Census recorded 16.7% of people travelling to work by public transport, walking or cycling. The mode of commuting statistics are also taken from the 2011 Census identifying 81.4% of people employed as using their car/van as their main way of commuting to and from work. Data will not be published until the next Census in 2021, as a consequence a meaningful comparison will not be able to be obtained until that time. This data will subsequently remain the same in future AMRs.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Water quality	To maintain and improve the quality of ground,	<b>1.</b> % of rivers reaching 'good' water quality status (+)	<p><b>1.</b> 32%***</p> <p><b>2.</b> 4 of 10</p>	<b>1.</b> The Water Framework Directive (WFD) combines ecological and chemical status in its reporting, the surface water body will need to reach good status in both elements in order to reach an overall 'good

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
	surface and coastal waters	<b>2.</b> Proportion of allocated sites and all other developments of over 10 dwellings/1ha that incorporate SUDS (+)		<p>status'. In the latest (interim) 2018 Water Framework Directive Classification, 32% of rivers in Monmouthshire achieve Good status.</p> <p><b>3.</b> All ten applicable applications permitted related to residential schemes. Four of the residential schemes incorporated SuDS ranging from the use of swales and ponds to water butts for individual plots. The remaining schemes did not include any proposals to incorporate SuDS although it is noted that two of the remaining residential schemes had permission to attenuate to existing watercourses, whilst the remaining 4 applications were submitted and validated prior to the Sustainable Drainage Regulations being implemented. While SuDS were not fully incorporated into all major developments over the monitoring period, the lack of SuDS appears to be justified in many of the cases and the reasoning behind the lack of SuDS is recognised within some of the application details and officers' reports. The number of major developments permitted has decreased since the previous monitoring period where there were 7 such schemes permitted. The proportion of schemes that incorporate SuDS has increased to 40% compared to the previous AMR which recorded 23% (2018-2019). This increase is likely to be due to the new regulations which came into effect in January 2019. This indicator will be monitored closely in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Water supply	To maintain the quantity of water available including potable water	<b>1.</b> Proportion of groundwater bodies reaching 'good' quantity status (+)	<b>1.</b> 100%***	<b>1.</b> Monmouthshire sits within three groundwater bodies, the Usk Devonian Old Red Sandstone (ORS), Wye Secondary Devonian ORS and Usk and Wye southern Carboniferous Limestone. All three groundwater bodies had good status for quantity over the 2015 monitoring period.

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
	supplies, and ground water and river levels			<p>NRW no longer produce an annual classification and the figures subsequently remain the same as the previous four monitoring periods. The next classification will nevertheless be produced for the updated River Basin Management Plans and should be produced in time for the next AMR.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Flood risk	Ensure that new development is designed and located to avoid the risk of flooding, and ensure the risk of flooding is not increased elsewhere	<p><b>1. Number of permissions for development in Flood Zones C1 and C2 not meeting all TAN 15 tests</b> (-)</p> <p><b>2. Proportion of allocated sites and all other developments of over 10 dwellings/1ha that incorporate SUDS</b> (+)</p> <p><b>3. Instances where rivers experienced summer low flow</b> (-)</p>	<p><b>1. 0</b> <b>2. 4 of 10</b> <b>3. 3***</b></p>	<p><b>1.</b> No applications have been granted planning permission contrary to TAN15 requirements in either Zone C1 or C2 floodplain over the monitoring period. This replicates the results of the previous monitoring period.</p> <p><b>2.</b> All ten applicable applications permitted related to residential schemes. Four of the residential schemes incorporated SuDS ranging from the use of swales and ponds to water butts for individual plots. The remaining schemes did not include any proposals to incorporate SuDS although it is noted that two of the remaining residential schemes had permission to attenuate to existing watercourses, whilst the remaining 4 applications were submitted and validated prior to the Sustainable Drainage Regulations being implemented. While SuDS were not fully incorporated into all major developments over the monitoring period, the lack of SuDS appears to be justified in many of the cases and the reasoning behind the lack of SuDS is recognised within some of the application details and officers' reports. The number of major developments permitted has decreased since the previous monitoring period where there were 7 such schemes permitted. The proportion of schemes that incorporate SuDS has increased to 40% compared to the previous AMR which recorded 23% (2018-2019). This</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				<p>increase is likely to be due to the new regulations which came into effect in January 2019. This indicator will be monitored closely in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>3.</b> There are three key river monitoring stations in Monmouthshire positioned on the River Usk, River Wye and River Monnow. The flow data is based upon the days in which these have fallen below the Q95 flow during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Q95 is the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, meaning flow is greater than this for 95% of the time and lower than this for 5% of the time. On average flows are below Q95 for around 18 days per year. It is often used as a typical indicator of summer low flows. In the latest monitoring period all three monitoring stations recorded flows above Q95. Whilst all three monitoring stations recorded flows that remained above Q95; flows in the main River Usk were higher between 17th May and 12th June 2019 due to Dwr Cymru Welsh Water making regulation releases from Usk Reservoir. This is consistent with previous AMRs other than the previous 2018-2019 AMR where all three monitoring stations recorded flows below Q95 for longer than 18 days.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Minerals and waste	To ensure that primary materials and minerals are managed in a sustainable way, by safeguarding mineral areas,	<b>1. Number of permitted permanent non-mineral developments on safeguarded sites that do not comply with Policy M2 (-)</b>	<b>1.</b> 0 <b>2.</b> 61.60%**** <b>3.</b> 0ha permitted <b>4.</b> 0	<p><b>1.</b> No applications were granted for permanent non-mineral developments on safeguarded sites that did not comply with Policy M2 during the monitoring period. This is in line with the previous monitoring period.</p> <p><b>2.</b> The latest data published is for the 2018 – 2019 period which suggests 61.60% of Monmouthshire’s total household waste was</p>



Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
	encouraging re-use and recycling and avoiding final disposal of resources	<p><b>2.</b> Proportion of Monmouthshire's household waste collections being recycled and composted (+)</p> <p><b>3.</b> Amount of waste management capacity permitted expressed as a percentage of the total capacity required as identified in the Regional Waste Plan</p> <p><b>4.</b> Extent of primary land-won aggregates resources as a percentage of total capacity identified in the Regional Technical Statement.</p>		<p>recycled or composted (based on municipal waste collected/generated as per the indicator). This has decreased marginally since the previous AMR which indicated 62.41% was recycled or composted. This indicator will continue to be monitored in future AMRs.</p> <p><b>3.</b> There were no permissions for waste management capacity during the monitoring period. For further information refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Waste.</p> <p><b>4.</b> No primary land-won aggregates were extracted over the monitoring period. There has therefore, been no reduction in the land bank in Monmouthshire. For further information refer to the Policy Analysis in Section 5 relating to Minerals.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>
Land/soil	To use land efficiently by prioritising development on previously developed land where possible, and using existing	<p><b>1.</b> Proportion of development permitted on greenfield land as a percentage of all development excluding householder, conversions and</p>	<p><b>1.</b> 79.1%</p> <p><b>2.</b> 18.27ha</p> <p><b>3.</b> 27.84dpha</p> <p><b>4.</b> 7.3ha (potentially lost)</p>	<p><b>1.</b> A total of 25.03 hectares of development was permitted over the monitoring period, 19.79ha of which was located on greenfield sites. This equated to 79.1% of all development (excluding householder, conversions and agricultural buildings) as being permitted on greenfield land. The site at Church Road has reserved matters approval for 130 dwellings and this site (10.09ha) combined with the Well Lane site in Devauden (SAH11 (ii)) (1.34ha) account for 11.43ha (57.8%) of greenfield development. The amount of greenfield land permitted for</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
	land efficiently by tackling contamination and protecting higher grade agricultural soil	<p><b>agricultural buildings (nc or -)</b></p> <p><b>2. Amount of Greenfield land lost to development which is not allocated in the development plan</b></p> <p><b>3. Annual average densities of new housing development (+)</b></p> <p><b>4. Hectares of agricultural land at Grade 3a and better lost to major* development (excluding LDP allocations and agricultural development)'</b></p>		<p>development is lower than the previous two monitoring periods (2018-2019; 25.27ha, 2017-2018; 32.12ha).</p> <p><b>2.</b> Over the monitoring period 34 permissions were granted on greenfield land not allocated for development in the LDP, totalling 18.27 hectares. This is a significant increase on the last AMR (9.71ha) and is the third highest amount of non-allocated greenfield land permitted. (2014-15 – 26ha, 2015-16 – 44.6ha, 2016-17 – 16.5ha, 2017-18 – 8.98ha). For further detail refer to the Landscape, Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The annual average density of all new housing development equated to 23.65 dwellings per hectare. This figure is lower than the last AMR (27.95) and the 2017-2018 AMR (29.1). However, it is marginally higher than the first three AMRs which recorded 23.5 (2016-2017) 22 (2015-2016) and 21 (2014 - 2015) dwellings per hectare, indicating a gain in the time since therefore positive progress. Furthermore, while the figure is lower than the LDP target of 30 dwellings per hectare, only 7 applications for sites of over 10 were granted permission over the monitoring period.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Approximately 7.3ha of agricultural land at Grade 3a and above has potentially been lost to major development over the monitoring period. This relates to the Church Road site in Caldicot which has reserved matters planning permission for 130 dwellings. The outline planning application was approved by Planning Committee in April 2019 has since gained reserved matters approval in March 2020. An agricultural land assessment was undertaken for the site which states</p>

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Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				that the site is classified as 'best and most versatile' however the assessment notes that the site is at the lower end of this scale and is not practicably suitable for intensive agricultural use.  <b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b>
Energy	To secure energy efficiency improvements in all new buildings and encourage energy generation from renewable sources.	<b>1. Number of new developments completed that incorporate on-site renewable energy generation. (i.e. permissions following LDP adoption that have been completed over the 2019-2020 monitoring period)</b>	<b>1. 1</b>	<b>1.</b> One scheme incorporating on-site renewable energy generation were completed over the monitoring period; this was a 110KW Woodchip boiler at Mill Farm Dingestow and was a retrospective application and thus this scheme is considered complete.  <b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b>
Employment	Provide a range of jobs within Monmouthshire that help meet the needs of the resident workforce	<b>1. Net employment land supply/ development and take-up of employment land (+)</b> <b>2. Amount of employment land lost to non-employment uses</b> <b>3. Proportion of resident workforce working in Monmouthshire (+)</b>	<b>1.</b> Supply 40.16ha, Take-up 3.7364ha <b>2.</b> 0ha <b>3.</b> 60.1%***** <b>4.</b> 21.9km** <b>5.</b> Abergavenny: 6.6%,	<b>1.</b> The Employment Land Background Paper identified 40.16ha of employment land available across the County (the supply relates to SAE1 Identified Industrial and Business Sites only) meaning that sufficient employment land remains available. The take-up rate of employment land stood at 3.7364ha over the monitoring period. The take-up <sup>6</sup> is higher than the last AMR (0.873ha). For further information refer to the Economy and Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5.  <b>2.</b> No new applications were granted during the monitoring period that related to the loss of B uses on employment sites. Reserved matters were, however, approved for the development of a care home as part

<sup>6</sup> Employment land take-up relates to SAE1 Identified Industrial and Business Sites, SAE2 Protected Employment Sites and Mixed Use Sites.

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
		<p><b>4.</b> Average travel to work distance (-)</p> <p><b>5.</b> Percentage of vacant units within CSA of each town and local centre</p>	<p>Caldicot: 7.6%, Chepstow: 11.2%, Monmouth: 14.4%, Magor: 13.6%, Raglan: 9%, Usk: 15.3%</p>	<p>of the SAH2 – Crick Road, Portskewett allocated site. Policy SAH2 allocates 1 hectare of B1 land, which has been replaced by the care home. Whilst not strictly B1 employment a care home represents a different form of employment and would result in job creation on the site. For further information refer to the Economy and Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The Welsh Government travel to work statistics identify 60.1% of the Monmouthshire workforce remaining in their own area for work. This figure has decreased by 0.3% since the previous AMR. However, these figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p><b>4.</b> The average travel to work distance is 21.9km. Data will not be published until the next Census in 2021, as a consequence a meaningful comparison will not be able to be obtained until that time. This data will subsequently remain the same in future AMRs.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Vacancy rates recorded in the Central Shopping Areas (CSA) for all of the County's town and local centres, with the exception of Monmouth (14.4%), Magor (13.6%) and Usk (15.3%) were below the GB High Street vacancy rate (12.1% December 2019, Local Data Company). For full details refer to the Retail Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary																																																								
Wealth creation	Raise prosperity and quality of life by developing a more self-sustaining local economy encouraging indigenous growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Range of SAE1/SAE2/Identified Mixed Use Sites available, distribution and size</li> <li>2. Planning permissions granted for employment use by settlement</li> <li>3. Planning permissions granted for employment use by sector</li> <li>4. Proportion of resident workforce working in Monmouthshire (+)</li> <li>5. Number of people in-commuting to Monmouthshire</li> <li>6. Number of people out-commuting from Monmouthshire</li> <li>7. Tourism expenditure (+)</li> <li>8. Number of rural diversification/enterprise schemes approved</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. See table in commentary section</li> <li>2. Main Towns: 0.11ha, Severnside: 0.92ha, RSS: 0.01ha, Rural General: 0.096ha</li> <li>3. See table in commentary section.</li> <li>4. 60.1%*****</li> <li>5. 18,900*****</li> <li>6. 17,700*****</li> <li>7. £244.99 Million *****</li> <li>8. 15</li> <li>9. 17</li> <li>10. 7</li> </ol>	<p>1. The table below identifies the range of employment sites across the County by location along with the size of the sites available. While a large proportion of land is located in Magor there is distribution across the Main Towns and some of the Rural Secondary Settlements.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site Reference</th> <th>Site Name/Location</th> <th>Site Use Class</th> <th>Remaining land available (ha)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>SAE1a</td> <td>Wales One, Magor (west)</td> <td>B1</td> <td>4.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1b</td> <td>Quay Point, Magor</td> <td>B1/B2/B8</td> <td>13.76</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1c</td> <td>Gwent Europark, Magor</td> <td>B8</td> <td>13.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1d</td> <td>Westgate, Llanfoist</td> <td>B1/B2</td> <td>1.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1e</td> <td>Ross Road, Abergavenny</td> <td>B1/B2</td> <td>1.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1f</td> <td>Newhouse Farm, Chepstow</td> <td>B2/B8</td> <td>4.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1g</td> <td>South Woodside, Usk</td> <td>B1</td> <td>1.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE1h</td> <td>Pill Row, Caldicot</td> <td>B1/B8</td> <td>1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAE2w</td> <td>Wales One, Magor</td> <td>B1/B2/B8</td> <td>0.57</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAH2</td> <td>Crick Road, Portskewett</td> <td>B1</td> <td>1.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAH3</td> <td>Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow</td> <td>B1</td> <td>0.65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAH4</td> <td>Wonastow Road, Monmouth</td> <td>B1</td> <td>2.78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SAH5</td> <td>Rockfield Farm, Undy</td> <td>B1</td> <td>2.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site Reference	Site Name/Location	Site Use Class	Remaining land available (ha)	SAE1a	Wales One, Magor (west)	B1	4.0	SAE1b	Quay Point, Magor	B1/B2/B8	13.76	SAE1c	Gwent Europark, Magor	B8	13.3	SAE1d	Westgate, Llanfoist	B1/B2	1.3	SAE1e	Ross Road, Abergavenny	B1/B2	1.5	SAE1f	Newhouse Farm, Chepstow	B2/B8	4.0	SAE1g	South Woodside, Usk	B1	1.3	SAE1h	Pill Row, Caldicot	B1/B8	1.0	SAE2w	Wales One, Magor	B1/B2/B8	0.57	SAH2	Crick Road, Portskewett	B1	1.0	SAH3	Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow	B1	0.65	SAH4	Wonastow Road, Monmouth	B1	2.78	SAH5	Rockfield Farm, Undy	B1	2.0
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		<p><b>9. Number of tourism schemes approved</b></p> <p><b>10. Number of tourism facilities lost through development, change of use or demolition</b></p>		<p><b>2.</b> The Severnside area accounted for the majority of permissions relating to employment over the monitoring period equating to 0.92ha. The Main towns followed with 0.11ha. The Rural Secondary Settlements (0.01ha) and Rural General (0.066ha) accounted for a lesser number of permissions. For further information refer to the Economy and Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <p><b>3.</b> The table below only identifies those sectors where planning permission for employment uses occurred over the monitoring period. The largest proportion of employment floorspace for B use classes permitted related to Wholesale &amp; retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles. For the full list of sectors and additional information refer to the Economy and Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sector</th> <th>Size(ha)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Manufacturing</td> <td>0.15ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wholesale &amp; retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles</td> <td>0.96ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transport &amp; storage; information and communication</td> <td>0.01ha</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities</td> <td>0.02ha</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>4.</b> The Welsh Government travel to work statistics identify 60.1% of the Monmouthshire workforce remaining in their own area for work. This figure has decreased by 0.3% since the previous AMR. However, these</p>	Sector	Size(ha)	Manufacturing	0.15ha	Wholesale & retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	0.96ha	Transport & storage; information and communication	0.01ha	Real estate activities; Professional, scientific and technical activities; Administrative and support service activities	0.02ha
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Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				<p>figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution.</p> <p><b>5 – 6.</b> The 2019 Welsh Government Commuting Statistics identified a total of 18,900 commuting into Monmouthshire and 17,700 out of Monmouthshire. The level of in-commuting has decreased significantly since the previous monitoring period (2018 – 2019 24,600) with the level of out- commuting increasing (2018 – 2019 17,400), resulting in a net inflow of commuters. However, these figures should not be given too much weight as the data is based on a small sample survey and should therefore be treated with caution. The Economy and Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5 provides a further breakdown of this information.</p> <p><b>7.</b> The Monmouthshire STEAM report (2019) identified the total annual tourism expenditure as £244.99 Million over the 2019 period. This compared to £218.93 Million over the 2018 period, equating to a 11.9% increase.</p> <p><b>8.</b> A total of 15 applications relating to rural diversification/enterprise were approved during the monitoring period. 7 of the applications were approved as rural enterprise schemes and 8 applications as rural diversification of existing farmsteads. Full details of which can be found in the Rural Enterprise Policy Analysis in Section 5.</p> <p><b>9 – 10.</b> A total of 17 tourism schemes were approved over the monitoring period the majority of which were holiday lets (all conversions). There was also a change of use of a dwelling into a hotel,</p>

Headline	Objective	SA Indicators	Data	Commentary
				<p>a change of use at a caravan site formalising its use and four glamping sites were approved, Additional bed spaces were also approved at a bunk house in Goytre.</p> <p>Seven planning applications were approved which involved the loss of tourism facilities over the monitoring period. Five of the applications relate to the removal of holiday let conditions. One of the applications was for a change of use of a B&amp;B to a children’s nursery whilst the final was the loss of Llansantffraed Court due to financial viability. All seven applications were justified within the overall LDP policy framework. The Visitor Economy Policy Analysis in Section 5 provides full detail of the type of tourism facilities gained over the monitoring period.</p> <p><b>Continue to monitor SA objective.</b></p>

\*Major development - development involving one or more of the following: developments of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5ha or more for outline and full applications; development of building or buildings where the floor space to be created is 1000m<sup>2</sup> or more; developments on site with an area of 1ha or more; winning or working of minerals, or use of the land for mineral working deposits; or, waste development.

\*\*Figure derived from Census 2011

\*\*\* Contains Natural Resources Wales information © Natural Resources Wales and database right. All rights reserved

\*\*\*\* Welsh Government Stats Wales

\*\*\*\*\*Welsh Government Commuting Statistics (2019)

\*\*\*\*\*Monmouthshire STEAM Report (2019)

\*\*\*\*\* This is one of two new indicators that have been added to replace the previous five-year housing land supply indicator, to reflect the requirements of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020) following the revocation of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (January 2015)



## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 7.1 This is the sixth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Monmouthshire LDP. As the LDP has been operational for six years, trends have emerged through the monitoring process as to which policies are performing as intended and which are not. The AMR indicates that good progress is being made in delivering many of the Plan's policies with identified targets being met and that the LDP strategy remains sound. However, the AMR also indicates that there continues to be certain elements of the Plan which are not progressing as intended.
- 7.2 Section 5 provides a detailed assessment of how the Plan's strategic policies, and associated supporting policies, are performing against the identified key monitoring targets and outcomes and whether the LDP strategy and objectives are being delivered. This has enabled the Council to make an informed judgement of the Plan's progress in delivering the targets/monitoring outcomes and policies during this monitoring period. The table below provides a visual overview of the effectiveness of the Plan's policies during the current monitoring period based on the traffic light rating used in the assessment. There were fewer 'red' ratings recorded during the current monitoring period, compared to the 2018-19 AMR (3 red ratings). This is due to improved performance in relation to developments permitted on previously developed land compared to last year and progress with the Strategic Housing site at Vinegar Hill, Undy.

Targets / monitoring outcomes* are being achieved	<b>59</b>
Targets / monitoring outcomes* are not currently being achieved but there are no concerns over the implementation of the policy	<b>27</b>
Targets / monitoring outcomes* are not being achieved with subsequent concerns over the implementation of policy	<b>1</b>
No conclusion can be drawn due to limited data availability or no applicable data	<b>4</b>

\*For those indicators with no target/trigger the monitoring outcomes are assessed and rated accordingly

### Key Findings

- 7.3 Information collected through the monitoring process indicates that the majority of the indicator targets and monitoring outcomes are being achieved (green traffic light rating), indicating that the relevant Plan policies are performing as intended. The most significant achievements include the following:

#### Strategy and Housing

- Progress continues to be made towards the implementation of the spatial strategy, with 71% of completions coming forward on allocated sites. Small sites accounted for the remaining 29%.

- 356 dwellings were built during the monitoring period (274 general market and 82 affordable). Whilst the completions recorded were not as high as the last monitoring period they remain significantly higher than previous monitoring periods and reflect the progress being made on bringing the strategic sites forward.
- The policy target of 35% affordable homes secured in Main Towns and Rural Secondary Settlements has been exceeded this year at 100%, although it is recognised that this is based on only two applications in Chepstow submitted by Monmouthshire Housing Association. Nevertheless, the schemes will make an important contribution to affordable housing in Chepstow.
- Six of the LDP allocated strategic housing sites have achieved consent since the Plan's adoption. Two strategic housing sites gained reserved matters approval and two Main Village sites gained planning permission progressing their delivery:
  - Land at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) 269 dwellings including 68 affordable homes (25%);
  - Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3) 347 open market dwellings. Land identified for affordable housing or employment land as part of the outline approval (DC/2014/01290), will be the subject of separate applications.
  - Two Main Village sites at Well Lane, Devauden (SAH11(ii)) and Cross Ash Garage (SAH11(i)(b)) gained planning permission over the monitoring period for a combined 21 units in total (12 open market, 9 affordable over both sites).
- The target densities were exceeded on the reserved matters approved on the Strategic Housing Sites at Crick Road, Portskewett (SAH2) and Fairfield Mabey, Chepstow (SAH3).
- Affordable housing policy targets set out in Policy S4 are generally being met in relation to planning permissions granted in the Main Towns, Rural Secondary Settlements and Severnside settlements.

### **Economy and Enterprise**

- The County has a total of 40.16 hectares of employment land available, indicating that sufficient employment land is maintained to meet the identified take up rate.
- There has been progress in terms of employment permissions within the County, with permissions granted for a range of B use class employment uses on protected employment sites (SAE2). A number of rural diversification and rural enterprise schemes have also been approved (15), providing employment opportunities throughout the County.
- No new applications were granted during the monitoring period that related to the loss of B uses on employment sites. It should be noted however, that reserved matters were approved for the development of a care home as part of the SAH2 – Crick Road, Portskewett allocated site. Policy SAH2 allocates 1 hectare of B1 land, which has been replaced by the care home. The acceptance of this loss has previously been justified in relation to the outline permission which was approved in an earlier monitoring period and therefore not double counted in this AMR.

- The Council approved proposals for 17 tourism related applications, ranging from holiday lets and hotels to glamping facilities. Comparison with previous AMRs demonstrates that the number of tourism schemes approved during the current monitoring period remains at a positive level. The Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance [SPG] (November 2017) has helped clarify our general support for this important sector of our economy.

### **Retail and Community Facilities**

- 70.5% of all new retail floorspace was permitted in town/local centres. The remaining 29.5% permitted out of centre relates to one planning permission for a drive through kiosk at Magor Motorway Services, which is considered appropriate given the context of the proposal and justified within the context of the LDP retail planning policy framework.
- Vacancy rates in the centres of Caldicot, Chepstow, and Usk have decreased since the previous monitoring period, with Raglan remaining at the same level.
- The proportion of A1 retail uses within the towns' Primary Shopping Frontages generally accord with the thresholds identified in the Primary Shopping Frontages SPG.
- A total of 12 community and recreation facilities have been granted planning permission, which is the highest number approved during the Plan period.

### **Environment**

- No applications have been granted planning permission contrary to TAN15 requirements in either Zone C1 or C2 floodplain over the monitoring period.
- There was an increase in the number of new developments permitted that incorporate on-site renewable energy generation. Three proposals related to roof mounted solar panels to small scale housing proposals for Monmouthshire Housing Association which incorporate solar panels on the roofs from the onset.
- Ample land remains available for potential waste management sites and there has been no reduction in the minerals land bank.
- There were no applications that resulted in the loss of listed buildings or historic sites and no development permitted which would have an adverse impact on the historic environment.

7.4 This indicates that much of the policy framework is operatively effectively allowing appropriate development to take place and that good progress has been made in implementing the LDP.

7.5 The analysis also indicates that there are various policy indicators which are not being achieved but there are no corresponding concerns over policy implementation (amber traffic light rating). Further investigation has determined that there are justified reasons for the performance recorded and this is not representative of any fundamental issue with the implementation of the policy framework or strategy at this time. The most significant findings in relation to these are as follows:

## **Housing**

- The number of new dwellings permitted during the monitoring period is notably lower than the previous two years, from 1238 in 2017 - 2018, 598 in 2018 - 2019 to 251 in 2019 - 2020. However, this decrease is primarily due to the majority of allocated sites already having planning permission and the LDP reaching the latter stages of the Plan period. It is also worth noting that a number of reserved matters applications have been approved during this monitoring period on strategic sites and 'unallocated' sites. These have not been included in this year's figures to avoid double counting numbers included in previous AMRs from the outline planning applications.
- The remaining allocated strategic housing site at Vinegar Hill, Undy is yet to obtain planning permission. However, whilst initial progress has been slow, the developer (Bovis) submitted a hybrid application (DM/2019/01937) during the current monitoring period (November 2019). The application is for 155 dwellings, 72 dwellings as a full application and 83 dwellings as outline. The Housing Trajectory prepared in conjunction with the Housing Stakeholder Group schedules the site to commence in the next monitoring period with completions anticipated in 2021/22.
- The proportion of new residential permissions in the Main Towns was lower than the identified target. This is due to the allocated strategic sites in Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow gaining planning permission in previous monitoring periods. Conversely, the proportion of new residential permissions in the Severnside Area was higher than the identified target, attributable to the 'unallocated site' at Church Road, Caldicot gaining outline approval for 130 units.
- The proportion of residential completions in the Main Towns were higher than the identified LDP target. This is however, primarily attributable to the delivery of allocated sites. Notable contributions came from the Wonastow Road site (SAH4) in Monmouth, and the Deri Farm (SAH1) and Coed Glas sites (SAH9) in Abergavenny. However, completions within the Severnside area, Rural Secondary Settlements and Rural General areas all remained within the acceptability range indicating that overall the housing is being delivered in accordance with the spatial strategy.
- While there has been some progress with the Main Village allocations (total of 44 affordable dwelling permissions and 12 affordable dwelling completions since the Plan's adoption), the target for these sites to collectively deliver 20 affordable dwellings per annum has not been achieved. However, two Main Village sites gained permission over the monitoring period (Cross Ash Garage - SAH11(i)b and Well Lane, Devauden- SAH11(ii)).

## **Economy and Enterprise**

- While sufficient employment land is available across the County, no new planning permissions were approved during the monitoring period on SAE1 Strategic Employment Sites.
- Seven applications were permitted during the monitoring period relating to the loss of tourism facilities, five of which related to the removal of holiday let conditions to residential use. All proposals were, however, considered to be justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework.

### **Retail and Community Facilities**

- Vacancy rates in the central shopping areas of Abergavenny, Monmouth and Magor have risen. However, the increases do not raise any immediate concerns with the vitality and viability of the centres.
- Four community facilities were lost to alternative uses. However, the loss in all instances is justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework.

### **Environment**

- There has been an increase in development permitted on non-allocated greenfield land at 18.27ha, however, in each case the loss was considered justified within the context and requirements of the LDP policy framework at the time of decision making. Residential development accounted for the majority of non-allocated greenfield land permitted during the current monitoring period, at 7.11 ha (38.9%). The main contributor to residential development was 'Land to the east of Church Road' departure site in Caldicot, which is permitted for up to 130 dwellings, with the developable area of land for residential use accounting for 6ha.
- A total of 25.03ha of development was permitted over the monitoring period, of which 5.3ha was located on brownfield sites. This equated to 21% of all development (excluding householder, conversions and agricultural buildings). This is lower than the level recorded in previous AMR monitoring periods, but does represent an increase on last year's figure of 12.7%/3.7ha. This is reflective of the limited brownfield land available within the County for development.
- Two applications were permitted within an area of amenity open space. Both applications were justified on the basis that the majority of the proposed development area was on previously developed brownfield land (0.065ha out of 0.7ha site and 0.04ha out of a 0.2ha site) and the loss of the amenity area was incidental and a minimal loss in context of the total site areas.

7.6 Notwithstanding the above, the information collected through the monitoring process has identified a key policy indicator target that is not progressing as intended (red traffic light rating). This relates to overall housing completion figures:

### **Strategy and Housing**

- Housing completion rates represent an under delivery of -1,469 units (36.3%) for the Plan period when measured against the newly introduced cumulative Average Annual requirement (AAR).

7.7 As discussed in the policy analysis section, during this AMR period the Welsh Government announced changes to the way in which housing delivery is to be monitored. The changes remove the five-year housing land supply policy and replace it with a policy statement making it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP and agreed with the Housing Stakeholder Group, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of development plan housing requirements as part of LDP

Annual Monitoring Reports. The way in which this should be undertaken is set out in the Development Plans Manual (DPM) (Edition 3) (March 2020).

- 7.8 Two new indicators have been included in this AMR, which replace the previous indicator which measured the five-year housing land supply. The first of these indicators measures the annual level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR). Whilst the Plan under delivered in the early years of the Plan period in the most recent monitoring periods housing completions have been much closer to the AAR, -7 units (-1.6%) in 2018/19 and - 94 units (-20.9%) in 2019/20. This is due in main to the speed with which the strategic sites have come forward. Of the 7 strategic sites, 6 now have planning permission so it is likely that completions will be more in line with the AAR going forward. However, the trigger for Plan review has been met in previous AMRs and work on the Replacement Local Development Plan begun.
- 7.9 The second of these indicators measures the total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative requirement (Cumulative AAR). There has been under delivery of cumulative completions since the beginning of the Plan period of -1,469 units and so the trigger has been met. However, in more recent AMRs the % under delivery has steadily declined as the strategic sites have come forward. This shortfall is largely attributable to the lead in period of the strategic housing sites. The analysis discussed in relation Policy S2 – Housing Provision and S3 – Strategic Housing Sites shows that in the early years of the LDP the majority of completions were from existing commitments from the previous Plan. In recent years, however, as the Strategic Sites have gained permission their contribution to total completions has increased, and are projected to meet or exceed the annual average requirement over the next 5 years as the remaining sites build out, reducing the shortfall.
- 7.10 The seven LDP strategic housing sites were due to deliver approximately 2,020 units out of the total need of 4,500 units, with the remainder provided via allocated urban sites (SAH8 Tudor Road, Wyesham and SAH9 Coed Glas, Abergavenny), SAH10 rural secondary settlement sites, SAH11 main village sites, and other windfall sites. The agreed trajectory demonstrates a Plan period shortfall (up to the end of 2021) of 1,172 dwellings from Strategic sites. While there has been further progress over this monitoring period with two Strategic sites gaining reserved matters planning permission and construction having begun on two further Strategic sites, which will contribute to reducing the overall shortfall, there is still a significant shortfall on the delivery of dwellings on Strategic sites during the Plan period.
- 7.11 However, as evidenced in the AMR, progress is being made in bringing the LDP allocated sites forward, with six of the seven strategic sites now having planning permission and the submission of an application on the seventh at Vinegar Hill, Undy. This demonstrates that the strategic sites are deliverable, however, their slower than

anticipated delivery rate has obvious implications for the delivery of the housing requirement and reinforces the need to progress with the RLDP.

- 7.12 Given the importance attached to the supply of housing land, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018, which was reported in the last monitoring period. The report concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure, i.e. a replacement LDP. The latest position on the RLDP is discussed below in the recommendations section.

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**

- 7.13 SPG preparation/adoption will continue in the next monitoring period as appropriate. Resources will, however, be focused on the Replacement Plan.

### **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Monitoring**

- 7.14 Section 6 expands the assessment of the performance of the LDP against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) monitoring objectives. There is an overlap between some of the LDP and SA indicators helping to demonstrate how the LDP monitoring and SA monitoring are interlinked.

- 7.15 Some of the most notable findings specific to the SA during the current monitoring period include:

- Two of the three major new development<sup>7</sup> approved during the monitoring period are located within a 10 minute walk from a frequent and regular bus service.
- No trees that were protected by a Tree Preservation Order were lost to development over the monitoring period. This is a decrease in the number of TPO trees lost over the monitoring period when compared to the previous AMR (3 trees).
- One location where the annual objective levels of nitrogen dioxide was exceeded (Hardwick Hill, Chepstow). This is the same location as the previous 4 AMRs.
- Four of ten proposals permitted on LDP allocated sites and sites of over 10 dwellings/1ha incorporated Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)<sup>8</sup> into the

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<sup>7</sup> Major development is defined as development involving one or more of the following: developments of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5ha or more; development of building or buildings where the floor space to be created is 1000m<sup>2</sup> or more; developments on site with an area of 1ha or more; winning or working of minerals, or use of the land for mineral working deposits; or, waste development.

<sup>8</sup> SUDS are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. By mimicking natural drainage regimes, SUDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment. SUDS achieve this by lowering flow rates, increasing water storage capacity and reducing the transport of pollution to the water environment (*British Geological Society*).

scheme. This is an increase since the previous AMR where three of 13 schemes incorporated SUDS.

- All three water flow monitoring stations located across the County at River Usk, River Wye and River Monnow remained above the summer low flow level.
- 61.60% of Monmouthshire's total household waste was recycled or composted. This has decreased marginally since the previous AMR which indicated 62.41% was recycled or composted.
- Approximately 7.3ha of agricultural land at Grade 3a and above has been approved for major development (excluding LDP allocations) over the monitoring period. This relates to the Church Road site in Caldicot for 130 dwellings. An agricultural land assessment undertaken for the site states that the site is classified as 'best and most versatile' however that the site is at the lower end of this scale and is not practicably suitable for intensive agricultural use.
- 11.9% increase in tourism expenditure, £244.99 million compared to £218.93 million over the previous 2018 period.

### **Recommendations**

- 7.16 A letter published on 7th July 2020 by the Minister for Housing and Local Government removed the requirement to submit an AMR this October due to Covid-19, but strongly encouraged LPAs to continue with data collection to help shape and inform policy and plan development. Monmouthshire, however, considered it a worthwhile exercise to continue to prepare an AMR and undertake the associated policy analysis of the Plan's monitor indicators and triggers to feed into the preparation of the RLDP. The UK was placed in to lockdown on 23rd March 2020 in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Given that this occurred towards the end of this monitoring period, it is considered to have had limited impact on the ability to monitor for the 2019-20 period.
- 7.17 At the time of writing this AMR, some easing of the lockdown restrictions had commenced such as the opening of non-essential retail and the tourism industry. However, the County was in total lockdown for a period of over three months during March, April and May and part of June. The implications of the Covid-19 lockdown are still emerging on a national and local scale and it is still unknown what impact, if any, the current situation with Covid-19 will have for the adopted LDP. Any implications will be reported in future AMRs.
- 7.18 Overall, the 2019-20 AMR indicates that good progress continues to be made in implementing many of the Plan's policies and that overall the strategy remains sound. There were fewer 'red' ratings recorded during the current monitoring period, compared to the 2018-19 AMR due to improved performance in relation to developments permitted on previously developed land. However, while progress has been made in relation to the Plan's Strategic Housing Sites, cumulative completion rates for the Plan period are lower than the Plan requirement and remain a matter of concern if the housing needs of Monmouthshire's communities are to be met.



- 7.19 Given the importance attached to delivering and maintaining a constant supply of housing land, a full review of the LDP commenced in 2017 and culminated with the publication of the Final Review Report in March 2018. Based on the evidence contained within the Review Report it was concluded that the LDP should be revised and that this should take the form of a full revision procedure. The Council resolved in May 2018 to commence work on a Replacement LDP for the County (excluding the area within the BBNP) which will cover the period 2018-2033.
- 7.20 The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is being prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement. The Monmouthshire RLDP Delivery Agreement was first approved by Welsh Government on 14th May 2018, with a revision approved in March 2020. The subsequent unavoidable delays to the plan preparation process experienced as a consequence of the current pandemic and the publication of the 2018 Population Projections has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement. A Revised Delivery Agreement is therefore in preparation which sets out a revised RLDP timetable, including a consultation stage on an updated Growth and Spatial Options Paper to take account of the recently published 2018 Population Projections. This is scheduled to be reported in autumn 2020.
- 7.21 The Revised Delivery Agreement timetable will result in a significant delay to the preparation and subsequent adoption of the RLDP, with consultation on the Preferred Strategy anticipated spring 2021 and adoption of the RLDP anticipated in autumn 2023. While it is too soon to fully understand the impacts of Covid-19 it has become generally expected that the planning system has a fundamental role in supporting sustained recovery post COVID-19, as reflected in the Minister's recent letter which recognises that "up to date agile development plans are the cornerstone of our planning system" and that Welsh Government's commitment to a plan-led system has been reinforced by the current pandemic. Welsh Government's 'Building Better Places – Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery' (July 2020) document further highlights the importance of planning in supporting Covid-19 recovery. It identifies numerous planning priorities as being fundamental in the response to Covid-19 including place-making, Green Infrastructure, de-carbonisation and town centres.
- 7.22 Accordingly, the AMR recommends the following:
1. Continue to progress work on the RLDP. The next formal stage of RLDP involves consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options Paper to take account of the recently published 2018-based population projections. This is anticipated to commence towards the end of 2020.
  2. Submit the sixth AMR to the Welsh Government by 31 October 2020 in accordance with statutory requirements. Publish the AMR on the Council's website.
  3. Continue to monitor the Plan through the preparation of successive AMRs.

## Appendix 1 – Timing and Phasing of Sites

### Allocations

Settlement Tier / Settlement	Allocated Site Name	Total site capacity	Phasing of Development (April 2020-December 2022)				Units beyond the plan period		
			Completions	U/C	2020 -21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Main Towns</b>									
Abergavenny	Deri Farm (DC/2014/01360)	250	100	25	25	50	50	0	0
	Coed Glas (DC/2015/01587)	51	32	19	0	0	0	0	0
Chepstow	Fairfield Mabey (DM/2019/00001 & DM/2019/01960)	373	0	0	5	70	81	81	68
Monmouth	Wonastow Road (DC/2015/00390 & DC/2015/00392)	340	327	13	0	0	0	0	0
	Wonastow Road (remainder of site)	110	0	0	0	0	35	35	40
	Tudor Road Wyesham	35	0	0	0	0	0	15	20
<b>Sevenside Settlements</b>									
Portskewett	Crick Road (DM/2019/01041)	269	0	0	0	19	50	50	50
Magor Undy	Rockfield Farm (Phase 1)(DM/2018/01606)*	144	16	16	28	44	40	0	0
	Rockfield Farm (remainder of site) (DM/2016/00883(O/L))	122	0	0	0	18	35	35	34
	Land at Vinegar Hill (DM/2019/01937)**	155	0	0	0	10	40	40	40
Sudbrook	Former Paper Mill (DC/2015/01184)	210	96	14	26	40	34	0	0
<b>Rural Secondary Settlements</b>									
Penperlleni	Land South of Usk Road (DC/2013/01001)	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	0
Raglan	Land at Chepstow Road (DM/2018/00769)(O/L)	45	0	0	0	12	12	12	9
Usk	Cwrt Burrium***	20	0	0	0	13	7	0	0

Settlement Tier / Settlement	Allocated Site Name	Total site capacity	Phasing of Development (April 2020-December 2022)				Units beyond the plan period		
			Completions	U/C	2020 -21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Main Villages</b>									
Cross Ash	Land adj Cross Ash Garage (DM/2017/01335)	6	0	0	6	0	0	0	0
Devauden	Land at Well Lane (DM/2018/01741	15	0	0	0	7	8	0	0
Dingestow	Land South East (DM/2018/01404)	15	0	15	0	0	0	0	0
Little Mill	Land to the north	15	0	0	0	15	0	0	0
Llanfair Kilgeddin	Land north (DM/2018/02001(O/L))	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	0
Llanishen	Land rear Carpenters Arms (DM/2016/00415(O/L))	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	0
Penallt	Land south west (DM/2015/00606)	10	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
Shirenewton	Land to east (south of minor road)	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Werngifford Pandy	Land adjacent	15	0	0	0	5	10	0	0

\* Original outline permission for 266 dwellings. Phase 1 of development is 144 dwellings

\*\* Hybrid application for 155 dwellings - 72 as full application, 83 in outline only

\*\*\* Approved 23.04.20 for 7 dwellings

Sites with planning permission

Settlement Tier / Settlement	Site Name	Total site capacity	Phasing of Development (April 2020-December 2021)				Units beyond the plan period		
			Completions	U/C	2020 -21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
<b>Main Towns</b>									
Abergavenny	Ross Road (DC/2007/01679)	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ross Road (DC/2008/00024(O/L))	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mulberry House (DM/2014/01015)	25	0	7	0	18	0	0	0
	Magistrates Court (DM/2018/00007)	47	0	47	0	0	0	0	0
	17-25 Brecon Road (DM/2018/00156)	24	0	24	0	0	0	0	0
Chepstow	Osborn International (DC/2009/00910)	169	40	4	26	30	30	30	9
Monmouth	Hillcrest Road, Wyesham (DM/2019/02054)	11	0	0	0	11	0	0	0
	Land west Rockfield Road (DM/2017/00539(O/L))	70	0	0	0	30	30	10	0
<b>Severnside Settlements</b>									
Caldicot	Former White Hart Inn (DC/2013/00796)	16	0	0	8	8	0	0	0
	Church Road (DM/2019/01761)	130	0	0	0	20	36	36	38
Rogiet	Green Farm (DC/2015/01328)	11	0	0	0	5	6	0	0
	Ifton Manor Farm (DC/2015/00095)	12	0	2	8	2	0	0	0
Sudbrook	Old Shipyard (DM/2018/01828)	46	0	0	10	36	0	0	0
<b>Rural Secondary Settlements</b>									
Llanfoist	Land at Grove Farm (DM/2019/00346)	106	0	0	0	25	35	35	11
<b>Rural</b>									
Llanellen	Llanellen Court Farm (DC/2015/00474)	14	0	14	0	0	0	0	0
	Llanellen Court Farm (DC/2015/00983)	14	0	0	0	0	14	0	0

**APPENDIX 2:**



**monmouthshire**  
**sir fynwy**

**Equality and Future Generations Evaluation**

<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation Mark Hand</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 07773478579 <b>E-mail:</b> markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>Submit the adopted Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) sixth Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Welsh Government in accordance with statutory requirements and publish the Report on the Council's website.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Planning (Planning Policy)</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p> <p>22/09/2020</p>

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**Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The AMR includes indicators that monitor health and access to community facilities and open space. These matters affect all of our communities but could disproportionately affect children and elderly people who may have limited ability to travel greater distances.	None.	The AMR includes indicators that monitor health and access to community facilities and open space.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	The AMR includes indicators that monitor health and access to community facilities and open space. These matters affect all of our communities but could disproportionately affect people with disabilities who may have limited ability to travel greater distances.	None	The AMR includes indicators that monitor health and access to community facilities and open space.
Gender reassignment	None.	None.	N/A.
Marriage or civil partnership	None.	None.	N/A.
Pregnancy or maternity	None.	None.	N/A.
Race	None.	None.	N/A.
Religion or Belief	None.	None.	N/A.
Sex	None	None	N/A
Sexual Orientation	None.	None.	N/A.

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Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Welsh Language	None.	None.	This and successive AMRs will measure the impacts of the LDP on a range of social, economic and environmental indicators. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provides a statutory basis to the established practice of giving consideration to the impacts of LDPs on the use of the Welsh language and that sustainability appraisals include specific consideration of such impacts.  The AMR will be published in Welsh and English.
Poverty	None.	None.	N/A.

2. **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	<i>The LDP strategy seeks to increase employment opportunities within Monmouthshire; the policy framework protects existing employment sites</i>	Continue to monitor employment land supply and take up throughout the County through the annual Employment Land Survey undertaken by the Planning Policy Service. The data from this survey will inform the 2020-21 AMR. The

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p><i>and allocates additional land for employment use.</i></p> <p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole, including employment policies.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>results of the AMRs will identify trends and allow remedial action to be taken, if necessary, to ensure the LDP objectives are being delivered, those objectives being directly related to creating a prosperous Wales. The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.</p>
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p><i>The LDP strategy seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity within Monmouthshire; the policy framework protects existing sites and promotes green infrastructure.</i></p> <p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole, including biodiversity impacts.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor biodiversity throughout the County to inform the 2020-21 AMR.</p> <p>The results of the AMRs will identify trends and allow remedial action to be taken, if necessary, to ensure the LDP objectives are being delivered, those objectives being directly related to creating a resilient Wales. The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.</p>
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole. The sustainability appraisal/strategic environmental appraisal measures LDP impact on a range of sustainability indicators including air and water quality.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor sustainability indicators throughout the County to inform the 2020-21 AMR. The results of the AMRs will identify trends and allow remedial action to be taken, if necessary, to ensure the LDP objectives are being delivered. Creating healthy communities forms part of delivering sustainable development. The monitoring process will also</p>








Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
		inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole, including the spatial strategy.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	Continue to monitor indicators to inform the 2020-21 AMR. The results of the AMRs will identify trends and allow remedial action to be taken, if necessary, to ensure the LDP objectives are being delivered. Creating healthy communities forms part of delivering sustainable, resilient and cohesive communities. The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole. The sustainability appraisal/strategic environmental appraisal measures LDP impact on a range of sustainability indicators. Preparation of the AMR allows the Council to assess LDP impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	Continue to monitor SA indicators to inform the 2020-21 AMR. The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The AMR monitors the implementation of the Plan as a whole, including impact on community facilities. The Welsh language impact is a material planning consideration and was fully considered during the adoption of the LDP via the SA/SEA process.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor indicators throughout the County to inform the 2020-21 AMR. The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provides a statutory basis to the established practice of giving consideration to the impacts of LDPs on the use of the Welsh language and that sustainability appraisals include specific consideration of such impacts. The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.</p>
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Preparation of the AMR allows the Council to assess LDP impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor indicators throughout the County to inform the 2020-21 AMR. The results of the sixth AMR identifies an issue in relation to housing delivery, housing delivery rates represent an under delivery of -1469 units (36.3%) for the Plan period to date when measured against the newly introduced cumulative Average Annual Requirement (AAR), although it is recognised that while the plan underdelivered in the early years in the most recent monitoring periods housing completions have been much closer to the AAR, this is due to the speed with which strategic sites have come forward. This affects the ability of our communities to secure appropriate and affordable accommodation. The continued progression of a Replacement LDP is therefore</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
		<p>essential. Creating a more equal Wales forms part of delivering sustainable development.</p> <p>The monitoring process will also inform and shape the Replacement LDP by reflecting on what is working and what is not.</p>

**3. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?**

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The sixth AMR measures short/medium term impacts since Plan adoption which enables future comparative analysis. Sustainable development is central to the adopted LDP.</p>	<p>Successive AMRs will be prepared on an annual basis, providing both an annual evaluation of Plan performance and year by year comparison from which emerging long term trends may be identified and reported on. This will inform the evidence base for the Replacement LDP.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The AMR measures Plan implementation and delivery. The LDP was prepared through extensive engagement with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to monitor and report on this in the 2020-21 AMR and will consider any actions required in light of the AMR findings. The AMR indicates that some of the Plan's objectives are not being delivered, particularly in terms of housing delivery, and therefore officers recommend to continue to progress work on the Replacement LDP.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p> <p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>The LDP was prepared through extensive engagement with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is no requirement to undertake consultation on this AMR. The Replacement LDP will be taken forward through extensive community and stakeholder engagement, expanding on the methods used previously.</p>
 <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p> <p><b>Prevention</b></p>	<p>The AMR demonstrates the extent to which the LDP strategy and objectives are being achieved and whether the Plan's policies are functioning effectively. Emerging trends may be identified and appropriate action considered at an early stage.</p>	<p>The AMR recommends to continue to progress work on the Replacement LDP. This will ensure up to date policies and proposals in the County once the RLDP is adopted.</p>
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p><b>Integration</b></p>	<p>The AMR measures the impact of the LDP on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County.</p>	<p>Future AMRs will examine LDP impacts over a longer period and evidence the emergence of any trends at different spatial scales. Delivering sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) is central to the LDP.</p> <p>Continue to monitor indicators to inform the 2020-21 AMR.</p>

4. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Social Justice, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Social Justice	None	None.	N/A
Safeguarding	None.	.None.	N/A.
Corporate Parenting	None.	None.	N/A.

### 5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

An extensive range of data sets have been used to prepare the AMR, from a wide range of sources both internal and external to the Council. These are clearly referenced in the document, but include:

The Development Management planning application database and Monmouthshire County Council publications including:

- Monmouthshire LDP 'Retail Background Paper', March 2020.
- Monmouthshire LDP 'Employment Background Paper', September 2020.

Additional data has been provided by colleagues in the Conservation, Countryside, Economic Development, Housing, Waste and Transport Services.

External sources of data include Welsh Government, Cadw, Natural Resources Wales.

### 6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

**Positive** - The AMR is a positive tool for monitoring the effectiveness of the LDP and ultimately determining whether any revisions to the Plan are necessary. It aims to demonstrate the extent to which the LDP strategy and objectives are being achieved and whether the Plan's policies are functioning effectively. It allows the Council to assess the impact of the LDP on the social, economic and environmental well-

being of the County and identifies any significant contextual changes that might influence the Plan's implementation or revision.

The AMR is required to be prepared each year following plan adoption, providing an annual evaluation of plan performance and year by year comparison. This is the sixth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the LDP and is based on the period 01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. The findings of the sixth AMR have been analysed and compared to the findings in previous five AMRs allowing emerging trends to be identified and reported on.

The AMR recommends that work progresses on the Replacement LDP. It is further recommended that the AMR is submitted to the Welsh Government in accordance with statutory requirements even though these have been relaxed this year.

**Negative** – None. There are no implications, positive or negative, for social justice, corporate parenting or safeguarding.

**7. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Submit the sixth AMR to the Welsh Government by 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2020 in accordance with statutory requirements even though these have been relaxed this year. Publish the AMR on the Council's website.	October 2020.	Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flood Head of Planning Planning Policy Team

**8. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this**

**process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

<b>Version No.</b>	<b>Decision making stage</b>	<b>Date considered</b>	<b>Brief description of any amendments made following consideration</b>
1.0	Economy and Development Select	19/10/2020	Economy and Development Select Committee recommended that the Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Land Use Planning endorses the sixth Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government on an informal basis.
1.0	Individual Cabinet Member	11/11/2020	

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PROPOSAL TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO THE HOMESearch ALLOCATIONS POLICY.</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2020</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

**1. PURPOSE:**

1.1 To consider proposed amendments to the Homesearch Allocations policy following a review of the current policy and processes.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

2.1 To consider the proposed changes (**see Appendix 1**) giving regard to meeting the aims of the policy and contributing to the priorities of the Council.

2.2 Where applicable, consider the report in respect of the recent changes in Welsh Government homeless policy and homeless demand.

2.2 To recommend that the Cabinet Member adopts the proposed changes.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

3.1 Under the Housing Act 1996 and Housing (Wales) Act 2014, the Council has a legal duty to run a housing register that manages the letting of social housing in Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire Housing Association (MHA) administers the register on behalf of the Council via Homesearch. There is a service level agreement in place with MHA to manage this service. Melin Homes and Pobl are also part of the Homesearch partnership. Each housing association let their affordable housing in line with the policy and associated procedures. To ensure an effective allocation policy that continues to meet the needs and priorities of Monmouthshire, reflects current legislation and case law, periodic reviews are undertaken as per the requirements of the Housing Act 1996. The previous review was 2016.

3.2 In addition to ensuring the policy continues to meet the Council's aims, the review considered feedback from consultation events with stakeholders such as staff, support providers and Social Care colleagues as well as applicants and those recently housed via Homesearch. The comments received were collated, placed into themes and used as starting point when considering the effectiveness of the current policy. The review panel also reflected upon best practice and have set out amendments that support the Council's aim of an allocations policy, which is flexible, fit for purpose and meets statutory obligations and operational requirements.

3.3 The main policy changes include:

- Local Connection. The criteria has been tightened and applicants must have resided in Monmouthshire for a minimum of 2 out of the past 3 years. This is to ensure that established residents of Monmouthshire are given more priority to meet their housing need.

- Banding. The number of bands has reduced from 7 to 5. This is to help simplify the process and help ease of understanding for applicants.
- Armed Forces Personnel/Veterans. Applicants are to be given high priority when they are leaving the armed forces and do not have accommodation on discharge. This is in response to the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.
- Lettings Quotas. This is being amended to include the introduction of flexible quotas which will allow the Homesearch Partnership to increase or decrease the number of properties available to each band. This will allow flexibility in the policy to respond to pressures and urgent need. e.g. increase the Homeless quota to meet statutory requirements.
- Rapid Rehousing Protocol. This is a requirement of Welsh Government's Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support and is an agreement between the Council and partner RSLs to minimise the time a homeless person spends in temporary accommodation before a move into permanent housing. This includes partnership working to identify suitable properties and the Council supporting move on into permanent housing with immediate intensive resettlement housing support. This will support the Housing Options Team in relation to their statutory obligations to ensure all homeless applicants have a move on plan and are supported in the transition to permanent housing and ending their homelessness.

3.4 In addition to the main policy changes detailed in **3.3**, the review also aimed to achieve business and organisation efficiencies together with improving the service user experience. These include:

- An upgrade of the Homesearch website, which is out-dated. No upgrades have been made since the current software and website were acquired over 10 years ago. Its functionality is minimal with little scope to make changes without paying a fee. One impact is a restriction on the ability to communicate with applicants.
- Customers and stakeholders have advised that the form is too long and time consuming to complete. It currently can take up to an hour to complete and it is known this impacts on more vulnerable applicants. The change also supports agencies who assist vulnerable applicants to apply for accommodation.
- Replacing paper based systems to a digital format e.g. medical/welfare. New facilities such as the ability to upload documents improves efficiency for staff and accessibility and convenience for service users
- Moving to a format that is mobile friendly. It is extremely difficult to use a mobile phone to make an application.
- The introduction of Auto-banding reduces the need for manual assessments. This will help to free Homesearch staff up from 'processing applications' to proactively engage with applicants.
- A new form to make it easier to apply for all tenures available through Homesearch, helping to increase housing options for applicants. The current form does not allow people to effectively register for intermediate accommodation. Nor is it easy to apply for low cost home-ownership properties.

- Enabling applicants to self-serve e.g. password re-set. This will reduce the need for applicants to contact staff, for example if they lose their details.
- Applicants have advised that they want to be kept informed on the progress of their application and have confirmation when documents are received. The new system will automatically send texts to applicants at each key customer contact point.
- The availability of Live Chat as an additional means of communication
- Improve transparency. Complaints from applicants aren't uncommon about perceived underhanded allocations. The new system will restrict the properties that customers see e.g. a person under 60 will not be able to bid on a sheltered property. This will alleviate the perception that the system is unfair and that applicants aren't cherry picked

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

4.1 There are no negative implications of the proposal. **See Appendix 2**

#### 5. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

5.1 The following options are available:

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
<b>Option 1:</b> The <u>recommended option</u> is to agree to the proposed amendments and implementation of the revised policy.	<p>An allocations policy that is up to date and reflects current legislation and case law including the recent Welsh Government change in homeless policy through Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness &amp; Housing Related Support</p> <p>An allocations policy that is robust and ensures the Council's statutory duties are met and can withstand any legal challenge. Again, this includes the new homeless responsibilities required by Welsh Government.</p> <p>An allocations policy that is flexible and able to respond to any challenges the Council may be facing.</p> <p>An allocations policy that supports Monmouthshire residents, particularly</p>	There are no risks to this proposal, although there are financial implications	<p>The review has been thorough and has included all aspects of Homesearch such as the application process, how we communicate with customers, eligibility/housing need, managing expectations and demotions/exclusions. The proposed amendments have considered all feedback received and officer experience and where appropriate led to amendments.</p> <p>There is a need for aspects of the revised policy eg Rapid Re-housing to be complemented by the future commissioning of the Housing Support Grant Programme, scheduled for April 2022.</p> <p>By way of example, the Council has recently received a legal challenge in respect of</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
	<p>those in greatest housing need.</p> <p>Digital improvements provide costs benefits and keep operational costs to a minimum, which will benefit all Homeseach partners.</p>		<p>one aspect the Policy where an applicant considers that the Council may not be meeting its Equalities duties to all those with Protected Characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Option 2:</b> Do nothing and rely on the existing policy.</p>	<p>The current policy is established and has been in place for the last 4 years.</p> <p>Staff, partners and customers have an understanding of the current policy. There would be no need for additional training or communicating changes with new applicants.</p>	<p>The current policy does not take into good practice that has been identified in the last 4 years.</p> <p>There is a risk that there could be gaps in the current policy or it is not as flexible as the Council would like to meet current challenges. Therefore, would not fully meet local need.</p> <p>The current policy doesn't reflect changes to Welsh Government homeless policy.</p> <p>This review has been undertaken in Partnership with Monmouthshire Housing, Pobl and Melin Homes. Should the Council not support the review this may impact detrimentally on this strategic partnership.</p>	<p>The council has a legal responsibility to review the allocations policy periodically and the review has identified areas where the policy would benefit from amendments.</p>
<p><b>Option 3:</b> Implement some of the proposed changes.</p>	<p>This would see improvements in some aspects of the allocations policy.</p>	<p>This could leave gaps in the policy and leave the Council open to legal challenge if the policy doesn't properly reflect the current legal position.</p>	<p>The Council has a legal responsibility to review the allocations policy periodically and the review has identified areas where the policy would benefit from amendments.</p>

**6. REASONS:**

6.1 The Council has a duty to periodically review the Allocations Policy under the Housing Act 1996 and Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

6.2 Although this review was started during 2019, timing has allowed the requirements of Welsh Governments Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support to be incorporated into the changes. The proposed changes result in a better policy and system that strengthen delivery against the Council's objectives and better meets the needs of our customers.

## **7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

7.1 There will be resource implications associated with this proposal. These are:

£47,703 per annum This is the Council's annual contribution towards the Homeseach partnership which is shared with individual partners. This is budgeted from the Housing and Communities budget.

£15,000 one off fee This is the Council's contribution to upgrade the Locata IT system to implement the proposed changes. IT upgrades will include on line forms such as medical questionnaires and change of circumstances form, auto bid for low need applications, upgraded letters/templates, enhancements to Intermediate Housing side of Locata, better quality property adverts, push notification for applicants where suitable properties are available.

7.2 £2000 one off fee This is for Welsh Language compliance plus £2,500 annual fee

7.3 Due to the Covid-19 circumstances and the impact on the Council's homeless budget, there is currently no budget provision. (The review has been in progress since 2019). However, efforts will be made to absorb the expenditure into the Housing budget. If we cannot fund the costs within the service budget then as they relate to service transformation and collaboration, permission will be requested to capitalise the expenditure under the capitalisation directive.

## **8. CONSULTTEES:**

8.1 Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways & Flooding; Chief Officer Enterprise; Housing & Communities Manager; Welsh Language & Equalities Officer; Disability Advice Project; U3A; Disability Wales; Stonewall Cymru; Race Equality First; Onyx Foundation, Melin Homes, Monmouthshire housing Association and Pobl.

8.2 The review considered feedback from consultation events with stakeholders such as staff, support providers and Social Care colleagues as well as applicants and those recently housed via Homeseach.

8.3 The proposal was considered by Adult Select Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and feedback was received. Comments and queries raised are listed in **Appendix 3.**

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- Housing Act 1996

- Housing(Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(Wales) Regulations
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Welsh Government Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support

11. **AUTHOR:** Louise Corbett, Strategy & Policy Officer – Affordable Housing

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## Appendix 3

### Adults Select 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 - Consultation Feedback & Queries

#### Local Connection – Those in Prison

- Local Connection was queried and how the criteria applies to those incarcerated in Monmouthshire and those incarcerated outside of Monmouthshire.

It was confirmed that being placed in prison in Monmouthshire does not meet the local connection criteria and for Monmouthshire residents who may be placed in prison outside of Monmouthshire, Homesearch would consider their address history prior to detention. It is important to note that any applicants without a local connection are able to register on Homesearch but they will not be considered if they qualify for a reasonable preference for housing (unless in exceptional circumstances).

#### Improving Digital Access & Upgrading the Locata IT system to better support staff and service users.

- Concerns were raised that not all applicants are comfortable using the internet or mobile applications and how this change may affect them.

Although it is proposed to invest in this area there will be no deterioration in the way the service is offered to residents who may not want to utilise the digital service. The Hubs, Housing Options Team and Homesearch Team will continue to be available to support residents in accessing Homesearch and supporting them in relation to their housing concerns. The services of Housing Support Providers is also relevant in this regard.

#### Assessing Income, Savings & Assets

- The comment was made that in respect of sufficient financial resources and the fairness of using an arbitrary figure when looking at income, savings or assets and determining who may qualify for a reasonable preference for housing.

There is no official guidance as to what could be considered as sufficient financial resources. During the course of the Homesearch review many options were considered and the most appropriate and fair way of determining these figures was to consider open market conditions. We considered a Monmouthshire average entry level property price, the average cost of a private rented property and considered the income level required to access these properties. The policy amendments allow for an applicant who has medical requirements to be considered for reasonable preference irrespective of their financial circumstances. Anyone exceeding the sufficient financial resources threshold are able to register on Homesearch but will not be considered to have a housing need.

#### An Individual Housing Applicant & Their Current Circumstances

- A member of the Committee commented about the circumstances of an individual applicant whose banding was being affected by their circumstances and the policy.

It was acknowledged that a policy issue had been identified and was being addressed through the policy review. This was, in part, the purpose of the policy review. The applicant in question had been previously contacted and was aware of the situation and their application would be reviewed once the policy had been adopted. The Disability Advice Project who is supporting the applicant had also been made aware of the situation.

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**Proposed Amendments to Homeseach Allocations Policy (change highlighted)**

THEME	CURRENT POLICY	PROPOSED AMENDMENT	REASON FOR CHANGE
<p>Local Connection</p>	<p>The applicant or a member of their household has lived in the County in accommodation of their choice for 12 out of the past 24 months or 3 out of the past 5 years.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household are employed within the County, where they work within the area and not where the employers head office is. Employment will be deemed to be work that is permanent or long term in nature and is for 15 hours a week or more.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household has a family association, (being mother, father, brother, sister or dependent children or adult children) who reside within the County and have done so for the past 5 years continuously. This includes step children and adopted children.</p> <p>There are special circumstances, for example, the applicant needs to be near special medical or support services that are only available in the Monmouthshire area. A local connection</p>	<p>The applicant or a member of their household has lived in the County in accommodation of their choice for <b>2 out of the past 3 years</b> or 3 out of the past 5 years. For a local connection to apply, an applicant must have lived in Monmouthshire through their own choice.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household are employed within the County and they work within the area (i.e. not just where the employers head office is). <b>Someone who is self-employed would need to show that they routinely work in Monmouthshire to qualify.</b> Employment will be deemed to be work that is permanent or long term in nature and is for 15 hours a week or more.</p> <p>The applicant or a member of their household has a family association, (being mother or father <b>(or a person who's acted in that capacity)</b>, brother, sister or dependent children or adult children) who reside within the County and have done so for the past 5 years continuously. This includes step children and adopted children. <b>There will be no local connection where the relationship is estranged.</b></p> <p>There are special circumstances, for example, the applicant <b>or their household</b> needs to be near special medical or support services that are only available in the Monmouthshire area. A local connection established on these grounds is likely to be</p>	<p>The intention is to ensure that established residents of Monmouthshire are given more priority to meet their housing need than applicants who do not meet the defined local connection criteria.</p> <p>Applicants living in refuge in Monmouthshire will be considered as having a local connection; this is being proposed to support safe guarding objectives.</p>

**Appendix 1**

	established on these grounds is likely to be exceptional.	exceptional. We would consider someone has a local connection where they are living in domestic abuse refuge accommodation in Monmouthshire and it is considered unsafe for them to return to the area that they have left.	
Page 252 Banding	<p>Band 1 Urgent Housing Need</p> <p>Band 2A High Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 2B Homeless Households</p> <p>BAND 3A Medium Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 3B Homeless Households</p> <p>BAND 4</p> <p>BAND 5 No Housing Need</p>	<p>Emergency Band - Urgent Housing Need</p> <p>Band 1 - High Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 2 - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 3 - Low Housing Need</p> <p>BAND 4 - No Housing Need</p>	Feedback received from service users stated there were too many bands and it was confusing. We are proposing to reduce the number of bands from 7 to 5 and rename them for ease of understanding.
Children in Flats	<p>BAND 3A - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>➤ Children in Flats</p>	<p>BAND 1 – High Housing Need</p> <p>Children Under 5 Years Old in a Flat and no Lift</p> <p>Applicants who have two or more dependent child (living with them full time) both under the age of 5 and live in a flat above ground floor will gain Band 1. Homesearch will review this once one child turns 5 years of age and applicants will then be placed into Band 2.</p>	Increase in banding to support a quicker move into more suitable housing.
Armed Forces Personnel/Veterans	<p>BAND 3A - Medium Housing Need</p> <p>➤ Leaving Armed Forces</p> <p>BAND 5 - No Housing Need</p>	<p>BAND 1 – High Housing Need</p> <p>Applicants will meet this category when leaving the Armed Forces and are in receipt of their Cessation of</p>	This supports the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and ensures those leaving the armed forces

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 253</p>	<p>Serving Armed Forces Personnel</p>	<p>Duty Notice or their Testimonial of Military Service Notice and they have a local connection to Monmouthshire. If the applicant has left the armed forces and secured alternative accommodation, they will be assessed on the accommodation they currently occupy. This band is awarded on basis the applicant doesn't own or lease their own accommodation and is threatened with/experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Applicants who are active participants in operations of the Territorial Army (TA) will not be given extra preference on the Homesearch Register.</p> <p>When assessing sufficient financial resources Homesearch would disregard financial resources connected with being in the armed forces.</p> <p><b>BAND 4</b> – No Housing Need</p> <p>Serving Armed Forces Personnel</p> <p>Applicants who are serving in the British Armed Forces can apply to join the Housing Register and will initially be placed into <b>Band 4</b>.</p>	<p>are given a priority for housing, if required.</p>
<p>Households with Children</p>	<p>Single applicants or couples, who do not have children residing with them on a full time basis, will only qualify for two bedroom accommodation providing they can supply written evidence that their child/children have an overnight stay on average at least two nights a week.</p>	<p>Single applicants or couples, who do not have their child/children residing with them on a full time basis, will qualify for an extra bedroom providing they can supply sufficient evidence that they have an overnight stay and providing those child/children are unable to share a bedroom with any other child/children residing at the property. NB: an applicant would only be allocated a general needs flat</p>	<p>Policy updated to consider households where children may have an overnight stay (rather than 2 nights a week) with a parent and households who have access to their children on a 50/50 basis.</p>

	<p>An affordability assessment will be carried out prior to an offer of accommodation being made to ensure that the applicant can afford the rent</p>	<p>and not a house and this would also be subject to the applicant(s) being able to afford the property.</p> <p>Applicants applying with a household where they are responsible for a child/children on a shared 50/50 basis with an ex-partner will be placed into the household type and band they would be if the child(ren) lived with them on a full time basis.</p>	
<p>Sufficient Financial Resources</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 254</p>	<p>We will take into account an applicant’s financial resources in determining whether an applicant would qualify for reasonable preference or whether their preference should be reduced. Regard will be given to any resources wherever in the world they are situated. This category applies to households whose gross income from all sources exceeds the threshold for the higher rate of income tax (currently calculated at £34,371 for single applicants or £50,000 for joint applicants) or whose household’s capital assets or savings exceeds £50,000. Such applications will be placed into Band 5 and are unlikely to receive an offer of accommodation.</p>	<p>Income/money received as a result of leaving the armed forces or from welfare benefits will be excluded when Homesearch considers financial resources. If a single applicant or joint applicants earn more than £45000.00 per year, they will be placed into Band 4. If cash investments/savings exceed £16,000.00 or if capital assets exceed £50,000.00 they will also be placed into Band 4. The only exception to the above criteria is if applicants are eligible for medical priority.</p>	<p>The amended threshold for sufficient financial resources has been calculated using a Monmouthshire average property price for purchase and rent and consideration of the income required to obtain one of these properties off the open market.</p>
<p>Lettings Quotas</p>	<p>To help ensure that all groups of applicants are given an opportunity to move under this scheme, (based on housing need) and to further promote sustainable communities, letting quotas may be applied if deemed necessary. If applied, quotas will be advertised based on applicant type and quotas periodically reviewed by the MHR partners. Where quotas are applied, property adverts will be used to inform applicants of the quota criteria relating to the individual letting. Where a quota is applied, all appropriate applicants will be considered on the shortlist for bands 1 to 4 (irrelevant of quota) before applicants in band 5 are considered. This criteria,</p>	<p>To help ensure that different groups of applicants are given an opportunity to move and to support sustainable communities, Homesearch reserves the right to use flexible letting quotas to allocate social housing. A letting quota may also be used in exceptional circumstances in response to an emergency e.g. large-scale flooding. Where lettings quotas are used it will be made clear in the Homesearch property adverts.</p>	<p>Includes the use of flexible quotas, which allows us to increase or decrease the number of properties available to certain groups in exceptional circumstances.</p>

## Appendix 1

	may however, be circumvented where a local lettings plan is applied		
Applicants who Fail to Bid	<p>Homesearch will review non-bidder applications periodically.</p> <p>For applicants in higher bands, partners may instigate assisted bidding. Homesearch reserves the right to reduce priority</p>	Homesearch will regularly review all Emergency Band and Band 1 (high welfare need only) non-bidder applications. If an applicant with this banding fails to bid after 3 months and a suitable property has become available during that time, Homesearch may reduce an applicant's priority/banding. If any applicant no longer wishes to remain on the Homesearch register their application will be cancelled	Homesearch is a needs based system and the expectation is for applicants with a recognised high housing need to bid for all suitable properties to ensure move on.
Automatic Bid for Homeless Applicants	Homeless applicants will be supported in accordance with the relevant Code of Guidance and within the procedures of MCC. Homeless applicants owed a Section 75 duty will generally be expected to bid for advertised properties in the same way as other applicants, although bids may be submitted for suitable properties on their behalf. If within 13 weeks of the date of acceptance of the homeless duty, no suitable offer has been made, MCC may place a bid. If Successful this would discharge the Council's final offer under Section 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. An applicant's banding would then be re-assessed as per the allocations policy, dependent on their new circumstances	Homeless applicants owed a full homeless duty (as per Section 75 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) will generally be expected to bid for advertised properties in the same way as other applicants. However, MCC reserves the right to bid on behalf of any Homesearch applicants with a full homelessness duty who do not express an interest in a suitable property when it becomes available.	This allows the Housing Options Team to bid on behalf of any full duty (S75) homelessness applicants who may not be bidding. This supports the aim of rapid rehousing for homeless households and assists their move from temporary to permanent housing.
Withdrawing Offers	<p>Where the applicant's circumstances have changed, or new information comes to light and this changes their priority or makes them ineligible for the property or makes them ineligible to appear on the Housing Register.</p> <p>Where the property fails to become vacant e.g. withdrawal of notice</p>	<p>Where the applicant's circumstances have changed, or new information comes to light and this changes their priority status for social housing or makes them ineligible for the property or makes them ineligible to appear on the Homesearch Register.</p> <p>Where the property fails to become vacant e.g. withdrawal of end of tenancy notice by the current tenant(s).</p>	Supports efficient management of social housing.

		<p>Where an applicant is transferring from one Homeseach partner's tenancy to another Homeseach partner's tenancy and the property they are vacating fails a property inspection or debts are connected to the old tenancy and they are not properly addressed.</p>	
<p>Rural Allocations Policy</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 256</p>	<p>The Rural Allocations Policy will be used to allocate the first 10 homes on all new housing sites and on all subsequent lettings of these properties (once identified via the first round of lettings) in rural areas.</p> <p>Priority order: Priority will be given, in the first instance, to (a), with (b), (c)</p> <p>(a) Applicants with a housing need who have lived in the community (defined as the Community Council area) for a period of at least 5 years at the time of application, or in the past.</p> <p>(b) Applicants who need to live in the community in order to provide support to a dependent child or adult or to receive support from a principal carer.</p> <p>(c) Applicants who are principally (&gt;20 hours per week) employed in the community (defined as the Community Council area).</p>	<p>The Rural Allocations Policy will be used to allocate the first 10 homes or 80% of the available properties (whichever is greater) on all new housing sites and on all subsequent lettings of these properties (once identified via the first round of lettings) in rural areas.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances where the number of properties available exceeds those covered by the Rural Allocations Policy, the Local Authority reserves the right to choose which properties that will be eligible for the Rural Allocations Policy. This decision will be made having due regard to the housing need and preferred mix of available properties to meet that need.</p> <p>Priority order: Priority will be given, in the first instance, to (a), with (b), (c) and (d) having equal priority.</p> <p>(a) Applicants with a housing need who have lived in the community (defined as the Community Council area) for a period of at least 5 years at the time of application, or in the past.</p> <p>(b) Applicants who need to live in the community in order to provide support to a dependent child or adult or to receive support from a principal carer.</p>	<p>This proposal supports residents living in rural communities being prioritised over those who do not live in the area for affordable housing.</p> <p>Increasing the number of properties covered by the rural allocations policy and allowing the council to determine which property mix best meets need, contributes to the resilience of rural communities.</p>

		<p>(c) Applicants who are principally (&gt;20 hours per week) employed in the community (defined as the Community Council area).</p> <p>(d) Applicants who have left the rural area to access housing, but rely on immediate family members for child care (where family members have lived in the community (defined as a community council area) for a period of at least 5 years).</p>	
<p>Suspensions/Demotions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 257</p>	<p>We may exclude someone from the Housing Register if it is considered proportionate and reasonable to do so, as a result of unacceptable behaviour. We will take into account relevant factors when making these decisions</p>	<p>We may prevent an applicant from bidding for social housing via Homesearch (for a period of time), if it is considered proportionate and reasonable to do so as a result of their unacceptable behaviour. We will take into account relevant factors when making such a decision. We may also demote an applicant's banding (again for a period of time) because of their behaviour. This would mean that they are less likely to be able to secure social housing through Homesearch. Homesearch partners will seek to minimise suspensions and demotions and provide advice and support or facilitate appropriate support in order to do so.</p> <p>To suspend an applicant the following 3 stage test criteria must be met. This test will be applied by the Suspension Panel (a panel of Homesearch landlord's representatives) to determine if the unacceptable behaviour warrants suspension (all answers must be yes):</p> <p>i) Was the applicant's (or household member's) behaviour serious enough to entitle a local authority</p>	<p>Ensures the policy is adhering to current legislation and good practice and offers transparency regarding decisions about suspensions and demotions.</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 258</p>		<p>to obtain a possession order on a secure tenancy in the same circumstances? Normally an outright order should be expected.</p> <p>ii) Was the behaviour serious enough to render the applicant or a household member unsuitable to be a tenant?</p> <p>iii) Is the behaviour still relevant/unacceptable at the time of application (meaning the applicant is still unsuitable)? NB: It is not necessary for an applicant to have actually been a tenant of one of the Homeseach partners when the unacceptable behaviour occurred to warrant suspension.</p> <p>Demotions can be applied where:</p> <p>The circumstances aren't serious enough to meet the three stage test. Alternatively demotion can also take place where an applicant refuses a certain numbers of offers.</p>	
<p>Bypassing Policy &amp; Procedure</p>	<p>Policy Principles:</p> <p>Blanket bans will not be used.</p> <p>A decision to bypass an applicant will only be taken according to the criteria set out in this document.</p> <p>Any local letting agreement must be agreed by all partners and adhere to this document.</p> <p>If a Monmouthshire Homeseach partner wishes to retain bypassing rules outside of the Common Allocation Policy and Procedures e.g. rules relating</p>	<p>Bypassing means that in some limited situations a Homeseach partner/landlord can 'bypass' the highest banded applicant who has bid on a property so an applicant won't receive an offer for that particular property.</p> <p>Where there is evidence an applicant does not have the mental capacity to understand a tenancy agreement, for a property allocated via Homeseach (also see the Mental Capacity Act 2005), a Homeseach partner will enact the Bypass Policy and Procedure</p>	<p>Setting clearly defined reasons for bypassing will support transparency and ensure accurate data collection for monitoring purposes. If an applicant is to be bypassed for a reason other than those listed, it must be agreed by all partners beforehand.</p>



	<p>to the size of the accommodation to be offered, or offers where there are rent arrears or unresolved unacceptable behaviour – these rules will be recorded as an appendix to the Common Allocation Policy and Procedures. They will be transparent, so it is clear when a partner will bypass an applicant and why.</p> <p>All parties have agreed, as far as possible, to set a common set of rules and to keep exceptions to a minimum. All Monmouthshire Homesearch Partners also recognise the need for each body to manage their dwellings appropriately.</p> <p>It is not possible to describe every situation where an applicant may be bypassed. The following list describes the most common:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant not suitable for social housing allocation with communal entrances/facilities.</li> <li>• Applicants who are vulnerable and have high support needs or applicants who require a sensitive letting such as MAPPA case.</li> <li>• Current arrears/former tenancy related debt.</li> <li>• The property is not suitable for a disabled applicant’s long term needs.</li> <li>• Medical needs.</li> <li>• Pending information.</li> <li>• Wrong banding.</li> <li>• Pre void inspection.</li> <li>• Affordability.</li> <li>• Senior Officer Discretion.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Bypassing Reasons</b></p> <p><b>Ineligible for the Property:</b> A household doesn’t meet the criteria outlined in the property advert such as the household size not matching the property size; not meeting an age restriction requirement to live in the property or not requiring disabled adaptations present in the property. We may also bypass because there are reasonable grounds for believing that false information has been given to try and obtain a tenancy.</p> <p><b>Rural Allocation Policy/Local Letting Plans</b> Applicants may be bypassed where they do not match specific criteria set out via either of these. Both can be adopted for specific areas/homes to ensure social housing is accessible to those who need it in the local community and that communities are as balanced and sustainable as possible. Properties subject to the Rural Allocation Policy/local letting plans will be clearly advertised and priority will be given to those that meet the criteria set out within those.</p> <p><b>Change in Applicant’s Circumstances:</b> There has been a recent change in their circumstances which makes someone unsuitable or ineligible e.g. banding has changed, change in medical situation, financial situation or a change in the number of bedrooms needed.</p> <p><b>Property Unsuitable:</b> An applicant is considered not ready to move or to live independently due to social or medical reasons (the support available will also be considered). Or the Homesearch landlord/Occupational Therapist recognises the</p>	
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property is not suitable for their support/medical/mobility needs (including longer term needs) e.g. the property they have bid for cannot be adapted to meet their needs or it has unsuitable communal facilities or they are likely to be too vulnerable (e.g. lack mental capacity) or pose a risk to themselves or others (e.g. MAPPA case). Another reason could be a recent history of significant anti-social behaviour (from the applicant or their household members) which would make them unsuitable for the property.

Rent Arrears/Debt: Applicants can be bypassed where they have current or recoverable (non-statute barred) former debt with a Homesearch partner (which they can't pay in full). This would be where the arrears/recoverable debt are above £500. We would exclude arrears included in a Debt Recovery Order as applicable.

Affordability: Where it cannot be proved that welfare benefits will be paid to an applicant to sustain a tenancy or a person hasn't been employed for a minimum of three months (with an income sufficient to sustain a tenancy) or does not have sufficient enough savings to sustain a tenancy for at least 12 months, an applicant will be bypassed.

Information is Pending: Homesearch partners have not received information requested from an applicant in conjunction with the Homesearch Allocation Procedures.

Property Advert Withdrawn: Some properties advertised for letting may need to be withdrawn for

<p style="text-align: center;">Page 261</p>		<p>example because it is urgently needed for an emergency (e.g. a tenant has lost their home due to fire) or because the previous tenant has decided not to leave their tenancy and retracted their notice to end their tenancy.</p> <p><b>Condition of Tenancy:</b> Where an applicant is transferring home and an inspection is carried out and the current property they are leaving has been damaged/neglected.</p> <p><b>Applicant Leaving the Armed Forces –</b> an applicant would be bypassed (if they bid on a property) up to 2 months prior to discharge from the army. Homesearch will notify applicants leaving the armed forces when they are able to bid.</p> <p><b>Exceptional circumstances/Discretionary Decision:</b> Cases that fall outside the above criteria will need to be discussed by the <b>Suspension Panel</b>; discussions may have to be conducted via email as the panel only meets once a month. The application of a <b>discretionary decision for exceptional circumstances</b> will need to be approved by all partners (via email).</p>	
<p>Rapid Rehousing (Agreement in principle - subject to partner approval)</p>	<p>Not in current policy.</p>	<p>It is a requirement of Welsh Government, as per the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support, for the Council to have a 'move-on protocol with rapid re-housing at its heart' for re-housing those in emergency/temporary homeless accommodation into suitable permanent accommodation.</p> <p>The Council is required to minimise the number of placement moves for any individual or family that experiences homeless. Settled permanent</p>	<p>This supports the Council in meeting its obligation to provide those in homeless/emergency accommodation with move on into suitable permanent housing as soon as possible.</p>

accommodation following a short period of time in emergency accommodation is the desire for all partners when working together to eradicate homelessness and promote sustainable tenancies.

MCC will work closely with the Monmouthshire Housing Partnership to facilitate adequate availability of social housing stock through local housing associations to help meet local homeless need through the flexible quota arrangement within the existing Monmouthshire Homesearch Housing Allocation Policy. The Council is committed to RSL's having the guarantee of immediate Intensive Resettlement Housing Support for those needing to be accommodated via the homeless route. In the short-term this will be provided through an interim reconfigured Housing Support Grant funded service provided by Pobl. It is acknowledged that not all applicants may be suitable for all vacancies and there may be occasions where an allocation is considered as too high risk. In these rare circumstances the applicant can be bypassed, however, all such bypasses and the reasons why, must be reported to the Council at the time of bypass for monitoring purposes.

Should this support not be available this may prevent the Council from moving some applicants on to permanent accommodation.

On a homeless determination and a 2B Banding status assessment under the Homesearch Allocation Policy, Housing Options Officers will work closely with Homesearch Officers to ensure registration of housing applications and minimise delays in

processing applications. The allocated Support Worker will be involved by providing individual support plans to illustrate the intensity of support to be delivered, as well as the individual's commitment to working towards a successful tenancy.

Any barriers to an offer of accommodation, such as previous rent arrears, will be negotiated by this triage, and if necessary, the Council will utilise the Homeless Prevention Fund to reduce/refund arrears. Any support issues such as previous behaviour or substance misuse issues which could inhibit an offer being successful, will be addressed via the support plan and evidenced by the involvement of the Substance Misuse Assertive Outreach Worker (also part of MCC bid), and Mental Health services.

To further support individual clients, the Council or support providers will refer clients into the multi-agency Housing Intervention Panel to consider and identify solutions. The Council, housing associations and support providers are committed to both referring clients and attending meetings.

As the Temporary Accommodation and Resettlement Support Service are delivered through the same Providers, there will be a seamless move with support during the resettlement process. High-intensity flexible, client-led support will be provided for between 12 to 16 weeks, with ongoing support being provided via the RSL or generic floating support service after this period.

**Appendix 1**

Intermediate Housing Framework	Not in current policy.	The framework sets out what type of housing is intermediate housing, the eligibility for each type and the how the scheme will be administered.	Sets out the overarching principles and ensures consistency in relation to allocations.
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## Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

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<p><b>Name of the Officer</b> completing the evaluation Louise Corbett</p> <p><b>Phone no:</b> 07970957039 <b>E-mail:</b> louisecorbett@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</b></p> <p>It is a legal requirement for Monmouthshire Council to run a Housing Register that manages the letting of social housing in Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire Housing Association (MHA) administers the common housing register on behalf of the Council via Homesearch. There is a service level agreement in place with MHA to manage this service. Melin, Pobl and United Welsh are also part of the Homesearch partnership and use it to let their affordable housing in Monmouthshire to applicants in line with this policy and accompanying procedures. To ensure an effective allocations policy that is fit for purpose and reflects current legislation and case law, periodic reviews are undertaken and amendments to the existing policy proposed.</p>
<p><b>Name of Service area</b></p> <p>Housing</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p> <p>18/05/2020</p>

1. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	The revised Homeseach policy should bring positive benefits to Monmouthshire residents of all ages. Households from the age of 16 and above are able to register on Homeseach. 16/17 year olds are granted a tenancy in trust until they reach 18. There is no upper age limit as to who can register for Homeseach and there a range of housing options available to meet need e.g. older persons housing.	Applicant could be assessed as adequately housed and therefore not in housing need.	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.
Disability	The Homeseach policy administers the allocation of a range of properties including those that meet accessible housing requirements. Each household who registers on Homeseach has their circumstances considered on a case by case basis. Where an applicant might have disabilities, supporting medical information and/or occupational therapy assessments will be considered when determining their application and suitability of accommodation.	Applicant could be assessed as adequately housed and therefore not in housing need.	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.
Gender reassignment	None.	None.	N/A.
Marriage or civil partnership	None.	None.	N/A.



Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Pregnancy or maternity	None.	None.	N/A.
Race	None.	None.	N/A.
Religion or Belief	None.	None.	N/A.
Sex	None.	None.	N/A.
Sexual Orientation	None.	None.	N/A.
Welsh Language	None.	None.	N/A.
Poverty	None.	None.	N/A.

2. **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<b>A prosperous Wales</b> Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	<b>Positive:</b> The policy sets out our commitment to make best use of resources and ensure affordable housing is allocated in the most appropriate way. Affordable housing helps the overall prosperity of neighborhoods and residents (eg a stable home to access employment) and contributes towards	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homesearch Partnership where performance will be monitored.



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>balanced and resilient communities that are sustainable.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b> Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> N/A</p>	N/A
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b> People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The policy seeks to prioritise those who are assessed as having a housing need, this includes those who have physical health issues, mental health issues or other welfare needs. The provision of suitable housing can assist in promoting good health, independence and well-being.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>There is ongoing dialogue between the Council, Monmouthshire Homeseach and partner agencies to encourage clients who may have a housing need to register onto the waiting list. During the application process their housing need is assessed on a case-by-case basis and the appropriate banding is given to their application.</p>
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> Affordable housing makes an important contribution to the sustainability and cohesiveness of our towns and villages by providing homes that local people can afford to live in and helps to mitigate against the need to move away.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	<p>Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.</p>


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p><b>Positive:</b> The Policy provides provision for local letting policies that can help to address localized issues, eg anti-social behavior.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None</p>	
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> N/A.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> N/A</p>	N/A.
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The policy applies to housing in rural areas and includes a Rural Allocation Policy which sees new homes allocated to local people who are able to evidence a long standing connection to village. This contributes to and supports the heritage and culture of our rural communities.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	Ensure the policy is accurately interpreted and implemented. This will be achieved through quarterly meetings of the Homeseach Partnership where performance will be monitored.
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p><b>Positive:</b> The policy aims to allocate affordable housing equitably and in a transparent manner regardless of an individual's ethnic origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion. The policy is a means for the Council's partner Registered Social Landlord's (RSL) to allocate properties and once someone becomes a tenant they are able to access a range of support such as financial inclusion or education and employment opportunities - all of which</p>	The agreed policy will be subject to regular monitoring and periodic review, in line with the Code of Guidance.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>contributes to empowering people and helps them fulfil their potential.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> None.</p>	

3. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p> <p><b>Long Term</b></p>	<p>The policy is the framework for managing the Homesearch waiting list and sets out how we will manage applications and allocate properties. The waiting list is a live database and changes continuously with applicants registering, cancelling applications or notifying of a change in their circumstances – it is the measure of need at that point in time. The policy is reviewed periodically to ensure it reflects current legislation, good practice and is fit for purpose.</p> <p>The database is used for future planning when assessing housing need and feeds into an evidence base that is used for a range of Housing and Planning policies such as Local Housing Market Assessment and replacement of Local Development Plan. The data also influences decisions as to where Welsh Government funding should be allocated as well what specialist housing provision is required i.e. social services/health need.</p>	<p>As part of the review and proposed changes the Locata IT system will be upgraded. This will ensure the database captures all the relevant information for housing needs mapping, the data can be obtained easily and that it can be interpreted effectively.</p>
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b></p>	<p>To effectively review the policy a review group was set up and key partners were invited to participate. In addition to the allocation of social housing the policy also seeks to support wider priorities, such as those relating to Social Care, Community Safety etc. Our partners and effective joint working are essential for us to be successful in the implementation of the policy and deliver outcomes.</p>	<p>The Monmouthshire Homesearch Partnership will meet quarterly to review implementation of the policy and its effectiveness.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The policy amendments have been agreed in liaison with Homesearch partners. At the beginning of the review process consultation and engagement events were held with stakeholders, staff and applicants of the waiting list. The final policy has also been made available for consultation with Shelter Cymru, U3A, Disability Wales, Stonewall Cymru, Race Equality First and Onyx Foundation.</p>	<p>Feedback and comments have been considered and fed into the review.</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The policy seeks to assist applicants with a housing need and supports the Council in its statutory duties with regard to those who are threatened with homelessness or who are actually homeless. Applications are banded according to need and priority is given to those who have the most urgent requirements, the allocation of suitable housing should prevent problems getting worse and contribute to improvements in people's health and well-being.</p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>Affordable housing makes an important contribution to the sustainability of our towns and villages by providing homes that local people on low incomes can afford to live in. The policy seeks to support those in housing need and vulnerable households, the housing application assessment considers a range of needs including medical and welfare needs and banding is awarded in line with someone's circumstances. An allocation of affordable housing is often a betterment to an individual's circumstances. RSL partners offer a range support to their tenants such as financial inclusion, advice in relation to fuel poverty/energy efficiency or advice around education and employment all of which help the individual as well as the economy and environment.</p>	N/A

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Social Justice, Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Social Justice	N/A	N/A	N/A
Safeguarding	The policy supports households and agencies in relation to safeguarding issues e.g. domestic abuse.	None.	N/A.

Corporate Parenting	The policy supports the Corporate parenting and allows for care leavers and child in need cases to be awarded priority banding.	None.	N/A.
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## 5. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

Evidence has been gathered in the following ways:

- Consultation with a range of stakeholders including staff, councillors and partner agencies.
- Surveyed existing Homeseach applicants, analysed feedback received by the Homeseach team in range of ways such as complaints, compliments, customer satisfaction surveys and new tenant feedback.
- Consultation with the Council's Equality Officer.
- Consultation with Shelter Cymru, U3A, Disability Wales, Stonewall Cymru, Race Equality First and Onyx Foundation.
- Housing register data
- Local Housing Market Assessment (September 2018)

The legislation and good practice which have informed the policy revisions are:

- Housing Act 1996
- Housing(Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government's Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness
- The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility)(Wales) Regulations
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Equalities Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Welsh Government's Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness & Housing Related Support.

## 6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

### Positive -

The positive benefits of this proposal will allow us to:

- Allocate affordable housing fairly, consistently and transparently



- Fully adhere to legislation and the Welsh Government’s regulatory framework
- Provide a service that is easy to access, responds to changing demands and gives high customer satisfaction
- Work to support sustainable and resilient communities, the prevention of homelessness and help to support vulnerable people.
- Make best use of housing stock

**Negative – None.**

**7. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.**

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Respond to policy changes.	October 2020	Strategy and Policy Officer – Affordable Housing
Implement and publicise changes and make amended policy available.	October 2020	Strategy and Policy Officer – Affordable Housing

**8. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.**

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
0.0	Adult Select Committee	October 2020	
1.0	ICMD	October 2020	

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>WELSH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER'S MONITORING WORK 2019-20</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SARA JONES</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>

**1. PURPOSE:**

To provide an update on the outcomes of Welsh Language Commissioner's 2019-20 monitoring work and secure endorsements of the actions that will be taken by the authority to address the issues highlighted.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To approve the actions, shown in appendix 2, that will be put in place to address the issues highlighted in the Monitoring Report prior to a formal response to the Commissioner.

**3. KEY ISSUES:**

- 3.1 The Welsh Language Standards were created in 2011 and introduced the concept of the Welsh Language Standards. These standards were tailored to individual local authorities and were allocated in September of 2016 for us to implement. They are a very detailed list of requirements that set out how Monmouthshire must use the Welsh language in both the workplace and in its dealings with the public.
- 3.2 The Welsh Language Commissioner annually monitors user experience by reviewing all 22 local authorities in Wales to test the effectiveness of their Welsh language offer. This process takes the guise of a mystery shopper exercise and is carried out by an external organisation on behalf of the Commissioner. The survey is very detailed and involves the following: written and e-mail correspondence, Facebook and Twitter posts, press releases, vacancies, telephone calls, visits to receptions and sample surveys of pages on the councils website. These interactions are all designed to measure the effectiveness of our provision through the medium of Welsh.
- 3.3 The feedback, shown in appendix 1, was generally positive and compares well with the average results across Wales which can be seen alongside the findings in Monmouthshire. There were 4 key areas highlighted which suggested a "suspicion of failure to comply with the relevant statutory requirements" and these have required specific actions to ensure compliance with the standards. The key areas are:

- The Council was unable to deal with one of the three telephone calls made in Welsh to 01633 644644.
- 2/3 of the forms that were subject to the survey were available fully in Welsh.
- 18 of the 30 pages surveyed on the organisation's website were available and fully operational in Welsh. There were 12 pages where the Welsh language was treated less favourably.
- During the visits to the County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, reception staff were unable to deal with any of the Welsh inquiries in Welsh.

3.4 These issues have been examined in detail and remedial actions identified which are shown in appendix 2 of this report. The first three issues will be addressed by the effective application of existing processes, and additional checks have been introduced to minimise the risk of these re-occurring. The final issue is one that is more difficult to address in the short term. It has been agreed, therefore, that the next time a vacancy arises for a receptionist at County Hall that it is designated as Welsh Essential and that a fluent Welsh speaker is recruited. In the meantime further Welsh language training has been offered to existing staff.

**4. REASONS:**

To ensure compliance with the Welsh Language Standards and ensure that those who wish to use the Welsh language in their interactions with the authority are treated no less favourably than those using English.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no specific resource implications resulting from these recommendations

**6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)**

A full evaluation has not been carried out for this recommendation. However it has been identified that the proposals will have a positive impact on the Welsh language. No negative or positive impacts have been identified in other areas.

**7. CONSULTEES:**

Senior Leadership Team  
Cabinet

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

**9. AUTHOR:**

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**Results of the Monitoring Work**

<b>Monmouthshire CC Performance</b>	<b>Average performance of the sample of organisations</b>
<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three emails were sent in Welsh to contact@monmouthshire.gov.uk between June and November 2019.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A response was received in Welsh to the three Welsh emails.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional material was provided in Welsh with one of the responses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One of the responses did not include a statement welcoming correspondence in Welsh and that corresponding in Welsh will not lead to delay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 73% of Welsh correspondence received a response (in any language).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 92% of responses to Welsh correspondence were in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional material was provided with the responses to Welsh correspondence in 49% of cases.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Responses to Welsh correspondence included a statement welcoming Welsh correspondence in 41% of cases.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telephone calls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three phone calls were made to 01633 644644 between July 2019 and December 2020.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The automated information was available in Welsh for all of the calls.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A proactive offer of a Welsh language service was received at the start of the three phone calls.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The organization failed to deal with one of the three calls in Welsh in its entirety and provide a complete answer to the inquiry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 90% of automatic telephone options were in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There was a proactive offer of a Welsh language service at the start of the call in 67% of cases.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 55% of calls were dealt with successfully in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Forms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three forms were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Two were available fully in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The English versions of the forms did not state that the document was also available in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 78% of the forms subject to the survey were available fully in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 19% of the forms subject to the survey stated that the document was also available in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Press releases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three press releases were subject to the survey.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All three were available fully in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All three were pages on the organisation's website, and there was a language choice button on the English versions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 82% of the press releases that were subject to the survey were available fully in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 22% of press releases that were subject to the survey stated that the document was also available in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Brochure / pamphlet / leaflet / card</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three examples were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All three examples were available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The English versions did not state that the document was also available in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 68% of the examples subject to the survey were available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 7% of the examples subject to the survey stated that the document was also available in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Corporate identity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Three examples were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All three examples appeared in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 88% of the corporate identity examples surveyed appeared in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 30 pages of the organization's website were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The text of 18 of the pages were available fully in Welsh with 7 partly available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 18 of the pages were fully operational in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 29 of the pages included a 'Welsh' button on the English version</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There were 12 pages where the Welsh language was treated less favourably</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 81% of the website pages that were subject to the survey were available fully in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facebook and Twitter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 15 messages on the organization's Facebook page were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All 15 messages were available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 15 tweets on the organization's Twitter account were subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All 15 tweets were available in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 74% of the Facebook messages that were subject to the survey were available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 70% of the tweets subject to the survey were available in Welsh.</li> </ul>

<p><b>New and vacant posts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10 jobs were subject to this survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Welsh language was mentioned in all of those posts.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The 10 posts were advertised in Welsh and included a statement welcoming applications in Welsh</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Application forms for 8 of the posts were available in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The application forms did not provided a space for specifying the preferred language of assessment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All 10 of the job descriptions were available in Welsh.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 82% of the job advertisements subject to the survey included a Welsh language skills category.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Welsh language was considered 'essential' for 17% of the jobs subject to the survey.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 47% of job advertisements were available in Welsh.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reception areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Two visits were made to the County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, between October and November 2019.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The visitor was greeted in Welsh by a member of the reception staff at the start of both visits.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A member of reception staff was unable to deal with both visits in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The organization had displayed a sign in the reception area stating (in Welsh) that persons are welcome to use Welsh there.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not all reception staff who spoke Welsh wore a badge stating this.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The organization promotes the use of Welsh in reception.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visitors were greeted in Welsh or bilingually during 37% of visits.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 46% of visits were successfully dealt with in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There was a sign stating that visitors were welcome to use the Welsh language in 51% of cases.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All Welsh speaking reception staff wore a badge showcasing this ability in 36% of cases.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Self-service machines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Council was not subject to this survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The default language of 25% of the self service machines surveyed was Welsh or bilingual.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 75% of self-service machines were working fully in Welsh.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 75% of self-service machines proactively offered a Welsh language service.</li> </ul>



**Signs**

- Six signs were subject to the survey during visits to the County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, between October and November 2019.
- All text on the six signs was available in Welsh
- The Welsh text was set so that it was likely to be read first on two of the signs.
- All text was accurate in meaning and expression.

- 89% of the signs subject to the survey had all the text in Welsh.
- The text of 84% of signs is set so that Welsh is likely to be read first.
- 90% of signs included text that was correct in meaning and expression.

## Further Details and Proposed Actions

Issue Highlighted	Context and Response
<p>The Council was unable to deal with one of the three telephone calls made in Welsh to 01633 644644.</p>	<p>Callers to 01633 644644 are asked to dial 1 for English and 2 for Welsh. On further investigation it appears that the call that was not dealt with in Welsh was made on the English Language Line in error and not the dedicated Welsh line.</p> <p>When people dial 2, a telephone hunt system identifies an available Welsh speaker who then handles the call. In the event that no Welsh speaker is available, the caller can leave a message and an audio file is sent the Welsh Language Officer to contact the caller.</p> <p>Recruiting is underway to appoint a fluent Welsh speaker in the contact centre to reduce the reliance on the hunt system while further Welsh speakers are being sought amongst existing staff to bolster the number of staff who can receive calls via the hunt system</p>
<p>2/3 of the forms that were subject to the survey were available fully in Welsh</p>	<p>The majority of forms are available in both languages and there is no technical barrier to this being in place for all forms</p> <p>All individual departments are responsible for publishing on the council website rather than the council having one dedicated officer being responsible. All departmental web site publishers have been contacted and reminded of their obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011</p> <p>An audit of all forms will now be carried out to identify any further instances. The particular forms highlighted by the Commissioner are being remedied.</p>

<b>Issue Highlighted</b>	<b>Context and Response</b>
<p>18 of the 30 pages surveyed on the organisation's website were available and fully</p>	<p>The errors identified varied in their significance, however there should be no reason for pages not to be fully available in both languages and processes are in place to support this.</p> <p>All website updates carried out centrally are automatically sent for translation by the Communications Team prior to publication.</p> <p>All departmental website publishers have been contacted to remind them of the requirements of the Act and reiterate that everything on our website must be in both languages.</p> <p>We will commission a third party to carry out an annual audit of the website to proactively identify and remedy any errors. This will ensure a fully compliant bilingual website. We have specified that the review includes the front pages of all departments and includes links to other documents externally hosted sites commissioned by the council.</p>
<p>During the visits to the County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, reception staff were unable to deal with any of the Welsh inquiries in Welsh.</p>	<p>County Hall reception is staffed by 3 officers (one dedicated to the role and two as cover) who have all undertaken Welsh Language training although none are fluent</p> <p>The role has previously been advertised as Welsh Essential but unfortunately we were unsuccessful in attracting any applications despite a comprehensive recruitment campaign through the medium of Welsh comprising the following: a video on the council website; social media posts; a paid advert on Lleol.com and an e-mail to the Welsh Language Officer's Welsh speakers database of circa 200 people</p> <p>The 3 members of staff will be offered the "Say something in Welsh" fast track course and that the next time a vacancy occurs the role will once again be designated as Welsh Essential.</p> <p>As a council we are fully aware and supportive of our obligations under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 but as with many other local authorities with our language</p>

<b>Issue Highlighted</b>	<b>Context and Response</b>
	demographic we have been unsuccessful in attracting Welsh speakers utilising the Welsh Essential criteria.